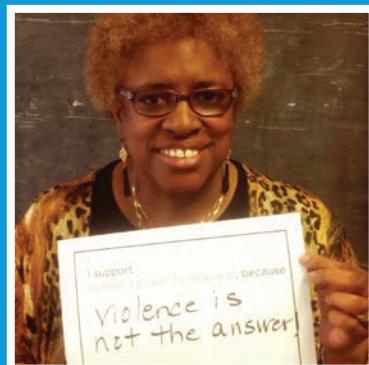
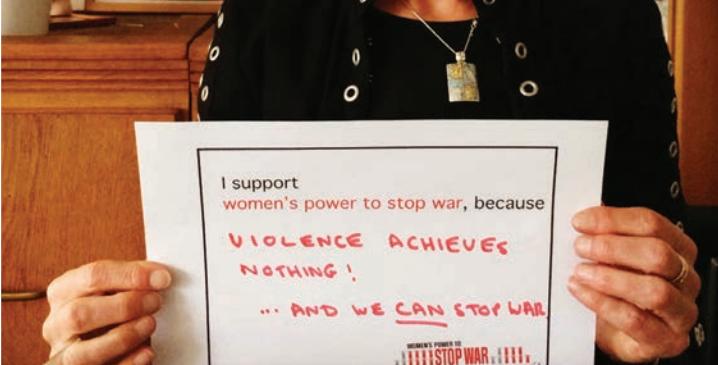
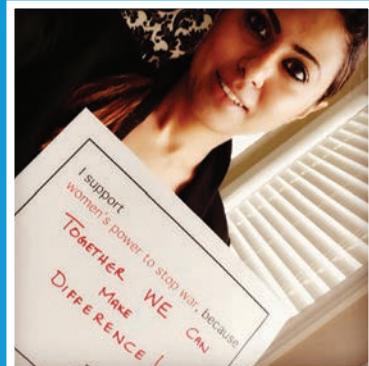
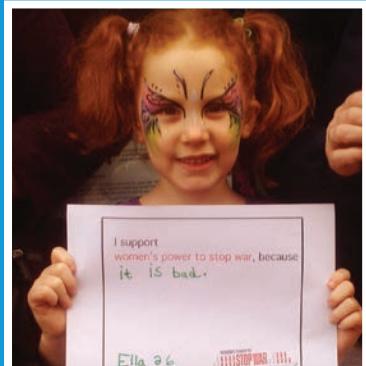
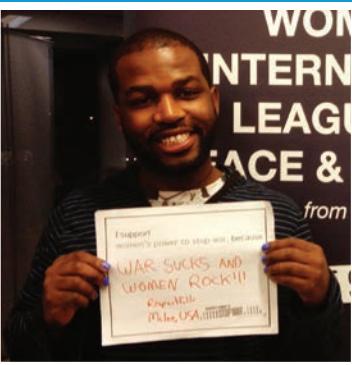
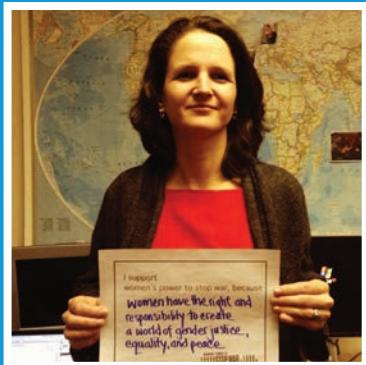


PEACE & FREEDOM

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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.

WILPF has sections in 42 countries coordinated by a secretariat in Geneva. WILPF carries out its work through grassroots organizing by WILPF branches. WILPF supports the work of the United Nations and has consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

WILPF U.S. Section:

11 Arlington Street, Boston, MA 02116; phone: 617/266-0999; fax: 617/266-1688; e-mail: dialogue@wilpfus.org; website: wilpfus.org

President: Mary Hanson Harrison

Treasurer: Altaira Hatton

Director of Operations: Ria Kulenovic

WILPF International Secretariat:

1 rue de Varembé, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland; phone: 41-22-919-7080; fax: 41-22-919-7081; e-mail: secretariat@wilpf.ch

President: Adilia Caravaca

Secretary General: Madeleine Rees

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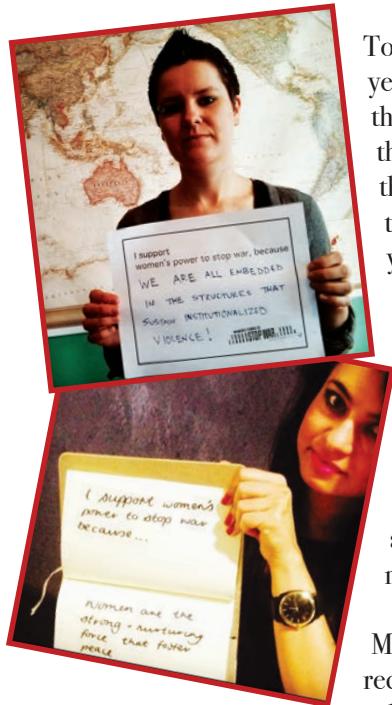
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THE COUNTDOWN TO 100 FIND YOUR WAY TO JUMP IN

In 1915, about 40 bold and sassy women sailed from New York to raise their voices in protest to World War I. With trailblazer Jane Addams leading the way, they made that courageous voyage to The Hague in Holland, joining 1,056 other visionary women to establish what we now know as the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

Following the path of these pioneering women, we carry their message today by continuing to push for a peaceful and free world for everyone, won with women's participation in all aspects of peace and security decision-making.



To mark the first 100 years' progress and lay the groundwork for the coming century, the "Women's Power to Stop War" 100-year anniversary movement boasts

a website with blogs, webinars, pledge pages, and meetings, and will culminate in a conference, a congress, and more, with ways for everyone to participate. (womenstopwar.org) The centennial anniversary returns to The Hague with the WILPF 2015 Conference next April 27 to 29. This time more than 1,300 women from peace organizations around the world will join WILPF members to celebrate, connect and strengthen the work of women peacemakers. A few days prior to the 100th anniversary celebration, WILPF leaders and delegates will gather for the International Anniversary Congress to adopt WILPF's new manifesto, a guide that will lay down the tracks for the next 100 years of peacemaking.

More than a conference and a congress, "Women's Power to Stop War" is a movement that recognizes the work of women peacemakers from around the world to show how far we've come and how far we still have to go in reaching sustainable peace.

To that end, the long-anticipated Anniversary Atlas was launched on the "Women's Power to Stop War" website (womenstopwar.org). The Anniversary Atlas is an interactive timeline that allows anyone to see WILPF's dynamic past, present and future activities, uniting a global movement of peacemakers. How can you add to the "Women's Power to Stop War" movement? Have you signed the pledge, joined one of the Anniversary webinars, or planned your trip to The Hague? Learn how you can become part of 'Women's Power to Stop War' by visiting our website at womenstopwar.org and expanding yourself as a peacemaker today!

Send your ideas for local and regional U.S. activities to: centennialcoordinator@wilpfus.org.

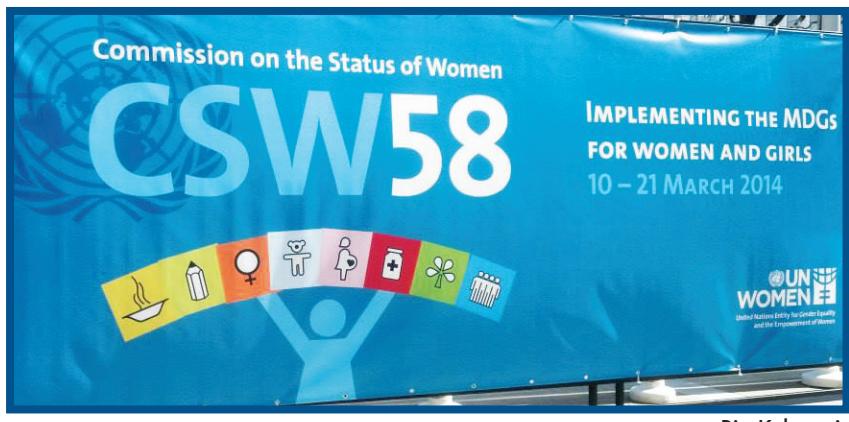


Ria Kulenovic

International Anniversary Coordinator Emma Burgisser and WILPF's Secretary-General Madeleine Rees presenting on the 100th Anniversary during CSW in New York, March 2014

CSW 58: REPORT FROM THE FRONT LINES OF PEACE

By Kristen Alder



Ria Kulenovic

human rights, the inclusion of women at all levels of the peace process, and the urgent need for disarmament in order to carry out sustainable development.

Among U.S. delegates were the 2014 Local2Global cohorts and the UN Practicum in Advocacy students. Spanning generations, our members made a strong statement about WILPF's cross-generational galvanizing mission. Led by Marie-Louise Jackson-Miller of Quincy/Boston and Nicole Scott of Detroit, Local2Global women—Lauretta Freeman of New Jersey, Jan Corderman and Deb Holley of Des Moines, Iowa, Eileen Dunn of Ashland, Oregon, and Alexandria “Rain” Smith of Missoula, Montana—represented WILPF's diversity of experience and activist interests. The longevity and strength of WILPF's message was emphasized by the presence and participation of Lauretta Freeman who joined WILPF sixty-six years ago in 1948.

Working alongside and learning from our members were nineteen university women in the UN Practicum in Advocacy program. Led by Melissa Torres of Houston, Texas and Kristin Alder of Ft. Worth, Texas, the Practicum women represented a wealth of racial, ethnic, national, sexual and educational diversities exemplifying young women's ability to align across difference.

The two groups engaged each other and other CSW delegates in a myriad of sessions that sought to address both the CSW's main theme, “Challenges and Achievements in the Implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for Women and Girls,” and the impending creation of the UN's Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals. Within this context, WILPF's overall position was based on an integrated approach to human security that there can be no peace nor women's full and equal rights nor sustainable development without disarmament. Moreover, WILPF pointed to the detrimental impact of excessive military spending which, “Exacerbates sexual and gender based violence,” while simultaneously raiding funding for peace, women's equality, and sustainable development.

These points were emphasized in WILPF-sponsored event, “No Development without Disarmament.” WILPF Secretary General Madeleine Rees, Joy Onyesoh of WILPF Nigeria, Rehana Hashmi of WILPF Pakistan, Debir D'hejal of WILPF Colombia, and Ray Acheson of WILPF's Reaching Critical Will disarmament program addressed the relationship between sustainable development, peace, women's rights, disarmament and ending regional and global conflict. A particular connection was made between the presence of arms and that of gender-based violence. Both Debir D'hejal and Rehana Hashmi addressed disarmament in their regional contexts. Hashmi spoke of the negative impact of American drones and the overall war economy upon development issues in Pakistan, while D'hejal reflected upon ongoing militarization in Colombia and its impact upon the millions of displaced people, mostly women and children, in that country. She reminded the audience that, “Peacemaking starts at the local level,”

With 75 delegates at the United Nations's 58th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in March, WILPF voiced a strong and united demand for recognition of women's power to stop war. WILPF delegates from Pakistan, India, Australia, Nigeria, Jordan, Syria, Bosnia Herzegovina, and Colombia, joined women from Geneva, Switzerland and the United States to kick-off WILPF's 100th anniversary movement, Women's Power to Stop War! At the same time, WILPF delegates advocated for the advancement of women's

and discussed the many ways WILPF Colombia aligns itself with other local and regional organizations to work for peace in her nation.

Coalition building was also stressed in the WILPF event, “From Bosnia to Syria.” Secretary General Rees was joined by Bosnian peace activists Nela Porobis Isakovic and Goruna Mlinarevic, and Syrian peace activists Nawal Yazeji and Sabah Alballak in a discussion of WILPF’s powerful initiative to bring women together to learn from one another’s shared experiences and to strengthen their capacities as peace builders and agents of positive change. Rees spoke of women’s realities not only as victims of conflict, but also their critical role in the peace process. She remarked upon the importance of continuing to challenge traditional discourse in peace building. All of the panelists emphasized that peace was a process, not a project and spoke of their ongoing partnership with one another.

The Local2Global and Practicum women cheered on WILPF’s Rees as she was awarded the 2014 CUNY School of Law Dean’s Social Justice Award in recognition of her exemplary work in women’s human rights, particularly in conflict situations. Rees was shown a short film of WILPF well-wishers and was flanked by supporters filmmaker Abigail Disney, Barbro Svedberg of WILPF MENA, and Rhadhika Balakrishnan of the Center for Women’s Global Leadership. The women addressed Rees as a visionary, a genius and, “A radical partner for peace.” In accepting the award, Rees spoke not only of her current work with women in Syria, she also remarked on her drive to combat injustice. “I’ve been doing this since I was three years old. Whenever I saw injustice, I had to do something about it personally.”



Ria Kulenovic

Commission on the Status of Women participants

WILPF delegates also played a valuable role in advocating for WILPF’s positions in the CSW’s Agreed Conclusions. In their e-news update on “WILPF at the 58th Commission on the Status of Women,” PeaceWomen emphasized advocacy as part of a successful push for the CSW’s Agreed Conclusions to demand gender equality as a priority for the UN’s Post-2015 sustainable development agenda. The call was for both a stand-alone gender equality Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) and for gender to be integrated into all other SDGs. Despite this accomplishment, we continued to be frustrated by pushback on human rights broadly and especially on sexual and reproductive health and rights. We are particularly concerned that a few states, led by the U.S. and China, were able to delete support for cutting military spending in order to finance development. Not to include language already agreed on by Rio de Janeiro’s 1992 environment and sustainable development summit and by the 1995 Beijing Conference on Women which call for financing development with cuts in military spending is a failure of the CSW 58 Agreed Conclusions. New ways to tackle this resistance and galvanize support for stronger progressive language in the post-2015 development framework must be found.

