

WILPF 2/14

Women's International League

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



TWENTY-NINTH ANNUAL REPORT

MARCH, 1944—FEBRUARY, 1945.

Address:

FLAT 8, 144 SOUTHAMPTON ROW,
LONDON, W.C.1.

Price Sixpence.

Women's International League

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

TWENTY-NINTH ANNUAL REPORT

MARCH, 1944—FEBRUARY, 1945.

Address:

FLAT 8, 144 SOUTHAMPTON ROW,
LONDON, W.C.1.

THE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

Head Office:

Maison Internationale, 12 Rue de Vieux College, Geneva, Switzerland.

International President—Miss Emily Greene Balch.

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.

Before the war we had National Sections or Correspondents in

Argentine	Denmark	Hungary	Palestine
Australia:	Egypt	India	Panama
Victoria	El Salvador	Ireland	Poland
Tasmania	Estonia	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**

Address:

Flat 8, 144 Southampton Row, London, W.C.1.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR 1945:

Chairman—Mrs. Duncan Harris.

Vice-Chairmen—Mrs. Ballinger, Mrs. Castle, Miss Agatha Harrison.

Miss Mosa Anderson, Mrs. Bedford, Miss Hilda Burton, Mrs. Brayshaw, Miss Maud Dickinson, Miss Edith Hayler, Mrs. Ineson, Mrs. Longson, Mrs. Malcomson, Mrs. Phillips, Mrs. Lloyd Prichard, Mrs. Berwick Sayers, Mrs. Stapledon, Miss Myrtle Wright.

Hon. Secretary—Mrs. K. E. Innes.

Hon. Treasurer—Mrs. McGregor Wood.

Hon. Organising Secretary—Mrs. Grindley.

Hon. Press Secretary—Miss Amy Haughton.

Vice-Presidents—

Miss Vera Brittain, Mrs. de Bunsen, The Hon. Mrs. Franklin, Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, Miss Edith Pye, Lady Unwin.

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

TWENTY-NINTH ANNUAL REPORT.

March, 1944—February, 1945.

During the period covered by this report, the war has entered its sixth year, and the time of the end is still unpredictable. While we always have in view the vision of reconstruction, of picking up again those threads not broken for ever, our day-to-day activities have inevitably been decided by the immediate opportunities provided through changing events, for the expression of our principles and convictions, and the indication of lines of action having as their objects the peaceful world organisation which we desire.

The value of every activity recorded in the following pages may be tested by reference to that vision and that object.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

In spite of flying bombs and rockets the Executive Committee has met eleven times during the year, nine times in London and twice in Reading, by the kind invitation of the Reading Branch. Five new members have been co-opted: Mrs. Longson, Mrs. Stapledon, Miss Hayler, Mrs. Phillips and Miss Myrtle Wright on her return from nearly four years in Norway under German occupation, where she had close co-operation with members of our Norwegian Section.

During the year the Organisation Committee has been revived, and in addition to plans for such immediate expansion as appears possible, has been considering the proposals of the memorandum "Two Steps Forward" by Mrs. Lloyd Prichard and Mrs. Greta James, referred to it by the Executive Committee.

The India and Colonies Committee has carried on throughout the year.

AFFILIATIONS, ETC.

We are one of the constituent bodies of the Liaison Group of British Women's Organisations interested in Indian Affairs, of the National Peace Council and the British Commonwealth League. The following were appointed to serve on the N.P.C. during the year: Mrs. Duncan Harris, Miss Harrison, Miss Haughton and Mrs. Longson. Two of our representatives are also on the N.P.C. Executive. Miss Dickinson continues to serve as our representative on the Women's Advisory Council of the League of Nations Union; she represents us on the Council of the Abyssinia Association, and has attended on our behalf meetings of the Associated Country-women of the World.

GROUPS AFFILIATED TO OUR HEADQUARTERS.

Branches of the following are affiliated to Headquarters:- The B.W.T.A.U., Women's Co-operative Guild, Women's Liberal Association, London Congregational Union (Women's League), Women's Section of the Labour Party and the Women's Adult School. The Methodist Peace Fellowship (Women's Group), the John Keble Church, the London Diocesan Federation of Women's Church Meetings and the Wood Green and Southgate Women's Arbitration Committee are also affiliated.

CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER GROUPS.

On behalf of Headquarters, Mrs. de Swiet represented the W.I.L. at a meeting of the Polish Association of University Women in Great Britain in commemoration of Madame Curie's death. Miss Dickinson represented the W.I.L. at the Conference called by the Fabian Colonial Bureau, "Some Colonial Problems of the Peace," and Mrs. Duncan Harris attended a One Day School on United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration; Miss Harrison and Miss Burton reported on the Demonstration in Hyde Park on April 9th to protest against the reversing of the vote in the House on equal pay for equal work. Miss Palmer represented the W.I.L. at the "Welcome Home" of the Married Women's Association to Dr. Edith Summerskill from her visit to the Dominions as a Representative in the Parliamentary Delegation. Miss Harrison was also present and, in company with other women's organisations, gave a brief outline of the work and aims of the W.I.L. Mrs. Berwick Sayers represented the W.I.L. at the Conference of the Women's Freedom League on "The New Community and the Co-Partnership of the Women Citizen—How shall we achieve it?"

