

PAX INTERNATIONAL

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The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom Executive Meeting, Basle, 1938

The Meeting of the Executive Committee of the W.I.L.P.F. took place unusually early this year, and the sessions at Basle, January 5th to 9th, had, indeed, the character of an Emergency Meeting. Nowadays, with political and economic crises upon us, frequent consultations with National Sections and Executive Members elected by Congress are necessary.

The Agenda showed that the main object of the discussions was to decide the policy of the W.I.L.P.F. with regard to important international events: the aggressive war of Japan against China, the colonial demands of the Third Reich, Spain, Ethiopia, the Anti-Comintern Pact, Neutrality and, last but not least, the anxiety about the existence of the League of Nations.

The reports of the Permanent Commissions and of the Rapporteurs, too, were of a political nature; routine work only took up very little time.

The reports of the International Chairmen and of the Administrative Secretary showed the large amount of work done since the International Congress at Luhacovice. Nearly every day new political matters of international character present themselves to International Headquarters, to say nothing of the administrative and technical work. Communiqués were sent to more than 300 newspapers in over 30 countries; more than 8,000 communications were sent to Sections, members and outsiders within four months, such as individual and circular letters, telegrams, printed matter, etc. The membership is steadily though slowly increasing—a sign that women in all countries are becoming more and more aware that the present international regime founded as it is on international profit and consequently on Force and War, can be nothing but disastrous to the world. Those responsible for the W.I.L.P.F. have the passionate will to intensify the fight for a better future for the coming generation and to enlist more and more helpers for this struggle.*

As usual, the meetings were presided over alternately

* Members who desire to have the report of the work of the last months with details of the daily work since the Congress may get it through the International Headquarters, Geneva, 12 rue du Vieux-Collège. 30 Swiss centimes to be sent with application.

by the three Chairmen: Clara Ragaz, K. E. Innes and the undersigned. The material for the meeting was well prepared and the helpful collaboration of those present made it possible notwithstanding the amount of work—there were 42 items on the agenda—to close the meeting a day earlier than had been anticipated. This was, perhaps, also caused by the fact that this time there were not as many countries represented as is generally the case. Delegates were present from Sweden, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Great Britain, Czechoslovakia, Poland, France, Austria, Tunis and from the German Section. The absence of the International Honorary President, Emily G. Balch, was much regretted and also that of the representatives of the U.S. Section which is so very active. The letter which explained the attitude of this Section especially towards the Neutrality question showed alarmingly the dangers which might result from the abolition of the so-called Neutrality Act; whilst intensifying the practice of Neutrality would lead to a growing aloofness and possibly to an abandonment of the democracies in their struggle for existence. This letter made a deep impression upon every member of the meeting as it showed the tragic complexity of the present political situation in the U.S.A. On the initiative of the Danish Section it was decided to suggest a Government Conference to examine the Neutrality question in its relationship to Disarmament.

Six Resolutions were passed which are printed verbatim and need not, therefore, be dealt with. But the attention of readers must be specially drawn to the fact that the International Committee recommended its members in more than fifty countries to support the Consumers' Boycott of Japanese goods after Japan's refusal to submit her complaints to the Brussels Conference.

Considering the different temperaments and the different situations in the various countries as well as in our own sections, it stands to reason that the substance as well as the formulation of the resolutions were often the subject of lengthy and spirited debates. For those who have the opportunity of studying the fluctuations of political views in different countries from time to time, these discussions are a true mirror of what one observes, on a larger scale, within the countries which were represented here. The vibration of the atmosphere in

small and big assemblies in France, for instance, shows such a contrast to the matter-of-fact life in institutions and organisations of other countries that this difference must become apparent also in the speeches of Executive members representing their respective countries. It would take us no further towards reality and towards the solution of the problems in question, were we simply to put down such vibrations to the temperament or the character of the individuals present. Workers in the cause of Peace and Freedom should make a practice of mixing and living for a time with people in foreign countries with whom they have to co-operate in their international work, so as to learn to know the background of their political attitude.

Edith Pye gave an excellent review of the situation of refugees from Germany, Ethiopia, Spain and in China. Newspapers report about Spanish, Chinese and German refugees, but they must, for political reasons, not publish any accounts of the 15,000 Ethiopians, who under most desperate conditions are trying to find possibilities of settling and living in the neighbouring countries—without any right to work or to move from one place to another.*

Most pathetic were the letters from three German women who appealed to women all over the world to continue their efforts for the release of those who are imprisoned or even condemned to death for their convictions.

