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**WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL  
LEAGUE**



**YEARLY REPORT  
1939-40**

**PRICE 2d.**

# Women's International League

(British Section of the Women's International League  
for Peace and Freedom)

## TWENTY-FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT

MARCH, 1939—MARCH, 1940

INTERNATIONAL HOUSE, 55 GOWER STREET,  
LONDON, W.C.1

Telephone: Museum 3179

## THE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

*Head Office*—Maison Internationale, 12 Rue du Vieux Collège, Geneva

Formed at the Hague Congress of Women in 1915 to bind together women in every country who desire to promote the following objects:—

### I. The Settlement of Disputes by some means other than War.

### II. The Emancipation of Women.

National Sections or Correspondents:—

Argentine	Denmark	Hungary	Palestine
Australia:	Egypt	India	Panama
Victoria	El Salvador	Ireland	Poland
Tasmania	Esthonia	Italy	South Africa
New South Wales	Finland	Japan	Spain
Western Australia	France	Jugo-Slavia	Sweden
Belgium	Germany	Lithuania	Switzerland
Bulgaria	Great Britain	Mexico	Tunis
Canada	Greece	New Zealand	Ukraine
China	Holland	Nicaragua	U.S.A.
Costa Rica	Honduras	Norway	Venezuela
Czecho-Slovakia			

*The BRITISH SECTION of the LEAGUE is known as*

### THE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE

INTERNATIONAL HOUSE, 55 GOWER STREET, LONDON, W.C.1

#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR 1940

*Chairman*—Mrs. Duncan Harris

*Hon. Secretary*—Mrs. K. E. Innes

*Hon. Treasurer*—Mrs. McGregor Wood

Miss Mosa Anderson, Miss Karleen Baker, Mrs. Brayshaw, Dr. Hilda Clark, Miss Maud Dickinson, Mrs. Garside, Mrs. Greenwood, Mrs. Grindley, Miss Agatha Harrison, Miss Amy Haughton, Mrs. L. G. H. Huxley, Miss Lettice Jowitt, Mrs. Kinnish, Mrs. Lankester, Mrs. Longson, Miss C. E. Marshall, Miss Edith Pye, Miss W. I. Rinder, Mrs. Richenda Scott, Mrs. Thornycroft.

*Vice-Presidents*—

Miss Vera Brittain, Mrs. de Bunsen, The Hon. Mrs. Franklin, Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, Dr. Maude Royden, Miss Mary Sheepshanks, Lady Unwin.

MEMBERSHIP is open to all women who are BRITISH SUBJECTS, who desire to work for the above two-fold object. Associate membership is open to women and men of any nationality. Minimum Subscription to Headquarters, 2s. 6d. per annum. Monthly News Sheet, 1d.; 1s. 6d. per annum, post free.

## TWENTY-FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT

March, 1939—March, 1940

The year 1939 has seen the frustration of all our hopes for the maintenance of peace in Europe. In March Hitler annexed the whole of Czecho-Slovakia in contradiction to his pledge given at Munich, and his assertions that he had no more territorial aims in Europe. On September 1st he attacked Poland, thereby breaking a Treaty made in 1934, and on September 3rd, England and France, after an ultimatum asking for the withdrawal of German troops from Poland, declared war on Germany.

These events have overshadowed for us in the West, the fact that the major war between Japan and China, due to Japanese aggression, has continued unabated; and have undoubtedly affected the attention that should be given to the serious situation in India. The situation in Europe has been aggravated and confused by an alliance between the U.S.S.R. and Germany, which after the partition of Poland between the two Powers, has led to the virtual annexation by Russia of all the Baltic Provinces, and finally to the attack on Finland.

At the League Meeting in December, Russia was condemned as aggressor and expelled from League membership.

### THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

In spite of—or perhaps because of—the recurring crises in the international field, attendance at and membership of the Committee have been steady. Mrs. Brayshaw has been prevented from attendance through illness, and Mrs. Maxwell was obliged to resign when she left London at the beginning of the war.

Towards the end of the year Miss Jowitt went to Brummana, Syria, for a short period.

Mrs. Duncan Harris and Mrs. Lankester were Consultative Members at the Spring Meeting of the W.I.L.P.F. in Paris, and Mrs. Harris at the deferred Autumn Meeting in December, in Geneva.

We are affiliated to the National Peace Council, the Women's Peace Crusade, and the British Commonwealth League. Our representatives have served on the Women's Advisory Committee of the League of Nations Union, the Liaison Committee of British Women's Organisations interested in Indian affairs, and in addition Miss Dickinson has attended several joint group meetings as representative or observer.

Greetings were sent to the World Conference of the Associated Country Women of the World, meeting in London in May.

We have been glad to have at our Executive Meetings as visitors, in most cases regularly, Mrs. Hertzka and Mrs. Olga Misar of Austria, Mrs. Schmolkova, Mrs. Rudinger and Miss Brunecker of Czecho-Slovakia, Miss Sheepshanks and Lady Unwin.

The whole League felt deeply its loss through death of Mrs. H. M. Swanwick, one of its founders, Chairman for many years, and President. The following Minute passed by the Executive Committee sums up some of our feeling of the debt owed to her.

"The record of what the Women's International League owes to Mrs. H. M. Swanwick is written in every sphere of its early activities. Her energies contributed largely to its foundation; her keen, critical ability largely set its direction both in general policy and in detail, as one problem after another had to be faced.

