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In Pursuit of Peace: Jane Addams and the Woman's Peace Movement

Elaine Anderson

In the middle of a war they gathered to discuss peace. They came from the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Belgium, Denmark, Austria, Great Britain, Hungary, Germany, Italy, Canada and the United States. They traveled across the war-torn lands and through the war-shattered cities of Europe. They sailed across an equally dangerous Atlantic Ocean in the spring of 1915 to meet at The Hague in the Netherlands. Why would 1,150 women risk their lives to gather in the midst of war to talk of peace? What were they trying to accomplish? Perhaps, it was because they felt so strongly about the importance of finding a peaceful solution to the misery of war that they were willing to over-look the hardships and dangers of their undertaking. Not satisfied with simply sitting around talking of peace, the delegates to the International Congress of Women also toured the warring European capitals, meeting with representatives from all parties concerned. As Kathryn Kish Sklar and Kari Amidon comment, the overriding goal of the women who attended the Congress was “to promote peace through personal diplomacy.”¹ Their chosen leader was social reformer and pacifist Jane Addams, head of the American delegation.

On April 13, 1915, forty-seven members of the

¹ Kathryn Kish Sklar and Kari Amidon, “How did Women Activists Promote Peace in Their 1915 Tour of Warring European Capitals?” *Women and Social Movements, 1600-2000*, Website: <http://womhist.binghamton.edu/>. (4/2005).

American delegation to the Hague Conference sailed from New York. Most prominent among the delegates was social activist Jane Addams. She had long been known for her work among the lowliest and poorest of Chicago's citizens. In 1889, Addams and her longtime friend, Ellen Gates Starr founded Hull House where, as noted by author Daniel Levine, she created "an effective challenge to a view of man as a selfish individual engaged in ceaseless battle with other selfish individuals."² As Hull House grew, both in size and reputation, Addams worked tirelessly on a seemingly endless parade of social issues. Like so many reform-minded social workers of the day, Addams joined the struggle to prohibit child labor, to promote better housing, and to regulate employment for women. In addition to her social work, Jane Addams was active in the women's suffrage movement.

While she had been an advocate for women's rights as early as 1897, it wasn't until 1906 that Addams became active in the woman suffrage movement itself. Historian Allen Davis notes that in that year she joined the National American Suffrage Association. Addams spoke to women's clubs, college students, faculties, and "in public lectures [argued] for woman's right and responsibility to take a more active roll in government and society."³ In 1912, she became involved in the Progressive Party and Theodore Roosevelt's campaign for the presidency. Like many other social reformers, Addams saw the Progressive Party as a means to bring about reform and social justice to America. Roosevelt

² Daniel Levine, *Jane Addams and the Liberal Tradition*. (Madison, WI: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1971), 37.

³ Allen F. Davis, *American Heroine: The Life and Legend of Jane Addams*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 188.

and the Progressive Party adopted a number of social issues in their campaign platform including a plank supporting women's suffrage. According to Allen Davis, in her involvement with the Progressive Party, Jane Addams saw a way "to help the cause of women and to promote woman suffrage."⁴

Addams had her differences with other supporters of the woman suffrage movement. Most advocated a closed system with the vote for upper- and middle-class women. Some even allowed that working-class women should have the vote. Jane Addams, however, consistently advocated the vote for all women, including poor and immigrant women. She maintained that immigrant women "needed the vote to protect themselves and their families from exploitation by government and society."⁵ She would testify before congressional committees and travel extensively through the East and Midwest speaking everywhere, arguing for the vote for all women, rich and poor alike, naturalized citizen as well as native-born. This concern for poor and immigrant women who worked long hours at mind-numbing jobs in order to see that their children had a better life was a theme to which Addams returned again and again. Mothers and children would also be at the heart of her pacifism.

Pacifism had been a part of the American landscape long before World War I. However, prior to the Great War pacifism had been sectarian in its nature. According to historian Charles Chatfield, pacifists had been "motivated by obedience to religious injunctions against killing and against complying with the mili-

⁴ Ibid., 184.

