

February Report to Program Committee for the WILPF DISARM/ End Wars Issue Committee

Those items highlighted in yellow are action items from our 2014 February action calendar. Reports are of action taken in February re these important concerns. Other actions are ongoing or related to calendar items in earlier or later months.

There are currently four areas in our work. These are

- I. ABOLISHING NUCLEAR WEAPONS
- II. SHUTTING DOWN THE NUCLEAR WEAPONS COMPLEX
- III. KEEPING SPACE FOR PEACE
- IV. BANNING MILITARY USE OF DRONES

I. ABOLISHING NUCLEAR WEAPONS

1. **February 10-15** -- Civil Society participation in Nayarit Conference. Committee members Jackie Cabasso and Alice Slater will attend. The committee contributed \$1,000 toward the travel expenses of Alice Slater (*New York at large* and Disarm/End Wars committee member), with the understanding that she will report back to us on results of this joint conference of government and NGO delegates in Mexico and be available for speaking engagements organized by WILPF Branches or members. **Contact Alice Slater aslater@rcn.com.**

Alice could not join our monthly phone call because she was flying back from Mexico. Jackie Cabasso (*East Bay at-large*), who also attended, did join our call and reported 146 nations sent official delegations and about 100 invited NGO delegates met with them. I-CAN (off shoot of IPPNW) organized strategy meetings for NGOs before and after the conference. Around 20 nations expressed direct interest in starting a Ban Treaty process outside the UN (as was done with Land Mines and Cluster Bombs) to negotiate a Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty. Leaders include Mexico, Austria, Costa Rica and Malaysia. This was the hoped for result of most NGOs present. **Read Reaching Critical Will report here.** Authors are Ray Acheson (*Canada*), Beatrice Fihn (*Sweden*) and Katherine Harrison (*USA*).

Katherine started as a US intern in Philadelphia then later moved to Geneva WILPF where she worked on nuclear issues. However she began taking initiative on the cluster bombs treaty and soon was working with Norway which was hosting the process (as Canada had done previously with Jody Foster on the land mines treaty). Our former US intern Katherine's experience is now an invaluable asset for WILPF and the NGO community.

2. **February 12-14 - Second inter-governmental conference on Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear**, Nayarit, Mexico. Disarm/End Wars committee members Jackie and Alice actively participated.

Read [I-Can campaign news](#) on the conference, including closing speech of Ray Acheson for WILPF and I-Can. We recommend that you take a few minutes to explore the site. Both Ray and Beatrice are on the I-Can Board. I-Can, like PSR in the US, is a part of *International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War* (IPPNW). *Reaching Critical Will* and WILPF US have both worked very closely with IPPNW since the founding of RCW in 1998.

3. February 18 -[Judge Sends Transform Now Plowshares Resisters to Prison](#): Ellen Thomas, Coralie Farlee and Clare Hanrahan (*North Carolina at large*) attended the sentencing of Megan Rice (who is now a WILPF member) and her companions. Read Megan's statement and report on the trial at Transform Now Plowshares (*website above*). If you wish to help support Megan (or Michael and Greg) **contact Coralie at cfarlee@mindspring.com**. Megan's response in court (and much more) can be accessed from the side bar on the right.

4. Legislative action: Disarm/End Wars committee is securing a Program intern to help rebuild our WILPF legislative program, *EYE on Congress*. She will also prepare fact sheets to share with WILPF Branches, members, Congress and our communities. In the meantime we urge members and Branches to support HR 1650 and HR 1506.

- a) **[HR 1650](#)**: Eleanor Holmes Norton (Washington D.C. delegate is originator of the bill. She is speaking to International Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament in Washington D.C. of which Senator Markey (D-Ma) is co-President. Ellen Thomas is attending and filming Norton's speech. **Contact Ellen Thomas at et@prop1.org** for resources to invite your own Representative to co-sponsor HR 1650.
- b) **[HR 1506](#)**: This bill urges steps toward nuclear disarmament which are also needed to mitigate insanity of current policies which could easily lead to our own destruction. The steps are all supported by WILPF although we go further, insisting on abolition. 37 House Progressives already support this HR 1506. To help build support in our communities **contact Carol Urner at carol.disarm@gmail.com**. Her Congressman, Earl Blumenauer, is now the lead promoter and he is giving Carol a "lifetime award" for her work on nuclear abolition (though it is not yet achieved!)
- c) **[On February 27 new versions of the SANE Act](#)** were introduced in the House and Senate.