For Local2Global and Practicum women, lessons of the CSW were far-reaching. As newly elected board member and Local2Global attendee Deb Holley put it, “The stories and pleas of women around the world were so familiar—a very compelling feeling of sisterhood and solidarity that I had never encountered before.” She said CSW 58 was her first involvement in international affairs and had been kept busy by local, regional, and national problems. “But I am well aware of how small our globe has shrunk, and the fact that something impacting someone thousands of miles away is now affecting us on a local level. If we hope to improve our lives here in the U.S., we must help those in other countries as well.” To echo words of our Secretary General, whenever we see injustice, let us do something about it personally, and as WILPF.

Kristen Alder is a U.S. Section representative to the United Nations in New York City. She may be reached at krmariea@hotmail.com.

Declaration for Climate, Justice and Peace

By Nancy Price



Joe Brusky, Madison, WI

women's rights, in particular, are upheld, especially as they relate to climate change and sustainable development. It would also thwart increasing corporate influence at the United Nations.

A number of current reports and forthcoming climate conferences mark the challenges and opportunities for concluding a comprehensive legally binding agreement on climate.

Current Reports: Newly-released reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the White House's "National Climate Assessment" conclude that climate change is already impacting agriculture and food security, fresh water sources, human health and ecosystems worldwide. Most alarming is the latest news that the West Antarctic ice sheet is starting a slow but irrevocable collapse leading to rising seas. Clearly, the earth has reached a tipping point with catastrophic consequences for people and the planet.² Additionally, as people migrate to avoid climate and extreme weather, and corporations and nations seek control over land, water, mineral and energy resources, the potential for conflict increases.

United Nations Climate Conferences: The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) treaty was negotiated at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro and came into force in 1994. The objective was to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Since then, the Conference of Parties (COP) has met annually with few tangible results.

In 2011, recognizing the urgency, the group decided that at the final COP 21 meeting in December 2015, all nations would commit to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to prevent global temperature rise to not more than 2 degrees Celsius above current levels. To accomplish this, the amount of heat-trapping carbon dioxide concentration in the atmosphere, now over 400 parts per million (ppm), must be reduced to at least 350 ppm.³

This is a daunting challenge. Many countries will need significant aid to make the transition to lower-carbon economies while attempting to lift their populations out of poverty. At the 2013 COP 19 meeting, negotiators failed to make progress on such key issues as: carbon reduction commitments, mitigation measures, the financing of an Adaptation Fund, and an international

The Declaration: In 1915, visionary women came together to call for peace and founded the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Anticipating the 100th Anniversary, I propose that the Earth Democracy group, with others at WILPF's Triennial Congress in Detroit, augment that historic call with, "A Declaration for Climate, Justice and Peace." This updated Declaration would describe how climate change and extreme weather disproportionately impact the lives and security of women, their families and communities, and cause conflict and war, and jeopardize peace and freedom.¹

Furthermore, this Declaration would create a platform for WILPF to support women's gender and civil society organizations at the United Nations. It would seek to ensure that global commitments by the UN to gender equality and

process to fund loss and damage due to climate impacts and extreme weather, prompting hundreds of civil society, trade union, environmental, youth, Indigenous Peoples, and women's groups to walk out, along with representatives of developing and island nations.⁴

Eager to "build a solid foundation for progress on negotiations and commitments for reducing emissions," at the COP 20 meeting in December 2014, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon invited heads of state and government, and business, finance, civil society and local leaders to New York for a "Catalyzing Action" Climate Summit in mid-September. He challenged them, "To bring to the Summit bold pledges. Innovate, scale-up, cooperate and deliver concrete action that will close the emissions gap and put us on track for an ambitious legal agreement through the UNFCCC process."⁵

Climate Negotiations and Corporate Influence: Recently, however, members of the Women and Gender Constituency – Official NGO Observer to the UNFCCC wrote Summit organizers that the outcome could be compromised by growing corporate influence at the UN. First, they stress that because the Summit is an informal meeting with no negotiated binding outcome, discussion of pledges will reinforce a growing reluctance of UN members to agree to legally binding commitments.

Second, they point out that many groups are increasingly concerned about the "rise in corporations' unprecedented levels of access to the United Nations and state-level decision-making processes." This includes, "Prioritizing and championing public-private partnerships and 'transformative' role of the private sector," for both climate action and sustainable development.⁶ Similarly, a recent report states, "At a time when governments seem unable and unwilling to resolve pressing challenges..., corporations, governments and various civil society organizations...are promoting multi-stakeholder initiatives and public-private partnerships as innovative models to tackle global issues."⁷

The Women and Gender Constituency criticizes this model, pointing out that, "Private companies are not obligated to invest in social needs and global public good and that the private sector, especially large-transnational corporations, have contributed to the unsustainable development model which drives catastrophic climate change in the first place." They go on to call for, "Full transparency on all corporate contributions to the UN and its specialized agencies, including through public-private partnerships." They also urge, "Rigorous adherence to the numerous normative rights frameworks and legally binding agreements in the field of sustainable development, which provide the foundation for the work of the United Nations."⁸ Other groups also warn that the UN as an institution might never recover from reputation shock if chief private financiers it engages with are also chief violators of its most cherished principles.⁹

Climate, Justice and Peace: A "Declaration for Climate, Justice and Peace" could position WILPF to bring a strong platform to the up-coming 2014 Climate Summit in September, and to the 2014 COP 20 and 2015 COP 21 meetings. It could also support those wanting to reign in corporate influence at the UN and to achieve an ambitious, just, gender-sensitive, and legally binding agreement on climate. This may be one of the most important contributions WILPF can make to the cause of People, Planet and Peace over Profit.¹⁰

1. Google: "Women More Vulnerable Than Men to Climate Change" and "Environmental Change, Migration, and Gender." Also gendercc.net The GenderCC platform gender and climate. Articles on climate change and conflict can be found on the internet.
2. ipcc.ch, whitehouse.gov/climate-change, and ecowatch.com/2014/05/15/coastal-u-s-melting-antarctic-glacier/
3. 350.org/about/science/
4. "After COP 19 in Warsaw – Checkmate for International Climate Politics" boell.de/en/2013/12/03/after-cop-19-warsaw-checkmate-international-climate-politics
5. un.org/climatechange/summit2014/
6. Letter From Members of the Women and Gender Constituency to the Organizers of the Secretary-General's 2014 Climate Summit. tinyurl.com/qfzet2a
7. Lou Pingot, Corporate Influence in the Post-2015 process, January, 2014, globalpolicy.org/images/pdfs/GPFEurope/Corporate_influence_in_the_Post-2015_process_web.pdf; Also "Corporations, Climate and the United Nations: How Big Business has Seized Control of Global Climate Negotiation," Polaris Inst. Nov. 2011 polarisinststitute.org/files/CorporateClimateandtheUN.pdf
8. See note 6.
9. RightingFinance delivers statement on Partnerships for Financing Sustainable Development, April, 2014, rightingfinance.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Read-full-statement.pdf
10. The Global Climate Convergence: People, Planet, Peace over Profit vimeo.com/90085232

Nancy Price is chair of the Earth Democracy Issue Committee. To learn more, contact Nancy Price nancyprice39@gmail.com.

REMEMBERING FUKUSHIMA

A Precarious Path to Alternative Energy

By H. Patricia Hynes

Mainstream media moved on from the Fukushima story some time ago, leaving most of us in the dark about this worsening nuclear tragedy as if there was nothing more to mourn or fear and no more lessons to learn. Yet, people are still dying from its effects, radioactive water keeps pouring into the Pacific Ocean and contamination levels in U.S. West Coast aquatic life continues to be a concern.

There are no solutions at hand. But, ironically, the horrors of Fukushima may be the catalyst that spurs a shift to safer, cleaner energy alternatives.

Three years ago on March 11, the Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami devastated northeast Japan, claiming nearly 16,000 lives, injuring thousands more and crippling the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. Three of the plant's six reactors suffered hazardous core meltdowns and hydrogen gas explosions, releasing radionuclides into the air, soil and Pacific Ocean. More than 300,000 people were eventually evacuated from the region and today remain nuclear refugees, living with the same trauma, fear, sense of displacement, and loss of livelihood and social roots as those displaced by war. A few thousand residents, who have been allowed to return to their town, Odaka, find themselves alive in a dying region. "People don't believe it is safe to visit here. They won't believe our produce, our livestock, our fish are safe," reported one rueful resident.

By late 2013, about 1,600 nuclear refugees had died of insufficient medical services, exhaustion from relocating, suicide and, likely, heartbreak, surpassing the number killed in Fukushima Prefecture from the original disaster. Cysts or nodules were found on thyroids of more than 35 percent of 38,000 examined Fukushima children, compared with one percent of a control group for Japanese children. In a callous move to keep schools open in Fukushima, the Japanese government raised the permissible level of radiation for Japanese children, who can now be exposed to 20 times more radiation than was previously allowed.

Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of tons of radioactive water from the site have leaked through groundwater into the Pacific Ocean, and continues at a rate of 300 tons per day. Radioactive cesium, a carcinogen that bioaccumulates in animal, fish and human tissue, has been found throughout mainland Japan, in fish off the coast of Fukushima (thus closing that industry), and in large migratory fish such as Bluefin tuna off the coast of California. A plume of radioactive water from Fukushima was expected to have reached the West Coast of the United States in early 2014. "Kelp Watch 2014" researchers will analyze samples of kelp from the U.S. West Coast for potential radioactive contamination from Fukushima. California's kelp forest is, "A highly productive and complex ecosystem and a valuable state resource," according to the researchers.

Tragically, there is no solution in sight to trapping and treating the cesium-, tritium- and strontium-contaminated groundwater before it reaches the Pacific Ocean. "The situation at the reactor site is progressively deteriorating, not stabilizing," stated an international group of experts in their urgent appeal to United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon for international action.

In the wake of this \$250 billion disaster, Japan closed all of its 54 nuclear power plants. An extraordinary (and embattled) act for a country dependent on nuclear energy for one-third of its electricity, with plans to increase that rate to 50 percent by 2030, and for a country that had lulled its citizens into complacency with nuclear safety myths. Naoto Kan, Prime Minister at the time of the Fukushima meltdown, has since rejected nuclear power saying, "There is no [other industrial] accident or disaster that would affect 50 million people," like a nuclear accident. An unprecedented anti-nuclear citizen's movement ignited in Japan after Fukushima and has persisted, with a strong majority of the population opposing nuclear power in the face of the current conservative and militaristic government's determination to restart the offline nuclear power plants.

Radioactive waste is the nuclear industry's nemesis, most currently so in Fukushima Daiichi where intensely radioactive spent fuel rods lie in a warped and sinking structure, and remain at risk of catastrophic fire if another (and potentially likely) earthquake strikes the region.

TEPCO, the plant operator responsible for the clean-up of Fukushima nuclear power plants, has bankrupted the trust of Japanese citizens and of the world. An independent commissioned Japanese investigation determined that the nuclear disaster was “manmade” in that collusion between the nuclear industry and government agencies responsible for regulating nuclear safety resulted in lapses in basic safety requirements. TEPCO ignored, at the people’s peril, forecasts of an earthquake of this magnitude; did not immediately warn inhabitants of the radioactive plume’s direction, causing some to evacuate directly into its path; and lacked adequate evacuation plans. A Stanford University study found that, “Japanese nuclear power plants were relatively unprotected,” against floods and tsunamis when compared with plants in other countries. Yet, whether for technological or political face-saving or both, neither the company nor the Japanese government has sought or welcomed international engineering assistance in their technologically-challenged project to remove and rehouse 1,533 spent fuel rods from a severely damaged cooling pond structure in reactor 4. The earthquake-compromised rods embody the radiation equivalent of 14,000 Hiroshima atomic bombs.

Fukushima is a mirror to the world of nuclear nightmare: core meltdowns still not understood or under control; precariously perched fuel rods threatening catastrophe throughout Japan and beyond; hundreds of thousands of nuclear refugees and desperate nuclear workers living in anomie; on-going radioactive contamination of the Pacific Ocean; and collusive government and industry locked in an entitled estate of denial and secrecy against the will of their citizens.

Promoting nuclear power as a low-carbon alternative to fossil fuels—as some prominent climate change scientists are doing—is a myopic bargain with the devil. New generations of safer nuclear power plants that would purportedly reduce the risk of ruinous Fukushima-like accidents are decades away from market readiness, too late for stemming the climate change juggernaut. Much more far-sighted is the charismatic former prime minister of Japan, Junichiro Koizumi, an erstwhile nuclear power promoter. Since Fukushima, he calls for abandoning nuclear power, given its mammoth costs and Japan’s seismically active coast, and for his country to unite in creating a renewable society unparalleled in the world. Such a social movement, he foresees, would lift the country’s public spirit and re-charge its economy.

