

WILPF 2/25

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE
FOR PEACE & FREEDOM
BRITISH SECTION



FORTIETH
**ANNUAL
REPORT**

APRIL 1955
TO APRIL 1956

ADDRESS - 29 GREAT JAMES STREET - LONDON - W.C.1

The aim of the WILPF is to bring together women of different political and philosophical tendencies united in their determination to study, make known and abolish the political, social, economic and psychological causes of war, and to work for a constructive peace.

The primary objects of the WILPF remain: total and universal disarmament, the abolition of violent means of coercion for the settlement of conflicts, the substitution in every case of some form of peaceful settlement, and the development of a world organisation for the political, social and economic co-operation of peoples.

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

International Headquarters :
12, Rue du Vieux College, Geneva, Switzerland.

International President :
Miss Emily Greene Balch.

The WILPF was founded at The Hague in 1915 by women from 13 countries. Sections are now active in Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, India, Israel, Japan, Nigeria, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, U.S.A.

The WILPF has Consultative Status B with ECOSOC; Consultative Status with UNESCO; and Specialised Consultative Status with FAO.

BRITISH SECTION

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Liaison Officer :
Mrs. McGregor Wood

Chairman of Executive Committee :
Mrs. Myrtle Radley.

Vice-Chairmen of Executive Committee :
Mrs. L. de Swiet, Miss M. Dickinson, Mrs. M. Nuttall, Miss H. Walmesley.

FOREWORD

Since writing a foreword to our 1953-54 Annual Report two years ago, I have visited China, Japan, India, Thailand and other places in the East for the first time, and have been able to compare conditions there with those in this country, in the USSR, in the USA and in Australia, New Zealand and Canada. I have the impression that history is being written before our eyes. So many scenes might have been lifted straight out of Biblical times: customs, methods of agriculture and habits of thought can hardly have changed in two thousand years or more. Yet there is no doubt that they will change rapidly within the next century.

The East is awakening: and Europe and America are being weighed in the balance.

We cannot stop the advances of technology in hitherto technically-backward countries unless, indeed, we commit the final crimes of murder and suicide because we are so obsessed with our own security and standards of living that we lose our senses.

I believe that we should rejoice that the USSR, China and India, with their enormous problems of poverty and need, are now beginning to move forward through their own industrial revolutions. We know that they are bound to make mistakes. We shall certainly not agree with everything they do. They will not wish to copy us in everything. Yet we should aim at so conducting our own affairs that we set them an example of uprightness and integrity, as we have not always done in the past. But let us also remember that "what's past is prologue."

The future conduct of our own nation depends on us. In assessing the past year we have no intention of remaining content with all that has been done. We shall use it as a guide for action. Our country's relationships with other countries will be continually changing because the world is moving so fast. New problems may demand new methods. But peace and freedom are aims that do not change.

KATHLEEN LONSDALE.

HONOUR FOR THE PRESIDENT

The inclusion of our President in the New Year Honours List, when Kathleen Lonsdale became a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire, has caused great pride and rejoicing in the League.

In appreciation of Dame Kathleen's devoted service to the cause of peace, the League arranged a luncheon in her honour at Friends House, London, on 12th March, which proved to be a most happy and successful occasion.

About fifty of our own members from London and the branches joined with many distinguished guests—including scientists, Members of Parliament and representatives of peace organisations—to pay tribute to the eminence achieved by Dame Kathleen in so many fields. Mrs. Myrtle Radley acted as Chairman and other speakers, as well as the President herself, were Lord Boyd Orr, Mr. Ritchie Calder, Professor Winifred Cullis, Dame Irene Ward and Mrs. Joyce Butler, MP; Mrs. Barbara Duncan Harris spoke on behalf of the League.

COMMITTEES

EXECUTIVE.—Chairman: Mrs. Myrtle Radley.

The Executive Committee has met seven times during the year, with an average attendance of 25. The permanent meeting place is now the Friends International Centre, 32, Tavistock Square, W.C.1, and thanks are due to Mrs. Lydia de Swiet for making this arrangement possible.

At the **September** meeting the two consultative members for the British Section on the International Executive, Mrs. Mary Nuttall and Mrs. Evelyn Peat, gave reports of the meeting at Hamburg in July. Mrs. Phoebe Cusden, International Vice-Chairman, was welcomed back after a visit to China with a delegation which included the President, Dame Kathleen Lonsdale.

The Extended Executive was held in Manchester on **1st-2nd November** at the invitation of the Manchester Branch. It was well attended, and the excellent arrangements and warm hospitality provided by the Manchester committee and members were largely responsible for the outstanding success of the two days.

During one session an interesting and informative lecture was given by Professor Max Gluckman of Manchester University on "Tribal Life in Central Africa."

The 40th Birthday Party held on the evening of the first day was presided over by Mrs. Garnett and Mrs. Crossland and several foundation members spoke on the early days of the League in that city. Gifts were received for the birthday fund amounting to £300, and it was announced later that the total raised during the year was £431. It was decided to allocate this money as follows: 10 per cent. to International Headquarters; £100 to Congress expenses; £50 to the Agatha Harrison International Fund; £50 for a membership drive; and the balance to general funds.