"Frequently an initiator, she never spared herself in the execution of the action decided upon. As a speaker and writer, her clear thinking, full knowledge and power of logical marshalling of material, were given wholly to the spread of truth as she saw it, with the object always of promoting just and lasting peace between the nations.

"Her disinterested devotion will remain an example and an inspiration."

On the death of Mrs. Despard we lost one of our earliest members, though for some years she had not been in touch with us.

**Sandwich Luncheons** have been held at intervals at the Office and have been well attended. Speakers have included:—

Mr. Eric Hayman—The Situation in Denmark, with special reference to the steady growth of Nazism.

Miss Muriel Lester—Life in China.

Miss Rinder—Opener of Discussion on Clarence Streit's book "Union Now."

Mrs. Corbett Ashby—Peace Aims.

**A Tea Meeting** was arranged for Miss Li, of China, who spoke on her recent visit to the Amsterdam Youth Conference and of the work she was going to do in China under Miss Eleanor Hinder.

The Golders Green Branch co-operated with Headquarters in arranging a **Garden Fair** on July 1st. It was held by kind permission of Mr. & Mrs. J. B. Braithwaite at 85 Hampstead Way, and the beautiful surroundings contributed greatly to the success of the gathering. Over 230 people were present and were entertained with music by Czech Refugees, Folk Dancing by dancers from the Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute and acting by Players from the Play and Pageant Union in their private capacity. All performers generously gave their services. The Fair was opened by Mrs. Sukthankar, Secretary of the All India Women's Congress.

On December 5th a "**Bring and Buy**" Sale was held at the Office and £11 12s. 8d. was raised. The next day a delightful and very successful Party, organised by Miss Karleen Baker, was

given to between 30 and 40 W.I.L. Czech Refugees in the Office, which was gaily decorated with holly and a Christmas tree reaching nearly to the ceiling. Games and songs followed tea.

## GENERAL POLICY

1. **Before the outbreak of War.** Inevitably before the war began, tendencies were observable both in internal politics and internationally, pointing to the disaster towards which we were drifting. The W.I.L. took opportunity wherever possible to issue constructive criticism and to urge on the Government such steps as it thought might help to avert the breakdown.

*Proposal for a Conference of the democratic States on a democratic basis.* In April a letter was sent to Lord Halifax expressing concern at the concentration in British foreign policy on bilateral military alliances, while all ideas that the democracies have a part to play in the positive organisation of peace remained unexpressed and undeveloped. At the same time welcome was given to President Roosevelt's Peace Plea to Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini, and the suggestion was made that a Conference should be called of all countries willing to plan for peace on a democratic basis, and that those ready should at once initiate between themselves, such steps as were possible for the establishment of just conditions of trade and intercourse and the removal of the causes of war.

In July the Foreign Secretary stated that H.M. Government, while determined to resist further aggression by force, would be ready to discuss Germany's claims provided that the independence of nations is recognised. A letter was written to him expressing the belief that such a statement should be made more convincing to the German people by a clear indication of the constructive policy to remedy economic grievances, which would be proposed as soon as the use and threat of force was abandoned. It urged that the policy proposed must include, among other things, (a) co-operation with Germany in finding methods of meeting her particular requirements in international trade, adjusted to her economic and financial interests; (b) reconsideration of the policy of the Ottawa Agreement in consultation with the Dominions, and the initiation by Great Britain of an international inquiry into the question of raw materials with a view to a Convention ensuring equality of access.

2. **On the outbreak of War.** When war began the Executive immediately issued a leaflet on the situation reaffirming the W.I.L.P.F. pronouncement at the Hague in 1915, and urging its use as a starting point for work internationally for the renunciation of war. Proposals on general lines were made for the day of peace and the suggestion sent to the Government that as an immediate

step an Official Committee should be set up, including representatives of unofficial bodies, to study the root causes of war and the means by which they can be eradicated, and to consider and make recommendations for such terms of peace as would eliminate war. The Statement was sent to the Branches urging the continuance of their work.

When men of the R.A.F. dropped leaflets over Germany a letter was sent thanking the Government "for its appeal to reason rather than to force."

Proposals for the calling of a Conference for neutral countries were put forward on several occasions and embodied in a letter to President Roosevelt. The British Government was urged to make clear the terms upon which it would be willing to make peace, and the view was expressed that the terms should include the recognition of equality of race, and of the rights and liberties of the individual, and respect for the integrity of small as well as great nations. As an earnest of the acceptance of these fundamental principles the Government was urged to make clear its intention of bringing India into free and equal partnership in the family of nations.

In co-operation with the N.P.C. we promoted an Appeal for a Declaration of peace terms which included proposals which should form the basis of any peace negotiations.

After our International Executive, following up a resolution on the giving of opportunities to interned soldiers and others to learn about the country in which they are interned, we suggested to the War Office that radios should be supplied in Camps, if and where they were not already provided.

Attempts at mediation were made at different times by President Roosevelt, and by the Queen of the Netherlands and the King of the Belgians. These were welcomed and the suggestion was sent to President Roosevelt that he should call a Conference of neutral countries, having as its aim the putting forward of recommendations to the belligerents for the ending of the European conflict, and expressing the view that there should be no summary rejection of proposals to end the war but that any proposal should be considered by neutral powers. A copy of this was sent to our National Sections.

Letters were also sent to the Queen of the Netherlands and the King of the Belgians welcoming their efforts. An acknowledgment was received from the latter.