Scrapping nuclear power has sped the transition to efficiency and renewable energy. In 2012, Fukushima Prefecture signed an agreement to build the country’s largest solar park, and in 2013 Fukushima announced plans to build the world’s largest offshore wind farm –both part of the prefecture’s plan to generate 100 percent of its electricity using renewable sources by 2040. Countries in Europe with the most ambitious solar and wind goals are either phasing out nuclear power (Germany) or have adopted a no nuclear power policy (Denmark and Portugal).

As for the United States, we have enough resource capacity to power the United States with solar and wind. Wind energy in the Great Plains and solar energy in the Southwest could meet current electrical energy needs more than a dozen times over, and this estimate does not include the capacity of offshore wind. Critically acclaimed studies, including one conducted by researchers Mark Jacobson of Stanford University and Mark Delucchi of University of California at Davis, have laid out a roadmap for energy policy using only energy efficiency, wind, water and solar technologies in the next two to four decades.

In July 2012, an under-the-radar research laboratory within the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)—the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)—released an initial investigatory report on the potential for renewable energy. The report is, in DOE’s words, “The most comprehensive analysis of high-penetration renewable electricity of the continental United States to date . . .” The major finding of the “Renewable Electricity Futures Study” supports a nuclear-free, zero-carbon renewable energy future:

Renewable electricity generation from technologies that are commercially available today, in combination with a more flexible electric system, is more than adequate to supply 80% of total U.S. electricity generation in 2050 while meeting demand on an hourly basis in every region of the country.

The age of renewables will arrive when fossil fuels and nuclear power decline irreversibly, predicted German economist and renewable energy pioneer Hermann Scheer, stimulating renewables to increase irreversibly. The path to this age of renewables is political will forged by the will of the people—a struggle reinforced by Fukushima that ensues today in Japan and worldwide.

Patricia Hynes is director of Traprock Center for Peace and Justice, member of Nuclear Free Future, retired environmental engineer and Professor of Environmental Health from Boston University School of Public Health and a member of WILPF. She may be reached at phynes@gmail.com.

AFTER MEXICO

Why an “Ottawa Process” for a Legal Ban of Nuclear Weapons Deserves Our Enthusiastic Support

By Alice Slater

for India, Pakistan, and Israel, who went on to develop nuclear arsenals. North Korea, an NPT member, took advantage of the technological know-how it acquired through its “inalienable right” to nuclear power and quit the treaty to make its own nuclear bombs. Today there are nine nuclear weapons states with 17,000 bombs on the planet, 16,000 of which are in the U.S. and Russia.

At the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, a new network of NGOs, Abolition 2000, called for immediate negotiations of a treaty to eliminate nuclear weapons and a phase out of nuclear power.⁴ A Working Group of lawyers, scientists and policy makers drafted a Model Nuclear Weapons Convention,⁵ laying out all the necessary steps to be considered for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. It became an official UN document and was cited in Secretary General Ban Ki-moon’s 2008 proposal for a Five Point Plan for Nuclear Disarmament.⁶ The NPT’s indefinite extension required Review Conferences every five years, with Preparatory Committee meetings in between.

In 1996, the NGO World Court Project sought an Advisory Opinion from the International Court of Justice on the legality of the bomb. The Court ruled unanimously that an international obligation exists to “conclude negotiations on nuclear disarmament in all its aspects.” Disappointingly, it added that weapons are “generally illegal” and that the Court was unable to decide whether it would be legal or not to use nuclear weapons “when the very survival of a state was at stake.”⁷ Despite the NGOs’ best efforts at lobbying for continued promises by the P-5 at subsequent NPT reviews, progress on nuclear disarmament was frozen. In 2013, Egypt walked out of the NPT review meeting, because a promise made in 2010 to hold a conference on a Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone (WMDFZ) in the Middle East still had not taken place, a WMDFZ was offered to Middle East states as a bargaining chip to get their vote for the indefinite extension of the NPT nearly 20 years earlier in 1995.

In 2012, the International Committee of the Red Cross made an unprecedented breakthrough effort to educate the world that there was no existing legal ban on the use and possession of nuclear weapons despite the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that would result from nuclear war, thus renewing public awareness about the terrible dangers of nuclear holocaust.⁸ A new initiative, International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN),⁹ had been launched to make known the disastrous effects to all life on earth should nuclear war break out, either by accident or design, as well as the inability of governments at any level to adequately respond. They are calling for a legal ban on nuclear weapons, just as the world had banned chemical and biological weapons, as well as land mines and cluster bombs. In 1996, NGOs, in partnership with friendly nations led by Canada, met in Ottawa in an unprecedented circumvention of the blocked UN institutions to negotiate a treaty to ban land mines. This became known as the “Ottawa Process,” which was also used by Norway in 2008 when it hosted a meeting outside the blocked UN negotiating fora to hammer out a ban on cluster munitions.¹⁰

Norway took up the call of the International Red Cross in 2013, hosting a special Conference on the Humanitarian Effects of Nuclear Weapons. The Oslo meeting took place outside of the usual institutional settings. In those settings—the NPT, the Commission on Disarmament in Geneva, and the First Committee of the General Assembly—progress on nuclear disarmament had frozen. Nuclear weapons states would only address non-proliferation measures, failing to take meaningful steps toward nuclear disarmament, despite a host of empty promises made over the 44 year history of the NPT. The P-5 boycotted the Oslo conference, issuing a joint statement claiming it would be a “distraction” from the NPT. The two nuclear weapons states that did show up, however, were India and Pakistan, joining 127 other nations. Those two states came again to this year’s follow-up conference hosted by Mexico, along with 144 other nations.

The 1970 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), extended indefinitely in 1995 when it was due to expire, provided that five nuclear weapons states—the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France and China—would “pursue negotiations in good faith,”¹ for nuclear disarmament. In order to buy the support of the rest of the world for the deal, the nuclear weapons states sweetened the pot with a Faustian bargain promising the non-nuclear weapons state an “inalienable right”² to so-called peaceful nuclear power, thus giving them the keys to the bomb factory.³ Every country in the world signed the new treaty except

There is transformation in the air and a shift in the zeitgeist in how nations and civil society are addressing nuclear disarmament. They are meeting in partnership in greater numbers and with growing resolve to negotiate a nuclear ban treaty that would prohibit the possession, testing, use, production and acquisition of nuclear weapons as illegal, just as the world has done for chemical and biological weapons. The ban treaty would begin to close the gap in the World Court decision, which failed to decide if nuclear weapons were illegal in all circumstances particularly where the survival of a state was at stake. This new process has been operating outside paralyzed institutional UN negotiating structures, first in Oslo, then in Mexico, with a third meeting planned for Austria this year with no buy-in from the P-5 who have so far remained absent from the meetings.

By contrast, non-aligned countries that fail to grasp the urgency of swift nuclear abolition, propose waiting until 2018 to meet. The U.S., France and the U.K. did not bother to send an appropriate representative last fall to the first High Level meeting in history for heads of state and foreign ministers to address nuclear disarmament at the UN General Assembly. They opposed establishment of the UN Open-ended Working Group for Nuclear Disarmament that met in Geneva last summer in an informal arrangement with NGOs and governments, failing to show up for any session during the two weeks.

At Nayarit, Mexico, the Mexican Chair sent the world a Valentine on February 14, 2014 when he concluded his remarks to a standing ovation and loud cheers by many government delegates and NGOs in attendance, by saying:

The broad-based and comprehensive discussions on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons should lead to the commitment of States and civil society to reach new international standards and norms, through a legally binding instrument. It is the view of the Chair that the Nayarit Conference has shown that time has come to initiate a diplomatic process conducive to this goal. Our belief is that this process should comprise a specific timeframe, the definition of the most appropriate fora, and a clear and substantive framework, making the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons the essence of disarmament efforts. It is time to take action. The 70th anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki attacks is the appropriate milestone to achieve our goal. Nayarit is a point of no return.

The world has begun an Ottawa process for nuclear weapons that can be completed in the very near future if our efforts remain united and focused. One hurdle to achieving a broadly endorsed ban treaty is the position of “nuclear umbrella” states like Japan, Australia, South Korea and NATO members. They ostensibly support nuclear disarmament, but still rely on lethal “nuclear deterrence,” or, said another way, handing the U.S. the ability to incinerate cities and destroy our planet. Negotiating a ban treaty even without nuclear weapon states would provide a cudgel to hold them to their bargain for total elimination of nuclear weapons in a reasonable time. The P-5’s insistence on a “step-by-step” process supported by some of the nuclear umbrella states, rather than a legal ban, demonstrates their breathtaking hypocrisy. They are not only modernizing and replacing their arsenals, they are also spreading nuclear reactors around the world for commercial gain, even sharing lethal nuclear technology with India, a non-NPT party, which is illegal and violates the NPT.

With the Austria meeting coming on December 8th and 9th, we should be strategic in pushing for a legal ban. By convincing even more governments to show up in Vienna, planning for a massive turnout of NGOs to encourage states to come out from under their nuclear umbrella, and by cheering on the burgeoning group of peace-seeking nations we will move towards ending the nuclear scourge!

1 “Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament.”

2 Article IV: Nothing in this Treaty shall be interpreted as affecting the inalienable right of all the Parties to the Treaty to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination...”

3 un.org/en/conf/npt/2005/npttreaty.html

4 abolition2000.org

5 Securing Our Survival: disarmsecure.org/pdfs/securingoursurvival2007.pdf

6 un.org/disarmament/WMD/Nuclear/sg5point.shtml

7 icj-cij.org/docket/index.php?p1=3&p2=4&k=e1&p3=4&case=95

8 icrc.org/eng/war-and-law/weapons/nuclear-weapons/overview-nuclear-weapons.htm

9 icanw.org

10 stopclustermunitions.org/treatystatus/

Alice Slater is an international lawyer associated with abolition2000.org, the largest international coalition of nuclear weapons abolitionists. She may be reached at aslater@rcn.com.

USA

Missing in Action on Nuclear Disarmament

By Jackie Cabasso

U.S. was a designated convener. The Finnish ambassador worked feverishly, meeting individually with all of the countries in the region to facilitate the conference. Suddenly, on November 23, 2012, the U.S. State Department announced that the Helsinki conference, "Cannot be convened because of present conditions in the Middle East and the fact that states in the region have not reached agreement on acceptable conditions for the conference." It went on to say, "We would not support a conference in which any regional state would be subject to pressure or isolation." The statement was referring to Israel, the only nuclear armed state in the region.

In an historic November 2011 resolution, the International Red Cross Movement emphasized that, "The incalculable human suffering that can be expected to result from any use of nuclear weapons, the lack of any adequate humanitarian response capacity, and the absolute imperative to prevent such use, (makes it) difficult to envisage how any use of nuclear weapons could be compatible with the rules of international humanitarian law."

The Red Cross resolution appealed to all states "to pursue in good faith and conclude with urgency and determination negotiations to prohibit the use of and completely eliminate nuclear weapons through a legally binding international agreement." In March 2013, Norway hosted a conference in Oslo on the Humanitarian Impacts of Nuclear Weapons, with 127 governments in attendance. Mexico hosted a follow-on conference in Nayarit, Mexico in February 2014, with 146 governments present. The U.S., with Russia, the United Kingdom, France and China (known as the "P-5" nuclear-armed states recognized by the NPT), boycotted Oslo and Nayarit. Austria has announced that it will host a third conference in Vienna late this year.

In November 2012, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) established an Open-Ended Working Group for all member states "to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons." It scheduled the first-ever summit-level meeting of the UNGA devoted to nuclear disarmament for September 26, 2013. The U.S. voted against both resolutions and refused to participate in the Open-Ended Working Group, declaring in advance that it would disregard any outcomes.

The U.S. did send a representative to the UN High-Level meeting. It was Deputy Secretary for Arms Control, Verification and Compliance, Anita Friedt, rather than the President, Vice-President or Secretary of State. Worse, the U.S. joined with France and the U.K. in a profoundly negative statement, delivered by a junior British diplomat, "While we are encouraged by the increased energy and enthusiasm around the nuclear disarmament debate, we regret that this energy is being directed toward initiatives such as this High Level Meeting, the humanitarian consequences campaign, the Open-Ended Working Group and the push for a Nuclear Weapons Convention."

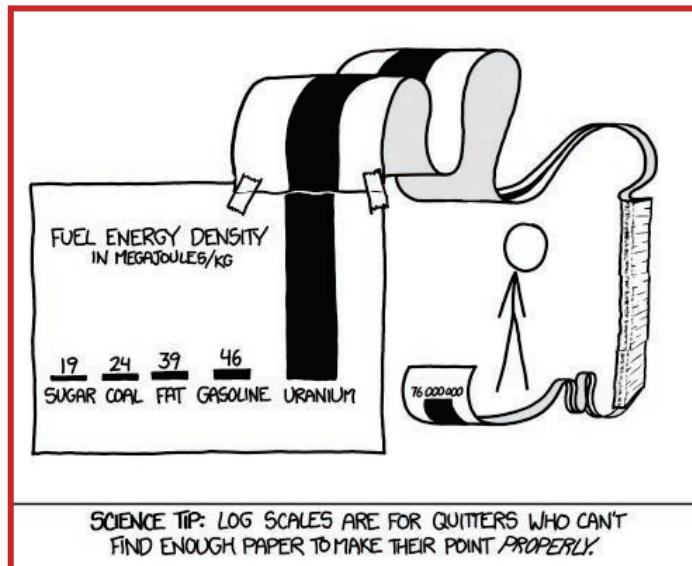
In contrast, the new President of Iran Dr. Hassan Rouhani used the occasion of the High Level meeting to roll out a disarmament roadmap on behalf of the 120-member Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). The roadmap calls for "early commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons for the prohibition of their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use, and for their destruction; designation of 26 September every year as an international day to renew our resolve to completely eliminate nuclear weapons and convening a High-level International Conference on Nuclear Disarmament in five years to review progress in this regard."