At the **December** meeting Mrs. McGregor Wood was welcomed on her return from the United States, where she had been in close touch with the work of the American Section.

In **February** Mrs. Evelyn Peat spoke on her experiences as observer for the British Section at the 10th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, where she worked as a colleague of Gladys Walser and sent regular reports back to London which proved extremely useful.

PARLIAMENTARY.—Chairman: Mrs. Phoebe Cusden.

This Committee has again met weekly at London Headquarters during the sessions of Parliament and the U.N. General Assembly, with an average attendance of twelve.

Miss Tims as Secretary has written and distributed carefully-worded minutes of the meetings, which it was decided should be sent to branches and individual members on payment of five shillings annually. This keeps the Section continuously informed on matters being studied and action taken on home and world problems, and facilitates joint action when this is possible and necessary.

The Committee relies for much of its work on members who make a special study of a particular issue, and on Mrs. Mary Fernau for reading and summarising *Hansard*. Action taken is reported under **The Year's Work**.

Visitors to the Committee during the year have included: Mrs. Edna Hutchison of the Australian Section; Frau Hoppstock-Huth, President of the German Section; and Mrs. Tamm-Götlind, Chairman of the Uppsala branch of the Swedish Section.

EDUCATION.—Chairman: Miss Hilda Walmesley.

The questionnaire drawn up and circulated by the Committee regarding the provision of educational means to good citizenship revealed not only a wide interest among branches, but also wide differences in educational facilities for young people in urban and rural areas as well as a general lack of these for handicapped children in remoter areas. During the year branches have been asked to explore what can be done to remedy these needs and to secure a better balance of facilities for these two groups.

It is encouraging to note that the WILPF interest in adolescent youth is being met in a positive way, not only by the Association of Education Committees and several Local Authorities which decided to advocate the development of County Colleges and Technical Schools in their areas, but more recently by HM Government in the White Paper on Technical Education which seeks the collaboration of L.E.A.s and industrial firms and supports the expenditure of £97 million for development of schools and colleges.

Some local surveys of suitable films and library facilities in and out of school have also been made and have proved useful in focussing interest on the need to maintain good international and personal relationships.

The exchange of children's art through "Art for World Friendship" is a happily extending activity and Mrs. Maude Muller of Pennsylvania, to whose inspiration the scheme is due, writes with appreciation of the pleasure which British children are giving by sending away their pictures.

SOCIAL.—Thanks are again due to the Social Committee for their splendid work in making our lunch meetings and other social functions so successful. Mrs. Dayan, Miss Gill, Miss Hargreaves and Mrs. Southon have been in charge of arrangements, with willing help from other members when required.

INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE

The International Executive Committee met in Hamburg from 25th-30th July. Mrs. Cusden and Professor Lonsdale attended as members of the Executive, and Mrs. Nuttall and Mrs. Peat were consultative members for the British Section.

Most of the resolutions sent in by Sections were incorporated in "A Message from Women to the World," which all sections were asked to distribute widely in their own countries.

The possibility of sending a reconciling mission to the Middle East was discussed, and Mrs. Parker Simon was asked to follow up and co-ordinate contacts, especially in the Arab countries.

A Committee was appointed to organise the Congress to be held in Britain at the Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham, 23rd to 28th July, 1956.

Miss Lous-Mohr offered to go to Geneva to be in charge of the office there until the next Executive meeting. This was accepted with gratitude and a small Committee was appointed to bring to the next Executive, firm suggestions for the future organisation of the Headquarters office.

MARY NUTTALL.

THE YEAR'S WORK

Work at Headquarters has continued on broad lines to carry out the aims and policy of the League. A special feature this year was the **General Election** in May, which gave opportunities for concerted action throughout the Section by means of a Questionnaire to candidates drawn up by the Parliamentary Committee and circulated to every member. This led to correspondence and interviews with candidates of all parties on the following issues:—Hydrogen Bomb; U.S. Bases; Disarmament; "Law not War"; Conscriptioin; China in the United Nations; Race Relations; Technical Assistance; Status of Women. A particularly welcome outcome of the election was the success of one of our own members, Mrs. Joyce Butler, in winning the seat at Wood Green, London. A letter was subsequently sent to all the women MPs drawing attention to the aims and work of the League.

UNITED NATIONS.—Our work with the UN was given a great stimulus by the presence of our own observer, Mrs. Evelyn Peat, at the Tenth Assembly in New York. Her regular reports on week-by-week events gave a useful background to current news and guidance on when and how to act to the best advantage. One instance of this was the sending a cable to the UK delegation urging support of a Syrian-Indonesian amendment to cease nuclear tests; this action also assisted Mrs. Peat in her personal contact with the UK and other delegations which was another valuable side of her work.

A Memorandum prepared by the Parliamentary Committee was circulated, as in previous years, to the members of the British delegation before the start of the Tenth Assembly, drawing attention to the following matters:—Disarmament; Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy; Atomic Radiation and Health; International Law; Africa; Middle East; Statelessness; Polar Regions; United Nations Membership.