The W.I.L. in a previous year took the initiative in a series of Conferences of Women's Organisations of which one was held in April. Lady Falmouth was in the Chair and the speakers were Mrs. M. Holland, Ph.D., of Columbia University, U.S.A., and Lecturer in Economics at the University of Cambridge, who spoke on "The attainment of a full standard of nutrition for all peoples." Mrs. Joan Clarke, B.A., Secretary of the Social Security League, who spoke on "The use of the material resources of the world and the full employment of men and women to this end." Mrs. Eleanor Barton, J.P., former General Secretary of the Women's Co-operative Guild who showed that these ideals were incapable of achievement without "Full co-operation with all nations." About one hundred delegates were present, and the W.I.L. was represented by five delegates from Headquarters, and by repre-

sentatives from Cambridge, Ditchling, Farnborough and Reading Branches.

In September and October, Miss Harrison, Mrs. Longson and Miss Dickinson represented the W.I.L. at meetings of the International Bureau for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children.

WORK OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

In March, 1944, the following Appeal for Declaration of Peace Terms as a step towards the cessation of hostilities, was issued:—

"With a sense of responsibility for our past share in the failure to prevent wars we, the British Section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, have reviewed the situation facing the world after nearly five years of conflict.

We voice our fellowship in the suffering of all who are under the burden of war; for those who have seen their countries invaded and for those whose homes are laid waste; for all who are desolate and oppressed; for those who have lost all that is most dear to them. And we set our faces to the work of reparation and reconciliation in the years that lie ahead.

We believe that the time has come to consider the best way to call a halt to the widespread and indiscriminate destruction now going on in all parts of the world; to the ravages aggravated by modern science; to the disastrous economic consequences reacting throughout the world; to the appalling loss of human life, particularly of youth; to the destruction of so much that humanity through the centuries has laboured to build up; to the blunting of spiritual perceptions.

We believe that the mass of people in each of the countries now at war are convinced that they are fighting not as aggressors, but in self-defence and for their own national existence. Such a belief provides a basis upon which a peace might be explored.

We therefore again appeal to H.M. Government to secure the publication by the United Nations of such Peace Terms as will be the preliminary step towards the cessation of hostilities—a cessation based not on the barren formula of unconditional surrender, but on the principles of justice enunciated in the Atlantic Charter.

We urge this course in the belief that the Statesmen of the United Nations have those qualities of heart and brain which are necessary to find, if they will, the way to bring this war to an end.

We believe, too, that no appeal to human feeling can ever be entirely in vain; every time words of pity and justice become articulate they awaken echoes in the hearts and minds of humanity at large.

Even if no response were forthcoming we would desire our own country to put on record its readiness for an end to the war on terms other than unconditional surrender.

In April the following was sent to Mr. Phelan in Philadelphia, where the I.L.O. was meeting:—

“The British Section of the Women’s International League warmly welcomes the meeting of the International Labour Conference at Philadelphia, and asks me to assure you that it will follow the discussions with lively interest.

“We should be grateful if you would take note that we do not consider that any of the questions coming before the Conference are outside our purview. We, therefore, deprecate the suggestions made in the invitations to the Conference that women should be included in the delegation on the grounds that there were special subjects on the Agenda which were of interest to us. On the subject of membership, we regret that inclusion of representatives of the dependent peoples has not been ensured.

“We are glad of the valuable Report on Minimum Standards in Dependent Territories and trust that the Recommendation will be generally adopted as a Charter of Social Justice and Social Welfare throughout the world.

“We enclose a statement on Women in Indian Mines for your information.”

(Signed) K. E. INNES,
Hon. Secretary.

Letters regarding the situation of Indian women in mines were sent to Miss Hancock and Dame Ann Loughlin, who were attending the International Labour Conference.

In August the following resolution was sent to the Prime Minister, and to Mr. Roosevelt, through the American W.I.L.:—

“In view of the discussion between the Governments of the U.S.A. and of Great Britain which are announced to begin this month we beg to lay before you an urgent plea.

“With the advent of the flying bomb we are made vividly aware of the extent to which science now holds in its hands the possibilities of destruction.

“We recognise that the weapons of the future could be developed within measurable time to such dimensions that their operation would threaten the annihilation of civilisation.

“We, therefore, beg that for the sake of the generations that come after us you will consider embodying in the conditions of peace the inauguration of that era which you and President Roosevelt foresaw when the nations, for realistic as well as for spiritual reasons, must come to the abandonment of force.