The NAM roadmap was subsequently adopted by the UNGA with 129 votes in favor. The U.S., which is contributing to a 16-year

Over the past three years, there has been a marked uptick in nuclear disarmament initiatives by governments not possessing nuclear weapons, both within and outside the United Nations. The United States has been notably missing in action at best and dismissive or obstructive at worst. This conflict may come to a head at the 2015 Review of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT).

After decades of campaigning by Arab states, the 2010 NPT Review Conference unanimously agreed to hold a conference on a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear and other Weapons of Mass Destruction to be attended by all states in the region. A date was set for December 2012 in Helsinki, Finland and the

deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament, voted no. An exchange between Anita Friedt and UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Angela Kane, at the February 2014 Assembly of Parliamentarians for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament in Washington, D.C., encapsulates the role of the U.S. in the dismal state of nuclear disarmament. Ms. Friedt restated the familiar U.S. refrain that it is committed to the long-term goal of nuclear disarmament through a step-by-step process. And, as President Obama noted in Prague, "This will not be easy" – maybe not in his lifetime. She explained that as long as we have nuclear weapons, the U.S. will maintain modernization programs to ensure that its nuclear deterrent remains, "Safe, secure and effective." While acknowledging disappointment with the pace of U.S.-Russia arms reduction talks, she proclaimed that regular meetings of the P-5 since 2009 demonstrate meaningful progress. She concluded that, "Retaining a minimum credible deterrent" – an absurd characterization of the current U.S. posture – "while going step-by-step, will make the world a safer place." In response to a question, Ms. Freidt declared that outlawing nuclear weapons would be "counterproductive" to the P-5 process.



Angela Kane noted that, in her UN position, she hears many different points of view. She reported that she has seen a considerable hardening of the position of the NAM in response to the lack of action on nuclear disarmament by the P-5 and that the coming together of the P-5 is seen as putting up a wall. She described how new international disarmament initiatives outside the traditional forums – in which the P-5 refuse to participate – such as the conferences on the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons hosted by Norway and Mexico and the UN Open-Ended Working Group on nuclear disarmament, have come about because of P-5's lack of action on nuclear disarmament. She warned that these efforts will accelerate. And, with only one year to go until the 2015 NPT Review Conference, dissatisfaction among states not possessing nuclear weapons is growing.

Jackie Cabasso is executive director of the Western States Legal Foundation. She is a WILPF lifetime member.

Would You Help WILPF With Your Time and Talent?

By Barbara Nielsen

The Nominating Committee needs WILPF members like YOU! Active in your WILPF branch or issues committee, ad hoc committee or working in WILPF regionally or statewide. You might have capacity to do something more or different for WILPF. We have several opportunities: Projects—membership records/communications issues/representation-liaison with kindred organizations that could use active WILPF members reaching beyond branch activity. Some of these might be on a short-term or longer-term ad hoc committee or something less formal, such as a temporary working group. Everything starts with YOU. Let us know what YOU THINK needs to be addressed to make U.S. WILPF better, stronger, more effective, and whether YOU or someone you know could help, too! On the national board, we will be electing new board members for 3-year terms between now and January 2015, to start service with the first board meeting of 2015. The positions of Secretary (see Bylaws section IV.A.8 for duties), one Program Chair (see Bylaws section VI.B.3. for duties), and one At-Large member (see Bylaws section IV.A.4) are up for election. The At-Large member opening this year chairs no committee, serving according to the board's needs. Watch for emails from the Nominating Committee about these opportunities. Board service requires a minimum WILPF membership of 24 months. We especially looking for WILPF members who have been active in branches, issues committees, or geographic WILPF efforts for at least that long. We are also looking for general members on an ad hoc basis for various national efforts, giving the members experience and knowledge for a national office and leadership down the road. Bylaws and supporting documents may be found at wilpfus.org/story/vision-and-mission.

Barbara Nielsen is chair of the Nominating Committee and a member of the San Francisco Branch of WILPF. She may be reached at bln.sf.ca@gmail.com.

WILPF Triennial Congress

“Global Detroit: Women, Democracy and Corporate Power”

By Laura Dewey

Thursday, July 31–Sunday, August 3 in Detroit



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Diego Rivera, Detroit Industry, mural panel, Detroit Institute of Arts

progress made towards disarmament, human rights and a sustainable environment. Promoting peace and justice within this context presents one of the key challenges of today, but a challenge worth taking on at WILPF’s upcoming Congress.

A Challenge to Ourselves

As the 100th anniversary of WILPF International approaches, the Triennial Congress will give our members a chance to lead the organization into its next 100 years. There will be opportunities to connect, share ideas, inspire one other, strategize and recommit to fortifying WILPF and the peace and justice movement.

The Detroit Branch challenges every branch to increase membership and activism in all areas of our work, including disarmament, human rights, a sustainable environment and peace, and to build movements that confront corporate power and promote democracy.

WILPF and other peace and justice activists often find ourselves preaching to the choir. We need to increase the size of that choir by recruiting new members. With the proliferation of social media tools, we also need to rethink how to engage new members, especially younger constituents. How do young women define membership in an organization? Is it something different from the dues-paying, meeting-attending model? How do we combine the newness of their ideas with the wisdom of our experienced members? How do we exploit and keep up with electronic media to facilitate WILPF’s work? These are some questions we can consider at the congress.

Think Detroit... and Motown hits, American cars and strong labor unions come to mind. Now, add to the list the biggest bankruptcy ever to hit a U.S. city. Detroit’s credit challenges threaten pensions, health care and wages, and throw public services into doubt as the Motor City digs out of its \$18 billion in debt.

The City of Detroit serves as the stage for this year’s Triennial Congress and its financial failings set the backdrop for the WILPF-US theme, “Global Detroit: Women, Democracy and Corporate Power.” While the city’s troubles may be local, they highlight a larger struggle within the U.S. and for democracies around the globe—the stranglehold of corporate money and power brokers wringing public interests dry and jeopardizing

Workshops and Plenaries

Branches and individuals are proposing workshops now. Topics include the Middle East Nuclear Free Zone and others covered by our issues committees; governance issues; "How To" skills; and an inter-generational workshop by Y-WILPF women. A list of specific topics will be announced shortly.

Activities and Events

- Detroit Bus Tour. For those arriving early on Thursday, July 31, a two-hour school bus tour beginning at 2:00 p.m. highlights the civil rights and labor history of Detroit. It will include stops at the Labor Legacy and Underground Railroad monuments near the Detroit River.
- A Conversation among Activists. On Thursday evening, we will hold a conversation among activist leaders, including Edith Ballantyne, former international WILPF president; Medea Benjamin of Code Pink; and a Detroit activist, to be announced. The discussion will center on challenges facing peace and justice movements. Where are they today? How do we challenge the corporate power that is strengthening its hold on our day-to-day lives? How do we build a strong movement? This discussion is sure to be thought provoking and inspirational.
- Meet New Board Members. Thursday evening will be capped by a social reception where members can meet the new board.
- Detroit Forum. On Friday evening, a forum on Detroit will bring global issues down to the local level. Detroit's problems—bankruptcy, high unemployment, the housing crisis, threats of privatization, and so on—are also playing out in many places around the world. A panel of Detroit activists will include those working on labor and pension rights, environmental justice, the anti-foreclosure movement, sustainable neighborhoods, and more. You will hear about the grassroots struggles for a better Detroit—information you will not find in the mainstream media.
- Culture and Socializing. Saturday evening will be a night for culture and socializing in a relaxed, casual setting. You will be treated to music, dance, and poetry by established Detroit artists and performers. We hope to hold the event in a nearby art gallery where you can sample the Detroit art scene.

Accommodations

Members will stay at The Towers Residential Suites dorms on Wayne State University's campus. Each unit has four private single bedrooms, a shared living room, and two half-bathrooms. There are a limited number of one-bed, two-bed, and handicap-accessible units. Free Internet access will be available in the dorms and at the McGregor Center. The Towers' amenities include a small fitness center and lounges for socializing. A convenience store, coffee shop and copy store are located near the dorms. Take a virtual tour of the Towers on the university's housing website. The Congress will be held at the beautiful McGregor Center on the main campus, a short distance from the dorms. We will take most of our meals at McGregor. Saturday dinner and Sunday lunch will be on your own at area restaurants.

Things to Do

The congress will be short, so there will not be much time for touring. Members who arrive early or stay late can visit a few must-see places nearby. The Diego Rivera murals at the Detroit Institute of Arts, the Old Streets of Detroit in the Detroit Historical Museum and the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History are just a few.

Branch Displays

A room at the McGregor Center will be set aside for branches to display their flyers and other materials. So, let us know what your branch is up to. If your branch worked on a unique project, a set of instructions on how to launch the project would be useful to others. Let's use this opportunity to spread our ideas and to inspire each other.

Fund-Raising for the Congress

Fund-raising efforts will include a silent auction and a tribute book. Branches are encouraged to fund-raise to send members to the congress. Please indicate any wishes to donate to the scholarship fund on the registration form.

We Will Be in Touch

The Site Committee will provide updates on workshops, frequently asked questions, and other details as the planning progresses, preferably via e-mail, but also by postal mail for those not on the Internet.

The Detroit Branch warmly welcomes you to Detroit. See you there!

Laura Dewey is the 2014 Congress Coordinator and a member of the Detroit Branch of WILPF. For questions: email the Congress Site Committee at congresscoordinator@wilpfus.org.

TINY MARSHALL ISLANDS SLAP NINE NUCLEAR WEAPONS GIANTS WITH LAWSUITS

By Carole Vaporean



On April 24, the tiny Republic of the Marshall Islands took on nuclear weapons states by filing landmark lawsuits against all nine of them in the International Court of Justice in The Hague, and a second suit against the United States in U.S. Federal District Court in San Francisco. The suits contend failure to comply with Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)—which obligates nuclear armed states to negotiate in good faith to eliminate those weapons—as well as violation of customary international laws.

Article VI states, “Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.”

The NPT applies to the five nuclear weapons states—the United States, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, France, and the People’s Republic of China. The lawsuits also charge the four nuclear weapons states outside of the NPT—Israel (which never acknowledged having nuclear weapons), South Korea, India and Pakistan—with violating international customary law. For link to lawsuits, see: nuclearzero.org/#realcourtdoc.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty has been in force for over 44 years. Yet, nuclear weapons states rely heavily on their arsenals, which they continue to modernize for active use.

Tony de Brum, Marshall Islands Minister of Foreign Affairs, in his April 28 statement to the 3rd Meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference at the United Nations, declared, “The Marshallese people have one of the most important stories to tell regarding the need to avert the use of nuclear weapons, and one which should spur far greater efforts for nuclear disarmament.”

De Brum reminded the committee that for 12 years between 1946 and 1958 the Islands were used to detonate 67 nuclear bombs equivalent to 1.6 Hiroshima bombs going off daily, and that 60 years of radiation have caused acute suffering and death to the people living there.

The suit against the U.S. asks for an injunction requiring the nuclear weapons giant to comply with its obligations under the NPT, “By calling for and convening negotiations for nuclear disarmament in all its aspects; or, if said negotiations, which have never taken place to date, have been convened by the date of this Judgment, that the U.S. participate in such negotiations.”

An analysis in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists opines that the lawsuit’s importance is its ability to highlight new emerging nuclear disarmament politics that “challenge the very legitimacy and legality of nuclear weapons possession. The lawsuit is unlikely to change nuclear disarmament’s legal standing. It could, however, foster international public support for more concrete efforts toward nuclear disarmament.”

For questions email: Carole Vaporean, editor of *Peace & Freedom* at editor@wilpfus.org.

Conversation Corner

An interview by WILPF Secretariat with WILPF U.S. President, Mary Hanson Harrison

moving forward into our 100th year. An opportunity to help build a community of women activists for peace, freedom and justice is an honor. Our board is full of energy and ready to serve our members. I look forward to WILPF U.S. bringing the global home, connecting our global Sisterhood with our WILPF branches and members, and sharing our future hopes and dreams. I would like to thank our outgoing board for their tireless efforts and for doing their part to create a world that is peaceful and free.

harrison0607@msn.com



I grew up on a small dairy farm out in the middle of the Iowa prairie. I had a view of the Raccoon River flowing through our bottomland, under the shade-filled maple trees of Squirrel Hollow Park. Sounds sort of romantic, doesn't it? But not so much in reality. Even with the rich black soil, there was oppressive poverty and the eternal cycle of plenty or scarcity. What I learned from that small beginning was to work hard, to persevere and to understand the necessity of working together as a community to survive. This ethos brought with it the dream of not only surviving, but changing the suffering I saw.