Ever since its foundation, the W.I.L.P.F. has taken a stand against the suppression of the rights of men. Thus, again, the suggestion of the Scandinavian Sections to protest against the executions in the U.S.S.R. was adopted.

The W.I.L.P.F. is taking an active part in the preparations for the great International Congress on Women, Peace and Democracy which, on the initiative of the large associations of women, the Co-operative Guilds, the Suffrage Alliance, the Comité Mondial des Femmes, etc., will be held soon after Easter either in Czechoslovakia or in France. The W.I.L.P.F. is convinced that the time has come for women to demonstrate their determination to defend and re-establish the democratic liberties without which an unarmed Peace is not possible. All readers are asked to obtain further information about this Congress from the Geneva Office and to work for its support and for the distribution of the Congress Agenda.

By the kind invitation of the W.I.L.P.F. Basle group, International Executive Members had an opportunity of meeting friends at a pleasant social gathering for which we express our warm thanks again here.

More strongly than ever before we urge our members on the five Continents of the Globe: intensify your daily work. Get more and more active workers, particularly among the young. Study and encourage them to study the economic background of the international political situation. Discover and apply new and attractive methods in your struggle for our aims. Remember that the old methods and the old pre-war pacifist terminology do not appeal any longer to the youth of to-day. If you complain that you cannot win over the young, *you* are condemned

* Readers who would like to relieve the lot of the victims of Italy's Imperialistic Policy should apply to Mrs. Hazel Napier, 5 Crossfield Road, London, N.W.3.

by it, not they. The aim is not always to sanction the means, but it should always determine them. The aim to protect Humanity from the terror of Imperialism and Dictatorship, from the firebrand of another war, is worthy of the most powerful, of the greatest and the noblest means.

GERTRUD BAER.

REPORT ON THE PROBLEM OF REFUGEES

The problem of the refugees who are the victims of great political upheavals or of the intolerance of arbitrary governments, and whose protection is an essential function of an organised society of nations, becomes more and more complicated as ideas of government by force and violence take root and flourish in new soil.

Great hopes had been aroused that the 1937 Assembly of the League of Nations would recognise the urgent nature of the problem and agree to all refugees coming under its protection instead of being dealt with outside its framework, as is now the case. There are at present two main bodies, the Nansen Office and the High Commission for refugees from Germany, both of which are to be terminated at the end of this year, and one or two other committees such as that dealing with the Assyrians, but there is no provision for the assistance of other categories of refugees, such as those from Spain, Italy, Poland or Roumania.

It was a great blow when the resolution, making plans towards the unification and continuation of the work for refugees which was strongly supported by many governments, including the British, was opposed in the 6th Commission by the Russian delegate. An amendment was brought in by certain members referring the whole question to the Council for re-examination and for the preparation of plans for the 1938 Assembly. This was done in the hope of avoiding an adverse vote in the Assembly and in the Finance Committee, since the whole work at present undertaken by the Nansen Office would come to an end at once without the supplementary credit needed of about £5,000. The amendment was accepted by the 6th Commission and sent to the Assembly in place of the original resolution. It was passed without any opposing vote, though only twenty-five countries voted for it. It was the opinion of some governments that it would have been better to force the Russian delegate to oppose this humanitarian measure in full Assembly—but such action would have made future progress impossible and there is some hope of a modification in the Russian attitude before the next Assembly which will decide the fate of the League's work for refugees.

The Nansen Office, under its President, Judge Michael Hansson, continues to struggle heroically with the problem of the permanent settlement of Armenians and Russian refugees and of re-organisation of its work. No one will ever know of the thousands of individual refugees who have been saved by it from misery and despair that would make death welcome.

Refugees from Germany

A certain number of these have found shelter and a new home and write happily, but there are many whose

future is still dark. A Convention for their protection has now been drafted from the provisional arrangement accepted previously. This Convention has been submitted to Governments whose representatives are to meet in February to discuss amendments submitted by various bodies. It is on the lines of the famous 1933 Convention for the protection of certain categories but contains clauses which suggest a further advance in humanitarian understanding.

Jewish Refugees

Unhappily this problem seems to grow more and more difficult of any right solution. There is a continuous trickle of men and women from Germany who, to avoid the shocking conditions imposed upon them are able to find their way out.

In Poland the situation is extremely anxious. Starvation, poverty and persecution faces enormous numbers in that country if the feeling against Jews should harden. Even with an enlightened administration the poverty question appears nearly insoluble. The latest news from Roumania seems to indicate that an attack is to be made upon Jews in that country, in which case there will be attempts at a new exodus. But where can the unhappy victims go? In Austria there does not appear to be much change in the attitude towards the Jews, but it may only be that we hear less because less news gets out.

