

Peace & Freedom

MAGAZINE OF THE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

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Celebrating 85 Years of Activism



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- JAPA Children's Book Award, *page 29* • Reaching Critical Will, *page 8*

Honoring Paula Tasso

After 16 years as the United Nations Representative for U.S. WILPF and serving as a member of the National Board, Paula Tasso has resigned. At the United Nations, Paula first covered discussions on the environment. She was twice invited to the former Soviet Union to present workshops on The Bruntland Report for an international environmental study. She later covered the U.N. Disarmament Committee. Paula wrote a regular United Nations column for *Peace & Freedom*. Her columns were a pleasure to read, informative and well written.



Paula was the latest in a long line of distinguished WILPF representatives to the United Nations: Gladys Walser, Ruth Sillman, Betsy Fehrer, Anne Florant and many others. Her productive work on behalf of WILPF and her devotion to the United Nations will be greatly missed.

— *Ruth Chalmers*, Jane Addams Peace Association

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The artwork featured on our cover was created by Jane Norling for the RISIN' UP...LIVE-1992 Our Legacy of Resistance, Empowering Women of Color Conference in California. Norling is a San Francisco-based artist/graphic designer/muralist who has worked for 30 years to achieve social and economic justice. With Norling's permission, WILPF's Uniting For Racial Justice Campaign has adopted her piece, "Women Dancing," as its logo.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)

has been working since 1915

to unite women worldwide who oppose oppression and exploitation. WILPF stands for equality of all people in a world free of racism, sexism and homophobia; the building of a constructive peace through world disarmament; and the changing of government priorities to meet human needs.

National Program: WILPF envisions a world

free of violence, poverty, pollution and domination — a genuine new world order of peace and justice. WILPF's program stands firm for disarmament and against oppression. The 2000-2003 program cycle has three key campaign areas: Challenging Corporate Power; Disarmament; and Racial Justice. Each campaign area focuses on local and national effectiveness in creating lasting social change.

WILPF has sections in 37 countries

coordinated by an international office in Geneva. U.S. WILPF carries out its work through grassroots organizing by WILPF branches, coordinated by a national office in Philadelphia. WILPF supports the work of the United Nations and has NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) status.

We invite all people who support our goals to join us.

With WILPF at the Beginning of the Millennium

.....
Mary Day Kent, Executive Director
.....

As I begin my time with WILPF, I am very conscious of this moment as a point with a strong pull to both the past and the future. We are looking at our history, the 85 years of struggle and survival for ourselves and the earth we live on, and we are newly reorganized and planning our work that begins in the second millennium of our experience.

My brief tenure as WILPF's executive director has been intensely devoted to learning about all aspects of the organization and in the process I have encountered my memory of the first time I ever learned about WILPF. It was when the Jeannette Rankin Brigade was formed to protest the Vietnam War in 1968. Jeannette Rankin herself participated, and I remember the sense of astonishment I felt at the time. To learn that there was such a person, a woman who was in Congress before World War I, a woman (indeed, anyone) who voted against both World Wars, and a woman who was still living and still protesting war, was deeply inspiring. The Jeannette Rankin Brigade seems a perfect example of WILPF at its strongest, drawing on the full history of the country's oldest women's peace organization and using that history and strength to act on the urgent and controversial issues of the day.

One of the most exciting aspects of working with this new/old organization is the willingness I see to

undergo change. The hard work of the "mavens" that has brought forth a new structure presents challenges and adjustments for all, members, staff and Board. From my experiences with other peace groups, I will confess that I am deeply impressed with WILPF for



deciding on a commitment to the three national campaigns and for the quality, urgency and depth of the programs each campaign is advancing. This issue of *Peace & Freedom* is focused on the new programs and the new working structure of WILPF, a venture to link our magazine as directly as possible to the actions and concerns of the membership through our branches, regions, campaigns, committees and national Board.

I see the months ahead in the new millennium brimming with challenge and action. As highlighted in the pages beyond, we will be reaching out to campuses to hold Race Raves as part of the Uniting for Racial Justice campaign, we will be a presence in Washington with the "ImPEACE the Congress" visits, we will be fomenting democracy in our Corporations study groups, and we will be mobilizing across the United States to focus on the United Nations during the Non-Proliferation Treaty review in April and around the many actions marking the fifth year anniversary of the Beijing U.N. Conference on Women.

As your new executive director, I can only say how grateful I am to have the chance to join WILPF in all these next steps. Thank you. ❖

WILPF SUPPORTS CONGRESS "LADIES"



Sen. Jesse Helms ordered Capitol police to remove 10 congresswomen from an open Senate hearing in late October when they tried to present him with a letter supporting CEDAW — the United Nations Convention on Ending All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Helms, chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, blocked a Senate vote on the 1979 U.N. treaty. The congresswomen decided to attend the Senate hearing after trying unsuccessfully for three months to meet with Helms.

Four officers escorted the women by the elbows out of the meeting, after Helms told them to act like "ladies." WILPF sent flowers to each of the 10 women, including Reps. Lynn Woolsey, Nancy Pelosi and Barbara Lee of California; Nita M. Lowey of New York; Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin; Eddie Bernice Johnson of Texas; Corrine Brown of Florida; Janice Schakowsky of Illinois; Patsy T. Mink of Hawaii and Delegate Donna M. Christian-Christensen of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

WILPF thanked the "ladies" for carrying on our 85-year-struggle for women's rights. ❖



Reader's Forum

DEBATING THE BALKANS

Dear Editor:

It was good that you ran the Roberta Spivek article. In my own struggle with the concepts of nonviolence, I finally found great peace of mind when I concluded that there are occasions when force is needed. Not violence, which is unthinking, but some controlled form of force. Let's face it—there are occasions when some children in some circumstances need some restraint against wild arm swinging, or a slap on the wrist, or possibly one whack on the behind. Similarly, I say to those of us in the peace movement, accept that good police officers are essential. This need is both local and international.

Charles Walton
San Jose, CA

Dear Editor:

Let me join in the debate Roberta Spivek wanted to stimulate with her "Wrestling With Intervention" piece. Spivek urges that we evaluate "what is most helpful" to the Kosovo Albanians and not "rule out...the use of armed force" but she does not look closely enough at whose interest this use of force has served.

Let me recommend three articles to readers who want to have a clearer idea of the interests served by a U.S. ("NATO") presence in the Balkans. The first, by Sara Flounders, is called "Bosnia Tragedy: The unknown role of the Pentagon" and is a chapter in *NATO in the Balkans: Voices of Opposition*, published in 1998 by the International Action Center in New York. (212-633-6646; iacenter@iacenter.org). The other two appeared in *Foreign Affairs* in Jan/Feb and Mar/April 1995. The first, by Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Carter's National Security Adviser, is called "A Plan for Europe." The second, by Richard Holbrooke, the new U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, "America, A European Power."

They show that the U.S. sees its role in the Balkans as part of the larger reality — that the U.S. is now the only super-power and must make sure that it is, and will remain, in a position to make all of Europe (and the rest of the world) safe for U.S. capital. Note the contrast of U.S. moral posturing in the Balkans with what is currently happening vis-a-vis Indonesia and East Timor.

Re "ethnic cleansing," there is extreme moral relativism of U.S. use of that phrase, and peace and justice activists must not fall in line behind U.S. selectivity. That brings me to Spivek's invocation of the Holocaust—always a mistake because it silences discus-

sion rather than furthering it. Being myself a Hitler refugee, I find it easier not to be silenced...

I am afraid we need to do our homework any time we feel tempted to support U.S. government policies at home or abroad.

Ruth Hubbard
Cambridge, MA

Editor:

I just read the unfortunate article ("WILPFers Join Thousands to Protest Bombing") in *Peace & Freedom* on WILPF participation in the June 5 anti-bombing protest. It reflects a mindless attempt to put the problems of the former Yugoslavia into a cold war framework. For some of you, the Balkan tragedy begins on March 24, 1999, with the initial NATO bombing. Your attitude on the situation can be summed up in a few words: "Bombing — b-a-a-a-d. Not bombing — g-o-o-o-d." Saves you from ever having to think... .

Serbia happens to be a modern fascist state responsible for starting four wars in nine years. Instead of trying to understand the situation, you rely on rhetoric of others who are equally uninformed. If you can't even recognize fascism when it surfaces in such an aggressive way as it did in Serbia, then, I'm afraid you're lost.

I agree that NATO acted badly, but only because it failed to use ground troops and low flying planes, which would have prevented the Serbs from virtually emptying Kosovo of its Albanian population. It also would have prevented most of the civilian deaths and other mistakes one makes from a distance of 15,000 feet. . .

I am part of a Bosnia solidarity organization, founded mostly by those of us who have a link to the Holocaust. We care because of the awesome parallels between what the ultranationalist Serbs did to non-Serbs in Bosnia and what the Nazis did to the Jews. Our sole purpose is to hold the U.S. Government accountable for its Balkan policy.

DeDe Faller
Bosnia Support Committee

Peace & Freedom received many letters responding to Roberta Spivek's piece, "Wrestling with Intervention," which ran in the Sept/Oct issue (see page 22 for more on that topic); as well as our Nov/Dec prison issue. Please send letters to Peace & Freedom, Editor, WILPF, 1213 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107-1691 or email to peacefreedom@wilpf.org. Please try to keep your letters to 300 words. We reserve the right to choose and edit letters.

WELFARE REFORM'S DIRTY SECRET

Dear Editor:

It was a relief to see that Cheri Honkala of the Kensington Welfare Rights Union wrote an article on poverty ("Human Rights at Home" Sept./Oct.) for *Peace & Freedom*.

With the Welfare Reform deadlines looming it is important to know what mothers who have not been able to become employed are facing. Welfare Reform first became a reality in Wisconsin and the Welfare Warriors reported that children were removed to state custody if the mothers were unable to find work. In Massachusetts, Welfare Reform has similarly removed children of mothers who were unsuccessful in securing employment...

The Federal Adoption and Safe Families Act calls for speedy adoption of the children and \$5,000 per-child bounties offered to states that adopt children out of poor mothers' arms. This year an Emergency Appropriation doubled the cash available to the states because they had done "such a good job" of adopting out the children of the poor.

Battered women seeking help had their children removed by the very agencies they went to for assistance.

Because WILPF is an organization dedicated to the empowerment of women, I would like to see more illumination on the struggles of the one in five mothers who left batterers rather than subject their children to trauma. The resulting poverty was bad enough. The termination of income and food and housing and health care is barely reported in the mainstream media. The loss of the children is a dirty little secret...

We can slow the destruction of families by talking about it and writing about it and asking about it. Please, let us stop and take a look at the real effects of Welfare Reform and decide if we really want to pay for the removal of children from their mothers and the sale of them to the more well off.

Susan B. Landry
Cape Cod



WOMEN IN PRISON

Dear Editor:

This letter is mostly to congratulate you on a splendid and really helpful issue on women in prison, with two cavils.

There is a such an overwhelming amount wrong with prisons, the ideas behind their organization, the attitudes that drive their administrators and staffs, and the social system that finds them

so useful, that it must have been hard to choose which aspects to cover. You gave a very well balanced picture of the horrors experienced by the women inside.

Cavil 1: On page 7, Lori B. Girshick finishes up a pretty good account of the forces that drive many women into prison with a most irritating remark: "Those of us women not in prison cells are just in more comfortable cages."

This remark ... is a serious insult to the many women who know what it is to have lost all freedom of choice, of companions, of activities, of noise level, of privacy...

Cavil 2: Your cover picture is a stunner, about the most devastating photo I've seen of women on a chain gang. The idea of women (even more than men, although that's a vile idea, too) on a chain gang at all is so frightful, that I was surprised and disappointed that there was no article covering the subject. You can't do everything in one issue, I know, but the desolation of that picture called for some elucidation.

Carol Bernstein Ferry
Rye, New York

Dear Editor:

I appreciated the articles on "Women in Prison" in the recent issue of *Peace & Freedom*. So did my husband, Richard, who advocates the abolition of prisons, and has attended five U.N. congresses on "The Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders."

I thought you might like to have information about the 9th International Conference on Penal Abolition to be held in Toronto, May 10 -13, 2000... I think many WILPF members are concerned about the injustice of the laws, the courts and the prisons. We hope some members may be able to attend this conference. For more information, please see the website at www.interlog.com/~ritten/home.html or call (416) 972-9992.

Elizabeth Broughton
Toronto

Dear Editor:

Congratulations and thanks for the latest issue of *Peace & Freedom* on Women in Prison. The whole issue is superb and in an ideal world would get wide circulation. Not only is it full of valuable information but the level of writing is impressive — better than any I've seen on the subject anywhere. And thank you also for the moving account of Lori Berenson's continuing ordeal. It was a reminder that we should all redouble our efforts to persuade our own government to act in her behalf.