When the Queen of England broadcast to the women of the Empire a letter was sent expressing the hope that she might feel able to give voice to the longing of women for the establishment of peace and to their hatred of war. Although, in the reply received from a Lady in Waiting, it was explained that the Queen did not feel able to embody outside suggestions of which she had received

a great many, a paragraph in the Queen's speech did give expression to this feeling.

### THE FAR EAST

The W.I.L. has continued to urge that the export from the British Empire to Japan, as the aggressor in the Sino-Japanese struggle, of materials essential to the building up of armaments, should be in every possible way discouraged.

During negotiations between the British and Japanese over the situation in Tientsin, in letters to the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary, we urged that the British Government should be careful in any agreement not to co-operate with Japan in a way which would help her aggression in China, and that the support given to China in connection with the currency of the Chinese Central Government should by no means be reversed by any acknowledgment of the Japanese Puppet currency.

### INDIA

The British Section of the W.I.L. has been able to follow closely the situation in India during the past year through the special contacts which a member of the Executive, Agatha Harrison has had with that country. She was in India for a visit of six months extending to the end of May, 1939, and during that time had opportunities of meeting with many of the political leaders of all parties and also responsible Government officials. She was with Mahatma Gandhi at the time of his fast over the Rajkot dispute and also obtained first hand knowledge on the spot of the troubles in the badly misruled States bordering on Orissa, which gives the key to the demand for democracy by the people of many of the Indian States. She also visited the North-West Frontier, as well as other parts of India and wherever she went she spared no pains to bring the spirit of understanding and reconciliation in difficult situations. On her return to England she wrote an article for the *July News Sheet*, expressing her great concern over the critical situation which she saw developing in India, and concluded by saying: 'Coming back from the turmoil in India to the turmoil here, I am convinced that the greatest contribution this country could make to the peace of the world would be to come to a just and honourable settlement with India.'

Events have moved rapidly since the W.I.L. Annual Council passed its resolution on India a year ago pressing the Government not to go on with the proposed scheme of Federation until it was so amended as to be acceptable to organised opinion in India. After the declaration of war between the Allies and Germany the Congress Party voiced its protest that India had been drawn into the war without its consent, and put forward the demand that War Aims should be clearly stated and India's future status explicitly

declared before co-operation could be given. It was further maintained that while Great Britain was defending the right of smaller nations to self-determination and independence, the right of India to frame her own constitution and decide her destiny should be recognised. The W.I.L. has, through its executive, expressed its sympathy with these demands, and regretted the uncompromising attitude of some Moslem leaders which has complicated the issue and given the Government the excuse to defer the implementing of promises. The Executive has closely followed subsequent developments, including the resignation of all the Provincial Congress Governments, which must give rise to tension all over India. Miss Harrison recorded in the September "News Sheet" that a "stalemate" existed and that the "situation was precarious in the extreme," but based hopes on the fact that the Viceroy on the one hand and Mahatma Gandhi on the other, were both searching for avenues of peace and an honourable settlement.

The W.I.L., as an active member of the Liaison Group of British women's organisations co-operating with the All-India Women's Conference, is actively linked with the women's movement in that country, and a member of the Executive still acts as Liaison Officer. Agatha Harrison attended the annual session of the A.I.W.C. as the special British visitor representing the Liaison Group, and on her return to England the Group organised a successful and well-attended meeting of welcome, at which Lord Sankey presided. The Executive Committee had the privilege of meeting two distinguished Indian women leaders during the year, Dr. Malinibai Sukthankar, the Hon. Secretary of the A.I.W.C., and an active social worker and Mrs. Kamaladevi, an outstanding personality in Congress circles, who was here on a visit en route for U.S.A. It is to be regretted that for the first time in five years the war made it impossible for a special representative of the Liaison Group to go from this country to the A.I.W.C. annual session, but Miss M. Sykes, a member of the staff at Sante-netan, already in India, was invited to act as a substitute. The "Bulletin," issued quarterly by the Liaison Group (2s. 6d. a year) keeps W.I.L. members in touch with developments of the women's movement in India.

### CONSCRIPTION

At the end of April the Government announced the introduction of conscription for Great Britain. A letter was sent to the Prime Minister on May 2nd, expressing regret at the decision, and pointing out that a country whose youth was trained to accept the war system as normal was less likely to work to end the system by constructive peace planning. Our unqualified objection to any form of compulsory military service or training was registered. A

formal acknowledgment was received. A number of Branches took similar action.

A Joint Advisory Bureau was set up for the combatting of conscription by legal methods. The W.I.L. affiliated for a short time and appointed Miss Dickinson as a representative until January.\*

### INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

Owing to the Czech crisis the Spring meeting of the Executive was held in April in Paris instead of later in Zurich. Mrs. Duncan Harris and Mrs. Lankester went as British Consultative Members, Mrs. Innes and Miss Pye as Congress-elected members. The Autumn meeting had to be deferred when war broke out but was held in Geneva in December, Mrs. Duncan Harris attending as British, Consultative Member. Very few Sections were able to be represented; the Scandinavians failed to get transit visas and the Dutch transit visa was received too late. It was not possible for Czech and Austrian representatives to go from England. The Committee was strengthened by the arrival from U.S.A. of Miss Dorothy Detzer, who came to Europe just for the five days. Madaline Rolland attended from France, and refugees in Switzerland represented Germany. Switzerland had full representation. Under the circumstances it was only possible to plan for an international Women's Congress at the time and place of the Peace Conference, and to leave open the question of subsequent meetings of the Executive during the war. The discussions centred around plans for a peace which would be "just and durable" and there was special emphasis on the need to secure by international agreement recognition for every individual of fundamental human rights as a basis for peaceful relations.