Members have continued to participate in the SCESWUN (Standing Conference on Economic and Social Work of the United Nations) working groups on Child Welfare, Human Rights, Refugees, Status of Women, and Technical Assistance. This

organisation supported a resolution to HM Government in July, asking for an annual increase of 20 per cent. for the next three years in contributions to the UN Technical Assistance Programme.

The draft Covenants on Human Rights were studied and notes were circulated to branches on the UK attitude to disputed articles. We have also been in correspondence with Mr. Barnett Janner, MP, on this question.

DISARMAMENT.—The whole defence policy of HM Government, with its basis on "nuclear deterrents" has been under critical review. As the obstacles to control of nuclear weapons have increased, pressure has been directed more towards the desirability, and necessity, for a general agreement on disarmament. This led us to write to the Foreign Secretary in April, 1955, urging the setting up of a Ministry of Disarmament and Redeployment.

A protest against encroachments of the military on civilian life was made to the Minister of Defence in October, regarding the proposed rocket range in South Uist.

As a first step towards relaxation of tension the cessation of nuclear tests has been advocated, and a telegram was sent to the Prime Minister in November urging an immediate response to a Russian proposal to this end. We again urged that Britain should take the initiative in this matter in a letter sent to the Foreign Secretary before the Washington talks in January.

The question of genetic effects of radiation was discussed in a meeting with a group of women MPs at the House of Commons which Mrs. Joyce Butler kindly arranged for the President and members of the Parliamentary Committee in February. Professor Lonsdale emphasized the moral basis of her objection to nuclear tests as a part of war preparation; there was so far no conclusive scientific evidence as to harmful effects from the tests.

The publication of a civil defence handbook on nuclear weapons in February caused us to make a strong protest to the Home Office expressing "dismay and concern" at the impracticable proposals for the protection of the civil population and requesting an explanation of certain passages in the handbook. The White Paper on Defence issued later in the month also caused concern by its implicit reliance on nuclear threats and lack of any positive policy of co-existence, and a protest in these terms was sent to the Foreign Secretary from the March Executive.

RACE RELATIONS.—Attention has again centred mainly on Africa, and we have to thank Miss Dickinson for keeping us so fully informed on matters in which we have a special interest and for her advice and recommendations as to the most useful action to take.

We are also indebted to the Africa Bureau for information and advice on many subjects.

As a practical token of friendship a scheme was devised for sending periodicals to the new multi-racial University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in the **Central African Federation**. This was started in September, with the participation of five of our branches, and appreciative letters were received from the Principal and Librarian. In connection with an incident in Salisbury, Rhodesia, in February, involving race segregation at a public ceremony when Lord Salisbury received the freedom of the city, correspondence with Lord Rea, leader of the Liberal peers, evinced his concern and led to enquiry into further details of the case.

The deteriorating situation in **South Africa** caused us to write a letter of encouragement in July to the Chairman of the "Defence of the Constitution League" in Pretoria, the women's "Black Sash" movement which protested against the Bill to remove coloured voters from the common electoral roll. A further letter on this subject was sent to the *News Chronicle* and published in February. The negative attitude of the United Kingdom to the United Nations Commission on the Race Situation in South Africa (which led subsequently to the withdrawal of the Commission by one vote) was deplored, and a letter to the Prime Minister in December begged HM Government to re-consider its attitude and to take steps "to save South Africa from the disastrous effects of its government's policies on its own people and on the whole of the African continent." Attention was also drawn to the different treatment of European and African offenders under the law which, we felt, "brings the Crown and the whole system of British justice into disrepute."

The publication of a White Paper on economic, social and educational development in the **High Commission Territories** in November was welcomed, but we were shortly afterwards disturbed by proposals for radar defence installations in these territories by the South African Government, and a protest was sent to the Commonwealth Relations Office.

The settlement of the dispute in **Buganda**, and the return of the Kabaka to his people, was made doubly welcome for us by the opportunity we had of a meeting with the Princess Irene of Buganda (sister of the Kabaka) at the House of Commons, in co-operation with the National Peace Council, in July. The Princess showed interest in the work of the League and has since received some of our publications.

Cordial greetings and good wishes were included in a message sent to the **All-India Women's Conference** meeting in December, in expression of the "sincere and warm friendship" between our two countries.

Our concern with **Colonial Affairs** generally has led to the setting up of study groups throughout the Section. Seven branches are so far participating in the scheme, covering the following territories: West Indies, Central African Federation, Gold Coast, High Commission Territories, and trans-Atlantic Colonies.

REFUGEES.—The British Section has taken action mainly in conjunction with other organisations represented on the working group of SCESWUN. In June the League was one of the signatories to a letter published in *The Times* pressing HMG to participate in the UN High Commissioner's plan for the permanent settlement of refugees under his mandate who were still in camps in Europe. Shortly afterwards it was announced that HMG would contribute £100,000 to the fund, and a personally signed letter received from the High Commissioner expressed his appreciation of the action taken.

A letter of congratulation was sent to Dame May Curwen and to the Foreign Office on her appointment as permanent government representative on the High Commissioner's Executive Council. A reception in honour of the award of the Nobel peace prize to the High Commissioner and his staff in December was attended by a WIL representative and a telegram of congratulation from the Executive was read during the proceedings.