The whole issue was a reminder that WILPF is an organization we can be proud of and grateful for.

Rachelle Marshall
Stanford, CA

Uniting for Racial Justice

Laura Partridge



Writing, talking, thinking and doing something towards the goal of racial justice has consumed most of my years on this planet. Even as a child, the “problem” (as my parents and grandparents referred to racism) was ever present in my life. I pray one day, in my lifetime, I won’t have to write, talk or think about racism anymore.

I come to you from a rather unusual position. Recently, in June 1999, I was appointed to WILPF’s National Board. The slot I filled is that of Campaign Coordinator for the Uniting for Racial Justice: Truth, Reparations, Restoration and Reconciliation (UFORJE) effort. This campaign was formerly known as the Truth and Reconciliation campaign. Between November and January, I was on leave from the board and working for WILPF as a paid consultant. Of course, the consulting I did was on the subject of racial justice. The point is, I have been provided a rare opportunity to see WILPF from two very different perspectives. My being a woman of African descent, (African American) makes this view unique. My thoughts may appear slightly “mixed up” between my board self and my staff self, so please try to keep my station in mind.

First, the dedicated women who served on the Truth and Reconciliation Issues Committee must be congratulated and thanked. Their tenacity and hard work provided the substance required to be selected as one of WILPF’s three major campaigns. The campaign selection process, as a first-time procedure, was indeed historic. To have the issue of racial justice emerge as a nationally elected crusade made the new method even more eventful.

But, now what happens? The campaign has been chosen as a priority. This is certainly in keeping with the public philosophy WILPF has espoused for decades. Ione Biggs and others have ensured that attacking racism remained on the group’s agenda. Yet, as is true throughout the United States and with most organizations, successes in affecting change in this arena have been few in recent years.

As a (really new) newcomer to WILPF (I joined in July 1998), I have repeatedly heard from women of all racial

hues that the organization itself needs to address internal racist practices. I have also been told that few branches have chosen to make racial justice a top priority in their community work. A few years ago, when a questionnaire regarding the racism within WILPF was sent out, few branches bothered to reply.

Recruiting women of color as members has long been a national WILPF goal, yet the numbers have only slightly changed. Where are we missing the boat? Once again, the racial justice goals and objectives include “reactivating the women of color caucus” and recruiting women of color. Before we can truly address these areas, we must know why we have not been successful in the past. What is the obstacle to attracting women of color and keeping them (us) active in the movement?

WILPF branches pride themselves on addressing concerns that are unique to their communities. Of course, this is something to be proud about. Racism, unfortunately, is not unique anywhere in the United States. Is that the reason many branches will not touch the racism “problem?” Is the “problem” considered so pervasive, so common that no one dare attack it? Is the “problem” so omnipresent that not even WILPFers feel solutions are possible? I sure hope the answer to all the above is a resounding “NO!”

At the June 1999 Congress, the women who attended the Truth and Reconciliation meeting called for the campaign’s number one priority to be as indicated below:

“To develop methods which allow for the examination and modification of policies, procedures, customs and traditions, within the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom and its branches that are racist in nature.”

“Our country’s destiny will not be fulfilled until human hearts recognize that we are all really one family of people.”

- Barbara McCord, coordinator,
Institute for the Healing of Racism

WILPFers have been uniting for 85 years to speak the truth. WILPFers know that justice will be achieved through reparations (sharing the wealth) and restoration (restoring the land to its rightful owners by honoring our treaties).

WILPFers understand that reconciliation will occur when these steps have been taken.

With that said, the rest of this article provides a brief overview of what UFORJE Campaign plans to accomplish during the year 2000. These goals are easily attainable with the support (financial, as well as woman power) of all of our branches. It is hoped that every branch will take the baton, raise it high in the air and stride toward racial justice in America.

- UFORJE is calling on all branches to assist in the collection of data documenting past and present racism in America. This information will be a part of the "Shadow Report" WILPF will submit in association with the United Nations World Conference on Combating Racism, planned for December 2001 in South Africa.
- Four Race Raves are planned for this year. The plan is to present at least one rave in each WILPF geographic area. As of late 1999, plans were being solidified to hold the Southeast-area rave in Florida, or possibly Alabama. The University of California at



WILPFers act out a visit to the welfare office during a Theatre of the Oppressed session at the Triennial Congress in St. Louis.

Santa Cruz is the location of the Western-area event. A campus in either Philadelphia or New York City will host the Northeastern-area event. In addition, a Central-area location will have been identified by the time you read this article. Up-to-date information will be sent to branches.

- The training component of the UFORJE effort is to sponsor a training conference in each geographic area. The training will include an introduction of the new vocabulary associated with racial justice and how these new concepts will affect us individually and as a society. At the U.S. Section Congress this past June, it was decided to incorporate Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed techniques in the work of each campaign. Train-the-Trainers workshops will be conducted at each conference site. The



Author Laura Partridge leads a Theatre of the Oppressed session in St. Louis.

training will be tailored to address the needs of WILPF's campaigns.

- Examination of racism within WILPF remains a top priority for the racial justice component of the organization. Development of tools and a user-friendly questionnaire are at the forefront of UFORJE efforts.
- The further development of WILPF's Women of Color Caucus will involve reaching out to all women of color within the organization. At this stage, issues of importance to current members will serve as the foundation for the evolution of the caucus. Recruitment of women of color will occur after internal issues are resolved.
- In October, UFORJE plans on hosting a national conference on racial justice. This will provide an opportunity for WILPF to share the training and knowledge acquired through our geographic area Race Raves and training conferences. The opportunity to collaborate with other national and international groups focusing on racial justice will culminate at this national event.

Laura Partridge is chair of the UFORJE Campaign.

This just in!

UFORJE has received a grant of \$15,000 from The Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief of the Episcopal Church. UFORJE started off 2000 with the first Race Rave in Florida, thanks to the generous resources of our members and from progressive organizations such as the Presiding Bishop's Fund.

Dismantling the War Economy

Gillian Gilhool, WILPF Legislative Organizer

The Disarmament campaign has created three sub-groups for the interrelated pieces of the Dismantling the War Economy Campaign. They are:

- **Weapons Abolition**
Encompasses several issues regarding nuclear and other weapons systems, linking with international movements and initiatives. "Reaching Critical Will" is the immediate project we will be engaged with during the first half of the year.
- **ImPEACEment**
Prepares issue advocacy and electoral work focusing on the year 2000.
- **Mil-Corp ConneXion**
Designs materials about weapons manufacturers and subcontractors for local study and action.

Reaching Critical Will

In late April, diplomats and NGOs from around the world will converge at the United Nations in New York for the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference. The conference runs from April 24 - May 17.

The meeting is a great occasion for organizing to reverse the U.S. disarmament slide. Since WILPF's 85th birthday is Friday, April 28, the campaign plans to celebrate by pressing for giant steps toward nuclear abolition.

"Reaching Critical Will" is a worldwide project organized by WILPF U.N. Liaison Felicity Hill to mobilize NGOs around the NPT conference. Stephanie Fraser of the WILPF NY Metro office designed a website for the project, collecting a number of resources to help activists working on the NPT and the review process. Using this work, the campaign has put together a six-month strategy for U.S. mobilization to activate the public. We want to get people to call loudly for accelerated progress on nuclear abolition.

See: <http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org>

Timetable For Action

In January, WILPFers hosted "house parties" for members and local peace allies around the country, showing a video by the Center for Defense Information on de-alerting. (Many nuclear weapons are set to automatically respond to an incoming nuclear attack within 20 minutes. De-alerting would take them off that set time frame. More information on de-alerting can be found at

www.dealert.org.) These events launched the Critical Will education and recruitment campaign.

In February, we are planning two sessions where we will "train the trainer." One will be held on the East



Members of WILPF's Japanese section at the 1998 "D. C. Day of Action" during WILPF's 27th International Congress.

Coast and one on the West. These two-day sessions will be accessible to WILPF members and other activists. The sessions will cover: influencing the NPT review conference, de-alerting and other abolition strategies, theater and direct action techniques, such as Citizens Weapons Inspections.

In March, we will hold 85 workshops across the country preparing activists to come to the New York meeting in April - May, and mount events nationwide to bring attention to the NPT. The workshops will last for three hours. Postcard invitations to March workshops and packets are available at the national office.

During the treaty review, April 28 will be a big day for actions in New York City:

Morning: A massive street action

Noon: A briefing with an official U.S. NPT delegation

Afternoon: Rededication of NY Metro Jane Addams Plaque, City Hall

Evening: 85th anniversary garden party celebration at the United Nations

At the same time, there will be Reaching Critical Will workshops and actions on April 28 and 29, as well as celebrations for WILPF's 85th Anniversary in the West, Central and Southeast geographic areas.

A temporary staff person has been hired to carry the project forward. She will be working for six months on the program-related parts of the 85th celebration in the four geographic areas, as well as on organizing the Critical Will work focused on New York. Contact Ellen

Barfield, Disarmament co-chair at (410) 243-5876, to get involved.

ImPEACE the Congress 2000

Our ImPEACEment project is getting off the ground. We are joining with other peace organizations in targeting candidates in the 2000 election who have received money from the war industry. We hope that every WILPF branch will participate and that we will have an ImPEACE representative in each one. We will provide information on the voting records of incumbents, as well as background information for questions at candidates' meetings, letters to the editors, etc. If we all work together, we can have a Congress that works for peace instead of war. More information can be found on the WILPF's website at www.wilpf.org, or contact Val Mullen, (802) 685-2214: vmullen@together.net.

Recruiting Branch Partners to Dismantle the War Economy

Many branches already have members who are amazingly involved in disarmament work. A core group joined the Disarmament campaign and helped put the proposal and implementation plans together. Now we need liaisons in every branch to help shape the campaign, spark coalitions and build its success in local communities. If your branch isn't already connected, please call or write Yoshiko Ikuta, Disarmament chair/board member at (216) 521-7057 or yikuta@aol.com, with leads and



Gillian Gilhool, center, and Molly Morgan at an NGO symposium during the WTO talks in Seattle.

people she can talk to about becoming part of this critical link for WILPF's disarmament initiatives.

Project Vote Smart

Calling all self-starters: Call 888-VOTE SMART or tap into Project Vote Smart's website at www.vote-smart for everything you need to know about candidates and campaigns, state and federal. Find out how your Representative and Senators voted on major bills, how they're ranked by advocacy organizations, how challenges answered on key issues and who's contributing to their campaigns. If you don't know your congressional district, just plug in your zip code. Call to speak to your own personal researcher. Ask for their free Voter's Self-Defense Manual, 2000 Election Edition.

Make the Mil-Corp ConneXion

Wanted: Research and actions addressing war corporations near you!

The long-term goal, of course, is conversion to socially constructive products or services consistent with human needs and environmental considerations, through education, action and the democratic process. In the short term, we propose:

- Organizing community "town meetings" to discuss new ways of thinking about national security, social needs and corporate intrusion in our lives.
- Researching a local military corporation and its environmental/social influence (corporate welfare, health effects, toxic waste disposal, etc.)
- Initiating a variety of actions that can bring public pressure to change our way of thinking and organizing our daily lives, and hopefully affect our whole foreign policy.

Our organizing packet will include a list of the top 100 military corporations (and their locations), a suggested "How-To" sheet on researching corporations, raising the issues in your community, and initiating actions that will attract media attention. We will outline a step-by-step process for activists and include a list of resources that already have a wealth of information about "your" favorite corporation.

A good source is *Mother Jones's* online atlas of U.S. arms, which can give you facts on human rights violations, insurgencies and regional conflicts where U.S. war corporations supply arms. Links are provided to many of the corporations, and you can check out their human resources information and learn when they'll be recruiting on college campuses near you. See www.motherjones.com/arms/index.html

This is an ambitious project, but one we believe will not only bring results, but help build membership. The Disarmament campaign is cross-pollinating with our Challenging Corporate Power work. Join our initiative! Contact Pat Birnie at (520) 908-9269 or birnie@gci-net.com.

Reclaiming Democracy

The Campaign to Challenge Corporate Power and Assert the People's Rights

.....
Molly Morgan
.....

WILPF has a long history of taking on the most fundamental issues facing humanity and staying committed to them for the long haul, rather than seeking simple or superficial solutions. This is evident in the U.S. Section's choice of campaigns for 2000-2003. Members of WILPF's Committee on Corporations, Trade, and Democracy have sometimes found themselves overwhelmed as we explore the scope and depth of corporate power in our country and its impact on the world. This article is provided to help frame the issue to which the U.S. WILPF Section has committed itself for the next three years.

