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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.

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Cover photo by Tara Pixley. Reprinted by permission. In Los Angeles, California, several LGBTQIA organizations joined forces to host an All Black Lives Matter march on June 14, 2020. Hundreds gathered as a show of solidarity for Black Lives and to protest police brutality.

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# Our Community of Support in the Face of Global Trauma

By Darien De Lu

President, WILPF US Section

**O**ur country is at a major crossroads, facing important decisions. The choice should be clear: the public supports funding for both “human infrastructure” and physical infrastructure upgrades, supporting the future quality of life for all and the beginnings of a shift from the fossil-fuel dependence that’s making our planet unlivable. WILPF supports the People’s Budget of the Poor People’s Campaign, funding a *Just Transition*, with strong safety nets.

**How do we increase WILPF’s capacity to mobilize the people’s pressure?** Our August Congress was outstanding! Now, in these difficult times, how do we *advance* on the long haul toward peace and justice? Strong, intrepid group that we are, WILPF members suffer from understandable depression, anxiety, and uncertainty.

We are traumatized by the losses of the pandemic and by the political threats so visible in the news. Yet, amidst multiple traumas, WILPF’s sense of purpose offers support. Can our community — based in appreciation and caring for each other — increase our healing and resilience?

Sometimes appreciation of each other can be challenging. As passionate, committed, and experienced activists with strong wills and opinions, we may find ourselves in conflict! I urge us to remember: **we are on the same side!** Let each of us practice what Michael Lerner talks about in his book, [\*Revolutionary Love\*](#): a kind of caring based on *love and justice*.

Even when basically aligned, we may see each other as opponents. Yet in that term, I see the possibility for shifts, for future agreements. In other contexts, with wider differences, *carefully chosen* work with opponents is consistent with one of WILPF’s purposes: “to abolish violence and coercion in the settlement of conflict and their substitution in every case of negotiation and conciliation.”

We can engage with others, keeping in mind our goal of *justice for all*. We recognize that many concepts and tactics current among our opposition are unacceptable — antithetical to our fundamental WILPF principles. Our ethical political work requires discernment and some self-discipline. Still, we can start our practice of loving engagement within the safer community of WILPF.



This “political home” — the community and principles of WILPF — is among the deepest benefits of WILPF membership. With the potential for healing and support, it helps give us the strength and courage to take risks and be *boldly loving* — in our political work and our lives!

Even in this time of “[the shock doctrine](#)” (the calculated strategy of advancing capitalist power and wealth by exploiting the public breakdown and disorientation of crises — *shocks*), WILPF continues to do what we’ve done for decades: connect, educate, organize, and lobby.

We rise up for justice, though we are horrified by acts of brutality and racism. Just maintaining a culture of civility, caring, and balance seems precarious in the immoral media and money world! We want to sustain hope in our own lives and in the lives of others, yet we see what a narrow path along the edge of the economic abyss — so many are forced to walk.

How do we advance? Let’s collaborate! In this *Peace & Freedom*, we read about some of the excellent programs at our Congress — a **team effort** of our branches, issue committees, and allies. These articles remind us of our human connections — across generations, classes, and races — and our shared goals, emphasizing analysis of interrelationships among issues.

WILPF promotes a system of lasting values, with compassion and equity. After decades of work, we understand that our peace and justice journey takes longer than we want. We persevere, despite fear and discomfort. One of the benefits of being a one-hundred-year-plus organization is that we take a long view (one of the challenges of a peace organization is that we *have to!*). So we continue to study, learn, and organize. We have much value to offer each other — and the world.

I hope you’ll find WILPF’s analysis and goals meaningful and will pass along our messages.

# Reflections on Our Soul Work

34<sup>th</sup> Triennial Congress 2021

By Mary Hanson Harrison

Congress Coordinator

**“Organizing is the soul of this work.”**

—Stacey Abrams



In early February of this year, Stacey Abrams and Lauren Groh-Wargo, her campaign manager, wrote an essay for the *New York Times*, “How to Turn Your Red State Blue”, with the subtitle: “It may take 10 years. Do it anyway.” While it deals mostly with grassroots activism, some of the same organizing principles apply to our experience building a virtual Congress and sustaining post-Congress activism.

What began as a seemingly impossible challenge for WILPF US turned into a great success. We started with a fundamental dedication to strengthening feminist voices by creating a **strategic and lasting synergy** among Branches, issue committees, at-large members, WILPF International, and in collaboration with peace organizations.