As regards *Pax* it was decided to continue to issue news as material came in.

An invitation was received to transfer the Central Office to the U.S.A., but it was felt that as long as it can work there the Office should stay in Switzerland. The question of any subsequent transfer was left open.

### PUBLICITY

Dr. Hilda Clark has continued as Chairman of the Publicity Committee and has edited the "News Sheet," with assistance from the Office. The situation has not allowed of many publications. The most widely circulated leaflet was our Statement in September on the Present Situation. Successful press work has continued

\*After that date developments in the work were outside our sphere, and active co-operation was therefore suspended.

throughout the year both at Headquarters and in the Branches. We have printed:—

- 20,000 "Wanted! Women for the Defence of the World's Children."
  - 1,000 "Visiting Cards," inviting recipients to write to the Office for further information about the W.I.L.
  - 6,000 "A Call to Action."
  - 3,000 "Present Situation."
  - 1,000 "Recall to Reason" and "Sovereign Rights."
  - 1,000 "Have Women a special point of view about War."
- Speakers' Notes for W.I.L. speakers, compiled by Mrs. Brayshaw.

Posters were displayed on several Underground stations.

### TREASURER'S REPORT

You who have long known the Domestic Economy of the Women's International League—how we get and how we spend—will have realized that there is a yearly rhythm in this part of the work: it varies from year to year, but its main waves seem always the same. It goes like this:—In January, the most virtuous branches and members send in their subscriptions or affiliation fees without a reminder; in February the Treasurer tries to write a letter that is friendly, short and to the point; one that says exactly the same as the year before in words that make it appear different! Replies to this reminder pour in; the money is joyfully received, and, we think, carefully spent. By June we are getting anxious, so July sees a Headquarters garden effort to tide us over the holidays; similar gatherings are arranged by Branches, in the suburbs of London, and the provinces. At the September Executive we are ready to file our petition; the Treasurer is told in no uncertain terms to throw herself and our desperate need on the generosity of Branches and members; this is done—a good response is the result; lovely, encouraging letters accompany the gifts and the winter's work can begin again. During this last year (January 1st—December 31st, 1939) events in the outside world ran pretty parallel with our usual procedure. Subscriptions came in well—we got £393, only £6 less than the year before; we had a successful garden fete at Mrs. Braithwaite's and netted over £36; then our usual little crisis came just when the war began and this time the Treasurer's appeal had to be backed by Mrs. Duncan Harris and Mrs. Innes—"We must carry on" was the burden of their letter; "We will carry on" came back in the form of your answer to the tune of £343. And so in this year of disappointment and financial duress for us all, our receipts are only £100 less than they were in that remarkable year before—the one in which you sent £486 in gratitude for what we dared to hope was peace and £404 for the Czech friends who were soon finding out what sort of peace it was.

Thus the cadence of this rhythm has to be always the same too—a genuine expression of gratitude from your Officers and Executive to all branches who, maintaining with increasing difficulty their own work, yet manage to support Headquarters; to Headquarters members who regard W.I.L. as a bread-and-butter necessity and not as a luxury to be foregone; to Miss Horscroft who has helped our funds considerably by carrying on with a less experienced colleague; to Miss Dickinson who has arranged entertainments for us with the very sure touch of a professional. Your Treasurer would like too, to thank Mrs. Lankester and Miss Baker for taking the Czech fund off her hands.

In war time to make war is not the only work of necessity; ideas are as strong as the sword; they are our weapons. Though we are often bewildered and baffled, we have proved that if we do the will we shall know the doctrine, or enough of it to live by.

The Women's International League, holding on and standing fast, may be able to offer its own gift of light and healing when this war comes to an end.

It was born in war; it must be born again in war.

### INTERNATIONAL HOUSE

The International House Committee has once more given constant thought to the well-being of what is temporarily our property. Owing to the war the proposed redecoration was postponed: the appalling frost visited our pipes and a lamp was purchased to help to stay further calamities. Our tenants like other people have had their difficulties but with a little patience we think our revenue will all be forthcoming.

### BRANCHES

The difficulties of the situation have stimulated greater activity in many of the Branches, as well as bringing us many new members. The Executive is grateful for the prompt response whenever action has been suggested, and for the excellent use made of the Statement issued on the Present Situation. A letter sent to Branches at the beginning of the war stressed the necessity for continuing our work and for planning for a new peace along the lines of W.I.L. principles. The work continues and two Branches—Manchester and Cambridge—are hoping to have small Conferences of Experts to plan proposals for the kind of peace which would be just and durable. Any conclusions will be sent in to the National Peace Council, which is working along the same lines on a larger scale. Together with continued activity the Branches have been most generous in

financial support of Headquarters. This encourages us to hope that our work will be continued without much reduction in scale. We have Branches in the following places:—

Acock's Green, Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Cheltenham, Croydon, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Harpenden, Keynsham, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, Loughborough, Manchester, Northampton, Marazion, North Wales (including groups at Bangor, Colwyn Bay, Rhyl, Wrexham, Caernarvon, Blaenau Festiniog, Llangoed, Menai Bridge, Llanrwst, Llanfairfechan, Oswestry, Deganwy, Conwy, Penmaenmawr, Aber), Peterborough, Preston, Reading, S.E. London, S.W. London, Stockport, Tunbridge Wells, Welwyn Garden City, Worthing.