⁵ Ibid., 187.

tary,”⁶ and had not directly challenged government policy. In the years preceding World War I, peace advocates were businessmen and educational leaders. The peace movement had a definite patriarchal as well as elitist quality. These men valued order and distrusted any challenge to authority. However, with the advent of the war, the order they valued and the authority they trusted fell into disarray. By the time the United States entered the war, many of the peace movement’s leaders had joined the war effort causing a great deal of consternation within the movement. The movement became divided between those who desired peace and those who demanded it. Emotions ran high. In an article for *Forum*, John Bruce Michell wrote in 1916:

Before the European war it was not necessary for a Pacifist to defend his sanity. He was hailed a peacemaker. To-day the Pacifist is branded as disloyal, a coward, a propagandist. Voices that are now hushed by the din of dollars and the War Spirit once were hailed as exponents of a world peace. Some of the world’s greatest thinkers believed world peace possible, honorable regulation of local issues feasible. To-day the howl of preparedness cries like a hyena for blood through the land.⁷

Like Michell, there were many pacifists who refused to compromise their principles. According to

⁶ Charles Chatfield, “World War I and the Liberal Pacifist in the United States.” *The American Historical Review* Vol. 75, No. 7 (Dec., 1970), 1920.

⁷ John Bruce Michell, “Why I Am a Pacifist.” *Forum*. Jul 1916; VOL. LVI.

Chatfield, those wartime pacifists reorganized the American peace movement. They gave it “much of the structure, leadership, social concern, and rationale that would characterize it for over a generation.”⁸ This remnant of the pre-war peace movement viewed the war as a threat to the values they had worked so diligently to maintain. It was their belief that only a concerted social action could solve the problem of war. Historian Charles DeBenedetti notes that Jane Addams was one of those pacifists who believed that peace had its foundation in social action rather than in nationalism. Addams regarded peace as a social dynamic “that subsisted more in organized acts of simple decency than in the collaboration of nation-states.”⁹

Europe had been at war for almost three years by the time the United States entered the conflict in April 1917. By this time, the horrors of modern warfare were abundantly clear. Troops, on both sides, suffered under trench warfare; men ‘going over the top’ into the face of withering machine gun fire; and, for the first time, being bombarded from the sky by enemy aircraft. From the outset, American civilians had volunteered to work for the cause of the Allies. In their book, *The Last Days of Innocence: America at War, 1917-18*, authors Meirion and Susie Harries describe the appalling conditions these volunteers, many of them from the sheltered and privileged upper-class, faced on the Western Front in France. The Harries quote Dr. William Woolsey who, after a stint in a British casualty clearing station, wrote of the:

⁸ Chatfield, 1922.

⁹ Charles DeBenedetti, *The Peace Reform In American History*. (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press. 1980), 88.

Long lines of groaning or morphinised patients awaiting their turn to be put on the table. The task seemed simply hopeless. Seven tables were going night and day. We worked sixteen hours on and eight hours off in rush times. Abdomens followed amputations and as many as twelve shrapnel or shell wounds on the same man would stare you in the face.¹⁰

Dr. Woolsey was also witness to the catastrophic effects of the newest terror of the war – the air raid. He noted that while in the midst of surgery, three earth-shaking explosions racked the clearing station. When the lights came back on the devastation was clear. There were “a few pieces of twisted iron and a big twelve foot hole in the ground where the cook house used to be. The cook’s liver lay up against my bell tent wall...”¹¹ As the war in Europe ground on and the details of horrific battles, the inhumane slaughter of troops, and the newly recognized psychological effects of modern warfare became clear, pacifists, like Jane Addams vowed to do whatever they could to end the insanity.

By the end of 1914, there were a number of organizations dedicated to peace and peaceful solutions to war on both sides of the Atlantic. One of the most prominent organizations in the United States was the Women’s Peace Party founded in January 1915, by Jane Addams at the behest of suffragist Carrie Chapman Catt. As the former president of the principal

¹⁰ Meirion and Susie Harries, *The Last Days of Innocence: America at War, 1917-1918*. (New York: Random House, 1997) 45.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 46.

woman's suffrage organization, the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, Catt could see, as noted by C. Roland Marchand, the "potential *contributions* of women in the search for peace."¹² It was obvious to the leadership of the woman's suffrage movement that the peace movement in the United States was "over-masculinized."¹³ This was more than an ardent suffragist like Catt could tolerate. Men had tried and failed to keep the civilized nations from the horrors of war. Now it was time for women to bring forth a new movement based on morality, humanity, and just plain common sense. Carrie Chapman Catt approached Jane Addams about creating a new women's organization dedicated to promoting peace. Addams, the social reformer, suffragist and pacifist, was the logical choice. The New Willard Hotel in Washington, D.C. hosted the organizational meeting of the Women's Peace Party. Thereafter, the national headquarters would be in Chicago so that Party Chair Addams could continue her work at Hull House. The first seventy-seven delegates were from women's organizations as varied as the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the Women's Trade Union League, and the Women's National Committee of the Socialist Party. The author of an article in *Current Opinion*, in March 1915, called the manifesto of the Women's Peace Party "unsurpassed in power and moral fervor by anything that has been issued

