

THE SYNDICALIST INTERNATIONAL

At its recent conference in London the Industrial Syndicalist Educational League of England decided to call an international Syndicalist conference to discuss the question of war. This conference is to be held as soon as practicable.

The holding of this conference is most advisable. It should receive the hearty support of Syndicalists the world over. Indeed, such conferences should be held periodically, as there is a pressing need for the Syndicalist movements of the various countries to get in closer touch with each other. At present they are isolated, no bonds existing between them other than those of common ideas. The Syndicalists are barred from the international Socialist congress, as this body recognizes only those organizations endorsing political action. With the exception of the French, they are also excluded from the labor union international—the International Secretariat. This is owing to the fact that this body only admits one organization (always the largest) and two delegates from each country. This arrangement effectively shuts out all the Syndicalist minorities.

The International Secretariat is a creature of the Socialist politicians. They use it as a buffer to protect their International Socialist congress from the Syndicalists. The only reason they allow it to exist is because it prevents a genuine labor union international from being formed. They keep it emasculated in size and functions, so that it can't come into competition with the International Socialist congress, as a live international immediately would.

Owing to the peculiar conditions prevailing in the various countries, it may be inadvisable at this time to start a live labor union international in opposition to the fake International Secretariat, but an international Syndicalist propaganda organization could most profitably be formed. Or, failing in this, at least, there should be international conferences held from time to time. The benefit that would result from these would be immense. There couldn't be the objections to these that there would be to a new international.

It is to be hoped that the proposed London conference does not limit itself to the question of war. There are numerous other questions that should be discussed. One of the many that might be cited is the question of what kind of a new society we are striving to found. Kropotkin has eloquently pointed out the necessity of knowing what we are aiming at. At present there are many conflicting theories—the communistic theory of the C. G. T., the industrial state of the I. W. W.; the Pouget-Pataud theory of double federation of producing labor unions on one side and the federation of distributing co-operatives on the other; the theory that the miners will own the mines, the railroaders own the railroads, etc.; the shop organization theory, etc. A thorough discussion of these various theories would do much to clear up the confusion that exists today in the international movement on this important matter.

By all means, let us have the proposed conference. It is to be hoped that the S. L. of N. A. will have one or more delegates present.

WM. Z. FOSTER.