Two letters were sent to the Foreign Office pressing the UK to support a suggested conference under UN auspices to eliminate or reduce **Statelessness**. In reply HMG indicated their willingness to participate "if a sufficient number of important states signify their willingness to participate in the proposed conference." This was felt to be unsatisfactory, and the matter has been taken up in the SCESWUN working group.

MIDDLE EAST.—The threat of further conflict between the Arab states and Israel, and between the powers with interests in this area, has been watched with much concern. A letter to the Prime Minister in November urged negotiation with all the appropriate governments for an agreement "to cease the supply of arms from any quarter to either side" and suggested the strengthening of the UN Observer Corps. The need for mediation by Britain was again stressed in a letter to the Foreign Secretary in January, which also deplored the conclusion of regional pacts, such as the Bagdad Pact, outside the United Nations. The plight of Israel has been brought to our notice in correspondence with our Israeli Section.

The vexed question of **Cyprus** has been kept under review. No action has been taken, but it was felt that HM Government's negative attitude to the Cypriots' demand for self-determination has precipitated violence and lessened the hope of a peaceful settlement.

Reports of collective punishment in the **Aden Protectorate** by bombing of tribesmen from the air caused us to write to the Colonial Secretary in July, and again in October following an unsatisfactory statement of HMG's policy. We pointed out that such methods of punishment could only lead to exacerbation of the disaffection and that "the only effective and just method of dealing with rebellion is to discover its causes and to make determined and patient efforts to remove them".

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.—The free vote in the House on 16th February for abolition of the death penalty was warmly welcomed, as was the passing of the second reading of Mr. Silverman's Bill in March. We had urged time for such a bill in a telegram to the Prime Minister in January, and a resolution pressing for abolition was sent to the Home Secretary from the Executive the previous September.

In view of government opposition to the Bill, efforts must still be made to influence MPs and public opinion and we are co-operating in the national campaign organised by Mr. Victor Gollancz.

Other matters to which our attention has been drawn during the year, mainly through the Parliamentary Committee, include the **Far East**, in particular the problems of Formosa and Vietnam, and we are indebted to Miss Edith Adlam for keeping us constantly informed on these questions; the internationalisation of **Antarctica**, which was urged in letters to the Press supporting the Indian proposal to include the question on the next agenda of the United Nations; matters concerning the **Status of Women; Conscription.**

REPORTS FROM THE BRANCHES

The total of branches in the British Section remains at 22, and the year has seen much useful activity and good co-operation between branches and with Headquarters. The following reports have been received of work undertaken during the year:—

BIRMINGHAM. Membership 59 (six new members). Seven committee meetings have been held and eight members' meetings, with an average attendance of 22. The deaths of Mrs. Morris and Miss Boneham are reported with regret.

Following a talk by Mrs. Mary Nuttall at the annual meeting in February, 1955, a Congress Committee was formed on which seven branch members were appointed to serve. The Committee has met three times to make arrangements in connection with the International Congress, to be held at Selly Oak in July.

The Branch is affiliated to the Birmingham Peace Council and has representatives on the Standing Conference of Women's Organisations and the Birmingham Council for the Care of Old People. The Chairman, Miss H. Walmesley, is British liaison officer for "Art for World Friendship" and branch representative for the local council of UNA.

Three delegates attended the extended Executive at Manchester in November, when a donation of £20 was presented to the 40th Birthday Fund.

BROMLEY.—Membership 16. Attendance at meetings has been good, and talks have been given on Rhodesia, Malaya and Germany. In the general election campaign questions were put to candidates on Disarmament, Conscription, China and International Law. The branch completed the questions in the UNA Citizens' Enquiry. A bring-and-buy sale was held in November in aid of funds.

CHILDWALL.—Membership 64 (nine new members; twelve resignations). The nine monthly branch meetings have dealt with a diversity of subjects, including the West Indies, Ceylon, Istanbul, the Hydrogen Bomb; and a visit to the Childwall Hall County College. A group has also met regularly, under the auspices of the WEA, to study Current International Affairs.

As one of the hostess branches, Childwall helped to organise the successful North-West regional conference held in September.

The Parliamentary sub-committee has written to local MPs on the Defence White Paper; Technical Assistance; and Capital Punishment; and candidates were approached at the General Election. The Social sub-committee has aided finances by organising functions, which were also valuable as a means of introducing new members.

CROYDON. Membership 90. The highlight of the winter's events was the meeting in February at which the Begum Shaista Ikramullah, wife of the High Commissioner, gave an address on "Education in Pakistan". The branch President, Mrs. Ritchie Calder, was in the chair and the meeting was supported by the local UNA and Teachers' Association.

The main theme of studies has been "British Colonies across the Atlantic" and talks have been given on Bermuda, the Caribbean Islands and British Honduras. A member, Mrs. Eisner, spoke about British Guiana, where she lived for many years; and the series ended with a lantern lecture on the Falkland Islands.