Why this campaign is important

The corporate form has existed for hundreds of years, but in the last century its impact on people's lives has increased exponentially. It is important to understand that the prime directive of all corporations is to *increase shareholder wealth*. No matter how well meaning a corporation may seem to be, its purpose is not to create jobs, take care of the community, fund schools, or provide healthcare — its purpose is to make as much money as possible for its investors. In pursuit of ever-increasing profits, a variety of societal and environmental harms inevitably occur, whether or not these are intended by the people who work in the corporations. The past decade of accelerating transnational corporate growth has demonstrated clearly the oppressive and destructive capacity of this institutional form. The powerful executives who run the world's multinationals control society in a way that undermines democracy, social justice, labor rights and the environment.

WILPF's campaign has two equally important goals. One is to redefine the relationship that currently exists and return economic institutions to their rightful place as subservient to the needs of people. We can begin by educating ourselves about the roots of illegitimate corporate power and how it has colonized our minds, usurped our governments, and deteriorated our lives and the natural world that sustains us. The other goal is to reclaim democracy by exploring what it means, examining our own behaviors, and experimenting with truly democratic ways of interacting. Facing these twin challenges can help create new social structures that better serve the needs of all people.

This work is particularly important for those of us in the United States, where the corporate form is the most entrenched, sophisticated, and voracious and the citizens the most accepting. Corporations in the United States determine in large part the food we eat, the clothes we wear, the news we see, the people we elect, the jobs we have. When we remain silent, we continue to benefit from corporate exploitation at the expense of other people around the world. By speaking out, we challenge the evangelical lies with which corporate globalization is being triumphed as the solution for the world's problems.

Understanding the depth and breadth of corporate power

Corporations are legal creations designed to protect a limited number of people in their accumulation of wealth, and as such, they have no obligations to people or the planet. Competition drives corporations inexorably toward greater profits to increase their stock prices or go out of business, and increased profits must eventually be achieved through reductions in expenses. The corners that are cut negatively impact the number of jobs, wages and benefits for workers, and protection of the environment. Furthermore, financial systems do not fully account for all expenses; for example, corporations do not budget for the cost of recycling packaging or toxic site cleanup. In other words, profits are privatized and costs are socialized.

Capitalism is characterized by private ownership of goods, so only those with resources can continue to benefit from the system of investment. This creates a tendency toward monopoly and over time expands the gap between the rich and the poor. Decisions are increasingly made to benefit a few at the expense of the many. The resulting power imbalance drives societies further and further from democracy.

Proponents of capitalism frequently tout the alleged benefits of competition, but in patriarchal systems, corporate competition can encourage the worst possible excesses of human behavior. Because of the relentless search for increasing profits, individuals are constantly tempted to make unethical decisions in order to stay in business. Those who stoop the lowest eventually set the standard for all, keeping a steady downward pressure on

the level of acceptable behavior.

In the competitive marketplace, the only measure of comparison is the best quality for the lowest price. Rampant consumerism conspires with this system and is an essential component for keeping it alive. Since consumers are distant from production, they seldom know what corners are cut to achieve “affordable” prices. Indoctrinated to be *consumers* rather than *citizens*, many people are concerned only about the price of a good or service instead of the condition of workplaces, the wages paid, the pollution of the environment during production, or the disposal process once their purchase is no longer useful.

Institutionalized *cooperative* structures, processes, and behaviors have the potential to provide for the needs of people far more effectively without increasing personal wealth at the expense of others. Until we let go of our need to feel we are better than others by getting “ahead” of them, competition will continue to be viewed as a good thing by the few who benefit from the system. Competition will also be viewed this way by the masses on the bottom who believe they can eventually do the same, even though their actual chances are almost nonexistent.

Where and how we can focus our efforts

The core issue is not corporations or even our economic systems, although they are connected. We feel that the greatest challenge is to shift our energy toward focusing on democracy - what it is, what it is not, and what it can be. This requires us to examine who we are as human beings. What is our nature, our potential? What are our capabilities? Grounded in such critical analysis, we can

Indoctrinated to be *consumers* rather than *citizens*, many people are concerned only about the price of a good or service instead of the condition of workplaces, the wages paid, the pollution of the environment during production, or the disposal process once their purchase is no longer useful.

choose more effective strategies and actions.

WILPF branches have an expanded opportunity with this campaign to become *intentional laboratories* model-



Lauren Draper

WILPFers listen to a presentation at the Triennial Congress in St. Louis.

ing truly democratic processes in our communities. The work begins at home - each of us must look at our own colonization, dependencies, beliefs, practices, denial systems, and how we interact with others. There is much we can learn from studying other groups, such as native peoples, about social interaction and building sustainable communities. Focusing on democracy, we may find a fresh perspective with which to build bridges to other groups and find allies with whom we can work in coalition.

This does not mean we should end efforts that challenge a particular corporate law, permit, or abuse. Urgent situations deserve our attention and are excellent opportunities to educate ourselves and our communities about not only the injustice at hand, but also about the illegitimate authority of corporations and the kind of democracy we can work to establish. How can we capitalize on each situation for deeper change? How do we critique our work to make certain that we frame it as sovereign citizens who belong in charge? As we move past the first phase of this campaign, we look forward to exciting ideas coming from the branches for more activities.

.....
Molly Morgan is a member of the Campaign to Challenge Corporate Power and Assert the People's Rights.

Committee Corner

Around and about WILPF



AFRICA

As part of a joint project initiated by WILPF and the Africa Policy Information Center, WILPF hosted a meeting at the Philadelphia office in early November.

This project will link African and U.S. women working for peace and justice in Africa, with an aim of also having an impact on U.S. policy in Africa. This was the third such meeting with representatives from a number of organizations.

An immediate task is to compile an annotated resource list of African women's peace initiatives in order to design future work in advocacy, collaboration and education. For now, the Africa Policy Information Center (APIC) in Washington, D.C. will serve as the depository for information. A second outcome of the meeting was a proposal to work towards "seeking the same language" through personal stories, theater, dialogue and other experiences. This work may find a beginning as a component of WILPF's work combating racism.

Present at this meeting were Vicki Ferguson (APIC), Isha Dyfan (WILPF-Sierra Leone and the Federation of African Women's Peace Networks), Sybila Williams (WILPF-Sierra Leone), Clarissa Kayosa (Demilitarization for Democracy), Jane Martin (Support Group for African Women of Peace), Meredith Turshen (Rutgers University; contact for African Women's Anti-War Coalition), Tahiya Nyahuma (HealthLink, Int'l). From WILPF-U.S., Kay Camp, Laura Partridge, Rosemary Burke and Regina Birchem were present.

CIVIL LIBERTIES

One of the worst parts of the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 is the provision for the use of secret evidence in deportation proceedings. The United States is now going after "terrorists" by targeting individuals for their First Amendment Activity and using secret evidence to deport them.

There are about two dozen people presently being held without bail on secret evidence as they face deportation. These people are predominantly Arab and/or Muslim, though some Irish and Basque are also being held. They have all been targeted for their political or religious affiliations.

Kit Gage, the Washington, D. C. representative of the National Committee Against Repressive Legislation, met with a group of concerned people shortly after the Anti-Terrorism legislation was passed to form the National Coalition to Protect Political Freedom (NCPFF). NCPFF has two goals: To provide legal support for those arrested under the secret evidence provision, and to work to cancel the secret evidence part of the bill.

The National Coalition to Protect Political Freedom played a major role in the recent release of Hany Kiareldeen. He is a Palestinian who had been held for 18 months on secret evidence while the government opposed his application for permanent residency and tried to deport him.

Strong legislation to ban the use of "Secret Evidence" has been introduced in Congress by Representative David Bonior (D) and Tom Campbell (R). Under the Secret Evidence Repeal Act of 1999 (H.R. 2121), all uses of secret evidence would be prohibited. The bill has 51 cosponsors and needs a lot more.

Action: Get your members of Congress to cosponsor the Secret Evidence Repeal Act, as soon as possible. To sign on, they should contact Scott Paul in Rep. Bonior's office, (202) 225-2106. Call your representative at the Capitol Switchboard (202) 224-3121 or write her/him at the House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515.

Kit Gage warns that it is especially important for political activists and immigrants to know they do not have to talk to FBI agents when they come knocking.

NCARL has produced a flyer in English and Arabic telling people not to talk to the FBI. Call or e-mail Gage for copies: (202) 529-4225 or Kgage@igc.org.

We also highly recommend the book: *Terrorism and the Constitution: Sacrificing Civil Liberties in the Name of National Security*, by James X. Dempsey and David Cole.

It is an exceptional analysis of deceptive public policy threatening the fundamentals of our First Amendment rights. In tracing the history leading up to the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1996, the authors review the abuses occurring today— denials of due process, detentions of aliens based on secret evidence, etc. Order the book from The First Amendment Foundation for \$10 plus \$1.50 shipping and handling: 1313 West 8th Street, Suite 313, Los Angeles, CA 90017.

LABOR

The present Labor Committee has participated in many events and campaigns, including: the Workers' Center livable-wage campaign, Labor Party presentations of videos and presentations of speakers from Haiti, the anti-

sweatshop campaign against Wal-Mart (demanding livable wages), joining union picket lines and sending delegates to the annual International Solidarity Affair of unions in the Philippines.

Many WILPF members attended the protests at the World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle during the end of November. Labor has been very active in the "No to WTO" movement and planned the huge march on November 30th. WILPF was represented in the planning committee and met and marched with the WILPF banners.

This committee publishes a Labor Committee Newsletter, so send us a report on your union outreach work. In our unity lies our strength!

MIDDLE EAST

The Middle East Issue committee is now reorganizing itself, and any interested WILPF member is welcome to join.

We plan to prepare a package of information on the Middle East and the previous work of WILPF, to serve as a tool for research and group discussion for branches interested in these issues.

We will do research and education around the militarization and nuclearization of the Middle

East. By Middle East we mean most Mediterranean countries, including North African countries.

We will support WILPF International in organizing the WILPF International Triennial Congress planned for 2001 in the Middle East to promote peace, the participation of women at the peace table, and WILPF recruitment in the area.

We will set up a network between branches working on Middle East issues and encourage solidarity and communication between WILPF and women's organizations working for peace in the Middle East.

To reach the committees listed on these pages, see *WILPF Contacts*, page 26. ❖



Sarah Hampton (left) shares a light moment with another WILPF member at the Triennial Congress.

Lauren Draper

Women's Delegation to Cuba

Hermanas: Sisterhood in Central America and the Caribbean, Northwest Labor and Employment Law Office (LELO) and WILPF invite you to join the Women's International Labor Conference and Economic Justice Delegation to Havana and Santiago de Cuba.

April 24 - May 5, 2000 (tentative dates)

\$1,350 for WILPF members; \$1,550 non-members (tentative prices)

Fee includes roundtrip airfare from the Bahamas or Cancun, in-country transportation, double room accommodations, two meals per day, guides and translators, expert trip leaders, all program activities, including conference and preparation materials. Deadline for application is February 22. Deposit of \$300 and license application required. Make checks out to: Marazul Tours, Inc. 4100 Park Ave., Weehawken, NJ 07087 (800) 223-5334.

Itinerary includes a tour of Havana, meetings with economists, labor leaders, women's groups, site visits to health centers, schools and factories, the Women's Labor Conference and participation in the International Labor Day march. Space is limited, so sign up now. To speak with delegation coordinators, call: Cindy Domingo in Seattle (206) 782-2565, Deborah James in San Francisco (415) 436-9722 or Jan Strout, in New Jersey (609) 448-3819.

Hermanas and WILPF have been organizing annual women's delegations to Cuba since 1990. LELO is a labor advocacy organization in the Northwest focusing on empowering communities of color and women to pressure for labor rights domestically and internationally.

Abolishing Nukes
**Seizing the Opportunity
of a Four-Week Nuclear
Disarmament Forum**

.....
Stephanie Fraser
.....

Has the 1970 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) done its job of preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and ensuring their abolition? Are nuclear weapons on their way out? Or are they on their way up? What part does nuclear power play in disarmament? How can the world achieve nuclear disarmament now, or at least soon?

These questions, and more, will be discussed and debated for four weeks — April 24 to May 19 — at the 2000 Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. This conference, which takes place every five years in New York at the United Nations, amounts to four weeks of negotiations on the complex subject of nuclear disarmament by nearly all the world's states. If the peace movement commits to making this meeting on nuclear weapons a major focus, it is likely that public opinion will reach critical mass and force governments to reach the political will necessary to change the nuclear genocidal security paradigm.