When will all these countries realise what reserves of intellectual and spiritual strength they are losing through driving out the Children of Israel?

Abyssinian Refugees

It has been stated that there are some 16,000 of these who have fled to surrounding territories in Africa and that they are living in great distress and poverty. It is hoped that they will be allowed to remain and cultivate the ground where they are, and to move about within the territories in order to provide themselves with the possibility of food. A statement lately appeared in the British press that the British Government was making itself responsible for expenses of maintenance of Abyssinian refugees in British territory.

Spanish Refugees

The problem of Spanish refugees outside and inside Spain does not appear to worry governments much, but the French Government has spent nearly half a million pounds in caring for those who fled to France, before insisting on their returning to Spain. The accounts given of refugee conditions in Spain itself, in spite of the heroic efforts made by the Government to deal with them, are really horrifying. When one thinks of the hundreds of thousands of children shivering and starving in towns and villages which have no adequate means of dealing with them and many of which have surprise bombardments from the air as an added complication, one marvels at the courage of the Spaniards, but serious fears for the future cannot be avoided.

Chinese Refugees

Of all the dreadful suffering of refugees in China, perhaps the fate of the Russian refugees there may be

the worst, for they have no protection of any kind. The tales of masses of Chinese men, women and children flying before aerial bombardment to villages which have no means of feeding them (and anyone who knows what the normal poverty of a Chinese village is will realise that even Chinese hospitality cannot share what is not there) are alike in every part of the world where man's inhumanity to man increases with his power to destroy.

Masses of food, clothing and medicants continue to be sent, but they can only be a drop in the ocean of suffering.

One Glean of Light

In all the refugee question there seems only one gleam of light. In many countries public opinion seems at last to begin to take an interest in it. The International Labour Office is convening a technical Conference of Experts to study international co-operation with regard to emigration for settlement. The Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, has set up a Refugee Survey, directed by Sir John Hope Simpson and France has organised the "Institut d'Histoire de l'Emigration politique contemporaine," of which M. de Lavailles-Labathet, who drew up the famous refugee convention of 1933 is President. All of which proves that an acknowledged problem exists which it is the duty of such civilisation as we have, to solve.

E. M. PYE.

INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE: NEWS ITEMS R.U.P. World Boycott Conference in London, February 11th-14th

After a lengthy discussion at Basle, the W.I.L.P.F. Executive Committee decided to recommend to members to support the organisation of a Consumers' World Boycott of Japanese goods. The W.I.L.P.F. will be represented at the Conference in London. It is hoped that National Sections co-operating with the National Committee of the R.U.P. will send delegates to the London Meeting.

Summer School

The French Section have decided to hold an International Summer School in Paris from July 9th to 18th.

Jane Addams Peace Fund

The collection for this fund is to go on. The Danish Section would like to remind other Sections that they have special Jane Addams collecting boxes which they had hoped other Sections would order. They are specially designed for collections for this fund. It was reported that Rosika Schwimmer has offered a first edition, autographed copy of "Tiska Tales", the proceeds to go to the fund.

Groupement Pacifist International

It was decided to associate with this movement.

China

Edith Pye was appointed referent for China.

Resolutions Passed at the International Executive Meeting at Basle, January 5th-9th, 1938

The Boycott of an Aggressor

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom has always stood for diplomatic, economic and financial measures by Governments against aggression. It urges Governments once more energetically to apply such measures against the Japanese aggressor.

The Executive Committee meeting at Basle from January 5th to 9th, 1938, recommends National Sections to support the organisation of a private consumers' boycott of Japanese goods; such action to be taken not for selfish economic ends or for reprisals, but in order to hasten the ending of the war.

The Question of Neutrality

The Executive Committee of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom is convinced that Neutrality in its pre-war sense is an outlived idea.

Neutrality in the sense of Isolation is incompatible not only with the principle of *Solidarity between the peoples*, which is fundamental for the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom but also with membership of the League of Nations.

It considers further that justice necessitates collective, non-military measures against an aggressor. However, recent experiences have shown that such efforts have failed on account of national profit-seeking interests, contradictory to the principle of solidarity.

Such collective action and co-operation between Nations towards this end will only have its full effect when measures of general disarmament come into force.

Consequently the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom should energetically urge the Governments to reconsider the question of Disarmament.