5. WMD Free Zone in Middle East: Disarm/End Wars and Middle East Committees are working closely together on this. **Contact Odile Hugonot Haber at odilehh@gmail.com** to join us in this effort. In February Odile issued an e-action alert on the December 2012 Haifa conference and cancelled UN Helsinki conference. Jackie Cabasso shared on the conferences with San Francisco and San Jose Branches and she and Odile are available to speak elsewhere on this major effort to rid the Middle East of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Jackie can also help Branches prepare for support for HR 1650 and

the US Conference of Mayors, both of which urge nuclear weapons abolition by 2020. **Contact Jackie Cabasso at wslf@earthlink.net**

II. DISMANTLING THE NUCLEAR MILITARY INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

Much of our work on weapons abolition is in this area because these profiteering nuclear industries promote and help create nuclear weapons at the same time they threaten our own and future generations of life on earth. Most of them also rely on taxpayer subsidies.

1. **Nuclear Power:** Nuclear power plants were developed to furnish plutonium for nuclear weapons, and must be dismantled along with those weapons. Hattie Nestel in February has been organizing the tour in New England and across the nation of Pradeep Indulkar with his short film *High Power* on disasters for communities created by installation of US made nuclear power plants in India. **Contact Hattie Nestel at hattieshalom@verizon.net** for fliers and tour and background information. Pradeep's DVD is a powerful argument for closing down nuclear power, source of plutonium for bombs wherever located. In India the US is thus also knowingly supporting development of that country's nuclear weapons program rather than seeking to bring that country under the *Nuclear Weapons Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)*.

We are beginning to mobilize California WILPF support for the powerful challenges of Senator Barbara Boxer to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and federal government over San Onofre and Diablo power plants, including a threatened suit against the NRC. Hattie has again been supplying us with the information.

2. **Uranium mining:** Join work on Charmaine Whiteface's proposed moratorium on uranium mining until existing and abandoned mines are cleared of dangerous radioactive waste. Charmaine Whiteface (*South Dakota Oglala Sioux nation at large*), Pat Birnie and Coralie Farlee (*both Washington D.C. Branch*) continue to work with Representative Grijalva (*Tucson Arizona and Progressive Caucus co-chair*) and a coalition (mainly of Native Americans) on drafting the bill. **Contact Pat Birnie patbirnie@greenbicycle.net**. New Disarm/End Wars committee member Crystal Zenon (*Montpelier VT Branch*) has produced an excellent **[video on Charmaine's project](#)**, which you can watch and share with your Branch or community.

3. **Nuclear Waste:** Ruth Thomas (*North Carolina at large*) and Kay Cumbow (*Michigan at large*) continue to communicate and work on waste issues. For information on stopping transport of highly radioactive liquid waste from Canada to Oak Ridge Tennessee. Contact Ruth Thomas through **[Ellen Thomas at et@prop1.org](mailto:et@prop1.org)**.

III. KEEPING SPACE FOR PEACE

We have been preparing for the March 13-16 *Global Network Conference* in Santa Barbara and at Vandenberg Air Force Base. MacGregor Eddy, Sheila Goldner and Carol Urner are attending for our committee. We hope many other WILPFers who are already on the GN mailing list will also be attending. US militarization of space is a threat to all other nations and a major block to nuclear weapons abolition, disarmament and ending wars. Emphasis will be on the Pacific Pivot and there will be plenty on drones as well. For information, visit the [Global Network website](#).

IV. ENDING DRONE WARFARE

Time now to plan actions for April and May focusing on banning militarized drones. Joan Ecklein (*Boston Branch*) and Marge Van Cleef (*Philadelphia Branch*) are facilitating this project for our committee. Marge serves on the national committee which is coordinating actions nationwide during April's planned emphasis on banning weaponized drones and drone warfare.

WILPF-US endorses the Know Drones Project:

Check out the Spring Days of Action Weekly Bulletins and you will find Macgregor Eddy (*Monterey Branch*) and other WILPFers active there. Joan Ecklein has been contacting Branches to learn what members are active on this issue. She also can provide a tool kit for April actions on drones. **Contact Joan Ecklein joanecklein@comcast.net** .

Leah Bolger has introduced WILPF members to the [Drone Quilt Project](#). Memorialize a civilian drone victim on a quilt panel. **Contact Leah Bolger LeahBolger@comcast.net** for names. Leah (*Corvallis WILPF Branch*) is stitching the panels into quilts and displaying them around the country. You can also arrange a display in your community. Working on the quilt would be a good Branch action project for April and May.

V. OTHER DISARM/END WARS PROJECTS OF MEMBERS AND BRANCHES

Let us know other Disarm/End Wars projects you are working on. Our priority for 2014 continues to be nuclear weapons abolition and dismantling the nuclear military industrial complex. However, our committee exists to offer support to other members or Branch projects that are steps toward the general and complete disarmament WILPF continues to seek. Requirement is the passion to work on the issue and to listen and learn as you participate in our Issue Committee. Funding may be available. **Contact Carol Urner at carol.disarm@gmail.com and/or Ellen Thomas at et@prop1.org**