The task before us is to educate ourselves on the history and content of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, to assess the current nuclear weapons situation and to set our eyes on the prize of a world without 30,000 nuclear weapons. Reinvigorating and focusing the efforts of many already existing organizations and networks, as well as finding new imaginative ways of expressing the anti-nuclear message is the focus of our project Reaching Critical Will.

WILPF branches and sections have a unique role to play in reaching this critical will, in bringing about the vision of a nuclear-free world. WILPF women are often connected to and known by the variety of associations, groups, organizations, religious communities, unions, and governmental actors they work with. By working with groups that focus on human rights, the environment, economic justice and racism — and showing them how and why nuclear issues are relevant — we will reinvigorate the anti-nuclear message. Putting this issue on the agenda in new ways, with new coalitions, with humor, theatre, round table discussions, house parties, chain letters, coalitions— this is the aim of our project Reaching Critical Will.

The NPT Conferences are the only time that this many governments talk solely about nuclear disarma-

ment. The opportunity to influence the outcome of the 2000 Review Conference is great. The potential for real steps forward is excellent, even in the face of harsh opposition to disarmament. Never before has so much been understood in the light of day by so many people about the nuclear world.

However, the risks of failure are great as well. Our world is in a very tenuous place, in part to these destabilizing factors:

- The recent Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty rejection by the U.S. Senate
- The furnishing of U.S. weapons makers with new facilities and computers to continue designing and testing nuclear weapons,
- The undermining of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty with Russia
- The race to dominate outer space outlined in the U.S. Space Command's Joint Vision for 2020

Since the last NPT Review Conference in 1995 the world has witnessed:

- Two countries — India and Pakistan — admitting to nuclear weapons possession through testing
- The entrenchment of the nuclear weapons modernization plans and facilities by the major nuclear weapons states
- Radioactive accidents due to human and technical errors at nuclear facilities
- The deaths of men, women and children from cancers and illness due to the production and testing of nuclear weapons
- The threatening and undermining of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty by building “Star Wars” facilities
- The completion, signing and bizarre rejection of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

All these things represent a return to the Cold War, a return to Mutual Assured Destruction, because all of these things lead to war, not to peace. Now more than ever, WILPF women must lead in the movement to abolish nuclear weapons. We must demand real, tangible, measurable steps toward nuclear disarmament. We must oppose all efforts by the nuclear weapons states to retain and improve their arsenals. We must stand and cry “Coward” at all those who cower under the radioactive umbrella. Let's proclaim that “The day of the Nuclear Weapon is over.”

Come to New York in April. Or organize a vigil or demonstration in your town. Talk with your church and friends about how you can raise the issue of nuclear disarmament in April. Join in the call for the abolition of nuclear weapons and let's really “Ban the bomb” this time.

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Stephanie Fraser is a staff member of the NY Metro WILPF branch.



CTB Treaty Defeat an Opportunity for Voter Education

Gillian Gilhool, WILPF Legislative Organizer

The Senate majority's vote against the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in October provides a great opportunity for educating voters and questioning candidates about their views on nuclear issues.

Sixteen Republican Senators running for re-election voted against CTBT ratification: AZ, Jon Kyl; DE, William Roth; IN, Richard Lugar; ME, Olympia Snowe; MI, Spencer Abraham; MN, Rod Grams; MS, Trent Lott; MO, John Ashcroft; MT, Conrad Burns; OH, Mike DeWine; PA, Rick Santorum; TN, Bill Frist; TX, Kay Bailey Hutchison; UT, Orrin Hatch; WA, Slade Gordon; and WY, Craig Thomas.

No Democratic Senators voted against it.

WILPFers need to lead a citizen rebellion to ImPEACE the Congress, converting insistent public opinion polls to real votes. A poll in November, which gave respondents the facts about federal budget spending, showed that now more than ever people want their tax money spent on social goods, not guns. We can help make the 107th Congress reflect the will of the real majority with strong issue advocacy work. For WILPF ImPEACEMENT materials and coalition links, call (202) 546-6727 or email the D.C. office.

State Races Vital to Redistricting

State legislatures elected in the year 2000 will make key redistricting decisions determining who is elected to Congress in the next 10 years. Local races also need an infusion of work to educate people about budgets and where their tax dollars are going. WILPF Women's Budget materials, supplemented with National Priorities Project reports (<http://www.natprior.org>) give detailed information, broken down state by state and in some cases by city. These reports are a great starting point, and are also available at the WILPF Washington Office.

The 85th Anniversary Peace Mission Invitational

Constituent voices matter in Congress. To celebrate WILPF's anniversary, delegations of two, three or more WILPF members are invited to Washington, D.C. for two or three days, to carry our message.

Delegates will visit representatives, monitor committee hearings, attend information briefings, educate bureaucrats and participate in office activities.

WILPFers can sign up on their own, or branches can

send a team of two or three representatives who can fit a mid-week undertaking into their calendar. Choose any week through the year 2000. Whether Congress is in or out of town, opportunities to talk with congressional staff, briefings and coalition meetings abound.

Genevieve O'Hara is one member who recently came to Washington for the Peace Mission. "In response to WILPF's invitation to come to Washington to celebrate 85 years of speaking truth to power, I spent several days in D.C. in September. It was a great experience! I began by visiting the WILPF office across from the Supreme Court and within walking distance of the House and Senate buildings and the Capitol. WILPF's office is in the impressive Methodist Building, with dozens of peace-and justice-oriented organizations. After spending the morning in the office, I had lunch with the office administrator of a southern Illinois representative to build pressure for CEDAW. I was able to hand-deliver a letter written that day in the WILPF office. Friday I made my way to Senator Bond's office, where I left my WILPF messages on U.N. funding and was given passes to the Senate and House. I highly recommend to every WILPFer making this Peace Mission to Washington during 2000."

A Room of Our Own

WILPF in Washington now has an entire room of our own, with three desks, two computers and three telephone lines. With 85th Anniversary delegates and two Jeannette Rankin interns, we can increase our work with Congress. The office is at 110 Maryland Avenue, down the hall from Women Strike for Peace. Another tenant is Gail Taylor, coordinator of the recently opened Washington office of the Free Lori Berenson campaign.

Database Power

WILPF has a great new tool to focus action when just a few votes can make a difference on a Congressional vote. The WILPF membership database is now organized so we can select WILPFers by Congressional district, and even state Senate and House districts. This gives us the ability to contact members whose immediate action will count most at a crucial moment. Branches can use this capability for local organizing. Call or email Kate Kasper (215) 563-7110, or email: kkasper@wilpf.org. ❖

Uproar in Seattle

More than 100 WILPFers took part in the historic protests that occurred at the World Trade Organization's Third Ministerial meeting in Seattle. Equipped with rain slickers and WILPF banners, members joined the thousands who marched, chanted and protested against the effects of rampant globalization.

They marched with Sweet Honey in the Rock, with the Raging Grannies, with environmentalists and union members from around the country. WILPFers—including members such as 83-year-old Ruth Hunter—were also among those hit with tear gas and hauled off to jail. More than 600 people were arrested and the Seattle police chief has since resigned.

Under WILPF's nongovernmental status, five WILPFers were also accredited to attend some of the WTO meetings inside as well. The talks in Seattle were supposed to launch a new round of multilateral trade negotiations and set the international trade agenda for the next 10 years. The WTO was formed in 1995 and as of last year had 134 member countries.

At the end, the WTO closed its talks without agreeing on an agenda for the next round of talks and without setting a new meeting date—an amazing turn of events. WILPFers returned home energized by the actions and ready to mobilize for the future. Most raved about the high-energy and important connections made in Seattle, the large number of youth involved and the feeling that the tide was turning against unfettered corporate globalization. Many WILPFers expressed deep sadness over the horrific stories about the exploitation of workers and the environment that were shared, as well as the heavy-handed actions of Seattle police.

In an interview after Seattle, Njoki Njehu, director of the 50 Years is Enough Network, said the months ahead hold many opportunities for activists to carry the energy from the WTO action forward. Njehu said there have been calls for a variety of actions, including:

- Mobilizing for the Republican and Democratic national conventions, which will be held in Philadelphia and Los Angeles, respectively.
- Mobilizing around the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) meetings in Washington, D.C. in mid-April. Njehu said the WTO is trying to become the enforcement arm of these

two agencies, and increase its power. She also said the president of the World Bank and the managing director of the IMF are beginning to make more connections with each other, and issued a joint statement about collaboration at the WTO talks.

- Actions around World Labor Day on May 1
- Actions around African Liberation Day on May 25

In addition, WILPFers are urged to carry the spirit forward as we prepare for the Beijing Plus 5 meetings in June. Check out WILPF's website for more information at www.wilpf.org, as well www.50years.org.

Here are some comments sent to us by WILPFers who were at the "Battle in Seattle."

"After today...Man! Things are gonna be different!"

- Comment overheard by Madeline Duckles as she marched with 50,000 others in Seattle.

I was there, it was both an inspiration and like a war. The workshops and marches were the inspiring part. Trying to get any place in the evenings was like being in a war zone. I attended the tribunals ...and heard how "shadow workers" were treated like indentured workers. Working under inhuman conditions and if they complained or worse tried to unionize, were fired and sent back home, leaving entire families deeply in debt...(Later) I went home and watched on TV the shots of vandals and looters and wondered, why if the media were there to catch them, why weren't the police there instead of out harassing and arresting the peaceful marchers and demonstrators ...I left with a real hope for



Protesters at the largest demonstration in Seattle, where many WILPFers joined others to fill the streets with chants and songs.

Ben Sher

the future and a true sense that I had already celebrated the Y2K!!! - Julianne Spillman

Meena Raman, of the Third World Network from Malaysia, was one of many who made an impression on me. She reminded us that women are central in the keeping of seeds, in the harvesting of crops and in meeting the nutritional needs of the family. She reported that the 1995 Agricultural Agreement has resulted in the removal of 2 million farms from production in the Philippines, in the inability of Malaysian farmers to compete with imported rice. She asked, "Will there be more agreements that will give the 'powers that be' more opportunities to kill us?" I was moved to hear Meena, from an area so victimized by global trade practices, state: "We want to help the citizens of the United States because they have to contend with the most powerful government in the world." - Barbara Drageaux

We were a river of peaceful protestors on a determined stroll. - Mary Rose

The absolute star of my WTO experience is Mary Margaret Pruitt...She not only found space for the designated NGO delegates but provided, instantly it seemed, for what turned out to be over 50 WILPF members in the lovely Sky Lounge of Horizon House...The meeting was a grand success and a fine orientation to what WILPF had to offer to its members. - Caroline Canafax

Elsie Dean, from British Columbia, Molly Morgan and Ben Sher from the U.S. Section Corporations, Trade and Democracy Committee; Kathleen Kelley, U.S. Section Labor Committee; and I were accredited NGO delegates for WILPF...The women's caucus (made up of officially recognized NGOs) was especially close to the strong and stalwart Caribbean and African delegations, and cheered and encouraged them to stand fast opposing the artificial "consensus" declaration to start a new "Millennial Round" of talks. - Gillian Gilhool

I was deeply touched by the younger people, mostly in their twenties, who formed the bulk of the nonviolent civil disobedience (CD) protestors. Overwhelmingly, they were deeply committed to maintaining nonviolence — even those who did not have the full CD training... One young woman I met is an example of well-prepared protestors: She had recently completed a year of intensive and on-site international education about the devas-



A giant green condom created by Greenpeace urging the WTO to "Practice safe trade" was seen by thousands in Seattle.

Greenpeace

tating impacts of WTO "neo-liberal" policies on communities around the world...I can only hope that the light in her eyes still sparkled even after the police gassings, beatings, and other abuses in the concealment of arrest custody. She was not naive about the potential for police violence, but none of us could have anticipated the extent or viciousness of the civil rights violations, which far exceeded the routine brutality of other mass CD actions I've participated in. - Darien De Lu

Seattle 1999 was a joyous and momentous event and will surely go down in history as a key milestone in the movement of citizens to assert their authority over the illegitimate concentrated power of large corporations. Contrary to the spin produced by corporate-owned media, the protests were by and large entirely peaceful and non-violent. At no time could events in Seattle properly be described as "a riot..." The central question confronting the American pro-democracy and anti-corporate movement at this point in time is how to carry forward the amazing coalition building and direct action of Seattle into the future. - Ben Sher

Let's celebrate! You all know that WE, the citizens of the world, had a dramatic impact in Seattle... In Auckland at the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting in October, the U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky, prophetically said, "The single greatest threat to the multinational trading system is the absence of public support for that system and for the policies which have created the system... And unless public support is generated, I think that the WTO is going to face tough sledding in the years ahead."