The Anti-Comintern Pact

The Executive Committee of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom is of opinion that the Anti-Comintern Pact, the so-called Triangle, the additional Protocol of which foreshadows interference in the internal affairs of certain States by other foreign States, constitutes a serious danger to internal peace in all countries, as well as to peace between Nations.

It considers that the Signatories of the Pact clearly use the struggle against Communism as a pretext; that it is in fact directed against Democracy and Peace, and in addition against one particular country, namely Soviet-Russia, which is to-day an indispensable partner in the defence of international peace.

In consequence it asks National Sections to oppose energetically every pressure exercised on their respective Governments to obtain adhesion to this anti-democratic pact, and not to allow themselves to be unconsciously drawn into a propaganda cleverly camouflaged as a fight against Communism but which actually aims through the U.S.S.R. at Democracy and Peace.

Colonial Problems, 1938

The Executive Committee of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom makes the following statement:—

The demands made to-day by Hitler's Germany place the colonial question in the forefront in all discussion of international affairs. The economic motives given for these demands, that is the necessity of procuring the raw materials lacking to Germany, and the need of new territories for her excess population, have little foundation in fact.

Statistics prove:—

- (a) that raw materials are produced by colonies only to a very small extent, the greater part not coming from colonial territories;
- (b) that Germany is using her available resources of raw material largely with the needs of war economy in view;
- (c) that Germany is not more densely populated than several other countries; and
- (d) that systematic efforts are made to increase the population.

The true purpose behind imperialist demands is to acquire strategic positions in the colonies and the raw materials from which the countries concerned might be cut off in times of war. The expansionist and aggressive policy of Hitler's Government is an illustration of this truth.

As regards the question of equality of rights, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom rejects any attempt to secure equality through injustice, by extending the colonial régime which it condemns.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom therefore views with anxiety the tendency of certain influential circles to treat this question under pressure of events as a matter for political bargaining.

It believes that no Government should take upon itself the right of disposing of peoples like merchandise, least of all in favour of a country which, like Hitler's Germany, preaches and practises racial discrimination.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, in all its resolutions, has taken a definite stand against the principle of colonisation. The Mandate system may be considered a step towards the final independence of the native peoples' concerned.

As a peaceful, transitory solution, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom proposes the internationalisation of all existing Mandates and the extension of the Mandate system to all colonies in the immediate future.

League of Nations, 1938

The Executive Committee of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom declares that

Since its founding in 1915 the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom has been a pioneer advocate of a League of Nations conceived as a universal Association of peoples. The League of Nations in spite of its failures, weaknesses and mistakes, nevertheless remains the only instrument for the pacific solution of disputes. To-day it is in grave danger.

The great Powers, Japan, Germany and Italy, have withdrawn from the League.

The presence at Geneva of countries whose theory and practice are in absolute opposition to the letter and spirit of the Covenant would not bring strength to the League, but the recent resignation of Italy, while not affecting the *de facto* situation involves serious dangers of the possibility of a reversion to the old system of a balance of power; the further break-up of the League by the defection of countries in the Italian sphere of influence; and the probable deliberate attempt to prevent the success of any proposed League of Nations action.

In this grave situation the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom urges:—

- (1) That plans should be worked out for making the League of such value to its members that the disadvantages of defection will be apparent;
- (2) that wherever opportunity occurs the loyalty of Members to Covenant principles should be demonstrated and the League machinery used for the solution of international problems.
- (3) The members of the League should co-operate closely in every phase of the work at Geneva; organise collectively and energetically action to safeguard peace and the fundamental principles of the Covenant upon which the democracies are also based.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom believes that only by energetic government action along these lines can the continuance of the League of Nations be assured.

Respect for International Treaties

The Executive Committee of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom reiterates its belief that the atmosphere necessary for the steady and peaceful development of peoples can only be created through the faithful carrying out both in the letter and in the spirit, of obligations undertaken in treaties that have been mutually agreed.

WHAT WE ARE FACING

I find it very difficult to comply with the invitation to write an article for *Pax* on the present world situation and especially on American policy in face of the war in China. Yet there are certain things that I see my way to say.

It is something to be thankful for, I do believe, that there is so much evidence that peoples in the countries where education for peace is possible seem to have learned at least one part of the peace lesson. They seem to be realising that going to war to wash out insults, or avenge outrages, or even—and this is the hardest point, to protect the weak—is no remedy but an additional evil; that it spells suicide as well as massacre.

To refuse to go to war is the negative side. It is not enough.