“We urge that, beginning with the orderly transfer of men, women and machines for the purposes of war to the requirements of a peaceful humanity, the prevention of aggression should be sought through the control of the world’s resources by international co-operation.”

Copies were also sent to the Foreign Office and the Ambassador of the U.S.A., Mr. John Winant, and to our section in U.S.A. Formal acknowledgments were received from Mr. Churchill and Mr. Eden and a letter from Mr. Winant. Some reference to the resolution appeared in the provincial press.

In December the following letter on the situation in countries freed from German occupation was sent to the Prime Minister and to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Anthony Eden:—

“Sir,

The Executive Committee of the Women’s International League reads with dismay of the situations that are developing in the countries of Europe that have recently been freed from German occupation. Through the dark years of war we have believed that in this country at least there was a stand for the basic freedoms even of people with whose views we did not wholly agree.

We would beg that in any policy adopted by H.M. Government the principle of democratic freedom should be maintained, even in the face of the chaos and difficulties of the present situation. With reference to Greece we would urge that its present policy of the use of force be superseded by every effort to reconcile the divergent elements by means of negotiation.

Yours faithfully,
(Signed) K. E. INNES,
Hon. Secretary.

A letter as follows was also sent on 13th December to Mr. Churchill on the granting to us of additional rations for Christmas :—

“ Sir,

The Executive Committee of the Women's International League is deeply troubled at the situation of malnutrition which is being uncovered in Europe, especially in relation to the granting of additional rations of our own nation.

We would like to urge that H.M. Government should make it a basic principle that until the rations in Europe have been raised to the level of our own country there should be no relaxation of our own restrictions, or enlargement of our own rations.

Yours faithfully,
(Signed) K. E. INNES,
Hon. Secretary.

In his letter of 13th January, Col. Llewellyn, of the Ministry of Food, to whom a copy of the above letter had been sent, replied : “ Unfortunately food difficulties in Europe are in evitable at present, not because of the shortage of food, but because of the dislocation of internal transport and the shortage of port intake capacity.”

On behalf of the Executive, Mrs. Innes replied to Colonel Llewellyn on 16th February, as follows :—

“ Thank you for your reply of 13th January to our letter of 13th December about extra rations for Christmas. We would still urge that no extra rations be given in this country till a standard of full nourishment has been established in liberated countries, and we would also urge that, as the avoidance of chaos and collapse in the rear of our armies is a vital military necessity, transport be definitely allotted as such, to the feeding of European peoples.

Yours faithfully,
(Signed) K. E. INNES,
Hon. Secretary.

At the time of the holding of the International Aviation Conference in Chicago a letter was sent to the Women Members of Parliament expressing the hope that the British Government would take the lead in making the use of the air available for peoples everywhere as one of the major factors in securing world peace. In some resulting correspondence with Lady Apsley the attitude of the W.I.L. was developed.

It was further agreed to sign the following statement (No. 2

Airways) from the Committee to promote the formation of a Joint Advisory Council for Reconstruction :—

“ Boundaries and frontiers in the air do not exist and war has proved the futility of attempts to define and defend them. The conquest of the air is a new gift to men, which renders national isolation impossible and demands new measures of world co-operation. Attempts to divide or control the air nationally or imperially must not only prove disastrous to the cause of future world peace, but must destroy the great common heritage which the conquest of the air holds out to the rising generation of the world. Whatever agencies may be deemed most capable of developing and operating the public services of the air, and of regulating the use of the air as a medium of transport, these agencies must be under the ultimate and effective control of an authority which will represent the peoples of all nations.”

The following Statement drawn up by the International Bureau for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children was endorsed by the Executive :—

- “ (1) That in view of the prevailing grave conditions all the Allied Governments should agree to co-operate in abolishing all forms of traffic in women and children ;
- (2) That the International Bureau for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children should invite the Governments to consider without delay, what alterations are needed in the laws of their country, in order to bring those laws effectively into line with the articles of the Convention of 1904 (International Agreement for the Suppression of the White Slave Traffic), 1910 (Second International Convention for the Suppression of the White Slave Traffic) ; 1921 (Third International Convention for the Suppression of the traffic in Women of full age), and also of the 5th Draft Convention (to protect persons of full age and of either sex against procuration for profit, even when they consent and are not taken abroad, and also against any other form of exploitation of prostitution, the Conference for the conclusion of which was to have been called for 1940 had not war supervened) ;
- (3) That the Advisory Committee on Social Questions of the League of Nations to which this subject stands referred should be revived as soon as circumstances permit and that Governments should consider in the meantime in

what way their co-operation in abolishing all forms of traffic in Women and Children can be made most effective ;

- (4) That the International Bureau, for many years Assessor to the League of Nations Committee, should continue to collect information relative to the above, obtained from Government and other sources for submission either to that Committee or to such other official body as may succeed it."