In addition to Societies affiliated to the Branches, we have affiliated to Headquarters: The Association of Women Clerks and Secretaries, Bolton Women's Council for Peace and Progress, The London Congregational Union Women's League, Lyndhurst Hall Women's Club, Wood Green and Southgate Women's Arbitration Committee, and branches of the Women's Adult School, Women's Co-operative Guild, British Women's Total Abstinence Union, and Labour Women's Section.

### THE OFFICE

Up to September, Miss Horscroft, with the assistance of Miss Stroud, continued the efficient running of the Office. In September it was regretfully found necessary to let Miss Stroud go and Miss Horscroft continued with junior assistance. Voluntary helpers have been Mrs. Goodrich, Miss Ruth Harrison, Miss Bunbury, Miss Gill, Mrs. Scarfe, Miss James, Frau Hertzka. The Office has also been given help by the readiness of several of our members to speak at meetings.

During a short period of evacuation, which lasted a fortnight in September, the work was carried on in Croydon at the house of Mrs. Redford Harris. The services of our faithful cleaner, Mrs. Andrews, who has been with us for over eighteen years, had to be dispensed with. We are glad that she is now back at work in the mornings, with the Office installed again at Gower Street.

### IN MEMORIAM

Besides the loss already recorded in the death of Mrs. Swanwick, we regret to record the death of Mr. Harold Morland who was one of our most faithful supporters.

### W.I.L. CZECH REFUGEES

The work of the W.I.L. for members of the Czech Section who became refugees after the occupation of Czecho-Slovakia, increased steadily until the outbreak of war, when all further immigration came to an end. With the occupation of the rest of Czecho-Slovakia in March came more requests for help and at the same time added difficulties in getting friends out of the country. The complications of getting a permit to enter this country were nothing to the series of regulations that had to be complied with before getting permission from the Gestapo to leave Czecho-Slovakia. The last friend to come to this country arrived two days before the war and three unfortunate

women were still left behind in Prague, having been unable to complete the necessary formalities. In August we were relieved and happy to welcome to safety the colleague in Prague who had worked so hard and undergone such constant danger in helping to get our friends to this country. Fifty-three adults and eleven children now compose the group for which we are caring. Most of the adults have domestic or nursing permits and are employed in private service or hospitals. The children are in schools or apprenticed to various trades.

Things have not always been easy for our friends. At first they were buoyed up by relief at reaching this country in safety. Later on the feeling of being exiles in a foreign land and the monotony and restrictions of domestic life, bore heavily on them. Many felt the reaction from months of nervous strain and suffered ill-health. Those who have come in close contact with them, feel nothing but admiration for the courageous way in which they have settled down in a strange land to unaccustomed work, many with great sorrows and anxieties for friends and relations left behind in their beloved country. One of the greatest hardships has been the feeling of loneliness experienced by all refugees. To help to counteract this, monthly tea parties have been held in the Office and a special Christmas Party was arranged on St. Nicholas' Day. The large numbers who have attended and the obvious delight at meeting their friends have been a pleasure to see. A special news sheet has also been edited and produced by the group and in this way close contact has been kept with those who live too far away to meet together.

When war broke out we anticipated that many of our friends might find themselves out of work. It speaks well for them that when hundreds of other refugees were thrown out of work, only a few of ours were unemployed. The recent relaxation of special restrictions on employment has led some of the group to seek factory work. We expect that shortly a number of them will find employment more suited to their tastes and experience.

Friends and members of the W.I.L. have continued to be generous in their gifts of money and hospitality and although we have had many calls on our funds on account of illness, short periods of unemployment, and the special needs of the children, a balance has been maintained to meet these demands throughout the year. The need for continued help remains. The work would scarcely have been possible except for the devoted and unremitting attention given to it by Miss Karleen Baker and her friend Miss Lia Levy, to both of whom the warm thanks of the League are due.

Many of the Branches have continued to give active support. Manchester in particular deserves mention as having taken full responsibility for six women and two children, and in addition, given help to two husbands. Brighton, Golders Green, and Worthing have also given substantial assistance.



## ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETINGS

March 5th, 6th and 7th, 1940

FRIENDS' HOUSE, EUSTON ROAD,  
LONDON.

### Resolutions adopted:—

#### 1. Federal Government.

"This Annual Council of the Women's International League holds that, for the Peace, Prosperity and Security of all Nations, it is essential that:—

(1) The principle of world order should override the particular interests of individual States. For this purpose there should be established a Federation or Federations, directly responsible to the electorates, embracing as wide an area and as many functions of Governments as possible. The basis of such Federation or Federations should rest on the essential liberties of the individual, irrespective of race, and should ensure freedom of the press and freedom of speech. Any Federation or Federations should maintain contact with each other and with States outside the Federation through a reconstructed League of Nations.

(2) The functions of such Federations should be to deal with international affairs, such as disarmament, colonies, mandated territories, tariffs, quotas, and all trade barriers, currencies, etc., and with the control of the distribution of raw materials, and of the economic conditions affecting world trade and industry.

(3) They should endeavour to raise the standard of social welfare of each nation, in keeping with its own cultural, social and political development.