At the annual meeting in May, Mrs. McGregor Wood spoke on "Our Opportunities," and the opportunity to contribute to the 40th birthday fund was seized with gifts which included forty farthings and forty radishes. These were received at the summer Garden Party by Miss Catherine Marshall. A total of £50 was presented at the Extended Executive in November.

During the general election letters or deputations went to all candidates, and their answers to questions on the Hydrogen Bomb, Conscription and China in the UN were sent to the local press. In the autumn MPs were approached to urge support for the UN Specialised Agencies.

The branch is a constituent member of the Croydon Council of Peace Groups and is represented on the local Marriage Guidance Council and Standing Conference of Women's Organisations.

GLASGOW. The Annual Bring and Buy Sale was held at the Student International Club, and was followed by a delightful informal concert given by some of the Indian, African and Greek students.

Mrs. Nancy Lapwood opened the winter session with a stimulating address on China before and since the Revolution. Mrs. Vera Mitchell, Secretary of the Edinburgh Branch, came and reported most interestingly on the visit of Gladys Walser to Edinburgh last summer. In January a film night attracted a large audience, and the film "World without End" was greatly appreciated. In February, Dr. R. Meek, of the Department of Political Economy of Glasgow University, described his visit to Russia in 1954. The season of lectures ended in March with a talk from Mr. Forrester of Edinburgh, a W.E.A. tutor, on economic and social development in Nigeria and the Gold Coast.

Members have discussed the United Nations' "Citizens' Enquiry" questionnaire, and the publication "Speak Truth to Power".

The addition of two or three younger members has been welcomed; total numbers remain about the same.

HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB. Membership 33 (eight new members). Monthly meetings have been held, with talks on India, France, the East-West Friendship Council, Uganda (Lady Mayer), the Hydrogen Bomb (Sybil Morrison), and the 10th Assembly of the United Nations (Mrs. Peat). A successful 40th birthday party was held in September and £16 sent to the birthday fund.

Members have taken an active part on WILPF Committees and at lunch meetings. The Parliamentary Minutes were regularly discussed; at the General Election questions were put to three candidates and a meeting was arranged with the Liberal woman candidate.

HASSOCKS AND DITCHLING. Membership 25. Meetings were held each month except in August, and reports have appeared in the "Mid-Sussex Times."

Mrs. Evelyn Peat, a member of the branch, was warmly welcomed on her return from the United Nations 10th Assembly in New York and gave an informative talk. Other speakers have included Dr. Pool on Holland; Rev. Fabricant on Israel; and Mr. Esma Burrough on International Voluntary Service for Peace.

Members attended political meetings during the General Election and put pertinent questions to the candidates. The branch is studying the West Indies for its 1956 project.

LEICESTER. Membership 32. Regular meetings have been held with interesting speakers on topical subjects. On several occasions Miss Tuckett has brought coloured students to share in the meetings. The branch is represented on the local Standing Conference of Women's Organisations by Miss Ross. A meeting addressed by Mrs. McGregor Wood from Headquarters was well attended, and had a good notice in the press; one new member was enrolled. Two faithful members, Miss Beaton and Miss Scarborough, were lost by death. A bring and buy sale helped to put finances on a sound basis.

LIVERPOOL. Membership 53. Regular monthly meetings have been held, and a successful North-West Regional Conference took place in Liverpool in September; the speakers were Mrs. Nancy Lapwood, Lady Mayer, Mrs. Myrtle Radley and Rev. Hannan. The branch has supported the work of the Methodist International Hostel, and members continue to meet the boats bringing West African students and to entertain foreign students in their homes. A small group is studying problems of Malaya.

Candidates were approached during the general election, and a Parliamentary Committee has been formed to consider the minutes from Headquarters and take action where necessary. Members helped with the campaign against capital punishment, and the branch is represented at the Women's Standing Conference. Mrs. Isono (of the Japanese Section) was missed on her return to Japan in August. The death of Miss Firth is reported with regret; one of the oldest members, she had served as both secretary and treasurer in the past.

MANCHESTER. Membership 105. Several stimulating meetings have been held, including a summer fair opened by Mrs. Vipont Brown and a 40th anniversary musical evening conducted by Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Percival.

An important event was the extended Executive held in Manchester in November and attended by delegates from thirteen branches. Mrs. Cusden spoke on her recent visit to China and Professor Gluckman on tribal life in Central Africa. Twelve members attended the North-West regional conference in Liverpool in September.

The branch has continued to watch the international situation and has kept in touch with action taken by the Executive and Parliamentary Committee. It co-operates with the Manchester and District Council for African Affairs and other local organisations, and has subscribed to send a quarterly periodical to the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

The Manchester branch has also a group in **Withington**, which arranges regular local meetings as well as joining in central branch activities. Two new members have been welcomed, and the death of Mrs. Ridgeway is recorded with regret. The group is making a study of the Gold Coast.

NORTH WALES. Membership 50 (three new members). Nine meetings have been held, and nine Committees, and the branch has had a busy and interesting year. At the General Election questions were sent to twelve candidates, and the replies published in the local Welsh and English papers.