Congratulations were sent to Miss Horsbrugh and Miss Ellen Wilkinson on the honour conferred upon them in the New Year Honours' List, January, 1945, when they were made Privy Counsellors. Letters of thanks were received.

A resolution put forward by the W.I.L. for the March, 1944, meeting of the Women's Advisory Council of the L.N.U. was carried as follows, and subsequently sent to H.M. Government.

"This Council desires to emphasise that Governments in their international planning in peace-making and in framing the Constitution of the World Authority of the future should recognise that all positions shall be open on equal terms to men and women, and that every endeavour should be made to appoint women with suitable qualifications to all representative bodies, and urges H.M. Government to take a leading part towards the promotion of this policy."

THE SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING, October 23-25, 1944.

In the Spring, the ordinary Annual Council was deferred under pressure of circumstances, and after plans to hold it in July were reconsidered, it was finally cancelled. Under changed circumstances, when the liberation of Europe had begun, some weeks later, the Executive decided to summon a Special Council to meet at Friends House in London, from October 23rd-25th. Representatives from 20 Branches attended.

In addition to the resolution on the Dumbarton Oaks proposals and the statement on Disarmament and International Police printed elsewhere in this Report, speakers included Prof. David Mitrany on "The Present International Situation and the Development of World Organisation," Miss Edith Pye on "Relief and Rehabilitation," and Miss Myrtle Wright on her experiences in Norway and Sweden.

At one session Mrs. Lloyd Prichard, with a vigorous and challenging address, opened a discussion on the stimulating memorandum "Two Steps Forward," prepared privately by herself and Mrs. James. The Memorandum contains suggestions for developing

and expanding the W.I.L. and for promoting "the education of women in the cause of peace;" and the proposals were referred to the Executive to consider what steps can be taken in the directions laid down.

At a Social, commèred by Mrs. McGregor Wood, friends from other lands gave us messages on behalf of their fellow-country women, and a Bring and Buy Sale organised by Mrs. Malcomson brought in £57—afterwards raised to over £61.

The appointment of Mrs. Grindley as Hon. Organising Secretary was unanimously and gratefully agreed to during the Council.

NATIONAL PETITION FOR A CONSTRUCTIVE PEACE.

The W.I.L., believing that the insistence on a policy of "unconditional surrender" without any attempt to reassure the German people as to their fate on the defeat of the Nazis, is only playing into the hands of the Nazi leaders, and is likely to lengthen the war, are giving strong support as an affiliated body to the Petition for a Constructive Peace issued by the National Peace Council. The Petition, which is for signature by all British citizens over sixteen years of age claims that "a world free from insecurity, injustice and war" must be build on "the principle of the interdependence of all peoples and their common responsibility for the making of a peaceful order," and that the making of such an order involves "a radical reconstruction—spiritual, economic and political." The Petition enumerates seven detailed proposals for a constructive peace and begs the British Government to put this programme "into action at home as fully and as speedily as possible" and "to commend it vigorously in the international field as the necessary basis for an enduring peace."

DUMBARTON OAKS PROPOSALS.

The following resolution was carried unanimously at the Special Council in October :—

"The British Section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom,

while welcoming the scheme for setting up an organisation aiming at the maintenance of peace and the development of friendly relations among nations :

(1) regrets the priority given at Dumbarton Oaks to the functions of the Security Council for the maintenance of peace by military forces ;

(2) trusts that the provision that the Security Council "should be so organised as to be able to function con-

tinuously" will enable it to "investigate any dispute or any situation which may lead to international friction" at the earliest possible moment and so to prevent by peaceful means the outbreak of war;

(3) welcomes the recognition that such an organisation shall include as an important function the co-ordination and encouragement of humanitarian, social and economic activities, begun by the League of Nations, at the Hot Springs Conference on Food and Agriculture, in U.N.R.R.A., the Monetary Conference at Bretton Woods, etc.;

(4) welcomes the integration of an International Court of Justice in the proposed organisation;

(5) regrets the exclusiveness in membership implied by the vague phrase "peace-loving nations" and by the title "The United Nations," and suggests that the acceptance of fundamental human rights for all persons of whatever race or colour should be the test for admission to membership;

(6) regrets, in the interests of progressive democracy, the very limited rôle assigned to the larger of the proposed bodies, the Assembly vis-a-vis the Council;

(7) regrets that no mention is made of the inclusion of an agency concerned with education as one of the basic means of harmonising the nations for peaceful purposes;

(8) urges that the progressive reduction of armaments as a major factor in the preservation of peace be assigned as a primary obligation on the proposed security organisation, to be carried out concurrently with the transfer and control of the resources so released to the peaceful needs of the nations, and further urges that with the reduction of armaments should go the abolition of conscription and all training of youth for military purposes;

(9) urges that by widespread publicity in every country any obligation undertaken by Governments be made known and constantly kept before the peoples concerned."