Neutrality in the sense of treating an aggressor and his victim alike is morally impossible. Except in the matter of supplying combatants with the means of fighting. The W.I.L.P.F. in the United States is, I believe, a unit in backing a bill that would prohibit all exportation of arms, in peace or in war, to any country. There is, however, no immediate prospect of its even being seriously considered.

Like Miss Detzer, I am dissatisfied with the American Neutrality Act of 1937, though not wholly on the same grounds perhaps. Nevertheless, I think as she does that for the President to sign it and then by a technicality evade putting it into force (by failing to find that a state of war exists in China) is an inexcusable dereliction of his duty and a betrayal of our democratic institutions.

It is important to note that the Neutrality Act, while conceived in the spirit of not discriminating between belligerents, does not exclude such discrimination outside the matters with which it deals. These are, substantially, exportation of munitions and war materials, loans, trade carried on in American vessels and travel on belligerent ships. Of these provisions, part are mandatory and automatic, part in the President's discretion.

Meanwhile, exportation of arms, except in Government-owned ships goes busily on. To stop this, new legislation would have to be passed. There is evidently impending a new Congressional struggle over the Neutrality issue, discussion of the law as passed, various modifications proposed from different angles and alternative measures. These debates will probably take a long time, and they have not yet been entered on.

So here we are collecting relief for Chinese wounded and refugees and selling the bombs that make the relief necessary—as necessary as it is inadequate. It is intolerable.

Personally I regret more than I can say that the United States did not see its way at Brussels to give a lead toward a systematic policy of aid to China, by financial assistance and by non-military technical help, and of non-military pressure to restrain Japan. It may be that the difficulty was that the American State Department found no support in Europe for such a policy. But it is one's impression here that American public opinion, which is normally rather provincial, would not have supported the Administration in any such steps.

I use the word provincial to convey a sense of remoteness and apathy which is by no means the same thing as a positive desire to achieve isolation.

The type of peace people with whom I disagree and whose influence seems to me to have had unfortunate results are those who teach, in effect, that we must do nothing that will make a bully displeased, since if we do he may fight—and then we have the world in flames again.

I do not think we should be scared off from doing what we should otherwise think it right to do through fear of how the bully will react. No one can be made to fight who chooses not to. It would be a salutary sight to see a country against which war had been declared refusing to accept that weapon and seeking the solution of the conflict by quite other means.

When we pass from theory to practical politics the statesmen who adopted this policy (if there were such statesmen) would have to consider whether the opinion of their public were mature enough to follow through a policy of war refusal and not be swept into a war fever. Political intriguers and powerful interests—notably the munitions interests which Government rearmament has made into perfect Frankensteins—would work up a war clamour for their own ends.

Gandhi, as we remember, had to call off his non-co-operation campaign at one critical moment because not even his Indian disciples were yet sufficiently disciplined to *act* and yet keep away from violence.

There is the further consideration that those who believe in force grow the more dangerous when they are led to believe that everyone is too much afraid of them to oppose them; and pacifists who avoid war by mere yielding are likely to be the more overwhelmed by it later. It is essential to offer effective opposition but by other methods than those of the violent, or rather to do far more than *merely to oppose* them. The peace method is, renouncing all idea not merely of revenge, reprisals or punishment but of "victory for our side", and adopting no "holier than thou" attitude, to seek out co-operatively a solution that will be beneficial all round. And such a solution is not so Utopian as it sounds. It is even conceivable that such a *via aurea* may be worked out, through mediation, in China and in Spain.

But to date the miserable outcome, so far as the East is concerned, is that we are doing nothing to restrain Japan or to lead her into another path, nothing to protect China and that we are profiting by trade in the munitions and materials that feed the war. As far as I know other countries are doing no better than the United States in these regards.

The end of the war opened the door for peace work and we took new heart. Since then one territory after another has become closed to us, notably Germany when her democracy fell. We must conceive our task the more greatly and pursue our aims with the greater intelligence and devotion.

May the New Year bring us happier prospects and stronger courage and warmer good-will in the face of any and every contingency.

EMILY G. BALCH.

SOCIAL EXPERIMENT IN PALESTINE

[Note.—The following are extracts from an interesting article on Jewish life in Palestine received by "Pax" through Mrs. Rose Gutman, a member of the British Section, who was at the Congress at Luhacovice and whose efforts for peace and reconciliation between Jews and Arabs were of such interest.]

In an age when size and number are all-important, little Palestine, smaller than Wales, still holds its distinguished place on the map. It seems that bridges may be as weighty as continents.

