

# BWSA and SWSI in Exile in World War II: Toward the Regeneration of the International Workers' Sport Movement

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The Socialist Workers' Sport International (SWSI) was established in Ghent, Belgium in 1913. It suffered serious damage from aggression by fascist nations and the two World Wars. The SWSI held Workers' Olympiads for non-privileged classes before World War II, was reorganized as the Comité Sportive Internationale du Travail (CSIT) in 1946, and changed its name to the Confédération Sportive Internationale du Travail (CSIT) in 1991.

Previous research on the history of the SWSI has not clarified the process of regeneration of the organization in World War II, and the main subject of this paper is to show its work in this period, when its leaders took refuge in London.

The work of the SWSI during the War was carried out by the Provisional Committee of the SWSI, which consisted both of officials of the British Workers' Sport Association (BWSA) and of leaders of workers' sport movements in Europe. The main task of this Committee was to maintain the human relations that would be needed when the SWSI was rebuilt after World War II. The Committee put forth the reports and appeals necessary at the height of rebuilding the SWSI and afterwards, and promoted friendship among refugees in London by holding matches such as the International Chess Match.

The International Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU) provided support to the SWSI and to this Committee. The Trades Union Congress (TUC), which controlled labor movements in Britain, provided the list of leaders of workers' sport organizations which took refuge in London. Further, the first World Conference of Trade

Unions was used for the regeneration of the SWSI after the War. In October 1945, the Paris conference of the SWSI, which discussed plans to rebuild the organization, was held soon after the second World Conference of Trade Unions was held in Paris.