THE POOL OF OPINION.

Replies from Branches or Executive to several questions in the Pool of Opinion were collated and sent to U.S.A. during the year. The one causing most discussion was that on *Disarmament and International Police*. The following reply was accepted at the Special Council:—

"The British Section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom maintains its conviction that total

and universal disarmament is the goal towards which we look, and which, when achieved, will give the greatest security against aggression. With this end in view it urges the necessity to develop and make effective the will to renounce war as a crime and to substitute law. Disarmament must be by the planned transfer of productive capacity from war purposes to the satisfaction of human need. It can only be achieved under a real International Authority, which even if it must start as a grouping of United Nations must include speedily the neutral nations and at the earliest possible moment the Axis countries also.

"To this International Authority should be related all those international organs of co-operation which are already in existence, which are emerging or which may emerge for the ordering of various functions, e.g., I.L.O., U.N.R.R.A., etc., and as the resources of the world are internationally planned so can aggression be controlled by their equitable allocation for the legitimate needs of the peoples. This control should replace the whole conception of penal sanctions, though these, in a non-violent form, may remain as an interim measure.

"As regards an international police force, it is first necessary to define with care what is meant. The British conception of police function is to bring the offender before an impartial tribunal with the least possible use of force. The police idea is also a definitely civilian function.

"The conception of an international police force would link it to the establishment of a World Court for conciliation, arbitration or the judicial settlement of disputes between nations. For this we stand. The advocacy of an armed police force was felt by the special Council Meeting to be outside the province of the Women's International League, whose function is to work for those fundamental changes which provide for a society founded on co-operation and in which war is renounced and preparations for war are no longer the first claim on the attention of governments. Some felt that recognition should be given to the fact that for an interim period the International Organisation would have to have some armed force at its disposal in order to exercise whatever measures of restraint are necessary to ensure that resort to war does not achieve its object.

"It was recognised that disarmament and the transfer of productive capacity to meet human need can only be achieved in conjunction with the raising of the standard

of life in every country. We link with this the international acceptance of a code of human rights. If this is broken, intervention in national affairs by international agreement should be allowable.

"We stress the psychological aspect of disarmament, recognising the need for education in the responsibilities and fellowship of world citizenship and the deliberate fostering of the will to renounce war."

INTERNATIONAL NEWS.

The year 1944 has been one of anxiety and suspense. The Sections in U.S.A., Sweden, Australia and Canada have been the only ones with which any regular correspondence has been possible. From all these we have had welcome news of activities along lines parallel to our own—wrestling with the problems of the Pool of Opinion, help in various ways to those in distress through the world upheaval, plans for reconstruction and studies of the causes of war with a view to their removal.

The International Circular Letters prepared by G. Baer in U.S.A. have been of great stimulus and interest, and Dorothy Detzer's reports from Washington have been specially helpful in keeping us in touch with the work and attitude to world problems of our U.S.A. Section.

Correspondence with Switzerland has been very uncertain, but when letters have come from Frau Ragaz they have told of continued work in the Swiss Section and the keeping open of the Office at the Maison Internationale with Louisa Jaques in charge—ready for the coming of better days.

In France, Miss Pye has been in touch with some of our members. From countries still occupied news—often alas! of death or disappearance—comes from time to time.

INDIA AND COLONIES.

The regular meeting of the India and Colonies Committee before each monthly Executive greatly facilitates our work on these two important matters.

An encouraging feature of the year's work has been the Regional Conferences held in March and June, and the Branches concerned are much to be congratulated.

India.—We admit with shame and with a sense of our share of responsibility, that yet another year has passed and the Indo-British deadlock remains. The situation has been followed with

vigilance and action. The W.I.L. has given material help in circulating and publicising some important statements (with suggestions for action), e.g., "Deadlock in India"; "Statement of the Indian Christians"; "New Move in India." Our Branches, experienced in this kind of work, have brought the contents of this material before M.P.'s, the press, etc., at a time when scant information is available and Indian affairs in the background of thought. The retrograde step of the Government of India in lifting the ban on the employment of women in mines, has received attention. We co-operated with the Indian Women's Committee in London in their appeal for funds for the Mrs. Gandhi Memorial Funds. Through the generous response of our membership we were able to hand over the sum of £88. We approached the International Missionary Council urging action by the combined Christian forces regarding the serious situation resulting from the discriminatory legislation passed against Indians in South Africa. Three of our members serve on the Committee of the Liaison Group that co-operates with the All India Women's Conference. The Conference held an important meeting in Bombay in April, and we contributed from our special India Fund towards the extra expense involved in bringing out a full report in the "Bulletin of Indian Women's Movement," the Branches taking consignments of this Bulletin and distributing it widely. Many meetings on India have been held during the year. The successful all day conference held in Liverpool in June last year calls for special mention.