Talks have been given by Dr. Crisp on "Biological Effects of the Hydrogen Bomb," and Mrs. Nancy Lapwood on China. In November a "Noson Lawen" was arranged, with an audience of eighty. The annual tea to overseas students was held in January, attended by 21 students. Letters were sent to MPs on the expulsion of Iraqi students in February.

Reports in the local press have helped to spread knowledge of the WILPF in the Bangor and Menai Bridge area.

NOTTINGHAM. Membership 30. The branch is making a study of the West Indies, and MPs have been approached regarding the welfare of immigrants, and also on the subject of capital punishment. The Christmas Party and a jumble sale were successful in raising £20 for the funds. Local sympathisers have been circularised in an effort to recruit more members.

ORPINGTON. Membership 32 (four new members; two losses). The main interest has continued to centre on Africa and a series of talks was concluded by Denis Moriarty on Kenya and John Harris on Makerere College, Uganda. The branch is now studying the High Commission Territories, and a letter on this subject was sent to the local MP, and also on Technical Assistance.

During the election campaign candidates attended a branch meeting to discuss the Questionnaire sent from HQ. The UNA Citizens' Enquiry has also been studied. At the Annual Garden Party a well-balanced talk on Israel was given by Martin Baram.

OXFORD. Following the resignation of the Secretary, Mrs. von Engel, in April, activities were suspended for a time, but after personal visits by Mrs. Pettit and Mrs. Shackleton the branch was successfully re-started. An undergraduate, Miss Hilary Sims,

was appointed Secretary, but owing to pressure of University work was obliged to resign in February. Mrs. E. M. Aitken has now taken this office, with Mrs. H. T. Gillett as Chairman and Mrs. Winston as Treasurer, and an interesting programme of meetings has included talks by Mr. Shih-Changwu, senior lecturer in Chinese at the University, Dame Kathleen Lonsdale and Professor Norman Bentwich.

MEMBERSHIP

I am glad to report that since the last Annual Council we have thirty new Headquarter members; during the year we lost five by death and four have resigned. The total of paid-up subscriptions is 299, but we are sure that a further twenty-three members will renew their subscriptions so that our membership may be put at 322.

I hope that membership in the branches has also increased, as our financial difficulties can be overcome by even a moderate increase in membership. I would like to say how loyal and splendid our members are; we can be proud of them all.

The total membership of the Section is approximately 1,250.

AGNES SHACKLETON.

EDITOR'S REPORT

Six numbers of *Peace and Freedom* have been issued during the year, and we should like to express thanks to the voluntary contributors who have helped to make the journal interesting and informative. We are still handicapped through lack of space, which prevents the inclusion of much material we should like to publish, including extracts from *Hansard*, background material, United Nations news, etc. We should appreciate more branch reports, and suggest that all branches should appoint a correspondent who would send regular accounts of their recent activities.

No propaganda leaflets have been published during the year, due to lack of funds, but the blue brochure describing our aims and work has been brought up-to-date and is still popular for publicity purposes.

PHOEBE CUSDEN.

LONDON OFFICE

Miss Margaret Tims is constantly in demand by telephone and letter as general secretary in the office, where she has undertaken increased responsibility and carried out the year's work with continued efficiency.

Mrs. Kathleen Boaden has been obliged to resign her position as keeper of the accounts, and is greatly missed at Headquarters. Miss Adlam has been welcomed as her successor and the happy fellowship of voluntary workers has continued with the valuable assistance of Miss Gill, Miss Ruth Harrison, and other helpers who "drop in" from time to time.

There now hangs on the wall a framed photograph of Agatha Harrison which was presented at the Executive by Miss Maud Dickinson, her close friend and helper.

LONDON MEETINGS

The monthly lunch meetings held at the Friends International Centre, Tavistock Square, have continued to attract a high level of attendance and interest. The following subjects were dealt with:—

- "The Problem of Kenya," Joseph Murumbi.
- "The Work of the International Co-operative Women's Guild," Mrs. Cecily Cook, O.B.E.
- "Pros and Cons of Caribbean Federation," Mr. A. Hyndman, B.A.
- "Impressions of the House of Commons," Mrs. Joyce Butler, M.P.
- "The International Alliance of Women," Mrs. Corbett Ashby, LL.D.
- "The Future of Cyprus," Mr. S. A. Kyprianou.
- "Far Eastern Problems," Gerald Bailey, M.A.
- "Impressions of the Tenth Assembly," Mrs. Evelyn Peat.

In addition, several meetings have been held in the early evening for the benefit of members who are not free at lunch time. In September, Miss Mary Benson, Secretary of the Africa Bureau, spoke on "Africa Today." At a New Year gathering Mrs. McGregor Wood was welcomed back with her husband from a visit to the United States and described her interesting experiences there. A social evening was arranged in March for some of our Nigerian friends, to say "au revoir" to Rev. and Mrs. Amos Solarin.

A fortieth birthday gathering for London members was arranged in October, when Mrs. Phoebe Cusden spoke on her recent visit to China; entertainment was provided by Mr. David Sturge at the piano and Miss Mary Victor with readings from Shaw.

AFFILIATIONS

The following organisations are affiliated to Headquarters:—

- Herne Hill Methodist Church Young Wives' Guild.
- London Congregational Union Women's League.
- Peckham Women's Co-operative Guild.
- Winchmore Hill Women's Adult School.