Not so much hope of a physical refuge from persecution—for Palestine can accommodate only a small part of those who suffer—but the hope of a refuge for the spirit, of a land where the Jews can live freely their own lives in their own way, that is the redemption for which Jews the world over look to Palestine.

What is the Jewish way of life? Religious customs and ceremonies have been only a symbolic expression of it to preserve it in strange lands. Among the four hundred thousand Jews of Palestine, scattered in cities, towns, villages and farms, there is again a kernel of about ten thousand who are recognized the world over as those who are trying to live according to that inner need of the Jewish spirit for social equality which found its ancient expression in the prophetic sayings and in the communal and simple life of the Sons of the Prophets. These are the collective farm and industrial groups, scattered over the land from Dan to Beer Sheba. The groups vary in size from twenty to eight hundred persons. They vary in character from groups of industrial workers in cities who live together on a small suburban plot where they raise chickens and vegetables to supplement their daily earnings, to large agricultural settlements that live exclusively from the produce of their work on the soil. There is no enterprise, from the potash works on the Dead Sea to the unloading of ships at the Haifa and Tel-Avir ports, to which they have not sent their workers. They belong to several parties or none, they are free-thinkers or orthodox, they come from many lands and from all classes. Yet these things unite them. Living on land which is not privately owned—most of them are settled on Jewish National Fund land, and those in the towns on communal land—owning no personal property, sharing all earnings, using a common kitchen and dining-room, and bringing up their children together.

No one has any cash except the treasurer, who hands it out for household shopping or to individuals who go on trips. There is a store-room where clothing is made to order and delivered free of charge.

Use is the only means of possession. Lectures, concerts, festivals and meetings for discussion are frequent; and courses in Hebrew and Bible are given regularly, especially for recent immigrants. Hebrew is the *lingua franca* of the Jew returning to Palestine.

Twenty-five years ago, when the first groups of the collective type were started, they were looked upon as an ideological luxury. Their opponents prophesied that economic pressure would destroy them. To-day it is agreed that they are the most economical, in fact the only practical way of settling a new country with few resources and little

capital. The second generation of the first of these settlers is now grown up. They are still few, but they carry on the experiment. Though they are attached to the land, they do not generally stay in the group where they were born. They long to pioneer, to start new groups; and several of them are already in the young settlements of the outposts.

On the whole, the collective groups have managed to maintain friendly relations with their Arab neighbour villages despite the terrible strain of the Arab political crisis.

JESSIE SAMPYER.

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

A Moving Appeal from Mme. Chiang Kai-Shek, Wife of the Generalissimo

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom has received the following letter from Nanking:

"... China is now fighting for her life against Japan's ruthless armies whose equipment is far superior to ours. Japan has been arming for years and preparing this invasion with a view to becoming the Master of Asia, while China was so engrossed with the spiritual and economic reconstruction of the country as to be unable to devote large sums to armaments and defence works.

"Japan's Premier has declared that Japan will bring China to her knees. If so, we will go down fighting. The country is united as never before, and every one of us knows that we are defending our homes, our families, our very national existence.

"The great Powers are reluctant to help China by applying economic sanctions against the aggressor. Yet economic pressure alone can shorten the duration of this terrible massacre of thousands of innocent civilians. Boycott is the most effective non-military weapon in the fight for peace and freedom...."

Abolition of Military and Civil Aircraft

The Chairmen have written a letter to Sections emphasising the need for work on this subject. They recommend concentration:—

- (1) On keeping the fact before the people and Governments of our respective countries, that this weapon could be abolished entirely by agreement;
- (2) on urging the official preparation of plans for the effective supervision of civil aviation;
- (3) on seeking pronouncements that if these plans were adopted, obstacles in the way of total abolition of military aircraft would be removed.

They mention, as a point to stress, that the development of civil aviation is seriously hindered by the lack of international control.

Imprisonment of Baroness Shidzué Ishimoto in Japan

From various quarters the attention of this office has been drawn to this matter. You may have read in your papers that Baroness Shidzué Ishimoto—a well-known Japanese writer and social worker—is reported to have been imprisoned because of her protests against the Japanese aggression in China. A letter has been sent by prominent Austrian women to the Japanese Embassy in

Vienna. We urge National Sections to undertake at once a similar step or—what would probably be more effective—to see the Japanese Ambassador in their country and ask details about the fate of Baroness Shidzué Ishimoto.