The Congress Program Committee (CONPRO) set out to work on this bold adventure not knowing exactly where we’d be going. It was and continues to be an experiment built on the hypothesis (or in our case, hyper-thesis) that **WILPF women have the knowledge and expertise** needed for a two-week virtual Congress, the first ever attempted.

It was, indeed and in deed, a transformative process. And this is where **organizing as soul work comes in — as an experimental process, bursting out of the confines of the past**. The structure for the Congress evolved into the following three organizing principles, combining grassroots activism with policy-making advocacy.

**Be Intentional:** Being intentional means having an idea, something planned, thought about, and reasoned. However, it

also implies the emotional commitment to a holistic approach, inclusive of intergenerational, racial and cultural diversity.

When the CONPRO Committee met, we discussed not what we wanted to achieve in numbers, but what we could learn about the Branches. Our intention was to diversify, lift up and consider individual WILPF members’ voices. We also focused on holding “How To” sessions and solutions-oriented workshops for building membership, furthering Branch actions, and fundraising. Our vision for the Congress was not limited to two weeks; rather, we saw the Congress as a springboard for the next three years.

**Stay in Touch:** “At its most basic, organizing is talking to people about important issues, plus moving them to take collective action”, Abrams declared. We found that listening was essential in constructing the Congress. The members of the CONPRO Committee reached out to every Branch, often meeting on Zoom, to hear updates and potential contributions to the Congress. From those discussions and from the overwhelming number of responses to the request for proposals, a thematic division emerged for the two weeks. The first week focused on “Environmental Justice IS Social Justice”, and the second week on “Using Our Power for Peace”; both weeks oriented toward solutions, sharing knowledge and practices.

Another example of the rewards of a “sustained engagement” was the success of the two “Prepare, Practice, and Perform” (PPP) sessions held in July 2021. All participants were invited to hear from seasoned presenters, ask questions, and most importantly, know they were not alone. Forming a cohort of presenters provided the necessary assurance that it could be done, through community.

**Create Pathway for Change:** As you will see as you thumb through this edition of *Peace & Freedom*, the Congress demanded hard work, reciprocity amongst participants, and a commitment to respect and value the opinions of others. However, the fundamental and indispensable technological support was the backbone of the entire structure. If it failed, so too would the Congress, but it didn’t. Participating in the Congress via Zoom was a milestone for our members, and our survey results show that overall it was very successful. This technological capacity creates a new pathway for recruitment, fundraising, and a sustainable future.

In the future, when asked “What does WILPF do?”, you can refer folks to our YouTube channel to watch Congress videos and start a conversation about joining the challenge. Yes, ask them to join! It is the power of our collective voices that will make the difference.

# Revive Us Again

## Vision & Action in Moral Organizing

Adapted from Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis's keynote address at the WILPF 34th Triennial Congress

**I**n late August, hundreds were arrested outside the Senate Hart building near Capitol Hill while participating in nonviolent direct action to demand voting rights, put an end to the filibuster, and advocate for economic rights for all. The action brought together poor and low-wage workers, clergy, and people of conscience — all committed to fighting for a multiracial democracy that works for everyone. Singing the old coal worker anthem “Which Side Are You On?” we claimed the moral authority of a higher law that is being violated by the failures of our political system.

It is increasingly clear that anti-democratic policies are threatening the fabric of this nation. Our democracy is in trouble so long as millions are allowed to live in poverty and near-poverty conditions, especially when lawmakers have the power to change them.

The attack on democracy currently playing out in D.C. and [in state legislatures like Texas](#) is the [worst we have seen since Reconstruction](#). Since January, there has been a wave of voter suppression laws across the country — while in the Senate, members of both parties continue to use the filibuster to block the political will of the majority of Americans.

At the center of this crisis are poor women, especially poor women of color, who are facing increasingly unlivable conditions, none of which will change without a democracy that works for them. History has circled back in the most wicked of ways, forcing a new generation of women to step into the breach to save this democracy.

173 years ago, on July 19, 1848, hundreds came together in Seneca Falls, New York, to denounce the outrage of second-class citizenship for women. The demands in Seneca Falls largely echoed the unheralded efforts of Black women stretching back decades, and their rising discontent under the leadership of women like Sojourner Truth. Three years after Seneca Falls, at a women's convention in Akron, Ohio, Truth famously said:

**“If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down all alone, these women together ought to be able to turn it back and get it right side up again.” — Sojourner Truth**

In direct actions in DC and across the nation, we carried the spirit of these women into the streets. We reminded the nation that unshackling our democracy from voter suppression and procedural rules like the filibuster is inextricably linked to the work of building a nation where every person's needs are met.