Colonies.—The heavy responsibility of Great Britain for dependent peoples, makes the question of Colonial policy a major issue for our section; it is one to which an increasing amount of time and thought must be given. The following resolution that was passed at a largely attended Regional Conference in Warrington (March, 1944) on "The Colonies and Us," serves to show the line we have been taking:—

"This Conference welcomes the proposed recommendations on minimum standards of social policy in dependent territories to be brought before re-assembled nations at the forthcoming International Labour Conference. It urges that as far as possible representatives of the dependent territories should be included in the British delegation and also that the British delegation gives its full support to the recommendations."

The W.I.L. welcomes the inclusion of the freedom for all dependent peoples, in the National Peace Council's Petition for a Constructive Peace. We keep in close touch with other organisations working on Colonial questions, co-operating in each other's conferences and

meetings. We were asked by the League of Coloured Peoples' to submit our recommendations for the "Charter" they have issued. The presence of coloured troops and technicians in this country has provided further opportunities for practical work on this ever present problem. We are glad to be able to report that we are now in touch again with Mrs. Obasa of Lagos, who some years ago forwarded to us a Peace Petition signed by Nigerian women.

Palestine.—Much time has been given to the study of the grave situation in Palestine and its future status in world affairs; in this we have had the help of people who understand both the Arab and the Jewish points of view.

LIAISON COMMITTEE OF WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom has continued its representation on this active Committee, with the help of the British Section. When Mrs. Grindley, who was the W.I.L. representative up to January, 1944, resigned, Mrs. Duncan Harris took her place.

MEETINGS.

Owing to circumstances it was not possible to hold Lunch or other Meetings during the summer months. In October a meeting was held at the Y.W.C.A., Great Russell Street, London, to welcome home Miss Lettice Jowitt, who was a member of our W.I.L. Executive Committee up to the time of her going out to Lebanon just after the outbreak of war, to take charge of a High School for Arabs controlled by the Society of Friends. Subsequently she spent a year on the Staff of the American University at Beirut. After spending the next six months visiting in South Africa, she taught English for a year in a Polish Refugee Camp in Tanganyika, E. Africa. Miss Jowitt gave the meeting some impressions of national and racial problems.

In December Miss Myrtle Wright, who had recently returned to this country after four years in Occupied Norway and eight months in Sweden, spoke at a W.I.L. meeting at the Y.W.C.A., London, on "Norway and the Occupation as seen by a Pacifist."

In January (1945) W.I.L. Czech and British members gathered together in the Office for a social hour, followed by a discussion on the Czech Government's proposed policy of expelling about a million Czechs from the Sudeten area. In February a second meeting was held in the Office.

On February 14th Miss Edith Pye spoke on "Conditions in France," at a Meeting in the Y.W.C.A., Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1.

NEWS SHEET AND LITERATURE.

Mrs. Innes has continued Editor of the News Sheet throughout the year. There have been 12 issues.

Literature published has been:—

- (1) A second reprint of a two-page Membership Form for use at meetings.
- (2) An eight-page pamphlet giving a short resumé of the outstanding activities of the W.I.L.P.F. and of the British Section since 1915.
- (3) Leaflet (No. 12) reprinting a Statement by the W.I.L.P.F. in Geneva, 1920, and printing our reply to the question in the Pool of Opinion on Disarmament and an International Police Force.
- (4) Leaflet (No. 14), Growing Points for International Co-operation.

THE BRANCHES.

The Branches have carried on their work steadily in spite of war-time difficulties, and we are glad to report that no Branch has altogether ceased to function.

Subjects of study by the Branches have included India, the Colonies, Relief Work in Post-War Europe, Unemployment and its Cure, Disarmament, Peace by Negotiation, Social Credit—a Technique for Peace, the Conditions of a Constructive Peace, Frontiers, the Children of the Future and their Allowances, How can organised women promote international reconstruction and peace-making, Present Conditions in Prisons, and Palestine.

A one-day Regional Conference on India was organised in June by our Liverpool Branch.

We have Branches in Acock's Green, Birmingham, Brighton, Bury St. Edmunds,* Cambridge, Childwall, Coventry,* Croydon, Ditchling, Edinburgh, Farnborough, Glasgow, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, Manchester, Marazion, Mayfield,* North Wales, Nottingham, Peppard and District, Reading, Ssffron Walden, Sheffield,* S.W. London, Stockport, Warrington, Welwyn Garden City, Worthing.

THE OFFICE.

The Office has continued at Flat 8, 144 Southampton Row, W.C.1, with Miss E. Horscroft in charge. In November Miss

* Formed during the last twelve months.

Palmer left us to take up work for the National Peace Council and Miss Horscroft has carried on single-handed. Voluntary workers assisting have been: Miss Dowell, Miss Gill, Miss Ruth Harrison, Miss Orr Paterson, Mrs. Bedford, Mrs. Legge, Miss Alexander, Mrs. Spielman.