The League is affiliated to:—

- British Commonwealth League; National Peace Council; No-Conscription Council; SCESWUN; Status of Women Committee; UNA Women's Advisory Council; Women's Council for India, Pakistan and Ceylon.

Representatives are also sent to: Comics Campaign Council; Crusade for World Government; Equal Pay Campaign Committee.

BRANCH SECRETARIES

- Birmingham* : Miss E. Jesper, 455, City Road, Birmingham, 17.
- Bradford* : Mrs. B. Gray, 106, Rooley Lane, Bradford Yorks.
- Bromley* : Mrs. M. Elwood, 50, Palace View, Bromley, Kent.
- Cheadle Hulme* : Mrs. M. Riley, 78, Swann Lane, Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire.
- Childwall* : Miss H. Dudley, 60, Garthdale Road, Mossley Hill, Liverpool, 18.
- Coventry* : Miss A. Underhill, 28, Holyhead Road, Coventry.
- Croydon* : Mrs. E. Ecroyd, 2, Benhurst Gardens, Selsdon, S. Croydon, Surrey.
- Edinburgh* : Mrs. V. Mitchell, 57, Ladysmith Road, Edinburgh, 9.
- Glasgow* : Mrs. A. Shanks, 32, Crompton Avenue, Glasgow, S.4.
- Hampstead Garden Suburb* : Mrs. K. Frost, 1, Cyprus Road, London, N.3.
- Hassocks and Ditchling* : Mrs. F. Pettit, 50, Mackie Avenue, Hassocks, Sussex.
- Leicester* : Mrs. S. J. Pick, 80, Letchworth Road, Leicester.
- Liverpool* : Mrs. E. Sunners, "Fieldside," Barnston Road, Heswall, Wirral, Cheshire.
- Manchester* : Mrs. E. Turkie, 25, Danesmoor Road, Manchester, 20; Mrs. D. Lund, 8, Beech Walk, Alkrington, Middleton, nr. Manchester (co-Secretary).
- North Wales* : Mrs. A. King, 3, Menai View Terrace, Bangor.
- Nottingham* : Mrs. G. Day, 20, Rolleston Drive, Lenton, Notts.
- Orpington* : Mrs. N. Weiss, 10, The Avenue, Orpington, Kent.
- Oxford* : Mrs. E. M. Aitken, Larchwood, Boar's Hill, Oxford.
- S. Devon* :
- Warrington* : Mrs. H. Davies, Bleak House, Penketh, Warrington, Lancs.
- West Kirby* : Mrs. M. Mason, 2, Victoria Road, West Kirby, Cheshire.
- Worthing* : Miss A. M. Bailes, 41, Balcombe Avenue, Worthing, Sussex.

ANNUAL COUNCIL, 1956

Over seventy members attended the Annual Council held at the City of Coventry Training College, 13th-15th April, by kind invitation of the Coventry Branch. The excellent arrangements made for our comfort, both by the branch and by the staff of the college, added to the enjoyment of a stimulating week-end which included a civic reception by the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress and a visit to two new comprehensive schools in the city conducted by the Director of Education, Mr. Walter Chinn.

An open session on Friday evening was attended by about 150 people, and a lecture was given by Mr. William Marwick, M.A., of Edinburgh University, on the economic implications of disarmament. On Sunday evening a welcome relaxation was provided by friends of the Coventry members who entertained us with a delightful musical programme.

RESOLUTIONS

DISARMAMENT

Believing that war is a barbarous and outdated method of defence or of attempting to settle disputes, this Annual Council of the WILPF urges HM Government to instruct its representatives on the five-power sub-committee of the United Nations Disarmament Commission to co-operate in any or all methods of initiating disarmament that will lead to immediate action; and to demonstrate its earnest intention to disarm by setting up an official body to investigate and make recommendations concerning the consequent change-over from military to civilian expenditure, employment and organisation.

MIDDLE EAST

This Annual Council of the WILPF urges HM Government (1) to support the efforts now being made by the United Nations towards easing the tension in the Middle East, and promoting a lasting settlement which would include a peace treaty; and (2) to rehabilitate and resettle the Arab refugees through the United Nations.

REFUGEES

Remembering the tragic fact that one in every hundred of the world's population today is a refugee, in the sense of having lost home and community; and that the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is struggling with inadequate funds to settle permanently those who are under his mandate, especially those still in camps in Europe;

this Annual Council pledges wholehearted support to the nation-wide campaign for refugees to be inaugurated in the autumn of this year by the United Nations Association,

and appeals to Branches and members to co-operate with the joint local Committee and to help in publicising the campaign in every possible way.

CONSCRIPTION

This Annual Council of the WILPF, believing that war is immoral and evil, and that conscription of young men for military training is part of war preparation and also a violation of individual freedom, demands the speedy repeal of the National Service Acts; and urges that immediate steps be taken by HM Government to secure the abolition of conscription as part of an overall plan of general disarmament.