(4) Purely domestic matters should remain under the control of National Governments."

#### 2. India.

"This Annual Council of the Women's International League,

Viewing with deep concern the impasse in the situation in India and the grave implications of recent developments, and

Believing that a right and honourable settlement, agreed to on both sides, would result, not only in a lasting friendship

between India and Great Britain, but might become a vital factor in the establishment of world peace on a constructive and permanent basis,

Earnestly appeals to both the British Government and to Indian leaders to make fresh efforts to expedite such a settlement."

#### 3. Colonies

"The Women's International League, at its Annual Council, wishes to express to H.M. Government its deep satisfaction with the recent Statement of Policy on Colonial Development and Welfare;

Welcomes in particular the departure from the previously prevailing principle that a colony should have only those services which it can afford to maintain out of its own resources;

Appreciates the decision to grant assistance to Colonial Governments for the maintenance of welfare services and for research, as well as for other schemes more clearly connected with material development;

Urges that the arrangements for promoting development schemes and proposals for research shall be put into operation with the minimum of delay;

Trusts that women with the necessary qualifications will be appointed on the two Advisory Committees; and begs that,

In the event of the sums allocated for financial assistance not proving adequate, H.M. Government will consider the desirability of asking for an increased provision.

Further, the Women's International League welcomes the provision for expenditure in the West Indies on development and welfare schemes as recommended by the Royal Commission but regrets that it has not been considered advisable to publish the Report on which these recommendations were based."

#### 4. Negotiation

"This Annual Council of the Women's International League, seeing in the visit of Mr. Sumner Welles an indication that the U.S.A. is anxious to associate itself with constructive efforts for the organisation of the world for peace, welcomes the initiative taken by President Roosevelt in sending Mr. Sumner Welles to Europe.

It urges H.M. Government to use the occasion to intimate their readiness to enter into negotiations with a view to ascertaining if it is possible to make peace on a basis which commends itself as just to the U.S.A. and to neutral opinion in general."

## CONSTITUTION AND RULES

### I. TITLE

“Women’s International League” (British Section of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom).

### II. OBJECT

- (1) To work for that peace between nations, races, and classes which is based on justice and goodwill.
- (2) To work for the acceptance of the belief that war is a crime.
- (3) To substitute Conference and Law for Coercive Force.
- (4) To secure full rights of citizenship to women.
- (5) To co-operate with women in other countries who are working for the same ends.

### III. MEMBERSHIP

(a) *Members.*—Membership shall be open to all women who are British subjects, who accept the above object, whose purpose it is to work for its accomplishment, and who pay an annual subscription either to a local Branch or direct to the national headquarters.

(b) *National Headquarters Members* shall pay a minimum subscription of 2s. 6d. in January each year.

(c) *Associate Members.*—Women resident in Great Britain, other than British subjects, who accept the above object shall be accepted as Associate Members.

Men resident in Great Britain who desire to become associated with the work of the League shall be accepted as Associate Members.

Associate Members shall pay an annual subscription of not less than 2s. 6d. and shall be entitled to all privileges of members except the right of election to Council or Executive Committee and the right to nominate and vote.

### IV. BRANCHES

(a) *Formation.*—Branches shall be formed in consultation with the Executive Committee. They shall consist of not less than ten members who support the object of the League, and shall pay an affiliation fee of 3d. per member annually to Headquarters. Branches may make their own rules and by-laws, subject to the general rules and constitution of the League.

(b) *Affiliation to other Organisations.*—Branches of the League are free to co-operate with other societies in their neighbourhood, but before affiliating to any other organisation, they shall obtain the sanction of the Executive Committee.

(c) *Affiliation of other Organisations.*—Branches of the League shall have power to accept for affiliation any local organisation of women in their district which supports the object of the League and pays an annual subscription of the same amount as the annual subscription of two individual Branch members. Such an affiliated organisation shall be entitled to send two voting delegates to general meetings of the Branch, such delegates to have the same power as members of the Branch.

### V. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### A.—Constitution of Executive Committee

(a) *Committee.*—The Executive Committee shall consist of the Hon. Officers and twenty-three members, who shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Council. Each Branch shall be entitled to send one representative to the Executive Committee meetings with power to speak, but not to vote, the Executive not being responsible for such representatives’ expenses.

(b) *Officers.*—The Officers shall be a President, Chairman, Hon. Treasurer, and Hon. Secretaries. The President, Hon. Treasurer, and Hon. Secretaries shall be elected by the Council at its Annual meeting. The Chairman shall be elected by the Executive Committee from among its members. An Assistant Treasurer shall be appointed when necessary by the Executive Committee.

(c) *Co-option to fill Vacancies.*—The Executive Committee shall have power to co-opt members to fill vacancies that occur during the year.

(d) Members of the Executive Committee shall be elected for one year, and at the end of that term shall be eligible for re-election without nomination.

Members of the Executive who have not attended 50 per cent. of the meetings during the year shall not be eligible for re-election unless some specific reason for absence can be offered, such as illness or absence from the country, and there is good reason to suppose that they will be able to attend in the future.

#### B.—Powers and Duties of Executive Committee.

(a) The Executive Committee shall meet, if possible, once a month.

(b) The railway fares of country members shall be paid so long as funds are available for this purpose.

(c) The Executive Committee shall carry on the business of the League between the meetings of the Council in accordance with the policy agreed to thereat.

(d) It shall administer the funds of the League and direct the organising work.