Where did you focus next? Since that time, I've lived on both coasts, in inner cities, a bit overseas, and returned a few times to Iowa. And always, my life in those many different settings led to community activism, even my late-blooming academic career. As a single mother with three young children, I received my Honors History degree at the University of Iowa, and then on to graduate school at Northwestern University near Chicago, Illinois. At that time in my life, I was inspired by the works of French philosopher Jacques Derrida and feminist playwright and author Hélène Cixous. Their deconstruction of Western binary oppositions—reason/imagination, logic/creativity, thinking/feeling—became my life's work. That philosophical journey fit perfectly into my passion for women's rights and justice and interrogating the value systems forced upon us.

How did you first come across WILPF? When I moved back to Iowa from Chicago, I put theory into practice by working for non-profits, grant writing and fundraising, in addition to teaching. Gathering support for underserved populations, particularly for mother/child health in African-American and immigrant communities, had brought me full circle. I had met a rowdy bunch of inspiring women in the WILPF Des Moines Branch, who gave all my searching for fairness and justice a home. Last October at WILPF's "Working for a Democratic Food System" symposium, we heard clearly and personally about the ravages of U.S. social policy, in particular, the exported effects of chemical-reliant industrialized mega-agriculture. Women and men farmer activists from Haiti, Brazil, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda showed us that the U.S. is the "third world" country, drowning in pesticides, polluted waters and animal waste. They are saying, "NO," loud and clear.

Did something initially make you want to run for WILPF U.S. Section President? Jane Addams. Living in Chicago, I knew of Addams and Hull House and her social activism. But I became better acquainted with her through my service on the Jane Addams Peace Association board. She rolled-up her sleeves and worked for the common good, to build a community with others not for them. Her trust in the power of imagination to make social change and her Midwestern pragmatism led to her winning the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931—a legacy that still lives in WILPF today.

What do you see as your main agenda? In the coming months, we have a unique opportunity to re-establish the connective threads to each member, branch, and section, and to WILPF International, to re-imagine the possibilities of grassroots activism in a global context. We have the vitality and expertise to implement the much-needed criticism of the U.S. government, its industrial-military complex and nuclear dependency, the scourge of multi-national corporations, the crisis of environmental degradation, and blatant disregard for women's rights. Of course, (the) "Women's Power to Stop War" (movement) starts right here in the U.S.

What is your vision for the U.S. Section during your presidency? Addams implores us, "To use moral energy to put a new sort of force into the world." We can do that through creating a shared narrative around the world, with voices speaking from a multitude of cultures and perspectives, not a cacophony, but rather a common refrain of perseverance and resilience. Bringing that global (refrain) back home—individual by individual, branch by branch, section by section—will require WILPF as an organization to respect its grassroots activism, asking each time what it is that they need. We are all farmers. Planting seeds, nurturing our foundation, gathering a harvest of peace, enduring depravation and endless hostilities, only to start over again—perseverance.

Every day, members of WILPF make choices and hope those choices make a life-affirming difference. Not just amongst ourselves, but in the larger world as well. Such a responsibility requires us to listen to each other and find common ground for

Serving Up **SOUP** and Constitutional Change at Legislative Lunches

By Deb Holley

or Thursday when most groups vie for times when legislators are likely to be attending sessions. The first two years we served in a legislative dining room on the ground floor of the Capitol (a lower profile area), and then moved up to the rotunda area this past February 6th.

Nearly every group serving legislators lunch caters sandwiches or pasta. So, we decided that we would get around the expense of catering and make a more attractive luncheon by offering a variety of homemade pots of soup, along with simple relishes, hot bread sticks, and a variety of homemade desserts, most notably pies. This formula has proven to be a real draw for legislators, who tell us over and over they're sick of catered lunches and love having a home-cooked, nutritious meal on a cold winter day. Because we were serving in a new area, we had to visit the area three or four months in advance, clipboard in hand, taking note of outlets, available tables and chairs, and general traffic flow for the buffet table and visibility of our message.

The Iowa statehouse was built in the late 1800's, and electricity is minimal at best. We make sure we know all rules, such as no open flames, no tape or tacks on the statehouse walls, etc. If we overload a circuit and accidentally shut off the electricity, we're fined \$200. So, we always make sure we've calculated our electricity load and stay safely under the limit. We always bring our own waste baskets and liners, plus paper towels and bath towels, wet sponges, etc., to make sure everything remains clean during the lunch. We carry out all of our own trash afterwards.

About two months in advance, we send letters to every WILPF or MTA member announcing the upcoming luncheon and what is needed in the way of food and serving volunteers. Even if members are located across the country, we send them a letter to keep them updated on one of our major activities. We sometimes also receive contributions, which are very welcome and help defray expenses! Although sending letters is more expensive and time-consuming than email, they reach every member and bring the luncheon to each person's attention.

WILPF is an official supporter of Move to Amend (MTA), a national, grassroots coalition calling for a constitutional amendment to end corporate personhood. The Des Moines WILPF Branch started a local MTA chapter in March 2010, after the U.S. Supreme Court's January 2010 Citizens United decision expanding corporations' latitude in campaign contributions.

The following year, we began lobbying to advocate for public welfare. With guidance from an MTA member, who also clerked for a representative at the statehouse, we learned that Iowa law allows groups to serve lunch to the legislators during legislative sessions running from January into April each year. All legislators must be invited to avoid the possibility of bribery. (Caution to WILPF'ers who want to serve lunch to their legislators—each state has different laws and in some, serving lunch to legislators is illegal. Check to see what lobbyists are allowed to do in your state before proceeding.) We were warned that getting a legislative response takes time and to expect to come back repeatedly to show legislators that we are in this for the long-term and will not leave until we receive that for which we are asking.

We found that the privilege of serving lunch required a lot of advanced planning. As of January 2, the statehouse calendar opened, not for the current year, but for the NEXT year's lunch schedule, if you want to serve in the premier first floor rotunda area. Spots fill up rapidly, especially on a Tuesday, Wednesday,



Deb Holley



Deb Holley

We also send a series of invitations to each legislator. The first is a rather formal, printed invitation, sent to arrive at each legislator's home between Christmas and New Years. A second printed invitation is put in the legislators' post boxes at the Capitol, and a third is an email sent just a couple of days before the luncheon. Lastly, if we have time the day of the luncheon, we write personal notes that are taken up to the chambers during the session and hand-delivered by the pages, reminding the legislators that hot soup is waiting for them downstairs!

Every year the message we give to the legislators while they're dining has gained importance. The first year, we only gave out a half-page explaining who we are.

The second year, we brought a dozen large, colorful posters and a booklet,

explaining some of the many issues caused by too-powerful corporations. This past year, we made a series of three stations by which legislators had to pass to get to the buffet line. The first station dealt with money as free speech, the second one dealt with corporate personhood, and the third showed a map of other states that have passed resolutions and then, called for similar action by ours! Volunteers stood by the stations, handing out materials and answering questions. We're becoming increasingly sophisticated with our marketing methods and how to target our messages, not only to the legislators, but the public as well.

We spend the month before the luncheon confirming what everyone will bring and finishing up details, like forming our 8 to 10 person volunteer serving committee, comprised of both WILPF and MTA members. Everyone on the committee gets a sheet in advance, listing what will be needed that day. MTA usually has several additional folks who volunteer to set up the displays or other marketing materials we have. We have learned not to try to anticipate how many people we'll serve. Our philosophy is to serve until we run out, and we provide what we can within our capacity. This prevents some unfortunate soul from having to make four pots of soup or ten pies, trying to fill some pre-set goal. This year, we converted from individual crock pots to the type newly out on the market that can be hooked up in a series. They proved very nice for a number of reasons—better control of the electric load, only one cord to deal with instead of a dozen, and the serving table looked very professional. We also acquired a bun warmer to keep the bread warm and moist, and other catering equipment. We switched from individual plates to recycled paper trays to make walking with food (especially soup) easier.

We reserve the area at the Capitol from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., which allows plenty of time to set up and begin serving at 11:00 a.m. We're usually out of soup by 1:00 p.m., giving us time to clean up. The one thing I always insist upon is that everyone has fun, and to that end there are never any sharp words or tension in setting up or serving the luncheon. We are all volunteers and everyone is doing the best that they can, and that's good enough! Because we all have fun giving the luncheon, there is never any problem getting volunteers to donate or serve year after year, and our teamwork is getting better and better! Our guests like it too—a group of servers with big smiles, having fun, ready to help them!

Is the luncheon effective? Every year the number of people we serve has grown, and we are getting to personally know the legislators even as they get to know us! We expect a resolution, directed at Congress, asking for a constitutional amendment that abolishes corporate personhood and money as free speech, to be passed sometime in the next three to four years, perhaps sooner. Moreover, we are learning a lot more about our state government and how it operates. Many of us have more respect for it now than we did before we started the luncheons. Our government CAN be responsive to our needs, but we have to get involved and work with legislators so that they know what we want. Call it our civic duty.

And yes, it takes time, but that is good. It ensures that our government remains stable, as it continues to respond to our needs. We've all agreed that even after Iowa approves the MTA resolution and sends it to Congress, WILPF is going to continue having the legislative luncheons. We will always have issues to discuss with our elected representatives, and having a known presence in our statehouse, year after year, is a valuable tool to accomplish those goals!



Deb Holley

Deb Holley, WILPF U.S. secretary, is a member of the Des Moines Branch of WILPF. She may be reached at debjholley@gmail.com.

THE SPOILS OF WAR

Disrupted Democracy in Detroit and Syria

By Rachel Nagin



Michigan Labor Legacy Landmark: “Transcending.”

and Corporate Power,” I would like to draw some parallels and connections in the political situations in Syria and Detroit. In each place, democracy is being supplanted and undermined. While one is under siege from war mongering, the other is experiencing further consolidation of power in favor of the corporate elite. In both, citizens trying to live their lives are gunned down, starved, and entirely disenfranchised from the political process. The landscape and scale is certainly different between these two places, but we undoubtedly live in an age where basic human rights are violated in favor of adhering to the exploitative principles of neoliberal capitalism.

We, in WILPF, understand that when world military spending reaches \$1.7 trillion (in 2012), citizens around the world are deprived of their right to safety, to shelter, to food, to economic well being, to education, to schools, to real participation in the political life.

In the first few months of my tenure as one of WILPF-US’ UN representatives, I have also come to understand this: much of the world is resisting.

In January, WILPF International and PeaceWomen sponsored the panel, “Women’s Participation and Women, Peace, & Security Accountability in Syria: Geneva II Peace Negotiations and Beyond,” with two speakers from the Syrian Women’s League, Syrian Women’s Network, and Syrian Women for Democracy. The Syrian representatives shared their powerful stories and informed a full room of their demands of the UN Security Council in the upcoming Geneva II talks. Their priorities included reserving 30 percent of available seats for women during negotiations; adopting the Geneva I document; lifting the siege and providing monetary relief to Syrians; calling for an immediate cease-fire that will end all military operations; and adopting and implementing the UNSCRs 1820, 1888, and 1960 to end gender violence. They detailed the need for better services for refugee camps, from “health baskets” that include feminine hygiene products to smarter infrastructure, including more accessible bathrooms.

One representative noted, “Sometimes there is only one bathroom for 500 people in these camps and women have to travel up to 1 km to reach it, where they are often harassed or worse. People are unable to live like human beings in these camps, because

In March 2011, as part of the so-called ‘Arab Spring,’ Syrians across the country protested for democratic and economic reforms. A month later, the government deployed the Syrian army to quell the protests with military force, instead of creating the systematic, equitable change citizens were calling for. After months of military sieges, protests disintegrated into armed rebel groups, pawns in global powers’ militarized chess match.

A year later and half a world away, the Detroit City Council voted for a measure, in the name of municipal financial solvency, that led to a state appointed financial advisory board and an emergency manager taking control of all Motor City governing affairs.

These are both ways to disrupt democracy.

As WILPF nears its 99th year Congress this August, with its theme “Global Detroit: Women, Democracy,

there is so little funding reaching them.” The representatives shared lessons they’ve learned from conversations with Bosnian women and George Mitchell, the influential U.S. Special Envoy during the Irish peacekeeping efforts. (WILPF International began building connections between Syrian and Bosnian women in 2012.) As a result, the Syrian women were adamant, though realistic, about the need for women to be part of the negotiation process. The subsequent Arria session, where the UN Security Council was able to have a more direct conversation with these women, was the first time the Council had heard directly from Syrian members of civil society.

Their country may be undergoing enormous turbulence, but these women came to the UN to speak out against the atrocities and show they and so many other Syrians are resisting the militarism and violence. They were humble and fierce. They are nonviolently fighting back.

In Detroit, citizens are strengthening longstanding community organizations and uniting to defend democracy. The Motor City is revving its engines, particularly as it defends a massive land grab occurring in the middle of the city. While the “good food movement” has been co-opted in some parts of the city, many organizations like the East Michigan Environmental Action Council and the Detroit Black Community Food Security Network are resisting and building their communities through gardens, developing co-ops and popular education efforts designed to empower young people of Detroit. EMEAC is partnered with the Grassroots Global Justice Alliance, a national coalition of organizations working for peace, democracy, and a sustainable world. GGJ has allied itself with La Via Campesina, working together to mobilize grassroots communities around the world against the secretive Trans Pacific Partnership along with other Free Trade Agreements. Detroit, to me, seems to be another example of how citizens will fight against oppressive politics and demand to be recognized and respected.