¹² C. Roland Marchand, *The American Peace Movement and Social Reform, 1898-1918*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972), 188.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 192.

here or abroad since the Great War began.”¹⁴ The new organization’s manifesto included such demands as were common in all groups of the peace movement. They demanded a limitation of arms, mediation of the European conflict, the creation of international laws to prevent war, an international police force instead of armies and navies, the removal of the economic causes of war, and a governmental commission to promote international peace that included both men and women as participants. However, the heart of their manifesto read:

As women, we are especially the custodians of the life of the ages. We will no longer consent to its reckless destruction. As women we are particularly charged with the nurture of childhood and with the care of the helpless and the unfortunate. We will not longer accept without protest that added burden of maimed and invalid men and poverty-stricken widows and orphans which war places upon us...Therefore, as the mother half of humanity, we demand that our right to be considered in the settlement of questions concerning not alone the life of individuals but of nations be recognized and respected.¹⁵

Here for the first time women had created an organized effort to promote world peace. These women did not have the vote, but felt strongly enough about peace that for a time, the urgency of peace united the

¹⁴ “Ideals of Women Engaged In a Crusade for Peace.” *Current Opinion*. March 1915; Vol. LVIII, No. 3.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

various groups within the suffrage movement.

What appealed to both factions of the suffrage movement was primarily its position on women as ‘the mother half of humanity.’ Women were charged with the future of their children and the care of the sick and elderly and were to endure it all without protest. It was no longer enough, according to author Harriet Hyman Alonso, women “were sick and tired of being exploited as a result of poor governmental judgment, greed, and violence.”¹⁶ The position of the new organization hit a chord among women’s rights activists. Within a year the Women’s Peace Party had grown from an initial eighty-five charter members to 512 active members in thirty-three local branches. By the following February, there were 40,000 members in two hundred branches and affiliated groups.

As is the case in large organizations with members from varied backgrounds with varied opinions, the Women’s Peace Party had its own internal conflicts. Jane Addams in Chicago, and Lucia Ames Mead from Massachusetts favored a more conservative stance that addressed peace over suffrage. Their goal was to achieve the cooperation of government officials in keeping the United States neutral and out of the war altogether. The ‘radicals’ of the Women’s Peace Party were centered in the New York branch. The membership of the New York group also wanted to gain the cooperation of the government, but also sought “societal changes that would end the causes of war, especially where those causes had become ingrained

¹⁶ Harriet Hyman Alonso, *Peace As a Women’s Issue: A History of the U.S. Movement for World Peace and Women’s Rights*. (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press) 1993, 64.

within the economic and legal structures of the United States.”¹⁷ Crystal Eastman was the force behind the New York branch of the Women’s Peace Party. Eastman, a self-proclaimed socialist-feminist, was joined by other women who took a militant stand on women’s issues such as reproductive rights, labor unions, and, of course, suffrage. While the radical element of the Women’s Peace Party would ultimately split with the organization, in the beginning the primary focus of all parties was the continued neutrality and non-intervention on the part of the United States.

“Despite the war, women have held two international conferences in Europe in behalf of peace, which is more than men appear to have done.”¹⁸ So wrote the unknown author of an article for *Current Opinion* in July of 1915. In March, Jane Addams had received an invitation to attend an International Congress of Women to be held at The Hague in the Netherlands. The invitation came from the president of the Dutch suffrage society, Dr. Aletta Jacobs. She urged the members of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance “to unite and ‘make future wars impossible’”.¹⁹ Addams had her doubts about the whole affair, which she expressed in a letter to her friend and fellow suffragist, Lillian Wald. She considered the many possibilities of failure, “indeed, it may even do much harm,” however the fact that so many women were willing to fail may be what it would take to “break through that curious hypnotic spell which makes it

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 65.

¹⁸ “The Significance or Insignificance of Women’s Protest Against War.” *Current Opinion*. July 1915; Vol. LIX, No. 1.