- Bruna Nota, International WILPF President

Compiled by Theta Pavis, Peace & Freedom Editor and Gillian Gilhool, Legislative Organizer.

Building U.S.- Cuba Solidarity

Jan Strout

The National Network on Cuba (NNOC) held a stimulating conference in early December that brought together over 250 activists from labor, youth, education and women's groups.

The NNOC is based in the United States and has about 100 member organizations, including WILPF. The "U.S.-Cuba 2000" conference focused on strengthening our work to end the U.S.-government blockade of Cuba. The conference was held in Seattle and included people who were participating in the World Trade Organization protests.

Among the highlights of the three-day conference was the Friday night program to welcome the Cuban delegation, featuring an address by Cuban Foreign Minister Felipe Perez Roque. More than 800 turned out to hear him speak. Other highlights of the conference included a screening of the film "Fidel" by Estela Bravo and a panel on women.

The panel featured Rita Pereira of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC), Johana Tablada, from the Cuban Interest Section in Washington, D.C., Angela Arboleda, director of Racial and Ethnic Diversity for the National Organization for Women, Debra O'Gara from Radical Women, and myself. The status of women in Cuba and the United States was discussed, along with how to integrate a gender analysis into our solidarity work and strategies to bring more women into the Cuba Solidarity movement.

Ideas included:

- bringing Cuban women's voices into the mainstream and progressive U.S. media
- calling for a Women's Summit in conjunction with the "World Solidarity with Cuba" conference, November 10-14 in Havana
- adoption of the women's declaration to end the blockade of Cuba
- a campaign to reach new and different sectors of women in the United States, such as other feminist organizations, reproductive rights activists, women of color, lesbians and labor and economic justice activists

Other strategies that will be pursued include support of Cuban Americans to travel and have relations with their families in Cuba, ending the travel ban for U.S. citizens to visit Cuba; and ending the ban on the sale of food and medicine as a way to take apart the blockade piece-by-piece.

WILPF was very present at the NNOC conference. In addition to the panel presentation, we had a table staffed by Tammy James, where plenty of WILPF mem-

bership materials were handed out. Other members of the WILPF Leadership Team included: Lisa Valanti, co-chair, Deborah James, Shad Reinstein, Ellen Farmer and Lorraine Caputo.

Cindy Domingo, who is also associated with the

Northwest Labor and Employment Law Office, organized a special reception, "Busting the Blockade," for the FMC and WILPF to promote our April 2000 Women and Economic Justice Delegation to Cuba. (See page 13) Jane Franklin was also a featured speaker on the U.S.-Cuba Relations panel.

Finally, a resolution was unanimously passed by the NNOC to support the return of the young Cuban boy Elian Gonzalez to his family in Cuba.

Jan Strout is co chair of the WILPF Cuba Action Committee. Ellen Farmer contributed to this report.



Lauren Draper

Cuban Foreign Minister Felipe Perez Roque

BOOKS WILPFERS ARE RECOMMENDING

Prison Writings: My Life Is My Sun Dance by Leonard Peltier (from Cape Cod)

Raising Children with Roots, Rights, and Responsibilities, by L. Dupont, J. Foley, and A. Gagliardi (MN Metro)

NATO in the Balkans: Voices of Opposition, by Ramsey Clark et al. (MN Metro)

How Wal-Mart Is Destroying America, and What You Can Do about It, by Bill Quinn (Monterey)

Bodily Wisdom: A Journey Through Illness into Wholeness, by Diane Shrank (Cape Cod).



Economic globalization continues, and so does WILPF's work on the issue. We are working on globalization's myriad ramifications, including the exploitation of workers and most people of the world, damage to the environment, globalized militarization and the disregard of international disarmament agreements and treaties.

We have been expanding our interaction with other organizations involved in the issue, and this has strengthened our sense that there is a growing movement of resistance to globalization. This resistance was certainly manifested around the World Trade Organization meeting in November.

In planning for the seminar that will precede the International Executive Committee meeting in Berlin in 2000, we will be looking at the call for a World Conference on Racism in 2001, as well as our ongoing work on racism and xenophobia.

We hope that by reviewing the U.N. global conferences of the 1990's (particularly the Beijing Conference on Women and the Copenhagen Social Summit) as well as preparations for the Third Earth Summit in 2002, that we can develop a comprehensive WILPF paper on all these inter-related issues.

- Regina Birchem

Many WILPF women are in dangerous situations struggling against great odds in their work for peaceful and just solutions to civil strife. Sierra Leone and Burundi come to mind, where many of our members are refugees. Colombia, however, is the present number one emergency and we have an important role to play. If you write only one letter this week or month to elected officials, strongly urge that ZERO dollars be sent to support Colombian government militias who continue kidnapping, killing and displacing whole villages.

Japanese WILPF reminds us of the military occupation of Okinawa, with the biased military courts having sole jurisdiction over soldier crimes against civilians. Our sisters there are also very concerned about U.S. efforts to establish new "defense of Asia" installations in Japan.

The Panama Canal Territory reverted to Panama at the end of 1999. Our section there asks for our support in their efforts to have the U.S. leave a cleaned-up canal. Much of the area has been severely polluted affecting miles of ocean.

Another environmental issue exists in Costa Rica

where women workers become ill from pesticides used in the banana industry. Nepal, like many sections, reports the adverse impact of the process of globalization with exploitation of women and children in carpet factories, as well as increase of domestic violence and traffic in girls.

Free Trade Zones throughout the world are the scenes of unsafe, repressive working situations. The women who bravely attempt to organize for better working conditions deserve our support. They, as well as International WILPF as a whole, remind us that economic justice in a world of limited resources is our shared challenge. Each of us can exercise our personal responsibility by only buying products made by people working for a livable wage. Be on the lookout for the lengthening lists of Fair Trade products.

- Joyce McLean

.....
International Vice President Regina Birchem can answer questions about African WILPFers. She can be reached at R.D.1 Box134, Irwin, PA 15642 or rbirchem@a1usa.net. Joyce McLean, the U.S. representative to WILPF's International Executive Committee, can be reached at 25080 Skyland Rd. Los Gatos, CA 95033 or at jmclean@jps.net.



Lauren Draper

WILPF U.N. Liaison Felicity Hill, left, and WILPF Special Advisor to the U. N. Edith Ballantyne shown at the Triennial Congress.

WILPF International Secretary General Named

.....

We are delighted to welcome Michaela Rosa Told, who began work as WILPF's new secretary general in January. She brings a wealth of international experience to our organization.

Michaela comes to us from the Swiss and Austrian Red Cross, where she worked in Laos on organizational development and capacity building. In the Laotian villages of the northern provinces, Michaela implemented community development and health projects and did assessment and training.

Michaela is from the mountain region of southern Germany and Austria. She has a degree from the Academy of Social Work for Professionals, a Master of Commerce degree from the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration, and a Master in Women and Development from the Institute of Social Studies, The Hague. Michaela's research focused on export-processing zones in Sri Lanka. She used Sri Lanka as a case study, looking at gender in ethnic-nationalist conflicts.

Michaela's international experience also extends to Africa, where in 1997 she was a consultant on gender policies for the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in

Mozambique.

The diversity of Michaela's interests and skills are also reflected in her experience in counseling, psychodrama, training on sexual health issues, quantitative-data analysis, conflict resolution, and publications on economy and gender issues. She speaks German, English, French, Portuguese and Lao.



Robin Lloyd

Michaela first became involved with WILPF when she was accredited by the organization to the Human Rights Commissions (1993-1995), to regional preparatory conferences for the Fourth World Conference on Women, and to the Human Rights Conference in Vienna (1993).

She recently plunged into WILPF work when she interrupted her work in Laos and her vacation time in Austria to participate in the 1999 International Executive Committee meeting in Costa Rica - *Regina Birchem*

Regina Birchem is WILPF's International Officer. She last wrote for Peace & Freedom about the Pan African Women's Peace Movement and her trip to Tanzania and Burundi.

PLANNED GIVING FOR PEACE

Anyone who pays federal taxes ends up supporting the military. Fifty percent of all taxes go to support the military. Through planned giving you can reduce your taxable income.

Many of our members have been able to benefit from planned giving and spend their money for peace. We wanted to share some of these techniques with all of our members and hope you will consider some of these ways of giving, which can benefit you, as well as programs for peace.

Here are some facts - write or call us for more details on how to set up a planned gift.

- If your estate is valued over \$600,000, your heirs will be taxed. You can reduce your estate value to the untaxed level by making a gift for peace.
- If you have stock that has gone up in value you will be taxed on the "profit." You can make a gift of this stock to the Jane Addams Peace Association (JAPA) which can sell the stocks and not be taxed. With the proceeds, an annuity can be set up for you and you will get income for life, rather than pay tax. Upon your death, the principal will continue to work for peace through WILPF.
- JAPA can set up an annuity to benefit your children or grandchildren and reduce your taxable income or estate.
- A bequest to WILPF is a legacy for peace. Consider a bequest of 5 percent of your estate. It can be set up in a special fund to honor your wishes and keep the dream of peace alive.

Please return the following coupon to WILPF to get more information or to have someone call you about a planned gift.

YES! I WANT MORE INFORMATION ON PLANNED GIVING for PEACE.

- Send me information about planned giving
- Call me to discuss planned giving. My telephone number is
- Send me a chart showing a life income on a gift of

I am _____ years old and married /unmarried (circle one - needed for preparing chart)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

**Send to: Planned Giving for Peace, WILPF, 1213 Race St., Philadelphia, PA 19107
Call: Rosemary Burke, Director of Development at WILPF (215) 563-7110**

New Union Organized by WILPF Member

Shirley Kirsten

Three years ago, I found myself in the midst of a labor struggle in Fresno, CA, a politically conservative area with a low number of union members. An ex-New Yorker with a formidable union pedigree, I had reentered the work force as a substitute teacher after raising six children. My mother, a 1930s labor organizer, had been my activist role model since early childhood. At age 6, I had stumbled upon a tattered *New York Daily News* clipping that showed her chained to a pillar in the Taft Hotel in midtown Manhattan, protesting the unfair labor practices of the Sutton Superior Laundry.

My own militance was sparked in September 1997, when I accepted a long-term, substitute teaching assignment in an inner city Fresno Middle School. At the time, I was outraged that Limited English Speaking (LEP) students were being educationally shortchanged because of the Fresno Unified School District's policy of rotating substitutes through classrooms at 30-day intervals. This allowed the district to "freeze" full-time teacher vacancies as a cost-saving measure. The practice also denied substitutes a decent salary with health benefits.

For 10 years, the Fresno district had frozen the daily substitute teacher wage at \$65 per day, while it granted incremental raises to unionized contract teachers, clerical workers, instructional aides, cafeteria workers, custodians and school bus drivers. When Fresno's substitute teachers became aware of the disparity in their wages, conditions were ripe for unionizing this temporary work force.

Spurred to action by an ad I placed in the *Fresno Bee* asking substitute teachers to contact me, a core group of grass roots activists assembled in my living room. We named ourselves FASTA— Fresno Area Substitute Teachers.

We were determined to locate substitute teachers in 125 district schools for the purpose of gathering "50 percent plus one"— the required number of petition signatures to file for union recognition.

A rainbow coalition of organizers plodded on for six months, working to search out substitute teaching peers, without actually knowing how many of them there were. The situation was difficult, because the school district had played games— sending the organization three confusing rosters that ranged from 900 to almost 3,000 names.

Feeling discouraged and defeated by these disparate figures, FASTA insurgents could not effectively plan their next move. We were also set back by the position of the established Fresno Teachers' Union (FTA) which represented 4,000 contract teachers. Its leadership relentlessly



At bottom of photo: Pam Whalen, SEIU senior organizer, left, and WILPF member Shirley Kirsten participate in a FASTA event.

insisted that the financial pie was not big enough to share with substitute teachers. The FTA had also historically refused to bring subs in under their union umbrella.

Suddenly, the media attention that FASTA had garnered in its feverish pursuit of union recognition drew the interest of professional organizers at SEIU Local 535. After adopting the group as an "organizing chapter," they paired union organizers with subs, collectively storming the trenches of 125 FUSD Schools in a blitz campaign that acquired hundreds more petition signatures, enough to push FASTA over the top in the recognition race.

In June 1998, FASTA successfully filed its petition to the Public Employment Relations Board while it simultaneously staved off a sudden intervener challenge by FTA meant to sabotage FASTA's independent unionization effort. Seven months into the campaign, despite maneuvers by the Fresno Unified School District to destroy FASTA, Fresno subs voted in landslide numbers to make FASTA the official union rep.