In October, Mrs. Grindley was appointed Hon. Organising Secretary, and in that capacity gives much welcome assistance.

Thanks are again due to Miss Horscroft for her unfailing loyalty, devotion and interest in very difficult times.

K. E. INNES,
Hon. Secretary.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

The adoption of the Quota scheme has had the two effects we anticipated. The direct result has been that H.Q. has been able to get through the year without going into debt, the indirect result has been that the branches have been invigorated through their shouldering of more responsibility for national work.

All the same the following facts must be taken into consideration: (i) we have for part of the year been very understaffed; (ii) we have had a very modest office and a rent that corresponded; (iii) in October we were down to £4 in the General account; in December our balance was £14.

Hence we see that expansion even to the state of our exchequer in the disillusioned thirties, is impossible if we continue to use our present methods of providing finance.

Accordingly at the 1945 Council we must lend our minds to the discussion of the possibility of: (i) collecting larger subscriptions in smaller amounts (e.g., 13s. per year is 3d. per week); (ii) the organising of a Thanksgiving Fund to be opened and quickly backed, on the cessation of the war in Europe for the appointment of one or more organizing secretaries; and (iii) the systematic approaching of persons of means who may feel it a privilege to help in our work.

Miss Dickinson's Penny-a-week Fund for International Reconstruction is well over £200, and the Congress Fund now reaches nearly £100, but those sums are earmarked for special purposes.

I should like personally to thank you all for the generosity and loyalty you have shown to the Housekeeping Department throughout the year; Miss Horscroft for struggling with so much of the work in the absence of the Treasurer, and Mrs. Bedford whose mathematical abilities we have so belatedly discovered.

L. MCGREGOR WOOD,
Hon. Treasurer.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED

at the Annual Council Meetings of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (British Section) at Friends House, Euston Road, N.W.1, April 11th to 13th, 1945.

1. THE ENDING OF HOSTILITIES.

"The British Section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, meeting in London at the moment when the armies of the Allies are sweeping victoriously across Europe, makes a solemn appeal to the Statesmen and Military Leaders of the United Nations to rise in their hour of triumph to the supreme height of greatness, which we believe lies not only in justice but also in mercy, not in the retribution of the moment but in a deep consciousness of the judgment of time. We would appeal also to them to conceive of this hour not in terms of triumph over a defeated nation but as the beginning of a new era of peace, an era which we believe must be founded on understanding and friendship between the nations. We, therefore, urge that so far as is possible the impulses of friendship from man to man be not hindered. Further, as an international organisation of women, built above the divisions of race and frontiers, we desire to play our part in laying these foundations by making common cause with like-minded women of all nations. We realise that for women everywhere war has destroyed some of the most precious things in life. It has shattered our common heritage of culture, it has laid waste our cities and our homes, it has decimated a whole generation, killing millions of the young and vigorous, and leaving broken and tortured lives.

We, therefore, put forward this plea, that no barriers shall be placed in the way of the free movement across frontiers, of individuals seeking the speediest possible restoration of international friendships and of peace."

2. DISARMAMENT.

"This Annual Council of the Women's International League urges H.M. Government in co-operation with the United Nations to re-affirm its views on disarmament as expressed in Clause 8 of the Atlantic Charter.

It urges that the future Peace Settlement shall, in addition to demanding the disarmament of the aggressor nations, lay down specific plans for the disarmament of ALL nations, along the following lines:—

- (1) All private profit on the production of arms and component parts thereof, to be abolished;

- (2) Productive power to be gradually released from the manufacture of arms and transferred to constructive schemes in housing, transport, food production and distribution, &c., with a view to the raising of the standard of living everywhere;
- (3) International control to be established and international supervision to take place in all countries to see that such transfer is carried out."

3. CONTROL OF WAR POTENTIAL.

"This Annual Council of the Women's International League, while recognising the necessity for the control, so far as is possible, of the industrial war potential of Germany, urges that this should not be an isolated and purely punitive measure, but that the control of all war potential should be accepted by the United Nations both as a safeguard against aggression from whatever quarter it may come, and also in order to ensure the fullest possible use of the industrial capacity of the world for the purpose of raising the standard of life for all mankind."

4. RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF SMALL NATIONS.

"Believing that small nations have a great contribution to offer in World Councils and fearing that they are in danger of being over-shadowed by the Great Powers and their point of view unheeded, this Annual Council of the Women's International League urges H.M. Government to have due regard for the rights and duties of small nations, and in particular see that they be adequately represented and recognised in forthcoming International Conferences."

5. TRANSFER OF TERRITORY.

"This Annual Council of the Women's International League views with dismay recent pronouncements by Statesmen as to proposed transfers of territory. It urges that, at the conclusion of hostilities, there shall be no ceding of territory except by the freely expressed will of the inhabitants, as promised in the Atlantic Charter."

6. INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON ABOLITION OF CONSCRIPTION.

(1) "This Annual Council of the Women's International League, believing the abolition of conscription to be a pre-requisite of total disarmament for all nations, urges that proposals for an International Convention for the Abolition of Conscription should be discussed at the San Francisco Conference."

(2) "This Annual Council of the Women's International League urges H.M. Government, while working towards an international convention for the abolition of conscription, to act independently in Great Britain and to restore the historic rights of British citizens by repealing the National Services Acts as soon as possible after the termination of the war in the Far East."

7. FAMINE.

"In view of the gravity of the food situation in the liberated countries of Europe this Annual Council of the Women's International League earnestly asks H.M. Government to give permission and facilities for expression of the concern and sympathy of the British people as voiced in the debate in the House of Commons on March 28th, by the immediate sending to these countries of such supplies as can be spared from Great Britain and provided through the British Voluntary Societies which are occupied with relief work abroad.

Further, in view of the probable duration of world shortage of food after the conclusion of hostilities, this Council urges that control of rationing should be continued and all food available be shared as equally as is practicable.

It would warmly support the suggestion of the establishment of a Supreme Economic Council."

8. EMPIRE.

"This Annual Council of the Women's International League, aware of the rapid development of political consciousness and aspiration among the peoples of the Colonial Empire ;

And realising the inevitability of fundamental changes as the result of the impact of the war, particularly in the dependencies of the Far East ;

Regrets that the recently formulated proposals for international collaboration do not include any suggestions for the advancement of the dependent territories in the world ;

Urges H.M. Government to declare its determination to treat self-government not as a remote aim but as a matter of immediate concern, and to bring before the Conference at San Francisco proposals for international association in the furtherance of that object ;

And, while recognising the important constitutional developments in the West Indies and Africa, would urge that still further steps should be taken for the drawing of Nationals of those countries into the responsibilities of government, and into the administrative

and social services ; that the recommendations on mass education (Colonial White Paper No. 186, ' Mass Education in African Society ') should be put into force at the earliest possible moment and that every effort should be made to secure the abolition of the Colour Bar and, in general, development towards self-government among the peoples of the Colonial Empire."

9. INDIA.

" This Annual Council of the Women's International League reaffirms its belief that continued denial of independence to India is a fundamental contradiction of Britain's claim to moral leadership in the struggle for freedom. It views with dismay that at the San Francisco Conference, India is not an equal member with the nations there assembled. Believing that India's contribution to the plans now being made is essential in the interest of the peace of the world and can only be made by representatives in whom the country has trust, it urges the immediate and unconditional release of political prisoners to facilitate the formation of such representative provincial and national self-government as will enable a free India to take her rightful share in the peace settlement."

10. ECONOMIC PLANNING.

" This Annual Council of the Women's International League believes that a plan for the promotion of International Trade should facilitate the exchange of goods and services between the nations to their mutual advantage. It considers that the final plan suggested by the Bretton Woods Conference should be thoroughly discussed by Parliament before being adopted.

It regrets the retention in ' The Joint Statement by experts on the establishment of an International Monetary Fund ' of a provision that payment to the Fund must be made in part in gold ;

11. WOMEN IN PUBLIC LIFE.

" This Annual Council of the Women's International League is strongly of the opinion that the time is long overdue for the admission of women into the Diplomatic, Consular and other Government Services equally with, and on the same terms as men. It further considers that, in the appointment of all Government bodies, whether advisory or consultative Committees or Commissions of any kind the same principles should apply."

12. WELCOME TO INTERNATIONAL CHAIRMEN.

" This Annual Council of the Women's International League has heard with great satisfaction of the proposal that the International Chairmen shall meet in London. It hopes to welcome them at the earliest possible moment."

13. A Message of Sympathy was sent from the Council to Mrs. Roosevelt.

AMENDMENT TO CONSTITUTION AND RULES.

VIII Rules for Council Meeting.—A. Ordinary Council Meeting.
(d) " Written amendments to resolutions must reach the Office not later than twenty-one days before the Meeting, but this rule shall not preclude the acceptance of verbal amendments at the Council Meetings, at the discretion of the Chairman."

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) Written amendments to Resolutions must reach the office not later than twenty-one days before the Meeting, but this Rule shall not preclude the acceptance of verbal amendments at the Council at the discretion of the Chairman.

(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 ;
- (2) Appointment of Standing Orders Committee ;
- (3) Appointment of Members of the Council as Returning Officers and Tellers for the ballot voting ;
- (4) Appointment of Auditor ;
- (5) Adoption of Annual Report and audited Statement of Accounts.

} At
Annual
Meeting
only.

(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.

*G. F. Hodgson & Son, Ltd.,
2 Newton Street, London,
W.C.2.*