It was thrilling to see WILPF facilitate interactions during the CSW between the UN community and Syrian and Bosnian representatives, as well as other WILPF delegates from Colombia, Pakistan, and Nigeria. WILPF’s ability to leverage its relationship with the UN to internationally elevate voices of marginalized women around the world, particularly those from war-torn areas, undoubtedly plays an important role in the international community. But what about domestically? How are we standing in solidarity with our fellow citizens? How are we pushing our country to be a better actor internationally? What ways are we building anew?

I ask these questions because I believe in participatory democracy. I ask these questions as a young woman trying to see herself as a global citizen, in part through her activism in WILPF. I ask these questions as a UN Representative. During my tenure, I plan to research our U.S. political representatives’ positions on Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). With this information, I will do my best to coordinate with WILPF branches the strategic messaging and resources to help mobilize your communities and push the U.S. to sign on to CEDAW. Though it may seem that way, CEDAW is not really a separate issue from any of our issue committees or from the realities in our communities.

We need to draw these connections outside of WILPF. We need to stand with other community organizations that are facing immediate challenges, outside of the usual circles in the Peace movement. We need to ask them what they need and do our best to engage with them on their terms. In these conversations, we can talk about the connections between the war economy and the disenfranchisement here and abroad. But in order to create the global change WILPF talks about, we need to be rooted in our communities, across socio-economic divisions, across perceived ideological divisions that obscure our shared needs.

Syrians are resisting, Detroiters are resisting. Our foremothers did not hesitate, neither should we. Look to Syria, look to Detroit for inspiration to see beyond ourselves and to act thoughtfully, powerfully, and energetically. We need democratic and economic reforms, just as the Syrians do. We need to disrupt and end toxic policies that bankrupted Detroit. We can no longer acquiesce to forces that derail us and that means actively listening to our compatriots and deepening our connections and trust within our communities.

I believe in WILPF and our next 100 years. I believe in the power of nonviolence. I believe in the strength of structural peace. I hope we draw our energy from our activist roots and communitarian spirit. It is time to begin our new world based on justice and real democracy.

Rachel is a U.S. Section representative to the United Nations in New York City. She may be reached at rachel.nagin@gmail.com.

WHICH WAY OUT FOR DETROIT?

By Dianne Feeley



Courtesy Brandon Bartoszek, Flickr Creative Commons

Detroit International Bridge, vintage postcard

mentions these structural problems. Most recently we were treated to a plan, announced by White House National Economic Council director Gene Sperling, which earmarks \$300 million in new and repurposed grants for demolition of homes and commercial buildings. Detroit mayor Dave Bing pledged to tear down 10,000 abandoned homes.

Former Emergency Manager for the Detroit Public Schools and former General Motors executive Roy Roberts was named the city's chief land officer. In his acceptance, Roberts stated that land is the city's most valuable resource. He stated that the goal is to find the most "efficient and appropriate" way to utilize it.

Certainly there are thousands of abandoned homes and buildings now beyond repair, that need to be knocked down. But thousands more could be rehabbed and made livable for folks who desperately need housing. That's not necessarily what developers and land speculators like Roy Roberts might find "efficient." In any case, with 70,000 abandoned properties and 40,000 homes being auctioned off for back taxes this year alone, \$300 million is not even seed money for the city's turnaround.

The state's plan, after concluding that Detroit's debt is \$18-20 billion, is to take the city into bankruptcy and see how many assets can be sold, how many services outsourced or privatized, how much they can weasel out of obligations to the city's retirees, and how many concessions they can demand from a 9,700-person workforce whose wages have been cut by 20% over the past three years.

The average yearly pension for 11,970 retired city workers is \$19,600. There are 8,000 police and firefighter retirees drawing a whopping \$30,000. The latter do not draw Social Security (their pension plans were intended to substitute for that).

For the past 50 years corporations have moved out of the city and the working class, particularly the white working class, followed. Between 2000 and 2010 one quarter of Detroiters left the city. They left even when they had jobs – like many of my mostly Black co-workers at an auto plant – because the public schools were taken over by the state and strangled, because workers were afraid of violence in their neighborhoods, because car and home insurance rates are higher in Detroit, because there are few stores, because their neighborhoods were destroyed by evictions.

As a retired autoworker active in preventing further home foreclosures in Detroit, I consider two of the city's most urgent issues to be unemployment (45.3% according to the U.S. Census Bureau, 2012) and evictions. These indicators reflect the poverty of the city – where 35% live below the poverty line according to the 2009 U.S. Census.

Additional statistics include shocking infant mortality rates (13.5 per 1,000 live births, or twice as high as Michigan's rate as a whole), and high rates of industrial pollution. Adults have an asthma rate 50% higher than anywhere else in Michigan; the rate is twice as high for children. And, lead poisoning is still a major problem.

Yet no state or federal official offering to "help" the city

is mentioned.

As a result, better-paid workers – whether we are talking about autoworkers or teachers or firefighters – don’t live within the city. At this point it’s not just whites who have left, but a large section of the African-American working and middle class. Detroit sits in the most segregated metropolitan area in the country. The city itself is 84% African American, 6% Latino, 1% Native American and 9% white. Some of the surrounding suburbs, like Livonia, are among the whitest in America. You can predict the difference in incomes.

Since 2009 there have been more than 70,000 foreclosures in Detroit; according to HUD 45,000 houses sit empty. This year another 40,000 homes are to be auctioned off by Wayne County for non-payment of taxes – the city turns over to the county all residential properties that are two years behind. There is no requirement that homeowners be informed; the only notice necessary is placing an ad in the paper.

Both mortgages and taxes are based on inflated prices, not market values. For example, the Hernandez family living just a half-block away from my apartment, is faced with an eviction order unless they pay \$83,000 for a home worth \$10,000-15,000.

On either side of the Hernandez house are vacant houses; one has been vandalized, with the hot water heater and all the copper pipes removed. The house at the end of the block used to be a beautiful old house – but now sits half burned. With a total of seven unoccupied houses on the block, the last thing the neighborhood needs is another vacant home!

A positive strategy would recognize that Detroit is a poor city that needs additional resources.

- Instead of the state of Michigan stiffing its cities by returning fewer dollars from revenue-sharing taxes, the Governor and legislature should restore funding. Over the last decade, according to the Michigan Municipal League, state revenue-sharing to cities fell by 28%. Others maintain that the decline for Detroit is closer to 50%.
- End the takeover of Detroit’s city government and its public schools. Instead of spending millions on consultants, set up neighborhood task forces to develop programs for what communities need.
- Develop a jobs program particularly geared to Detroiters. The employment rate for adult Detroiters is the lowest of all the big cities (49.8% in 2012 according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics). Further, fully 40% of Detroiters who work in the suburbs make less than \$15,000 a year. They need to upgrade their skills and move into better jobs. Detroit could rebuild itself as a manufacturing center for the development of a national mass transportation system. Situated on the Great Lakes, it is a logical ecological site where alternatives to fossil fuel can be developed and where urban farming is flourishing.
- Stop foreclosures and evictions. Keep residents in their homes and work with community block clubs to stop the stripping of vacant buildings.
- Hold Fannie Mae and the banks responsible for the destruction of the empty homes they now own.
- Revitalize neighborhoods by insuring that public schools, parks and community centers receive adequate resources.
- Build a quality transportation system for the whole city, not just for the downtown corridor. Link it with the metro area.
- Pass legislation requiring Detroit employers to withhold city taxes for non-residents and suburban employers to withhold city taxes for Detroiters. This loss amounts to at least a couple hundred million a year.
- Organize a task force to audit deals city politicians made with the banks. Outrageous fees and termination conditions are the tip of the iceberg.

It is true that Detroit has a weaker economy and has suffered greater devastation than most. And I believe it has been easier for America to allow its racist assumptions to run wild about Detroit. But Detroit is definitely a paradigm. If the city’s gentrifying downtown can expand on land formerly owned by African Americans, if retirees can be stripped of their health care and take a beating on their pensions, if pension boards are taken over by Wall Street, then the formula developed to destroy Detroit can be used to target others.

Capitalism is a voracious system that is always moving on to some other place, some other product in order to reinvent itself. Can we end it before it destroys us?

Dianne Feeley will appear as a panelist at this summer’s Tri-annual Congress in Detroit. Excerpts reprinted with permission from the original version that ran in “Against the Current,” Solidarity’s online magazine.

To read in its entirety, see: solidarity-us.org/site/node/4027.

Dianne Feeley will appear as a panelist at this summer’s Triennial Congress in Detroit

Meet the WILPF U.S. Board



Altaira Hatton, Treasurer: Hi, WILPF-US! I am very happy to now be serving you as Treasurer and I look forward to getting to know as many of you as possible in the coming years. If you haven't already, please visit my blog wilpftreasurer.wordpress.com and leave me a comment or suggestion. I will be hosting a workshop on "Finance for our Next 100 Years" at the Detroit Congress and I'd enjoy seeing you there. Happy 99th birthday to the longest running women's peace organization in the world!

altaira97209@yahoo.com



Deborah Holley, Secretary: As board secretary, one of my goals is to make the recording of the minutes an efficient task that delivers the information quickly and correctly. When, as a volunteer organization, we have problems getting members to run for the board, we should consider the amount of work we are requiring of the officers, and strive to minimize the time and effort involved for all positions, making duties as efficient as possible. I would also like to see the minutes sent not only to board members, but to all WILPF members. The members of any organization are more likely to be involved if they have access to its events and happenings on a regular basis.

debjholley@gmail.com



Nicole Scott, Personnel Committee Chair: "True Believer | Ruthless Innovator | Ambassador of Diversity | Courageous Advocate" My commitment to WILPF will be honored by conducting myself with the standards of duty of care, duty of loyalty, duty of obedience and duty of confidentiality. I am committed to coming to the job prepared and rising to the occasion. It is an honor to be serving during such a monumental time and I thank the membership for electing me. With the 99th and 100th anniversaries quickly approaching, I will be a part of another memorable journey! Serving as the personnel chair will allow me to play an important role in professionalizing and developing organizational standards.

nscott823@gmail.com



Sara Tess Neumann, Development Chair: As the newly-elected Development Chair I am very excited to be working with the Development Committee and the WILPF Board during the next two years. We have a lot of exciting work coming up, including the Capacity Capital Campaign. I hope to work on different fundraising strategies, including elevator speeches as well as larger events to bring in new members and donations. I also want to work on creating a stronger focus on LGBT issues as a part of WILPF's overall efforts on human rights.

sneumann@wilpus.org



LaShawndra Vernon, Membership Development Committee Chair: I would like to express my heartfelt thanks for being elected to serve as Membership Development Chair. It is an honor to work with all of you to uphold a shared vision: a transformed world at peace, where there is racial, social, and economic justice for all. Membership recruitment is an important part of ensuring that the legacy of WILPF continues for years to come. Members from several committees have already stepped up and are working together to align our efforts to engage new audiences through social media, membership engagement opportunities, and collaboration with external partners to increase our network. I look forward to celebrating 100 years of WILPF, and with your help, ensure 100 more!

lvernon.esp@gmail.com



Barbara L Nielsen, Nominating Committee Chair: The U.S. Section Board Nominating Committee functions to encourage and assist increasing numbers of our general members to test the waters, then to take wing and soar. The committee helps to collaboratively run our section at many levels while listening to our grassroots activists so the board and national infrastructure can effectively serve the members, and learn from and grow with the program work of at-large members and general members in the issues committees, branches and groups. The Nominating Committee is also responsive to members' needs and helps implement ways in which our grassroots activism can be supported, people energized and communications strengthened to make a more effective WILPF.

bln.sf.ca@gmail.com



Odile Hugonot-Haber, Co-Chair of Program Committee: I have been involved with WILPF U.S. for over 20 years. I strive for internal democracy and efficiency with our programs so members' voices are heard. My passions are Middle East peace, the abolition of nuclear weapons, building Nuclear Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zones, ending war, creating a peace culture and greater democracy. I see my role as program co-chair as facilitating the work of members who have taken on these issues and advancing a broader vision for WILPF. It is important to strengthen the branches by finding common threads among their work, providing them with appropriate resources and programs, and helping to publicize their work. Our role is to make branches aware of what is happening on the national level and at the United Nations, and to engage branches in our national campaigns. We need more open communication with our members and with other organizations in a direct democratic engagement on what would most advance the Peace and Freedom movements today. An interactive dialogue is needed to produce change. We also have to increase our work with alternative media and to engage our younger members.

odilehh@gmail.com



Deb Garretson, Program Committee Co-Chair: I am very pleased to have been elected to one of the Program Chair positions. I first joined WILPF in 2005. I went to my first meeting and the next month I was Branch chair! I have been chair of the Bloomington Branch in Indiana ever since. WILPF'ers have been wonderful role models for me. I am very grateful for having found WILPF for the knowledge, stimulation and challenges it affords. It is my hope that we will see the seeds we plant start to sprout as we begin the second hundred years of Jane Addams' legacy.

gorba336@gmail.com



Millee Livingston, At-Large Board Member: I have been a member of WILPF since the 1960's. In that time, I have brought WILPF issues and programs to whatever community I was living, including San Francisco, Palo Alto and now Auburn, California. Having recently been elected to the position of At-Large Board Member, my focus for the next two years will be to develop guidelines on how WILPF can better reach out to our At-Large Members. Two good examples would be the excellent articles published in the Fall/Winter 2013 Peace & Freedom magazine by two At-Large Members. First, Hattie Nestel described how, at times, civil resistance is necessary for the greater good of humanity. And, Crystal Zevon introduced an article that tells how all Americans' health is at stake until Congress passes legislation to fund clean-up of abandoned uranium mine across the U.S. Our At-Large Members are here and we look forward to hearing their voices.

milleelivingston@hotmail.com



Peggy Luhrs, At-Large Board Member: I'd like to see WILPF U.S. match the spirit and innovation of International WILPF and the gutsiness that the originators of WILPF had when they crossed the ocean in submarine infested waters during a war. I'd like to see our vision broaden to strong actions for peace and less emphasis on the minutia of rules and lists. I'd like to see us transcend our U.S. heavily white privilege and respond to the worldwide crisis we are in. I want us to connect the issues of war and ecological devastation and misogyny. I'd like to bring more of an ecofeminist perspective to the work.

artemix.peggy@gmail.com



Laura Roskos, Immediate Past President: As past president, I will continue to serve on the WILPF U.S. section board for another year, during which I want to see WILPF make the governance and structural changes necessary to support the future growth anticipated by our fundraising campaign for the 100th Anniversary. I will also continue to serve on WILPF's International Standing Finance Committee. The skills our newly-elected board members bring to their positions is energizing, as is the dedication of emerging leaders who are stepping up their involvement in WILPF. I encourage them to run for open seats in future board elections. In 2012, I began a three-year appointment on the Barnstable County Human Rights Commission, established largely through the tenacity and vision of WILPF member Jackie Fields. Over the coming years, I plan to use this platform to materially improve the working conditions of the guest workers and immigrant laborers essential to Cape Cod's tourism and health care industries.

lauraroskos@hotmail.com

THE HAIFA CONFERENCE

Israelis Draw Line in Sand Over Nukes

By Odile Hugonot Haber

“A new wind is blowing in all the countries of the world. People are demanding security, peace, and prosperity,” Issam Makhoul, former Israeli Knesset member.