¹⁹ Anne Wiltsher, *Most Dangerous Women: Feminist Peace Campaigners of the Great War*. (London: Pandora Press, 1985), 56.

impossible for any of the nations to consider peace.”²⁰ Addams overcame her doubts and decided to attend the Congress. It would be her first step toward the internationalization of the woman’s peace movement.

The Congress was originally to be held in Berlin. However, the onset of the war had caused the German suffragists to withdraw the invitation. In an effort to keep the peace movement from faltering, the Dutch society of suffragists took the initiative and offered to hold the conference in the neutral Netherlands. It was no small feat for the delegates to travel through a continent at war to attend the Congress. Three countries, Russia, France and England, made travel for their peace delegates virtually impossible. Only three of the 180 British delegates were able to get to the Congress. The three French delegates were imprisoned in France for preaching peace. The only Russian delegate to attend was a woman who was actually living in Germany at the time and escaped recognition as she traveled to The Hague. Belgian delegates were unable to get permission from German authorities to cross the frontier, although five Belgian women managed to pass through the frontier undetected. Then there were the American and Canadian delegates who crossed the Atlantic putting themselves at risk of U-boat activity.

Opening speeches to the International Congress of Women at The Hague were given on the evening of April 28, 1915. Initially there was some discord as a Belgian delegate pleaded for justice for her ravaged country and German delegates argued their country was fighting in self-defense. Ultimately, the focus of the Congress was shifted back to its original purpose

²⁰ Levine, 204.

– seeking a way to stop the madness of war. With Addams elected as president of the executive board, the conference delegates were able to get down to the business of finding a peaceful solution to the war. As they examined the issues before them it was very clear that ending the war in Europe was not going to be nearly enough. This international conference of women suffragists, pacifists, and social reformers was not going to be satisfied with anything less than the abolition of war altogether. Among the resolutions passed by the delegates was one “to [recognize] the right of people and nations...to independence and self-government,” and another “favoring arbitration and calling for the exertion of moral, social and economic pressure on nations refusing to refer their disputes to arbitration or conciliation.”²¹

Before the conference came to its conclusion, Rosika Schwimmer, a prominent Hungarian journalist and suffrage activist, urged the women to visit the leaders of the European nations and plead the cause of peace. “When our sons are killed by the millions, let us, mothers, only try to do good by going to the kings and emperors, without any other danger than a refusal.”²² The Congress made the decision to send two delegations to capital cities across Europe to discuss the idea of ongoing neutral mediation. From May through July, the two groups made thirty-five visits to heads of state in eleven countries. In the Introduction to *Women at The Hague*, editor Mercedes M. Randall notes that:

²¹“The Significance or Insignificance of Women’s Protest Against War.” *Current Opinion*. July 1915; Vol. LIX, No.1.

²² Alonso, 68.

Before their governments realized what the women were about, they had visited fourteen countries in five weeks (without benefit of autos and airplanes) and interviewed twenty-two prime ministers and foreign ministers, the presidents of two republics, a king, and the Pope.²³

Nothing like it had ever happened before. A delegation of ladies, with no experience in international affairs and no official standing, traveled from one warring capital to another attempting to talk the heads of state to come to their senses and accept neutral mediation. In most cases their reception was polite but non-committal.

The American press, however, had a field day with the women of the International Congress. Addams was singled out by the American press as an “unpatriotic subversive out to demasculinize the nation’s sons.”²⁴ One of the conferences most prominent detractors was Theodore Roosevelt. The former president proclaimed the women to be “hysterical pacifists” and said their platform was “both silly and base.”²⁵ More thoughtful detractors focused, not on the women as inexperienced meddlers, but rather on pacifism itself. While many thought the pacifist ideal laudable, they also saw it as flawed and, under the current conditions, inappropriate. In 1915, Philip Marshall Brown in an article entitled *The Dangers of Pacifism*, touched on several of

²³ Jane Addams, Emily G. Balch and Alice Hamilton. *Women at The Hague: The International Congress of Women and Its Results*. Edited by Mercedes M. Randall. (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1972), 12.

²⁴ Alonso, 69.