New History Society

Madame C. L. de Ligt van Rossem, a member of the W.I.L.P.F., has been awarded the first prize of 1,000 dollars in the New History Society Competition on the subject "How can the People of the World achieve Universal Disarmament?" Mrs. K. E. Innes and Madame Camille Drevet received "Honourable Mention."

Letters from German Women

The Executive Committee was deeply moved to receive copies of letters from three individuals who had escaped from Germany and who wished to thank the W.I.L.P.F. and all other organisations who had protested against torture and imprisonment and against the death sentences on the husbands of two of them. They believed that through these efforts their sufferings while in prison had been lightened and even where the death sentences had been carried out, the knowledge of the efforts of the sympathisers in other countries had given those condemned fresh courage to meet the end.

The following are quotations from these letters:—

1. "A year has gone by since the day when my husband was executed; all efforts could not save the life of this courageous fighter for Freedom and Peace. Many of them lost courage and think that protests are useless.

"Through this letter I want to tell all men and women who love justice and peace that my husband was so strong, so brave because he knew that thousands and thousands of men and women, workers and intellectuals, in the whole world were working for his release...."

"Thousands of prisoners and their families are confidently hoping that friends outside Germany will come to their rescue. Foreign action lessened the hardship of prison life for many of them; hostages, some of them women, have been released.

"The sympathy of the friends of Peace and Freedom abroad gives new strength not only to those in prison but also to their relatives."

2. "Dear friends of Peace and Humanity in all parts of the world,

"Please receive my thanks to which I know my husband would have wished me to add his for the help you have given in trying to prevent his execution...."

"I would dishonour his memory if, because of his death, I lost courage. This would weaken the struggle for the lives of those who are threatened with death in Germany."

3. "I feel it is my duty to tell how, during the imprisonment, we were able to feel the great solidarity of our friends abroad...."

"As a former prisoner in Hitler-Germany I would like to emphasize that the help of our friends abroad has been of tremendous value to all of us, that it constantly gave us new strength to hold up our heads!"

Does Opium Smoking Shorten a Man's Life?

We wish to draw the attention of readers of this paper to a pamphlet "Does Opium Smoking Shorten a Man's Life?" issued by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, British Section. Its author is Leonard A. Lyall, President of the Permanent Central Opium Board in Geneva. It contains official material collected by a Japanese physician in Formosa since 1900 showing that opium smoking shortens a man's life by one third. It must be remembered, though, that opium smoking compared with opium eating or opium injections is the lesser evil.

The pamphlet may be had free of charge from W.I.L.P.F. International Headquarters, Geneva, 12 Rue du Vieux-Collège.

Everybody interested in this very vital question ought to read this pamphlet and do everything to make it known.

Appeal for Information

The W.I.L.P.F. headquarters is interested in securing information as to the influence of the W.I.L.P.F. as an international movement upon governments, official international organisations, national sections of the W.I.L.P.F., public opinion and the peace movement in general, to be presented to the author of a forthcoming book on the influence of private international organisations in world affairs. It is requested that as fully documented evidence be presented as possible.

International News Agency

We draw the attention of our readers to the recently-founded International News Agency in Paris which, as far as we know, is the first undertaking of this kind which supplies politicians, or sociologists, professors or scientists with the sort of cuttings they themselves would choose in reading their papers. In short, an intelligent news service, which we would like to recommend most warmly to our readers.

Please write to the

International News Agency,
33, rue de l'Amiral Mouchez,
Paris 13e.

Tel. GOBelins 04-27 (R.C. Seine 47.123).

for prospectuses and ask for one month's service on trial. You thus support a new branch of intelligent international information work.

NEWS FROM SECTIONS

U.S.A.

Pax readers will be interested to know that beginning with the November issue, *Fellowship*, the official organ of the F.O.R., will carry several pages of news and articles of interest to the W.I.L. membership. This will be the first time that the entire membership of the W.I.L.—approximately 13,000 people—will be reached by a bulletin carrying news and articles from the national office. The present policy is an experiment for the next four months. If the magazine finds that it can adequately serve both groups, the policy will be continued—with the other important "if"—if finances will permit it.

The National Board held its fall meeting in New York City on October 24th and 25th. Readers of *Pax* may be interested in a few of the Resolutions passed by the Board:—

1. In view of the fact that for the past four months thousands of Chinese and Japanese soldiers and thousands of civilians have been killed in the undeclared war in China,

Be it resolved that we call on the President to recognize that war is going on in China, and that he immediately put into force the provisions of the Neutrality Act, adopted in the 76th Congress.