This season of action reminds us of the heroic work that WILPF has done for 100 years and that so many movement organizations have been doing for decades. It reminds us of the vision and actions of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King in the last years of his life. The same Rev. Dr. King who was the keynote speaker at the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary gathering of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

Dr King said: “There comes a time when a moral person can't obey a law which his conscience tells them is unjust... history has moved on, and great moments have often come forth because there were those individuals, in every age, in every generation, who were willing to say “I will be obedient to a higher law.”

43.5% of Americans are poor or low income. There are 140 million poor and low-income people in America, 15 millions families that can't afford water, 32 million workers making less than a living wage, not one town, city, county in the country where a full time worker making minimum wage can afford to rent even just a two bedroom apartment.

In such a time as this, people are called to come together and build a movement of the people, by the people, and for the people.

We must draw inspiration from the abolitionist movement where slaves and ex-slaves came together, built the underground railroad, organized and moralized against slavery, and





even when it looked like all hope was lost, pressed through.

If we are serious about addressing and abolishing systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, and the war economy, we need moral analysis, articulation and action. A movement led by those most impacted by injustice

but involving people of all walks of life. We need a moral revolution of values that places the needs and demands of the poor and the planet at the heart of our budget, at the center of our national discourse, at the core of our structures and policies.

Over the past four years, the *Poor People's Campaign* has built coordinating committees of poor and dispossessed people, moral leaders, advocates and activists in 40 states. We have met with tens of thousands of people and chronicled their demands for a better society. We have been honored to work alongside WILPF leaders all across the nation.

## **We are living in the midst of a “kairos moment” — a time of great change and transformation, when the old ways of society are dying, and new ones are being born.**

Drawing from this deep engagement, we developed a Moral Agenda to eliminate the evils of systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, the war economy and militarism. We have helped introduce a congressional resolution calling for a third reconstruction: fully addressing poverty and low-wages from the bottom up. Together, we have built the power to compel the president to commit to ending poverty as more than an aspiration, but a theory of change. **As we say and sing in our work, when you lift from the bottom, everybody rises.**

It is immoral that in this world of beauty and abundance, so many people don't have access to water, housing, or health care; good schools or the right to vote at age 18; sanitation services, or the freedom to live without fear. And we have the resources to feed, clothe, house, educate, and care for everyone in this entire world!

I want to tell you about the power of poor moms, of poor people, persistently fighting and engaging in nonviolent moral fusion direct action. I want to tell you about how students and young people and elders and a diverse fusion of people are leading the way to a more just society. I want to tell you about the power of moral leaders, organizers and activists challenging this injustice, this immorality.

The dominant narrative in this nation remains that if millions of people just acted better, worked harder, complained less, and prayed more, they would be lifted up and out of their miserable conditions. But this is a lie.

Bryan Stevenson of the Equal Justice Initiative has an appropriate response to problems such as these. He asserts: “the opposite of poverty is not wealth, it is justice”. But how do we achieve justice? How do we raise the dead, dry bones in the valley? We organize. We disrupt. We educate. We sing. We protest. We refuse to bow to violence and war and oppression. We are required sometimes not just to dissent but to disrupt. Not with hate — with revolutionary love. We must love the United States enough to take a knee and to call this nation to a knee of repentance.

I close with a final quote from Rev. Dr. King,

“There comes a time when a moral person can't obey a law which his conscience tells him is unjust. And I tell you this morning, my friends, that history has moved on, and great moments have often come forth because there were those individuals, in every age, in every generation, who were willing to say: “*I will be obedient to a higher law.*”

It is important to see that there are times when a man-made law is out of harmony with the moral law of the universe, there are times when human law is out of harmony with eternal and divine laws.

And when that happens, you have an obligation to break it, and I'm happy that in breaking it, I have some good company. I have Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. I have Jesus and Socrates. And I have all of you who refused to bow.

Thank you to all of you for continuing to refuse to bow! Let's keep it up!

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*The Reverend Dr. Liz Theoharis is Co-Chair of the [Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival](#) with the Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II. She is the Director of the [Kairos Center for Religions, Rights, and Social Justice](#) at Union Theological Seminary. She is an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA) and teaches at Union Theological Seminary in New York City.*

*Art by Molly Costello, [mollycostello.com](#)*

# Women's Power to Change the Environment

Excerpted from a keynote speech by  
Dr. Vandana Shiva at the WILPF 34<sup>th</sup>  
Triennial Congress

**[was] so happy to join you for your 106 year celebration.**

Now that is sustainability. That is the kind of sustainability on which we have to build.