In December, I traveled to Haifa for the first Israeli conference on creating a Weapons of Mass Destruction and Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in the Middle East. Arab Israeli former Knesset member Issam Makhoul called the meeting, along with other former members of Israel’s legislature.

The United Nations General Assembly first endorsed a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in a resolution approved forty years ago, following a proposal from Iran and seconded by Egypt. Since then, the resolution continued to pass annually with little effect. Then, in 1991, UN Security Council Resolution 687 endorsed the goal of establishing a Weapon of Mass Destruction Free Zone in the Middle East region.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review conference of 2010 unanimously endorsed five practical steps toward achieving that goal. One step was to convene a regional conference set for December 2012 in Helsinki to discuss the issue, but the United States and Israel later cancelled.

In November 2011, the International Atomic Energy Agency for a WMDFZ in the Middle East held a two-day meeting. Not much resulted, so Issam Makhoul declared, “If Israel does not go to Helsinki, Helsinki will go to Israel,” and set up an historic civil society conference intended to influence governments to arrive at diplomatic rather than military solutions.

The two-day Haifa meetings took place last December. Highlights included discussions of “Humanitarian Repercussions of Nuclear Weapons: Society, Democracy and Environment,” the role of Europe and NATO, and a mostly women’s panel on Civil Society and the Anti-Nuclear movement in Israel.

Urging a move from denial to action, former Speaker of the Knesset Avraham Burg said, “It is time to have this conversation democratically in Israel.” He explained that the bomb had been necessary to overcome a lack of military power when Israel was established. But now is the time for Israel to rediscover diplomacy for solutions and move from trauma to trust toward reconciliation. “Enemies of today will be the partners of tomorrow,” he declared.

Most moving was Professor Tadatoshi Akiba, former mayor of Hiroshima. He urged a 2020 deadline for a world nuclear exit, calling on civil-society groups to help governments achieve that goal. “Hatred will not create peace,” he said, reminding us of the words of Hiroshima and Nagasaki survivors, “Never Again.” Akiba said no one need suffer ever again the way Japanese people had after the United States unleashed nuclear bombs in World War II.

Emily Landau, of the Institute for National Security Studies and director of the Arms Control and Regional Security Project, said discussions among Israeli researchers and experts were already underway with the Institute. “For four years, 14 regional states were discussing arms control in a regional format and making progress on Confidence & Security Building Measures. It was an important experience.” Most needed now in the region, she said, was “the very first step. To be able to sit down with each other in the same room, recognize each other’s legitimate existence, and talk to each other in a regional format. That would be a huge step.”

Sharon Dolev, the founder of the Israel Disarmament Movement, spoke about “Obstacles and Hopes,” saying that confidence-building measures were necessary and might be implemented through the ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Then, all the countries in the region could move on to ratify the WMDFZ treaty with additional protocol for close supervision of existing nuclear arsenals and suspicious facilities.

Most speakers, Israeli and Palestinian alike, agreed that the conference was historic as debate over nuclear weapons had not been allowed in Israel until now, and could possibly generate future public discussion. Israeli civil society would need to advance the issue of a Middle East free of nuclear weapons.

The last panel included five women and one man, whereas the inverse was the case on most other panels. The women spoke of the important role that civil society should play and the importance of education and dialogue on this issue. They spoke of patriarchy as

a causal factor of war and regretted that men only were viewed as experts. They affirmed women's roles as organizers, researchers and also experts. They emphasized the enormous cost these weapons had on the entire economy at the expense of other more important priorities for securing human safety.

The Haifa meetings were followed by a day in Ramallah within the occupied territories and focused on the impact of nuclear weapons and nuclear waste on the environment. Dr Mahmoud Saadeh spoke of the effects of toxic dumping on Palestinian land and water, and an increase in cancer, leukemia, and anemia cases among its people.

The conference as a whole was attended by about 50 people, and will be followed by formation of a coalition of Israeli organizations. An international call will be sent to pressure the U.S. and Israel to reconvene an official UN Helsinki-type conference.

The Middle East is in crisis economically and politically. Increasing radicalism and wars are growing throughout the region. There is growing divide between Shi'ite Iran and Suni Pakistan that encourages a build up of weapons. Iran, Turkey, Algeria and Saudi Arabia may also have plans to build nuclear arsenals. If Israel really wants security in the region it would do well to admit that it is a nuclear power, negotiate treaties with its neighbors, and create a nuclear free zone now before it becomes too late.

A first step may be for Israel to negotiate in good faith a just solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, or at least take some credible practical steps towards ending the occupation. This would build trust with its Arab neighbors and would help open up disarmament conversations. The choices are either the road to an all out Armageddon, or turning hearts and heads towards humanity and life.

The status quo will not be maintained for long. And, nuclear arsenals are not the solution. All of the Arab states have so far signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty. For Israel to join the NPT it would have to give up its nuclear weapons and its ambiguous status.

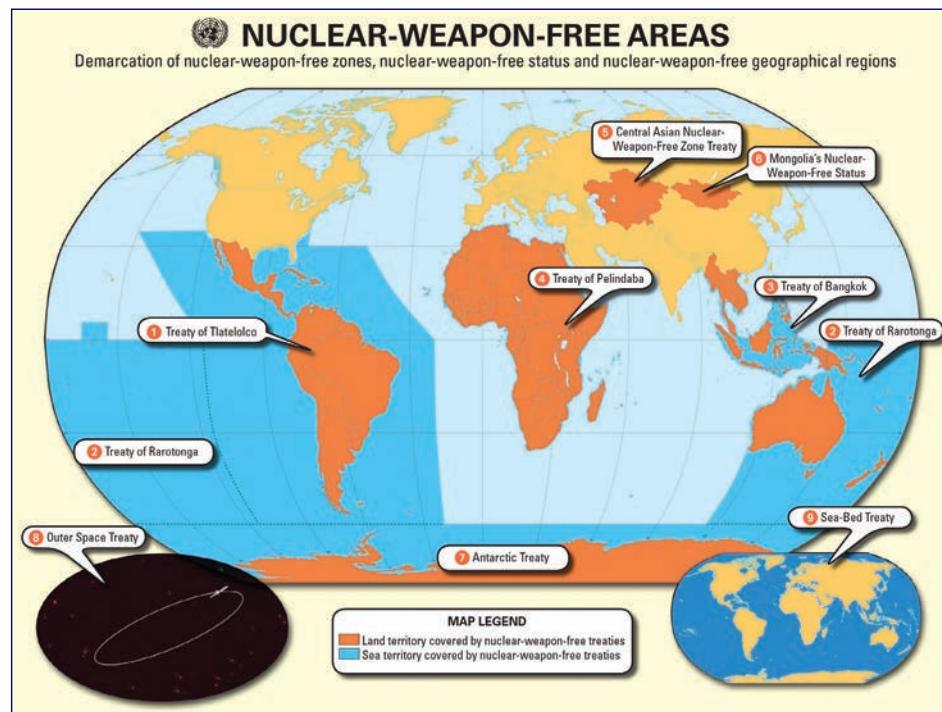
At the recent High Level Meeting in New York, 95 percent of attending countries asked for a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone/ Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone in the Middle East as part of their statement. Non-nuclear states also wanted to see measures implemented certifying that they will not be attacked by nuclear weapons states unwilling to abide by the NPT.

We came to the Haifa conference to continue this conversation knowing the positive effect of building nuclear free zones. We realize that convincing the Israeli public would be a large part of the equation, as they focus on Iran instead of their own country's status quo, namely its outmoded deterrence policy. But, Israel's disarmament movement stood visibly along the road in Tel Aviv with banners urging, "Don't Bomb, Talk."

We as a peace movement are focused on transforming the dark specter of Armageddon into a world free of arms of mass destruction. Enough blood has been spilled, it is time to end wars and start evolving into a peace culture.

To survive we need a world in which the economy will not be used for building stockpiles of weapons for mass destruction, building instead democratic structures, education, health care, housing, as well as alternative energies. We need to use our imagination and creativity to build a world of service to children, people, animals, trees, flowers and bees, and to sustain life as a whole on our planet.

Odile Hugonot Haber is Program Committee co-chair and longtime leader of the Middle East Issue Committee.



United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, Reprinted with permission

Branch Action News

By Georgia Pinkel

As WILPF's work continues its 99th year, 2014 becomes a time for reflection on the 50-year anniversary of advances in civil rights and government accountability. WILPF continues to fight for women's equality and civil rights as these struggles play out in modern times. Around voting booth issues, "Moral Mondays" protest movements which spread from North Carolina to Georgia and elsewhere apply pressure for state level accountability. Yet, "Stand Your Ground" laws that legalize murder are a modern day version of lynching, as well as institutionalized racial profiling. WILPF's National Issues Committees move the fight forward and this column highlights their work.

MEMBER NOTES: We now have a monthly members only WILPF International electronic newsletter, found at wilpfinternational.org. Some branch newsletters include updates from this International newsletter . . . Has your branch started a fund to support participation in our 100th Anniversary next April? International noted that the Lebanon Section is collecting donations to help Syrian refugees fleeing war in their country. If you would like to give, please check with the International office for instructions.

Advancing Human Rights: **Santa Cruz Branch** focused on Women in the U.S. Labor Movement for International Women's Day. **Triangle Branch** joined with Reverend Dr. William Barber in the "Forward Together Movement" and "Moral Mondays" rallies on a variety of human rights and justice issues. WILPF also joined the United Methodist Woman's project, "The Intercept Human Trafficking Campaign," to raise awareness of human trafficking and slave labor at sporting events, like Super Bowl Sunday. Find the toolkit at: wilpfus.org/sites/default/files/docs/Human_Trafficking.pdf.

Building the Beloved Community: **Los Angeles Branch** participated in the "Unity in Community" event for Martin Luther King day. Reverend William Barber II, keynote speaker at our **North Carolina Congress**, will be taking the "Moral Monday Movement" to **Madison, WI** to advocate for "On the People's Moral Agenda: Anti-Racism, Anti-Poverty, Pro-Labor," a Labor and Working Class Studies project. **Minnesota Metro** held "The Dynamics of Mixed' Families" discussions as part of Black History month. **St. Louis Branch** heard Sister Simone Campbell speak on Economic Justice, Immigration and Health Care.

Corporations vs Democracy: **Monterey Branch** sponsored Move to Amend's film, "Legalize Democracy," pointing out the role the Supreme Court played in shaping the doctrine of corporate personhood.

Cuba, Women and the Bolivarian Alliance (ALBA): The UN voted 188 to 2 against the U.S. embargo against Cuba. Ask Mary Jane Schutzius of the **St. Louis Branch** about her trip to Cuba in January when the Western Hemisphere met, minus the U.S. and Canada, to create a "zone of peace" across Latin America and the Caribbean. In March, **St. Louis** heard ALBA's alternative to U.S.-proposed ALCA, a Latin America Free Trade plan to reduce trade barriers among all American countries except Cuba. By contrast, ALBA is inspired by economic integration. Welcome to a new branch in **Corvallis, OR**. At its first event, editors Clifton Ross and Marcy Rein, presented their book, *Until the Rulers Obey: Voices of Latin American Social Movements*.



Taylor McKinnon

Left to right: Filmmaker Pradeep Indulkar, joined Klee Benally and Leona Morgan in Arizona, calling attention to dangers of uranium mining. He showed his film, "High Power," in 23 cities before returning to India. Hattie Nestle alerted branches to host showings or cosponsor presentations from New England to California.