ATOMIC ENERGY

The WILPF expresses its appreciation of the share contributed by HM Government in the valuable achievements of the Geneva Conference on Atomic Energy, 1955.

In view of the dangers attendant upon the development of nuclear power and the necessity to avoid these, the WILPF urges that information shall be co-ordinated at all peaceful levels through the United Nations and its specialised agencies, as well as through the European Council for Nuclear Research in order to secure:—

- (a) Protection of workers and neighbourhood at all stages of production against radiation injury;

- (b) Non-pollution of water supplies in disposal of waste products;
- (c) Prevention of excessive radiation of the atmosphere with its consequent dangers to the community and to posterity;
- (d) The beneficent use of the scientific discoveries in their application to biology, agriculture and medicine, as well as to the broader fields of industry and transport.

ANTARCTICA

This Annual Council of the WILPF, welcoming the international co-operation achieved in connection with the Geophysical Year 1957/58, but recognising that many nations, including Great Britain and other countries of the Commonwealth, are making claims to exclusive rights in the Antarctic regions, considers it urgent in order to safeguard peace that Antarctica should be constituted international territory and placed under the administration of the United Nations, thus securing general accessibility to the resources of the area and avoiding conflict; and urges HM Government to initiate or support proposals to this end at the United Nations.

SUNFED

This Annual Council of the WILPF, realising the urgency of the need of the under-developed countries, particularly with regard to the inadequacy of public services, and considering that the prerequisite of economic development is training and therefore education, and that it is essential to establish the right order of priorities, urges HM Government to give full and immediate support to the Special United Nations Fund for Economic Development, in order that universal primary education can be made a first objective.

CHINA

This Annual Council wishes to impress upon H.M. Government the right of the Chinese people to be represented at the United Nations by representatives of their own government, and urge HM Government to work, with renewed vigour, to that end.

HUMAN RIGHTS

This Annual Council of the WILPF urges HM Government, in view of the extensive and speedy world changes inevitable in a nuclear age, to adopt a much more flexible attitude in its policy towards the draft International Covenants on Human Rights.

FILMS

This Annual Council wishes to express its deep concern regarding the gangster films being continually shown in our cinemas and their undoubted evil effect on the minds of young people.

We are perturbed by the slackness of censorship in so vital a matter and appeal to the British Board of Film Censors to investigate means by which this evil could be mitigated.

EDUCATION

The WILPF urges a broad, comprehensive educational policy, popularising the fundamental facts and language of the atomic age as potentially beneficent; and a close co-ordination on a world scale of plans developed by the United Nations and its specialised agencies to arrive at world understanding.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Having always worked for the abolition of the Death Penalty we have been greatly encouraged by the result of the free vote in the House of Commons on 16th February, 1956.

We are, however, gravely concerned that the Government has not subsequently agreed to implement this decision of the House by itself introducing a Bill for the abolition of the Death Penalty.

We urge on HM Government that every opportunity be given to accelerate the passage of Mr. Silverman's Bill through the House on an entirely free vote at all stages and in every respect.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER, 1955

1954		CURRENT LIABILITIES		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	1954		FIXED ASSETS		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
20	Accounts and Accrued Expenses						88	1	3	—	Office Furniture and Equipment								Not valued
	CAPITAL FUND—										CURRENT ASSETS								
	Balance 1st January, 1955	...	882	10	5					270	Balance at Bank	...	390	6	5				
	Less Transfer from Income and Expenditure Account	...	32	7	6					11	Cash in hand	...	3	8	9				
882							850	2	11		Co-operative Permanent Building Society—Deposit			544	9	0			
																	938	4	2
902							938	4	2										
	SPECIAL FUNDS—									902							938	4	2
	Ford Memorial Fund—										SPECIAL FUNDS—								
	Balance as per last account	...	70	7	5						Ford Memorial Fund—								
	Add Interest received	...	5	0	9						Co-operative Permanent Building Society, Deposit			...	59	3	2		
							75	8	2			Jane Addams Memorial Fund, British Section—							
	Less Payment during year	...	16	5	0							Cash at Post Office Savings Bank			...	94	10	3	
70							59	3	2										
	Jane Addams Memorial Fund, British Section—																		
	Balance as per last account	...	92	4	3														
	Add Interest received	...	2	6	0														
92							94	10	3										
	Agatha Harrison Memorial Fund—																		
	Balance as per last account	...	76	1	0						Agatha Harrison Memorial Fund—								
	Add amount received during year	...	16	0	10					76	Co-operative Permanent Building Society, Deposit			...	32	1	10		
							92	1	10										
	Less Payments in respect of Overseas Work	...	60	0	0														
76							32	1	10										
1140							£1,123	19	5		1140						£1,123	19	5

I have audited the accounts of the Women's International League for the year ended 31st December, 1955, and certify that, in my opinion, the foregoing accounts are properly drawn up so as to exhibit the position of affairs in accordance with the information given me and as shown by the books.

13, Womersley Road,
Crouch End, London, N.8.
21st March, 1956.

L. A. DAYAN, Incorporated Accountant,
Hon. Auditor

Printed by
H. G. MATHER LTD.
(T.U. throughout)
Lower Green
Mitcham, Surrey