(e) It shall have power to appoint special Committees for carrying out the work of the League.

- (f) It shall have power to appoint and dismiss all paid officials.
- (g) In all things on which the rules are silent, the Executive Committee shall have power to decide, subject to appeal to the Council.

#### VI. AFFILIATION OF WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS

(a) *Central Executives.*—The Executive of the League shall have power to accept for affiliation the Central Executive of any national women's organisation which supports the object of the League and pays an affiliation fee of 5s. a year. Affiliated Central Executives shall be entitled to send two voting delegates to the Council Meetings of the League, such delegates to have the same powers as Branch delegates.

(b) *Branches.*—Headquarters shall have power to accept for affiliation any branch of women's organisations or women's groups within mixed organisations in districts where no Branch of the Women's International League exists. Such Branches shall pay an affiliation fee of not less than 2s. 6d. per annum, and shall be entitled to send one delegate to Council Meetings. Such delegates shall have the right to vote on all resolutions other than those dealing with the Constitution, with the election of the Hon. Officers and the Executive Committee.

#### VII. GENERAL COUNCIL

(a) The Council of the League shall consist of the Executive Committee, Delegates from Branches and Affiliated Bodies, and the Vice-Presidents. The Vice-Presidents shall be nominated by Branches or by the Executive Committee members, and shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Council.

(b) Each Branch shall be entitled to one delegate and one card vote for every twenty-five or part of twenty-five members for whom the affiliation fee for the previous year has been paid. This must be paid not less than a month before the date of the Council in the case of new Branches or increased membership. If the appointed delegate be unable to attend all sessions of the Council she may transfer her card to a proxy delegate duly accredited by the Branch or Affiliated Society.

(c) The Council shall meet at least once a year to transact the usual business of an Annual Meeting. The travelling expenses of one delegate from each Branch to the Annual Council Meeting shall be pooled, but no Branch shall be obliged to contribute to the expenses or benefit by the pool for the first Council Meeting after its foundation.

(d) A meeting of the Council can be called at any time by the Executive Committee or on demand of one-tenth of the total number of Branches.

#### VIII. RULES FOR COUNCIL MEETINGS

##### A.—*Ordinary Council Meetings.*

(a) Ordinary meetings of the Council shall be held at a time and place to be fixed by the Executive Committee.

(b) The General Secretary shall notify the Executive, Vice-Presidents, Branches, Headquarters members, and Affiliated Bodies two months before the Council Meeting, and all resolutions to be printed on the Agenda must reach the Secretary not later than five weeks before the Meeting.

(c) The Preliminary Agenda shall be issued to Branches four weeks before the Meeting.

(d) All amendments to Resolutions must reach the office not later than twenty-one days before the Meeting.

(e) The Final Agenda will be issued to Branches one week before the Meeting.

(f) *Resolutions* shall be placed upon the Agenda in the name of a Branch or affiliated organisation, or of the Executive Committee, or of any member of the Executive Committee, or of any of the Vice-Presidents.

(g) No business which is not on the Agenda may be taken at a Council Meeting, unless urgency is voted on the recommendation of the Standing Orders Committee.

(h) Delegates shall be admitted to Council Meetings on presentation of the official delegate's ticket signed by the Secretary of the Branch which she represents, or by the General Secretary.

##### B.—*Annual Council Meetings.*

(a) At the Annual Meeting of the Council, which shall be held in February or March, in addition to the ordinary business the Council shall:—

(1) Receive and adopt, if approved, the Report and Balance Sheet for the year;

(2) Elect by ballot the President, Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Secretaries, and twenty-three members of the Executive Committee;

(3) Elect Vice-Presidents;

(4) Consider any alterations of the rules that may be proposed.

(b) Nominations for the offices of President, Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Secretaries, and for the Executive Committee Members may be sent in by Branches, Vice-Presidents, and Members of the Executive Committee, and must reach the Secretary two weeks before the Council Meeting. The consent of the nominees must be obtained in writing before nominations are sent in.

(c) Resolutions to be placed on the agenda and proposed alterations of the rules must reach the Secretary not later than five weeks before the Council Meeting.

(d) The financial year shall end on 31st of December, and all affiliation fees must be paid before that date. Members' subscriptions shall be due in January each year.

(e) Branches which have not paid their affiliation fees before the end of the financial year will not be entitled to send delegates to Council Meetings.

(f) The Final Agenda and draft Annual Report shall be issued to the Branches one week before the Annual Meeting.

*C.—Special Council Meetings.*

(a) The Secretary shall give the Branches at least three weeks' notice of a Special Council Meeting, except in case of national emergency. Resolutions to be printed on the Agenda must reach the Secretary at least fourteen days before the Council Meeting.

(b) The Preliminary Agenda shall be issued to Branches at least one week before the Meeting, and a Final Agenda, including amendments, shall be issued before the Meeting if time allows.

(c) At Special Meetings of the Council no other business shall be taken except that specified in the notice calling the Meeting.

(d) Rules may be altered at Special Council Meetings, provided that notice of such alterations be given in the summons to the Council.