Disarm/End Wars: **Los Angeles** focused on WILPF's statement to find alternatives to war in Syria. **Des Moines Branch** is working with Veterans for Peace, Catholic Workers. Kathy Kelly and others participated in the No Drones in Iowa rally in March. In April they were at the Bishop Dingman Peace awards event. An Anti-Drone demonstration at Beale Air Force Base last November included peace activist MacGregor Eddy as one of four arrested. **Boston Branch** members are making squares for the Drones Quilt Project and hosted four Kathy Kelly speeches that reached over 200 people and raised \$1,000 for Voices for Creative Non-Violence. **San Jose Branch** is maintaining monthly vigils against nuclear weapons at Lockheed-Martin's plant in Sunnyvale CA. Angie Trudell Vasquez read her poem "Peace Brokers" at a **Milwaukee WI Branch** luncheon thanks to Rose Daitzman. **Greater Philadelphia Branch** protests University of Pennsylvania's drone research with "Death Walk Against Drones" in city center and at the newly opened drone command center. **Pittsburgh Branch** co-sponsored several anti-drone actions, including Robert Greenwald's film "Unmanned." Several branches showed "High Power" by Pradeep Indulkar about the effects of a nuclear power plant in India.

Earth Democracy: Called for action for Earth Day to May Day, 10 Days to Change Course. (globalclimateconvergence.org) **Los Angeles Branch** continues action against fast tracking a city council resolution regarding highly secretive negotiations of the Trans-Pacific Partnership. **St. Louis Branch** heard Webster University professor Allan MacNeill's talk "Trade vs Democracy: The case of the Trans-Pacific Partnership," and learned about how it would change sovereignty, current laws and prohibit future actions. Because of the Monterey Shale formation that runs along the

West Coast, fracking is of great concern to those on the Central Coast of California. **Monterey Branch** has signed onto a call for moratorium to evaluate the risks. **Triangle NC Branch** is also targeting fracking in their backyard. In April, Mary DeCamp of the Tucson Branch Steering Committee joined the Great March for Climate Action as it swung through **Phoenix, AZ**, with plans to walk to Washington, DC with her dog. **Minnesota Metro Branch** considered the impact of tar sands and pipelines on fighting climate change at their Coffee-With-Discussion meeting in March. **Santa Cruz Branch** is working for their county board to establish an Office of the Guardian for Future Generations and for the city to re-think the water desalination project. **Des Moines** will co-sponsor Vandana Shiva to speak on Seeds of Love in October around World Food Prize events. **Portland OR Branch** noted that University of Oregon School of Law Professor Mary Christina Wool has a new book out: *Nature's Trust: Environmental Law for a New Ecological Age*.

Middle East: Des Moines WILPF celebrated Nov. 29th as a Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. They also watched "My Name is Rachel Corrie" in January. Read the "Undaunted Dove" newsletter from **Santa Cruz**, for the informative column "Shalom Salaam Peace; Reports of the Middle East Cluster" by Margaret Knight. Keep up with current trends and historical background at wilpf.got.net. Cape Cod's West Asia Study and Action Working Group launched a letter writing campaign urging U.S. lawmakers to sponsor legislation to promote the peace process and make financial aid to Israel conditional.

Best Practices: For International Women's Day **Los Angeles Branch** held a luncheon with keynote speaker Mimi Kennedy, board chair for Progressive Democrats of America. **Ashland, OR Branch** hosted a reception essay contest winners writing on: "What Will the Future Look Like When Women Have True Equality?" **Cape Cod** collaborated with the local Women's Group Coalition to host a breakfast with donations funding WILPF'S 100th Anniversary celebration. **Monterey County Branch** committed to a nuclear-free world with the Peace Lantern Ceremony. **Detroit Branch** celebrated with readings from Women's Experiences. **Des Moines** is working against wage theft with state level legislation in the works.



Raging Grannies

Left to right: Margo Newhouse, Betts Putnam-Hidalgo, Carole Edelsky and Stephanie Keenan (our WILPF co-chair). All four are Tucson WILPF steering committee members. This photo was taken at the 32nd Annual Peace Fair and Music Festival; Feb. 22, 2014.

Quincy, MA formed a new WILPF group that meets weekly. Their official kickoff will feature peace music and fashions! **Auburn, CA** library displayed the latest JAPA Book Awards including items from the Children's Peace Camp to celebrate Women's History Month. **Tucson Raging Grannies** performed at the 32nd Annual Peace Fair and in February, with Tucson WILPF represented by four of their steering committee! WILPF was actively involved in the U.S. Social Forum in **Atlanta** (2007) and **Detroit** (2009). Will you be there in 2015? See the Anniversary Pledge—for WILPF's 100th year: womentopwardonate.causedox.com.

Check out **SumofUS.org** to support the fast food workers' strikes for better wages and action.changewalmart.org/page/s/black-friday-pledge to support Walmart workers in their struggle to organize. **Triangle Branch** has taken up monthly vigils again as they oppose voter suppression legislation by the North Carolina legislature. **Cape Cod** held their annual planning retreat for 2013–2014. [They really need to write up a 'how to' for the rest of us. Their newsletter recap is a great place to start!] They will be starting with an idea from British WILPF called Connect Day and three main Program Pillars: Peace and Disarmament, Human Rights, and Environmental Justice. **Fresno Branch** participated in the 2nd Annual One Billion Rising on V-Day. **Portland OR Branch** is part of the Name it for a Woman campaign to name the newest bridge over the Willamette River for Abigail Scott Duniway.

Send your news for Branch Action to G.L. Pinkel, 2718 Falk Road, Vancouver, WA 98661 or by email to glpinkel@gmail.com. [member of Portland OR Branch of WILPF (Vancouver is just across the river.)]

Jane Addams Children's Book Awards

Recipients of the 2014 Jane Addams Children's Book Awards are:

Brave Girl: Clara and the Shirtwaist Makers' Strike of 1909, by Michelle Markel, illustrated by Melissa Sweet, books for younger children.

Sugar, by Jewell Parker Rhodes, books for older children.

Honor books for younger children:

We Shall Overcome: The Story of a Song, Debbie Levy, illustrated by Vanessa Brantley-Newton.

Razia's Ray of Hope: One Girl's Dream of an Education, by Elizabeth Suneby, illustrated by Suana Verelst.

Honor books for older children:

Seeing Red, by Katheryn Erskine and **Brotherhood**, by Anne Westrick deal with racial issues.

For additional information about the Jane Addams Children's Book Awards and a complete list of books honored since 1953, see janeaddamspeace.org.

TREASURER'S REPORT: A BUSY YEAR, STABLE FINANCIALS

By Altaira Hatton

	Jan.-Dec. 2013	% of Income
Income		
100th Anniversary	2,000	0.9%
Annual Appeal	14,936	6.7%
Bequests	2,000	0.9%
Branches	1,078	21%
Events & Initiatives	42,238	7.2%
Funding thru PDF	16,107	13.4%
Funding thru JAPA	30,029	23.5%
Individuals	52,793	7.9%
Investment Income	17,845	15.2%
Membership	34,191	0.5%
Mini-Grants	1,055	1.7%
Monthly Pledge	3,769	1.7%
Royalties & Pub Sales	1,450	0.6%
Total Income	224,490	100%

	Jan.-Dec. 2013	% of Income
Expense		
Advertising/Promotion	475	0.9%
Branch Support	3,853	6.7%
Web Maint./Hosting	5,671	0.9%
Staff Recr. & Dev't	637	21%
Events & Initiatives	37,852	7.2%
Fees & Licenses	5,298	13.4%
Governance	12,452	23.5%
Insurance	2,324	7.9%
International Support	28,548	15.2%
Issue Committees	10,097	0.5%
Mini-Grants	4,951	1.7%
Office Expense	6,962	1.7%
Personnel	89,704	0.6%
Postage & Printing	16,604	0.6%
Professional Fees	82,398	0.6%
Rent	9,980	0.6%
Travel	3,126	0.6%
Total Expense	320,933	100%

As WILPF U.S. plans for its busy next year, we must focus on growth. The Detroit Congress, our Capital Campaign, and the excitement of the upcoming Centennial will all take time, focus, and funding. I am pleased to say, that due to the generosity of our loyal and forward-thinking members, we are in a stable position to approach these milestones.

I am deeply appreciative of our wonder-woman, Director of Operations Ria Kulenovic, who has kept us on smooth sailing with excellent time and fiscal management during our last year. I am looking forward to our staffing increase, both to better distribute responsibilities, and also to put vital time and energy into fundraising avenues. I expect the year ahead will show a record income increase, as we are able to promote and develop our income potential.

I see WILPF U.S. as a crucial element in the success of WILPF International and all of the amazing and successful programming they accomplish. It is easy to be distracted by our internal politics, or past disagreements, or our growing pains as we envision a new and vital WILPF U.S. But, by simply focusing on the absolutely vital role we play to our larger organization, we can be re-motivated to work hard towards a strong and successful section.

So, as we plan for a busy and audacious year, I encourage everyone to join in by fundraising locally, joining our Capital Campaign team, making a donation, bequest, or hosting a fun event for new members. This is going to be a year to remember.

Altaira Hatton is treasurer, WILPF U.S. She may be reached at altaira97209@yahoo.com.

They Were Soldiers

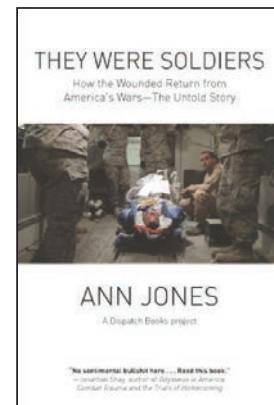
A Book Review

By Marjorie Van Cleef

transport planes from the Craig/Bagram Air Force Base hospital in Afghanistan, to Landstuhl in Germany and finally to Walter Reed Medical Center. Her journey proved to be nothing short of an odyssey.

Jones interviewed medical personnel at Walter Reed in particular. In Afghanistan, troops step on mines and IEDs. Those who survive are without one or two limbs, have a brain injury, a ruined face, or all of the above. The emotional damage goes without saying. "By early 2012," Jones writes, "3,000 [U.S.] soldiers had been killed by IEDs in Iraq and Afghanistan, and 31,394 wounded."

Despite the sometimes glorifying talk about our "wounded warriors," the government and its media outlets have not offered us this view of the reality facing those who fight in these wars and their families, the genuine cost of war to Americans. Jones also relates the kinds of mindsets soldiers are trained to cultivate in order to fight and then endure the physical and often mental damage they will live with for the rest of their lives. During her extensive time spent with the activist/mother of one severely injured soldier, Jones notes that the woman quoted Martin Luther King Jr. when he compares the military experience to the training of slaves to obey, follow orders, submit and become completely dependent on one's "superiors." That dependency follows severely injured soldiers through the rest of their lives.



Finally, Jones reminds us that it is war itself that makes these stories real. "While the U.S. would have us believe war is inevitable, most nations don't make war anymore except when coerced by the United States to join some spurious 'coalition.' The earth is so small, and our time here so short. No other nation on the planet makes war as often, as long, . . . as expensively, as destructively, as wastefully, as senselessly, as the United States. No other nation makes war its business."

Ann Jones has written these stories with compassion and clarity, the tragedies we as U.S. citizens are supposed to evade. We cannot keep our own humanity and continue to forget both the victims in our midst and those in the countries where the wars are made—Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and on and on.

Marjorie Van Cleef is a member of the Philadelphia Branch and the End Wars/Disarm Issue Committee. She may be reached at mvc@igc.org.

New Publication From Reaching Critical Will and Article 36 on Banning Nuclear Weapons



Reaching Critical Will

As the 2014 NPT Preparatory Committee got underway in New York, Article 36 and Reaching Critical Will published a joint paper in April 2014 exploring the development of a legal framework for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons.

Despite the growing recognition of the risk of a nuclear weapons detonation, nuclear-armed states and those in military alliances with them continue to rely upon and invest in nuclear weapons. However, the renewed focus on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons has opened space for consideration of the most appropriate political and legal responses to the existence of nuclear weapons.

The ban treaty approach discussed in this paper can bridge the gap between long-held aspirations for nuclear disarmament and the seemingly intractable legal and political landscape that exists today.

Authors Ray Acheson, Thomas Nash, and Richard Moyes are delighted to offer the online version for free, but please consider making a donation to Reaching Critical Will to help us cover the costs of producing this book. reachingcriticalwill.org/news/latest-news/8655-new-publication-from-rcw-and-article-36-on-a-treaty-banning-nuclear-weapons

Reaching Critical Will is a project of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Join us at wilfinternational.org/get-involved/join-us. Please help sustain your disarmament information resource. Consider making a donation to Reaching Critical Will at: reachingcriticalwill.org/donate.

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

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**Don't forget! WILPF Triennial Congress: July 31–August 3
Registration form included in this issue**

WILL YOU BE READY?



**WILPF U.S. IS
READY TO ROLL!**

We are rolling out our Keep Moving Forward
2014–15 Fundraising Campaign:

**“GROWING WILPF U.S.
FOR THE NEXT 100 YEARS”**

Get in at the start at Detroit Congress 2014!

Join us to build an infrastructure that will support our Issue Committees, Mini-grant Program, and Centennial activities, including travel scholarships to The Hague; and to bring the global home through strengthening our activities at the UN: the Practicum, Local to Global, PeaceWomen and Building Critical Will!!!

For information on how to get started
contact Sara Tess Neumann at stneumann@wilpus.org.