FASTA's victory resonates across the country. It is the only independent substitute teachers union in the state of California and one of only three in the nation.

Landmark contract negotiations with the school district produced an historic agreement between FASTA and FUSD in 1999, giving substitute teachers \$80 per day, plus cost-of-living allowances over three consecutive years. It also includes a three-step grievance process that significantly improves the job security of substitute teachers.

FASTA's organizing achievement is a working model for temporary workers across the country. Our rallying cry is the FASTA the better!

For more information: see www.netword.com/FASTA

WILPF member Shirley Kirsten, founder/president of FASTA, has an aunt Vera Taft who was an active member of Manhattan WILPF; her mother Jessie Taft Smith is a WILPF member and tenants' rights activist; her father was a union representative for the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen; and her brother is a Transport Workers Union representative.

The Path to War

Mimi Yahn

Editor's Note: This article is a response to the piece "Wrestling With Intervention," by Roberta Spivek, which ran in the Sept/Oct 1999 issue.

There are passages in each person's life which define or reinforce life's purpose. There are three from my childhood that stand out.

One was the fable of the boy who questioned authority and declared that the emperor had no clothes, a deed so brave, so representative of moral clarity, that I vowed to emulate that child throughout my life. Another was that peculiarly Jewish call, "Never again," which placed me squarely and irrevocably on the path of truth, justice and the internationalist way. And the third was one of the great, unanswered questions of the latter half of the 20th century: Could it happen again, here? Could we Americans become so passive—and so willingly complicit in creating a culture of blind obedience—that we would allow our government to perpetrate horrific crimes against humanity?

What makes these matters so important to me is that I believe as long as there are enough of us still willing to speak out when the emperor is naked, or morally wrong, then it can't happen here, and there is still hope that it will never happen again.

There were times in the 20th century—most notably the teens, '30s and '60s—when there were multitudes of us speaking out. The '90s were not one of those times, and the 1999 bombing of Yugoslavia was not a proud moment in our history.

We were told repeatedly there were no alternatives—and most of us believed it. We were told repeatedly that the bombing was humanitarian—and most of us chose not to question such an absurd notion. We were fed manufactured "background" on our benign role, both past and present—and most of us chose not to look beyond the NATO scripts.

Let me tell you the truth about Yugoslavia. In the past 20 years alone, there were a multitude of alternatives for securing peace in the Balkans, but instead, each and every one of those alternatives was squandered, ignored or fantastically and deliberately sabotaged by our "leaders."

Like so many regions of the world, the rise of nationalist demagogues, the ethnic scapegoating and the outbreak of civil wars were the direct result of severe austerity measures imposed by the International Monetary Fund, which caused a collapse of social supports and political unity. The United States, rather than

supporting the growing mass movements for democracy—which advocated peaceful solutions—instead chose to fund and arm nationalist groups and militias.*

Then, as the region predictably became engulfed in civil wars, there were the peace initiatives sabotaged by the United States.

On March 18, 1992, the European Community successfully brokered a negotiated peace between the Serbs, Croats and Bosnian Muslims to end the siege of Sarajevo. However, the United States convinced Bosnian leader Alija Izetbegovic to back out of the Lisbon Agreement and declare independence from Yugoslavia in exchange for U.S. backing and aid for their separatist movement. When the civil war inevitably broke out, the United States pushed the United Nations to impose an international arms embargo on both sides, effectively allowing the well-armed Yugoslav standing army to slaughter a nearly defenseless Bosnia.

In November of 1995, U.S. negotiators successfully—and unexpectedly—kept Kosovo off the agenda at Dayton, to the great shock and dismay of the Albanians who, under the leadership of Ibrahim Rugova, were defiantly creating an alternative society in response to the increasing repression of the Milosevic regime. After Dayton, however, Rugova's nonviolent methods lost credibility among the people, and by 1997, the hitherto ragtag Kosovo Liberation Army had gained sufficient popular support and enough arms to take on and declare war against the Yugoslav Army.*

At Rambouillet in February 1999, U.S. negotiators repeatedly blocked Albanian participation in the talks, then interjected non-negotiable demands which effectively guaranteed refusal by both sides, including that the Serbs agree to a NATO occupation force rather than a U.N. peacekeeping force and that Kosovo establish a "free market" economy. In view of the disaster that the free market economy brought to Kosovo's neighbor, Russia, this last demand was probably the most ludicrous and untenable to the Albanians, albeit the most salient for the Americans. After the collapse of Rambouillet, a State Department official told reporters, "We intentionally set the bar too high for the Serbs to comply. They need some bombing, and that's what they are going to get."

What then, did this "humanitarian" bombing accomplish?

NATO's stated aim was to weaken the Milosevic regime and his military. In reality—and in violation of the Geneva Convention and international rules of war—civilians and civilian infrastructure were targeted, from factories, mills and industrial plants to bridges, railways and highways; from phone lines and power grids to bus stations and religious centers. We dropped antipersonnel

cluster bombs on civilians—bombs which send shrapnel flying in all directions over an area the size of a football field. Hospitals, schools, farms, apartment buildings, outdoor markets, and pedestrian bridges were destroyed in over 25,000 sorties, which dropped more than 14,000 bombs and missiles. By the second month of bombing, the death toll was approaching 1,500. We didn't wait for night to bomb a "strategic" bridge; we waited until noon on market day, when the bridge would be most crowded. We used uranium-tipped missiles against the people of Yugoslavia—the same type of missiles used in Iraq and believed to be responsible for southern Iraq's epidemic of birth defects and cancers, including leukemia, among children born after 1991. By May, the University of Skopje in Macedonia reported that radiation levels there were three times normal.

We created one of the worst long-term environmental disasters in Europe's history: we bombed scores of petroleum and chemical factories, sending 18,000 tons of toxic chemicals into the air, soil and the Danube, which provides drinking water for 10 million people throughout Europe. Finally, there were reports of one of the

most diabolical tactics of any war: after bombing a civilian center such as an apartment building, NATO planes waited for rescue personnel to arrive before dropping the second round of bombs.

There were alternatives to this mass slaughter.

But for the U.S.—exporter of 49 percent of the world's armaments—peace is not one of those alternatives. Instead, as Jimmy Carter pointed out during the bombing ("Have We Forgotten the Path to Peace?" *New York Times*, 5/27/99), the United States actively undermines the peace process by "[S]hort-circuiting the long-established principles of patient negotiation" and excluding "nongovernmental organizations from peacemaking [which] precludes vital 'second track' opportunities for resolving disputes."

As we enter the 21st century, our nation is in the final stages of consolidating military and economic supremacy over an entire planet. This is not new; we have been doing so since the 1890s, and in the same

manner: We find a brutal, repressive strongman to put into power, destabilize the local economy and eliminate social supports, undermine and crush political dissent, destroy indigenous cultures, devastate the environment, then express shock and moral indignation when the strongman starts slaughtering an overly-oppressed, rebellious populace. We then come to the rescue with the Marines, the "smart" bombs, and the uranium-tipped missiles; we bomb yet another tiny nation back into the Stone Age, thus "softening" it up for Ford, ADM, Boeing, Nike, Shell, RTZ/Freeport, and all the rest of the New World Oligarchy.

Ours is a nation led by men with no moral authority, leaders who act with reckless, vindictive disregard for human life, leaders who chart courses of violent inter-

vention and who are bereft of the skills and maturity necessary to co-exist peacefully and respectfully with other human beings.

But what of us? Did we sell our souls for the myth of a liberal president or the right to drive SUVs? When did we give up informed political discourse for easy solutions? How did we lose our will to question authority and protest mass

murder carried out in our name by an immoral emperor?

How can we bear to remain passive while it happens here?

.....

Mimi Yahn is a writer, activist and WILPF member currently living in Louisiana. Her article detailing the history of US and NATO involvement in the Balkan tragedy, "From Littleton to Belgrade," first appeared in the June 1999 issue of Blueprint for Social Justice.

* Sources for this article include include: *The Truth About Yugoslavia*, by George Fyson, Argiris Malapanis and Jonathan Silberman (Pathfinder books), *The Militant* newspaper, The International Action Center, the pamphlet *Bosnia Tragedy: The Unknown Role of the U.S. Government and Pentagon*, by Sara Flounders and *What's Behind U.S. NATO Aggression in Yugoslavia*, a pamphlet published by the Workers World, *Time* magazine and the *Left Business Observer* newsletter.



Kosovar refugees

Impact Visuals

Celebrating WILPF's 85th anniversary

.....
Chris Morin
.....

As plans are developing for WILPF's 85th celebration, the Jane Addams quote below has been very much on my mind. Here we are about to start work on three new major campaigns addressing issues of racism, globalization and disarmament. It doesn't seem possible that any one of these issues has not destroyed the earth over the last 85 years. Nevertheless, because of the members of organizations such as WILPF gains have been made for social justice and bad governmental policies are constantly being challenged.

On the weekend of April 28th, we will be hosting multiple events around the country, honoring our sponsors and celebrating 85 years of WILPF's work for peace with justice. The details of these events are still in the early planning stages as of this writing. Sponsors who have said that they are available to come to one of the events are: Elise Boulding, Vinie Burrows, Frances (Sissy) Farenthold, Betty Reardon and Carmen Vazquez. An invitation will be coming to all members in March, so we hope you will watch for it in the mail.

Three cities/branches that will be hosting major 85th events will be Asheville, NC, Fresno, CA and New York City. The general format will be a day of political action,

**“What after all has maintained the
human race on this old globe . . .
if not faith in new possibilities and
the courage to advocate them.”**

- Jane Addams

followed by a dinner event with speakers, fun, introspection, and plans for future actions. These will be fundraising events, open to the public and highlighting new membership opportunities. The celebrations will mark the beginning of a year of festivities.

The idea to have four similar events across the country on the same weekend evolved from thoughts on how to make WILPF and our political message more visible.

How can we reach the national media in ways that we have never done before? We felt that if we yelled loud enough at the same time and on the same subject, we would be better heard. If our sponsors can lend their names and support and each of our branches can hold a similar event that weekend, it would increase our visibility. Members should also remember that the week of April 24th kicks off the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in New York City, around which many actions are planned.

Resources: WILPF member Margie Denton, who has a background in theater, has created a script about Jane Addams and Emily Greene Balch which covers the period between 1915 - 1919. The script has been used in schools and two WILPF branches have used it in recent programs. The script is available from Denton. Write to her at 63501 Bell Springs Rd., Garberville, CA 95542 or call (707) 984-8296.



Heidi Trester, left, resource coordinator for the 85th Anniversary, with Chris Morin in St. Louis.

.....
Chris Morin is WILPF's 85th Anniversary coordinator. To reach her, call (757) 229 3384 or email FunForLife1@aol.com

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Blanche Wiesen Cook Revisits “WILPF’s Eleanor”

Dominique Johnson

With the first two volumes of her Eleanor Roosevelt biography completed, author Blanche Wiesen Cook is continuing her search for information about the life and times of Roosevelt. Now at work on her third installment, Cook found a wealth of invaluable resources for her project, thanks to Kay Camp and the Main Line Philadelphia Branch.

Working with Cook’s contacts at Viking Press, the Main Line Branch sponsored and organized a talk, book signing, and reception as a part of a three-day whirlwind



Blanche Wiesen Cook, at left, with Kay Camp.

tour Cook did this past November in Philadelphia. After appearing at Giovanni’s Room bookstore in Center City and at a reception organized by WILPF in her honor at City Hall in Philadelphia, Cook visited with the Main Line Branch and a community of WILPFers and former New Dealers in Haverford, PA.