*D.—Agenda at Council Meetings.*

(a) The first business to be taken at a Council Meeting shall be:—

- |   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| (1) Appointment of Tellers for the votes in Council ;   | } At<br>Annual<br>Meeting<br>only. |
| (2) Appointment of Standing Orders Committee ;  |                                    |
| (3) Appointment of Members of the Council<br>as Returning Officers and Tellers for the ballot<br>voting ; |                                    |
| (4) Appointment of Auditor ;  |                                    |
| (5) Adoption of Annual Report and audited<br>Statement of Accounts.                                       |                                    |

(b) Otherwise the order of business shall be left to the discretion of the Executive Committee, and shall include the following:—

- (1) Report of the Executive Committee ;
- (2) Election of President, Hon. Treasurer, Hon. Secretaries, Executive Committee, and Vice-Presidents (at Annual Meeting only) ;
- (3) Correspondence ;
- (4) Amendment to Rules and Standing Orders (if any) ;
- (5) Resolutions, of which due notice has been given to the Secretary and by her to each Branch, and Amendments relevant to the motions before the Meeting ;
- (6) Other business.

# Women's International League

55 Gower Street, London, W.C.1

## BANK ORDER

(Bankers)..... Date.....

(Branch).....

*PLEASE PAY to the account of the Women's International League, at the Midland Bank, 237 Tottenham Court Road, London, W.1, my Subscription of ..... and continue to pay the amount, without application, in the month of ..... in each succeeding year, until further notice.*

Signature.....

Address.....

£..... :..... :.....

## FORM OF BEQUEST FOR INCORPORATION IN A WILL DULY SIGNED AND ATTESTED BY TWO WITNESSES

*I give and bequeath to the Treasurer for the time being of the British Section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom the sum of ..... free of legacy duty.*

Witness..... Signature.....

Address..... Address .....

Witness.....

Address.....

*All these signatories being present at the same time.*

**WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE**

**Statement of Receipts and Expenditure for the year ending December 31st, 1939**

RECEIPTS	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	EXPENDITURE	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
To Balance, January 1st, 1939 :—							By Czech Fund (including balance, £192 1s. 4½d. transferred to separate W.I.L. Czech Account)...				384	6	3½
General ... ..	151	18	10				Rent ... ..	75	0	0			
Czech Fund ... ..	217	9	3½				Lighting and Heating ... ..	15	15	2			
				369	8	1½	Office Expenses ... ..	34	2	11¾			
Donations : Czech Fund ... ..				166	17	0	Wages ... ..	40	16	11			
Subscriptions ... ..	393	18	7				State Insurances ... ..	7	19	6			
Donations ... ..	343	0	5				Travelling Expenses ... ..	40	19	11½			
Affiliation Fees ... ..	23	14	0				Affiliation and Delegates' Fees ... ..	7	6	6			
Sale of Literature and <i>News Sheets</i> ... ..	72	17	9½				Postage and Telephone ... ..	97	17	10½			
Proceeds of Meetings :—							Audit Fee ... ..	7	7	0			
Garden Fair... ..	48	1	2				Press Cuttings ... ..	2	2	0			
"Bring and Buy" Sale ... ..	11	12	8				Stationery ... ..	41	6	6			
General ... ..	14	8	6				Advertisements ... ..	3	0	0			
Office Expenses refunded by W.P.C....	30	13	2				Printing (including Annual Report £19 5s. 0d.) ... ..	44	2	0			
				938	6	3½	<i>News Sheets</i> and Literature ... ..	70	9	4½			
Geneva :—							Salaries ... ..	381	10	8			
Subscriptions ... ..	37	2	0				Meetings :—						
Donations ... ..	10	0	0				Garden Fair... ..	7	15	6			
<i>Pax</i> Subscriptions ... ..	4	11	4				"Bring and Buy" Sale ... ..	4	7	0			
				42	3	4	General ... ..	31	0	2½			
								908	16	8¾			
							Geneva :—						
							Subscriptions ... ..	37	2	0			
							Donations ... ..	10	0	0			
							<i>Pax</i> Subscriptions and Sales ... ..	4	11	4			
											42	3	4
							Balance, December 31st, 1939 :—						
							Cash at Midland Bank Ltd. ... ..	152	11	3			
							Co-operative Permanent Building Society ... ..	28	0	0			
							Cash in Hand ... ..	6	19	8¾			
								187	10	11¾			
							Less Reserve for Sundry Creditors	6	2	7			
											181	8	4¾
											£1,516	14	9
											£1,516	14	9

**WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE**  
**INTERNATIONAL HOUSE RENT ACCOUNT**

**Statement of Receipts and Expenditure for the Year ending December 31st, 1939.**

RECEIPTS				EXPENDITURE			
	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
To Balance, January 1st, 1939			436 1 6	By Rent	225	0	0
„ Rents	360	0	0	„ Insurance	6	5	9
„ Interest: Co-operative Permanent Building Society	12	11	1	„ Rates	103	4	7
			372 11 1	„ Land Tax	2	16	3
				„ Repairs	5	9	8
				„ Miscellaneous Expenses	2	4	6
							345 0 9
				„ Balance, December 31st, 1939 :—			
				Rates in Advance	26	14	9
				Debtor for Rent	40	0	0
				Cash at Bank	42	18	8
				Co-operative Permanent Building Society	353	18	5
							463 11 10
			£808 12 7				£808 12 7

I have examined the Books and Vouchers of the League for the year 1939, and certify that, in my opinion, the foregoing Statements are properly drawn up so as to exhibit the position of affairs in accordance with the information given me, and as shown by the Books.

147 Regent Street, W.1.  
24th January, 1940.

(Signed) M. S. CLUGSTON, *Certified Accountant.*  
*Auditor.*

