

I felt it as a great honour and an even greater responsibility to be the first person to put words to a Manifesto for the Centenary. I started by doing a lot of reading, of course. I wanted the Manifesto to be soundly rooted both in the League's historic beliefs and our contemporary programmes.

But, perhaps inevitably, I know I've left a lot of my own thinking in the document and I'm still not sure whether this is regrettable-but-inevitable, or whether I really could and should have tried harder to divest the document of my own philosophy. I think I just buried the doubt and hung onto a belief that the consultation process would eventually sort it out.

That process was long and slow. The e-mails and attachments I received back from all the Sections, when printed, amounted to around 200 pages of comment and criticism. I worked out a way to read the document line by line against all the comments. The problem was that comments tended to contradict each other. Some were saying the document could be more feminist, others that it should be less feminist; it could be more anti-capitalist, should be less revolutionary; men should be members, men are members, men should not be members. And so it went. In these cases sometimes a little moderation of expression could help, but in many cases in the last resort I had to make a choice, looking for evidence in WILPF texts, but undoubtedly expressing my own inclinations too.

When I passed the draft on to the Executive Committee, I thought - now's the time to let go. I said, 'Please, you now make any changes you see fit, and pass it directly to the International Board'. That wasn't easy to do - it was quite hard not to feel possessive about it. But, as it turned out, what was presented at Congress in The Hague seemed to be pretty much recognisable as my draft. It hasn't disappointed me. I was very relieved at the overwhelming 'yes' vote. Now I just hope it turns out to be a useful and usable document, online and in print, for a few years to come.