The group of nearly 100 sat captivated by Cook’s vivid recounting of Roosevelt and her journeys, not only as a first lady, mother, wife and friend, but especially as an activist for peace, social and economic justice and human rights. Complete with her accurately mimicking Roosevelt’s voice, Cook shared story after story—prompting many audience members to respond with their own stories about Roosevelt. While recalling a story about Roosevelt at a crucial civil rights conference, Cook spoke of the liberal radicals working for peace and justice during such turbulent times. A member of the audience casually raised his hand and said he had been at that very conference. He went on to describe his experience. Other New Dealers in the audi-

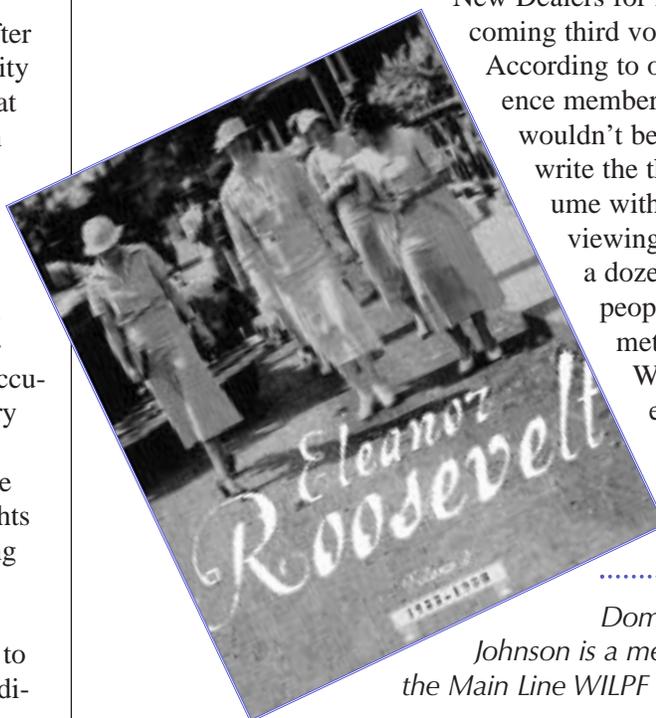
ence shared their stories as well, and Cook soon began taking notes.

This shared storytelling continued into the afternoon at a reception with WILPF Executive Director Mary Day Kent. More stories were told when Cook had dinner with the Main Line Branch members and their guests.

What is most impressive about Cook’s time with the Main Line Branch is the important lesson she brought with her: In telling the stories of “WILPF’s Eleanor,” we begin to realize that we have so much further to travel in this long journey towards peace and freedom. Cook described the political climates of Roosevelt’s time versus our time, and in doing so revealed that actions taken by activists in the past were often bolder and more critical than they are today. A passionate and articulate supporter of peace and freedom, Cook’s own bold political and social statements — which are always prefaced by her trademark, “in my opinion,” — moved some audience members to urge her to become more involved in the continuing politics of Roosevelt’s goals from the New Deal era. In her unique biography, Cook has captured the spirit of this great activist and woman. Because of her work, Roosevelt has become more approachable and more real to the world.

As a result of her trip to Philadelphia, Cook plans on returning to the Main Line Branch early this year to begin interviewing former New Dealers for her forthcoming third volume.

According to one audience member, she wouldn’t be able to write the third volume without interviewing at least a dozen of the people she met at the WILPF event.



Dominique Johnson is a member of the Main Line WILPF branch.

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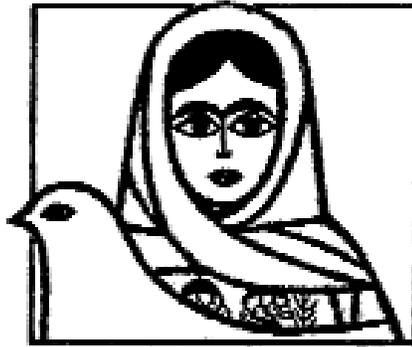
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THETA PAVIS, EDITOR,
AT THE U.S. WILPF OFFICE
IN PHILADELPHIA,
OR EMAIL PEACEFREEDOM@WILPF.ORG**

←
Kate Kasper, WILPF's new
Leadership/Outreach
Coordinator

A Year of Activism

.....
This calendar lists some of the WILPF events planned for 2000, as well as other items that may be of interest. If we have missed something important, or if you would like us to run an item in the future, please contact Peace & Freedom.

FEBRUARY

African American History Month
WILPF's Uniting for Racial Justice, Truth, Reparations, Restoration and Reconciliation (UFORJE) Training Conference, with Theatre of the Oppressed Techniques.
Date/Location TBA. Contact: Laura Partridge, UFORJE chair. Also, UFORJE issues National Call for the Collection of data documenting past and present racism in the USA.
UFORJE Race Rave Southeastern Region. Date TBA.

11-14 Open World Conference of Workers, in defense of trade union independence and rights, San Francisco (415 641 8616)

28 -March 17 U.N. Commission on the Status of Women/Preparatory Committee for Beijing+5

MARCH

1 Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Day (U.S. detonates 17 megaton hydrogen bomb on Bikini Atol, 1954)
1-8 Global Abolition Days (Week of public actions and lobbying for nuclear abolition, upholding articles 1, 2 and 6 of the Non proliferation Treaty)
7-9 WILPF Geneva seminar: "The Reporting of War and Disarmament: The Role of the Media in Building a Culture of Peace."

8 International Women's Day
Also, check out the World March of Women in the Year 2000
Contact Quebec Federation of Women at (514) 395 1196 or email: marche2000@ffq.qc.ca or see them on at the Web www.ffq.qc.ca

10 JAPA Collaboration meeting

11 JAPA Board meeting, NYC

11-12 Working Women Conference, Chicago (800) 871 9797

24-26 U.S. Section **WILPF** Board meeting, Philadelphia

31-April 2 Feminist Exposition 2000, Baltimore Convention Center, Baltimore, MD, with **WILPF** participation.

APRIL

WILPF UFORJE Training Conference
Date/Location TBA.

15 War Tax Resistance Day (IRS/Post office actions on Monday, April 17)

22 WILPF delegation to Cuba

Earth Day

Holocaust Remembrance Day (begins at sundown)

24-May 19 Non proliferation Treaty Review Conference, United Nations, NYC, culmination of **WILPF's** "Reaching Critical Will Project."

28 WILPF's anniversary, with celebrations around the world and across the U.S.

20-28 Commission on Human Rights, Geneva

28-29 Conference on "The Color of Violence: Violence Against Women of Color" at UC Santa Cruz. Conference will explore the relationships among racism, colonialism and gender violence in the lives and histories of women of color. Speakers include Angela Davis and Haunani Kay Trask. For registration materials, contact: Andrea Smith at 123 Felix Street, #4 Santa Cruz, CA 95060 or (831) 460 1856.

MAY

Labor History Month

WILPF UFORJE Race Rave

1 May Day

1-5 First session, The Prep Committee for the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, Geneva.

14 Mother's Day

15 International Conscientious Objectors Day

22-26 NGO Millennium Forum, New York

24 International Women's Day for Disarmament

JUNE

Lesbian and Gay Pride Month

WILPF UFORJE Training Conference

5-9 Beijing +5 meeting/conference, New York City, with **WILPF** participation.

14-18 National Women's Studies Association meeting, with **WILPF** participation, Boston. See www.nwsa.org

25 Lesbian and Gay Pride Day

26-30 Copenhagen+5, Geneva

JULY

WILPF UFORJE Race Rave

1-Aug 9 People's Campaign for Nonviolence. Daily vigils, rallies and nonviolent direct action at the White House, Capitol and Pentagon. Each evening, an interfaith prayer service and

speaker. Nonviolence training sessions will be held throughout the summer campaign. For more information, contact Fellowship of Reconciliation: (914) 358 4601.

6-9 International Conference on War Tax Resistance & Peace Tax Campaigns, Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. Info and registration: Peace Tax Foundation, 2121 Decatur PL, NW Washington, D.C. 20008; (202) 483 37 51; email: peacetaxfund@igc.org

16 Trinity Day. First nuclear weapon test, 1945.

27-29 WILPF International Meeting kicks off with seminar on "Eliminating racism/xenophobia and building a culture of peace," Berlin.

31 WILPF International Executive Committee Meeting, Berlin.

AUGUST

3 - 5 WILPF International Executive Committee meeting continues

6 Hiroshima Day

9 Nagasaki Day and Indigenous Peoples' Day

SEPTEMBER

Hispanic History Month

WILPF UFORJE Training Conference
United Nations Globalization Conference, NYC

11-15 Ottawa Landmine Convention, Geneva

JAPA and U.S. Section WILPF Board meetings, dates/locations TBA

OCTOBER

WILPF UFORJE Race Rave

1-17 World March of Women, worldwide marches, rallies and other actions against poverty and violence against women.

24 Disarmament Week. Begins on the anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

NOVEMBER

Native American History Month

WILPF UFORJE National

4 U.S. Presidential elections

10-14 WILPF delegation to Cuba for the World Solidarity Conference

DECEMBER

1 Prisoners of Conscience Day

10 Human Rights Day





Consumerism on the Playground

Betty Burkes, Field Work Chair

In both my political and personal life, young people are a priority. Engaging them in conversations, observing them at work and noticing their interactions with others, I learn about the politics of justice and nonviolence. Looking through their developmental lens I see the dehumanizing effects of capitalism, a system of economics that reduces children to insatiable consumers and manipulates them into wanting irrelevant things. Through television, feature films and sophisticated marketing techniques, toy companies fuel the flames of want and possession in defenseless children. Often, the thing whetting a child's appetite is useless except for its power to endow status and privilege— separating children who have from those who have not. Consequently, shades of injustice and potential violence — both familiar and profitable in the adult world — overshadow the child's sense of confidence and self-sufficiency.

Working in an arts and music program this past summer, I observed and interacted with young people every morning. We invented games, made masks, painted murals, poured plaster molds, gathered branches for weaving, picked blackberries and created lots of music. But one busy Monday morning, Pokémon arrived on the playground unannounced and uninvited.

From the sound and tone of the children's voices coming down from up in the tree house, Pokémon clearly did not belong in our peaceable arts environment.

Clarence, a father who accompanied his child and Pokémon into the playground stood by looking embarrassed and helpless. Since I was unfamiliar with Pokémon, he explained that it was part of an elaborate game including trading cards, videotapes, school supplies, the Internet and action figures. Pokémon, the latest collectible toy fad, is produced by Grand Toys International and is generating billions of dollars in sales worldwide.

The game brought an intensity and excitement to the playground that was neither friendly nor conducive to peaceable arts. Until I insisted that Pokémon return home with Dad, competition about the merits of the Pokémon figures, arguments about the rules of the game and hurt feelings over the trading card process escalated.

Even after Dad took Pokémon away, the game continued to have a destabilizing effect on our morning projects. The children remained agitated and at loose ends.

They seemed temporarily disconnected from the source of their wondrous imagination. They rambled from one activity to another, unable to settle into a purposeful job. Their ability to focus and to concentrate on small motor activities, like weaving and sewing, was markedly diminished. Outside on the playground, gross motor activities were carelessly undertaken as the children ran and climbed aimlessly without their usual attentiveness.



At circle time, the children were uncomfortable being in physical proximity to each other and sitting still, something we had practiced regularly. Silliness and irritability replaced laughter and humor. A kind of mindlessness crept into our morning that left some children unproductive and exhausted by the end of the day.

For the remainder of the morning, we coped with the effects of corporate influence and greed in our lives and the influence it has on children's behavior.

Pokémon's visit is a small but poignant example of corporate power and abuse in pursuit of profit by any means necessary. Currently, corporations have the legal right to exploit the minds and hearts of our children with no legal responsibility for guiding and caring for their development. We are as powerless to protect our children from Grand Toys International's drive for profits as Clarence felt while watching his son play Pokémon on the playground.

Consumerism is fundamental to the economic system of capitalism under which we all live. It is a prevailing cultural attitude that is both dehumanizing and nearly irresistible. We cannot allow the unbridled drive for corporate profits to override the safety of our children. The cost is too dear.

For our own good and that of the planet, we have some enormous rethinking to do about the tyranny of corporations, the loss of authority in our daily lives and how to reclaim our rights as citizens in a democracy. ❖

**This Peace Education section is funded
by the Jane Addams Peace Association.**

Children's Book Awards Celebrated

Dilys Purdy, JAPA Executive Director

The finale to the 1999 Jane Addams Children's Book Award was a joyous rendition of *This Land is Your Land*, sung by Woody Guthrie's daughter Nora.

A book by Guthrie based on his hit song was one of eight works chosen to receive an award at the 36th annual book award ceremony, held in New York in early November. The book *This Land Is Your Land* contains all of Woody Guthrie's lyrics, with paintings by Kathy Jakobsen (Little, Brown & Company).

Authors, editors, art directors, publicists, nationally prominent book reviewers and area librarians attended the ceremony, as did a substantial contingent from New York and New Jersey WILPF branches. Adding a special note to the event were children from three New York City schools: Lenox Hill Neighborhood House; Graham Windham Beacon Center; and IS 218. The children were able to read the winning books beforehand through donations made by the publishers, including: Scholastic Press, Greenwillow Books, Tricycle Press and Little, Brown & Company. They came well prepared with thoughtful questions for the authors and illustrators. Their enthusiasm served as a reminder that peace education is best started early.