²⁵ Davis, 223.

the main sticking points of the pacifist ideal when war is at hand. Brown discussed the problems of the pacifist demand for arbitration. He noted that pacifists, in general, had no real concept of the nature of arbitration; that it is in reality the handmaid of diplomacy. When “diplomacy can find no solution, then war alone can decide” the issue.²⁶ American pacifists were discrediting the cause of peace by pressuring the European nations to accept mediation to solve their political problems. Brown applauded the United States policy of non-intervention believing that it was “an extremely prudent policy to observe at this crisis.”²⁷

Like many of the more ardent nationalists in America at the time, Brown also expressed his disgust with pacifism and “the spirit of cowardice” and materialism it was spreading among American men and boys.²⁸ He reviled the selfishness that would cause someone to shirk his Christian duty to help his fellow man:

In failing to glory in the magnificent idealism of the soldiers of all the opposing armies now in combat who are joyfully giving their lives for something not themselves, who are inspired by a transcendent national ideal, pacifism is leading the rising generation to worship at a sordid, selfish shrine. It is fostering a spirit of cowardice of a peculiarly abhorrent kind.²⁹

²⁶ Philip Marshal Brown, “The Dangers of Pacifism.” *The North American Review*. Jul 1915; VOL. CCII, No. 716, 61.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 62.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 64.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 65.

Pacifism, in short, belittled nationalism, loyalty and the sentiment of self-sacrifice. It was, at best, a nice idea that simply wouldn't work. At worst, it aided and abetted the enemy by demoralizing the American public and demonizing the men who fought and died for their country.

Addams personally suffered for her stance on the war. An offhand remark at the end of a speech she gave on her return to the United States in July 1915 created a firestorm of controversy and cost Addams dearly. As she concluded her talk, Addams remarked that one of the worst ordeals for soldiers was the bayonet charge. She continued on to say that every army had to give some kind of stimulant to the troops before they would engage in such an action. The Germans had a "regular formula," the English troops were given rum, and the French were given absinthe before a bayonet charge was possible.³⁰ The idea that troops had to be given alcohol before they could do their duty was a bombshell. The press and public, alike, went wild. Addams had openly challenged the myth that the "soldier fought and died because of his sense of duty and his love of country."³¹ The public was outraged. Addams was vilified in the press. Richard Harding Davis, a popular novelist and war correspondent, expressed the attitude of many when he commented that Addams denied the soldier the credit of his sacrifice, stripped him of his honor and courage, and told his children that their father did not die for them, instead "he died because he was drunk."³²

³⁰ Davis, 226.

³¹ Ibid., 226.

³² Ibid., 227.

In spite of all the campaigning and lobbying by the Women's Peace Party, the United States entered the war in April 1917. Jane Addams was profoundly saddened at the advent of war because so many women found satisfaction, even joy, in supporting the war effort. After much soul-searching, she began a speaking tour on behalf of Herbert Hoover's Department of Food Administration. In addition to speaking to housewives about food conservation, author Carrie Foster notes that Addams "stressed the importance of creating an international organization after the war," in an effort to "preserve peace."³³ She continued to speak and write on the role of women as providers. The Women's Peace Party also followed Addams' low-key, non-threatening approach and concentrated its efforts on education always keeping its focus on the establishment of an international organization dedicated to peace. When President Woodrow Wilson presented his Fourteen Points in a speech to Congress in January 1918, the Women's Peace Party enthusiastically endorsed Wilson's "goals for a postwar world of peace and stability."³⁴ Wilson had adopted virtually every one of the resolutions passed at The Hague Congress.

With the signing of the armistice on November 11, 1918, the Great War officially came to an end. As they had planned, the women who had attended the International Congress of Women at The Hague in 1915 began organizing a second meeting of the Congress. They met in mid-May 1919 at Zurich. There were 211

³³ Carrie A. Foster, *The Women and the Warriors: The U.S. Section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 1915-1946*. (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1995). 27.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 28.

participants from across Europe who attended the Zurich meeting. They protested the blockade of Germany and the terms of the Versailles Treaty. “How could disarming only one nation create world peace?”³⁵ They approved, in principle, of the League of Nations, but felt that all nations should be invited to participate, especially Germany. The women also advocated a charter be incorporated into the Treaty allowing for equal rights for women, including suffrage. Among the other items the group recommended to be a part of the women’s charter was an “economic provision for the service of motherhood.”³⁶ Most of the delegates had worked tirelessly for women’s rights over the years. They worked for economic and personal freedoms through both trade unions and socialist parties. Their cause was peace and social justice for women and children. Even though the war, which had brought them together in 1915, was now over, the second International Congress of Women could see their work toward a lasting peace was not done. Delegate Catherine Marshall proposed that a permanent organization be formed. Marshall stated that “only in freedom is permanent peace possible.”³⁷ The delegates decided that their international sisterhood should continue as the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom.