2. Be it resolved that we support the President in co-operating with other nations through the Nine Power Conference to bring public opinion to bear against aggression and to investigate the causes of the present violent situation in the Far East and to take constructive steps for their permanent remedy.

3. Resolved that the U.S. Section should co-operate actively with our International organisation and should make clear our disapproval of any government which sends military forces into the territory of another nation.

7. Resolved that in this period of conflict and injustice the National Board of the W.I.L.P.F. reaffirm its belief that even flagrant injustice does not justify recourse to violence, inasmuch as the use of violence inevitably transforms those who employ it, and sows the seeds of hatred, intolerance and oppression.

New Zealand

A meeting of the Sections was held with Mrs. Humphreys, President, in the Chair. A report of the work done at the Luhacovice Congress was given.

It was decided to write to the L.N.U. asking that it should cable to the English Section to urge all branches to press at Geneva for the immediate imposition of economic sanctions against Japan. It was also agreed that the High Commissioner, Mr. Jordan, should be asked to press at Geneva for immediate economic sanctions against Japan and that the Government be urged to insist that all goods sold in the Dominion should be clearly marked with the country of origin.

In connection with the compulsory clauses of the Defence Act it was agreed that the Prime Minister be asked to have them expunged, according to promise, without any further delay.

Great Britain

A public meeting was arranged in London to protest against "The Crime of War". Dr. Maude Royden took the Chair and emphasised the crimes of violence and intolerance being committed against the Jews.

Miss Wellington Koo spoke on the Sino-Japanese situation and Mrs. Gee on Spain. Captain Philip Mumford dealt with the need for total abolition of military and naval air forces.

The following resolution was passed:—

"This meeting, deeply deploring the violence and intolerance which prevail over so large a part of the world at the present time:

Urges H.M. Government to take the lead towards reconciliation and understanding:—

1. By announcing its readiness to give up exclusive privileges in trade and colonies so as to clear the way at the earliest possible moment for frank and open discussion for the remedying of economic and territorial injustices;

2. By seeking opportunity to renew discussions on disarmament and specially to work out immediate plans for the total abolition of the air weapon, and the effective control to that end of civil aviation."

ROSA MAYREDER

All readers of *Pax* will be sorry to read of the death of Rosa Mayreder. It is difficult to describe all that Rosa Mayreder meant to the W.I.L.P.F. and especially the Austrian Section. Not only was she a poet and a philosopher, but she was also a sociologist. She was also a very valued President of the Austrian Section. Her book "Kritik der Weiblichkeit" became famous all over the world. She fought energetically for Women's Rights, but as she was above all an artist she soon retired to her true sphere—philosophy and poetry. She combined the task of wife and worker and it was quite natural that she should become one of the founders of the Austrian Section. In her book "Kritik der Weiblichkeit" she condemned war as a return to barbarism. She condemned conscription as the slavery of free men. Soul and spirit should mean more in our time than muscle, but the thirst for blood was still a remainder of the primitive man; still the coward was being surrounded by glory.

Rosa Mayreder always stated that the task of Motherhood was to protect life, why was it not also the task of Fatherhood? Women must influence men in this direction. She always believed that culture had caused man to abolish human sacrifice, so would it abolish mass murder in the form of war.

AIR RAID PRECAUTIONS

Interesting news comes from Switzerland of a movement of "conscientious objectors" to Air Raid Precautions.

A decree has been issued and power taken to impose fines up to 1,000 fr. or six months' imprisonment for resistance. Objection has been made to the decree on the grounds (a) that it is not in order because it has not been submitted to a public vote, (b) that the suggested measures do not afford effective protection, and (c) that they tend to militarise the population.

Professor Ragaz, and his wife, Frau Ragaz, our Chairman, are among those who have opposed the decree. Others include a woman teacher, who was fined 100 fr., and Pierre Ceresole who is likely to be penalised and who may choose prison rather than the payment of a fine. In French Switzerland a woman has had four days' imprisonment. In Zurich, in the summer, there were three households which refused to participate in the "black out," and one of them was fined 10fr. In the autumn in Zurich there were three households summoned; a good many more had refused to comply, but were not summoned, possibly because the authorities did not wish to advertise the strength of the opposition.

At the time of going to press the Ragaz household has been summoned for the second time for refusing to "black out", and were expecting a fine, though they had been treated with great courtesy, and say "The whole matter has really been a very encouraging experience, because we saw that there were a good many sympathisers on our side". The members of the W.I.L.P.F. throughout the world, whatever their individual standpoint on this vexed question, will join, not only in sympathy with our Chairman, but also in thanks for this courageous example.