Since its inception in 1953, the Book Award has acknowledged books which meet standards of excellence, as well as effectively expressing a theme which promotes peace, social justice, world community, gender and/or equality of the sexes or races. A national jury, chaired by Ginny Moore Kruse of the University of Wisconsin-Madison's School of Education, chooses the winning books. Other members who deserve credit for undertaking the arduous and often thankless task of selecting the winners include: Marilyn Hurley Bimstein, Rusty True Browder, Suzanne Martell, Mary Elting Folsom, Debby Langerman, Serena Murray, Cathie Reed, Patty Wong, Pat Wisner and Laurie Wright.

The two winners for 1999 include the novel, *Bat 6* by Virginia Euwer Wolff (Scholastic Press) and the picture book *Painted Words/Spoken Memories: Marianthe's Story*, written and illustrated by Alike. (Greenwillow Books).

Multiple voices relate the story in *Bat 6*, Wolff's complex novel involving an annual sixth grade girls' softball game competition in rural Oregon during 1949. A violent act by a troubled sixth grader influenced by society's racism toward Japanese Americans creates growing tension within the narrative. Wolff examines themes related to war and peace, discrimination, women's roles, and prejudice in a superb work of fiction containing no easy answers.

Painted Words /Spoken Memories combines two stories

about the same little girl whose family just immigrated to the United States.

Although Marianthe speaks no English, her teacher addresses the cruelty she is subjected to in the class-

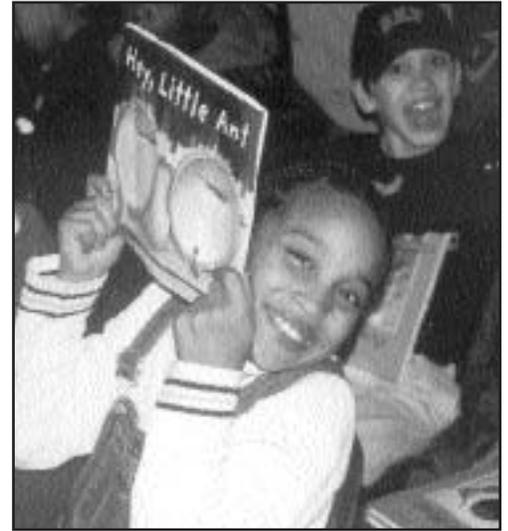
room, and understands that Marianthe's inner strengths make her able to communicate through pictures.

In the longer book category, the winners included: *The Heart of A Chief* written by Joseph Bruchac (Dial Books for Young Readers/Penguin Putnam), *No More Strangers Now: Young Voices from a New South Africa*, written by Tim McKee, photographs by Anne Blackshaw (A Melanie Kroupa Book/DK Ink.) and *Restless Spirit: The Life and Work of Dorothea Lange*, written by Elizabeth Partridge—who knew Lange as a child—with photographs by Dorothea Lange and others (Viking/Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers).

The Heart of a Chief is a novel featuring Chris, a sixth grade boy who has just moved from the Penacook reservation to a public school. *No More Strangers Now: Young Voices from a New South Africa*, contains McKee's interviews conducted in 1995-96 with 12 South African teenagers, each telling of her or his life before and after the end of apartheid.

In the picture book category, winners included: *Hey Little Ant*, written by Phillip & Hannah Hoose, illustrated by Debbie Tilley (Tricycle Press). The book began as lyrics for a song performed by Phillip and Hannah, a father and young daughter. *i see the rhythm*—a visual history of African American music— was written by Toyomi Igus, paintings by Michele Wood (Children's Book Press).

Most of the books are available for sale to WILPF members at a special price and may be obtained by contacting Millee Livingston at (530) 823-2224. To purchase award seals for the books, or for more information about the awards, please contact Dilys Purdy, JAPA Executive Director at (212) 682-8830 or japa@igc.org.





BranchAction News

Leslie Reindl, Branch Action Editor

MEMBERS HONORED

Agnes Bryant, past president of **Detroit** WILPF, was given a "PeaceBuilder Award" by Peace Action of Michigan. Alice Hamburg of Berkeley received the Berkeley Community Fund's "Achievement by Individuals" award.

USING THE ARTS FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

Based on a Phil Donahue show on racism, **Santa Cruz's** new Racial Justice Task Force prepared a script, which was presented at its January meeting. Afterwards, a dialogue on changes in racist attitude was held. The Arts Committee of **Minnesota Metro** performed its play about genital mutilation, *I See Hope in Your Eyes* at the annual meeting, inviting members of local refugee/immigrant groups and representatives of local health care organizations to attend. It also prepared an exhibit of peace art for a multi-group peace celebration. **Cape Cod** sponsored a book signing for Leonard Peltier's new book *Prison Writings*. The signer was the editor, Harvey Arden.

COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN TREATY (CTBT) AND OTHER NUCLEAR ISSUES

Fresno asked members to let Congress know they are outraged over the defeat of the CTBT. **Santa Cruz** and **Berkeley** urged members to demand that the president take U.S. nuclear missiles off alert status and nuclear reactors off line around the turn of the year, in view of the uncertainties surrounding Y2K. Members continue to collect signatures for the Abolition 2000 campaign. Petitions will be presented to heads of nuclear states at the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Conference in Geneva in April 2000. There is still time to get people involved. **Santa Cruz** also asked for co-sponsorship of the Woolsey Resolution, HR 82, which calls on the president to initiate multilateral negotiations on a treaty to eliminate nuclear weapons worldwide. Four **Portland** members participated in an action of conscience against the nuclear sub base at Bangor.

CHALLENGING CORPORATE POWER

Most reporting branches carried articles about the World Trade Organization and its November meeting in Seattle, and urged members to attend the citizens' protest held there. **Monterey** carried a long article from the International Network on Disarmament and Globalization explaining the WTO and how it is supplanting national

governments and the United Nations as the holder of power. **Cape Cod** carried U.S. WILPF's position paper on the Seattle meeting. **Portland** had an all-day WTO/Globalization Teach-in preparation for the November meeting. **Santa Cruz** and **Berkeley** helped organize a group to go. **Los Angeles** offered a briefing on the products, practices, and philosophies of the giant agro-chemical corporation Monsanto, which brought BGH and many other chemicals to life, and is now doing the same work with seeds. **Cape Cod** produced a program on Corporations and Democracy for its *In Your Face* TV program, including a skit, expert speakers and live call-ins to include the community. This program was a send-off for a six-week series of study groups to be convened across Cape Cod on the subject of corporate power and the people's rights. From a different angle, **Fresno** urged members to observe "Buy Nothing Day!" on November 26, the biggest shopping day of the year, to make a statement about the global economy and responsible consumption.

RACE RELATIONS

Los Angeles is a member of the Network Against Hate Crimes, a project of the L.A. County Commission on Human Relations. A new program organized by the District Attorney's office is JOLT (Juvenile Offenders Learning Tolerance) which helps offenders face up to their actions, as well as understand the basis of their intolerance and the consequences of their acts. Both offenders and their parents receive counseling.

Monterey is a member of Coalition of Minority Organizations, which celebrated its 10th anniversary with a forum on "Fear-based Ballot Initiatives," such as the Juvenile Justice Initiative and the Knight Initiative (which singles out gay and lesbian Californians for discriminatory legal treatment). Members organized a vigil for the National Day of Protest to Stop Police Brutality and Repression. **Monterey** and **Fresno** participated in the Stop the Hate Interfaith Vigil held across the country in October.

UNITED NATIONS

Monterey Bay co-sponsored a one-day conference on "Recommitting Ourselves to an Effective United Nations," with former Ambassador to Angola, Donald Steinberg, as keynoter. **Catonsville** heard a report about UNICEF and the effectiveness of its immunization, nutrition, and education programs. Its "School in a Box" pro-

gram, for \$170, provides materials for a year of education for a classroom of 80 students.

EAST TIMOR

Los Angeles hosted a speaker from the East Timor Action Network and pushed for action on the "East Timor Self-Determination Act of 1999" (S.1568 and H.R. 2895). This legislation would make temporary bans on military assistance to Indonesia permanent, until East Timor has a safe and secure environment. **Fresno** heard from an Indonesian surgeon and member of a human rights group who had to flee Indonesia. He asked that members demand an international commission of inquiry to punish those responsible for the atrocities throughout Indonesia, as well as in East Timor. **MN Metro** published articles and an Action Alert about cutting off military and financial aid to Indonesia.

OTHER HOT ISSUES

Detroit heard from a speaker on the School of the Americas at its annual Jane Addams Day celebration, and collected contributions to help people attend the demonstration on Nov. 20 at Fort Benning, GA. **Portland** hosted a send-off recognition of Oregonians going to demonstrate. Some branches are looking closely at the "War on Drugs" in Colombia and seeing the possibility of another El Salvador coming (**Berkeley, Monterey**). Work continues on Jubilee 2000 and Iraq (most branches). **Monterey** heard a speaker on landmines and the new U.N. program, Adopt-a-Minefield. **Santa Cruz** members are giving "Birthday Bashes" to raise money for the Coalition for Banning Landmines. The new **Santa Cruz University of California** chapter joined women across the country to speak out about issues surrounding reproductive freedom.

WOMEN 2000: BEIJING +5

Members of **Catonsville** attended a regional conference on this topic, convened by the President's Interagency Council on Women and Region III of the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor. Speakers included Ann Lewis, counselor to the President, and Patricia Flor, chairperson of the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women. **Berkeley** had a program highlighting the Platform for Action with a video made by a local filmmaker who attended the conference and a panel discussion with her and several others. The discussion topic was how people can pressure governments to make the changes to be called for by the Beijing + 5 conferences.

FUND RAISING

Minnesota Metro hosted a benefit concert with singer/song writer Deidre McCalla, who "celebrates folks who rarely get their due from the dominant culture." Also performing were Outrageous Women on an Outrageous Mission, a company committed to developing a Women's

Theater for Minnesota.

ORGANIZING AROUND THE THREE NEW CAMPAIGNS

Santa Cruz had a facilitator at its September meeting and brainstormed ideas for carrying out the goals of the three new national campaigns. These ideas (about 15 for each issue) were published in the October newsletter. Visit the Santa Cruz website to access these: wilpf.got.net.

To contact Leslie Reindl, write: 1233 Ingerson Road, St. Paul, MN 55112-3714.

HONORING NGO BA THANH



WILPF has just learned that the Vietnamese woman who headed the women's peace movement in Saigon during the U.S. invasion of Vietnam, and who co-drafted the Peace Declaration between her organization and WILPF, received the International Biographical Association's "Woman of the Year Award" in 1998.

In 1971, Dr. Ngo ba Thanh welcomed an International WILPF delegation to her country and organized a conference of women to hear them speak. She took us to the Thu Duc Prison, where she had frequently been incarcerated. Members may recall the WILPF campaign to "Free Mme. Thanh," whose courageous actions led to about five years of imprisonment. "Tell your soldiers to go home as soldiers and come back as friends," she told us.

Since then Ngo ba Thanh, who had studied law in Paris, Barcelona and New York, helped draft the country's new constitution and has been serving as a deputy in the National Assembly. She is a member of the executive committee of the Vietnam Women's Union and of the presidium of the Vietnam Motherland Front, and vice-president of the Vietnam Lawyers Association and of the Union of Friendship Associations.

When she visited the WILPF National office three years ago, she headed nine factories that were reprocessing and purifying soil contaminated by Agent Orange. At the 19th WILPF International Congress in Sydney, she contributed a 250-page report on "The Women: Architects of Peace," comprising her wartime papers, including correspondence with our WILPF delegation members.

When my 16-year old granddaughter Katherine Camp went to Vietnam with classmates, Ngo ba Thanh invited her to tea.

We are proud and happy she won this award.

- Kay Camp

Join your sisters in WILPF to:

- **UNITE** in a worldwide sisterhood of peace and justice;
- **BUILD** a constructive peace through world disarmament;
- **WORK** for the equality of all people in a world free of sexism and racism;
- **CREATE** lasting social change and worldwide peace and justice.



WILPF, one of the world's oldest, continuously active peace organizations, works in 37 countries, over 100 U.S. communities and on many campuses, and with the United Nations, where it has Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) status.

Yes! I want to join WILPF to work for peace and freedom.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____ email _____

Branch Name _____

New Member Renewal

Annual dues include a subscription to *Peace and Freedom*

Individual \$35 Household \$40 Student \$15

"More if you can, less if you can't" \$ _____

Contribution \$ _____ Total \$ _____

All dues and contributions are payable to WILPF and are not tax deductible. Make tax deductible contributions of \$50 or more to Jane Addams Peace Association Fund.

Mail to: WILPF
1213 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107
For information, call: (215) 563-7110

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

1213 Race Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107-1691

Time Value – Do Not Delay



WILPFers in Seattle
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