Jane Addams was elected the first president of the League. In the true meaning of sisterhood, the German delegation was given equal representation. How could it be otherwise? The Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom was, unlike the League

³⁵ Alonso, 81.

³⁶ Ibid., 82.

³⁷ Wiltsher, 210.

of Nations, open to women from every nation, as well as women from any nationality who thought of themselves as separate from the group in power. This created an ethnic diversity not seen in the League of Nations. In November of 1919, the U.S. Women's Peace Party voted to become the U.S. Section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

In the end, Jane Addams and the Women's Peace Movement left a permanent mark on the American landscape. For Addams, peace was not something that one could simply say was desirable. Peace was a way of life – a way to preserve life. She fought, not only to end war, but to end the causes of war. She realized early on that women were the victims of war as much as the soldiers who fought and died. Women's bodies could be violated, their homes could be destroyed, and their children could be left to starve. If their men came home at all, they were often physically maimed or mentally scarred leaving women with an additional burden to bear. Women had a vested interest in peace. Historian Terrance MacMullan wrote that:

Addams chose women as her audience because she recognized that women were habitually and experientially familiar with the devastation of war in ways that men were not...women are not innately more compassionate, but more practiced at experiencing human need and less familiar with the opiates of masculine honor, nationalism, and antagonism that dull men to the waste of war.³⁸

³⁸ Terrance MacMullan, "On War as Waste: Jane Addams's Pragmatic Pacifism." *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*. Vol. 15, No. 2, 2001, 97.

According to Daniel Levine, when Jane Addams entered the Rockford Female Seminary in the fall of 1877, she entered an institution where feminism was taken seriously by the faculty. From the very beginning of her education, she was taught “women had a supreme duty to preserve morality, culture, and the heritage of western civilization.”³⁹ Addams believed that women had a responsibility to oppose war. They were the mothers of each new generation and, therefore, responsible for the care and education of the future of humanity.

Women’s suffrage also played a critical role in the peace movement. Career suffragist, Addams was fervent in her belief that women should have the same rights as men. “All women needed the franchise in order to bring their natural human sympathies more effectively to bear on the problems of industrial America.”⁴⁰ A woman who could vote would be able to protect herself and her children from exploitation. It was an easy step from suffrage to pacifism. Women were the nurturers of human kind and they would not sit idly by and watch it be destroyed by men’s vanity. The women’s demand for the vote was based on their responsibility to the community and those social issues that fell into the feminine domain. The prevention of war was one of the single most important issues of the day. As “the mother half of humanity” women had a right to speak out and make their voices heard in regard to the war and America’s neutrality.

While the United States ultimately went to war in 1917, the importance of Jane Addams and the Women’s Peace Party cannot be underestimated.

³⁹ Levine, 17.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 181.

Addams and the women of the Party performed feats unheard of in that day and age. Women traveling throughout a war-torn continent to sue for peace and demand an end to war forever had never before happened. Party members suffered ridicule and scorn from political leaders and the public alike. But did they accomplish anything in their pursuit of social justice and peace? The Treaty of Versailles was a miserable failure. The brutal terms imposed on Germany only helped to foster the rise of Adolf Hitler and lead to World War II. The League of Nations, a first-ever attempt to create a body of nations working together to solve economic and social issues in an effort to prevent future wars, was ultimately a failure as well. These entities were devised and conducted by men who were incapable of rising above personal and political pettiness and animosity.

Jane Addams and the women of the W.I.L.P.F., however, accomplished the one thing that men had not been able to do – create a permanent organization dedicated to peace that is all-inclusive. Today, the W.I.L.P.F. is still an active organization dedicated to peace. In their mission statement, the women of the W.I.L.P.F. pay tribute to Jane Addams and the other ‘founding mothers’ who recognized over ninety years ago that “peace is not rooted only in treaties between great powers or a turning away of weapons alone, but can only flourish when it is also planted in the soil of justice, freedom, non-violence, opportunity and equality for all.”⁴¹

⁴¹ *Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom*.
Website: <http://www.wilpf.org/>. (April 2005).