In the last several decades, I have increasingly seen industrial agriculture become a militaristic venture. It is literally war — not only metaphorically, but materially. Chemical fertilizers and pesticides are the descendants of the gases used to execute people in the gas chambers of Hitler. The source of industrial agriculture is the militarized mind of extermination, the idea that anyone different from me must be exterminated. This was carried over to agriculture. And so, insects must be exterminated. Plants are being exterminated. Everything green must be wiped out. This is what WILPF was born to resist; to find alternatives for this “Roundup mentality”.

A logic of extermination creates tools of extermination. What began in Hitler's concentration camps is the extinction crisis of today — the extinction of biodiversity. In my view, small farmers are a threatened species. The paradigm of agriculture has become a totally manipulated calculus. It is farming without farmers, and food without farms.

Chemical fertilizers are war against the soil. The soil is not an empty container, she is Mother Earth, she's pachamama, and she is the very basis of our life. It's not an accident that living soil is humus, and that the word human is derived from humus. We are children of the soil, no matter how much we pretend we are the masters, the owners. When we define the soil as empty, we will destroy life. But by feeding the soil, feeding the pollinators, we can actually address the hunger crisis. Food really is the web of life.

**The health of the planet and our health is one health; peace with the planet, peace in society, and peace with our bodies is one peace. This is what we must strive for.**

Women are leading the shift to a nonviolent economic code, going from an economics of greed to an economics of care. We've been made to think in terms of fragmented injustices — racial injustice, gender injustice, economic injustice. But at the end, they all have common roots.



For me, regeneration is about regenerating peace. Because what we are facing is war in every dimension of life; therefore we must have peace in every dimension of our life. Can you imagine a system where your food, communication, and education are controlled, your health is controlled, and it's all integrated into one grand surveillance capitalism? This system is what we have got to say no to. And we can only say no to it when we build our own system based on building community; both the local communities where we are, the Earth community to which we belong, and the future communities to whom we are to hand over this planet.

Making peace with the Earth is regeneration, recognizing our non-violent creative power, our generative power; our ability to create abundance without external input. Our ability to share knowledge, and therefore have more knowledge rather than intellectual property and monopoly and royalties and battles. Here are the models: scarcity versus abundance, violence against non-violence. Beautiful peace, on every part of the planet, the sky, the soil, the waters — this is our work.

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*Dr. Vandana Shiva has been an advocate, a thinker, and an activist for decades. She has worked on many interconnected issues including climate change, human rights, earth justice, food sovereignty, and peace and freedom. She is the founder of the Navdanya seed conservation organization.*

# It All Flows Downhill

## The High Cost of Cheap Meat

By Emily Keen and Lib Hutchby

Triangle Branch

Jan Corderman, Sharon  
Donovan, and John Aspray

Iowa Des Moines Branch



**T**he WILPF branches of Iowa and Triangle of NC recently joined together to address a crisis in our national meat production that threatens the health and safety of the majority of Americans regardless of their food choices. Our choice of meats not only affects our personal health but has a vital impact on the environment, the safety of water systems, the social fabric of the communities which house them, and of course, the lives of the animals in confinement.

The inhumane practice of farming called Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations, known as CAFOs, is characterized by housing up to 10,000 hogs or up to 125,000 chickens on a single farm. CAFOs benefit most from packing the maximum number of animals into the smallest area and employing the fewest number of workers to manage them. The animals have little room to turn or move freely. They may never touch a natural surface or be allowed to pursue natural behaviors. Tails are docked, beaks clipped to curtail the biting they inflict on each other as they cope with their suffering.

During COVID, the delay in supply chains brought about a catastrophe in these massive animal factories. As the animals began to multiply on each farm, slaughterhouses were losing workers to infection and thus delayed. Many farmers couldn't feed their animals and many were euthanized. Some elected to allow them to die an agonizing death of dehydration or

suffocation from their own fumes. This is what we inflict on sentient beings in order to have cheap meat, easily accessed for our tables.

North Carolina and Iowa are leading states in these factory farming operations. Farmers are under contract to major corporations which direct every aspect of the process and extract every penny of profit. These exploitative businesses are also prolific in South Dakota, Minnesota, Nebraska and California. There are very limited regulations on the production of poultry and pigs — the EPA, ostensibly the monitoring agency, knows far too little about these farms and leaves much of the monitoring to states which often decline accountability.

According to a recently published study by the National Academy of Sciences<sup>1</sup>, U.S. agricultural production results in 17,900 air quality-related deaths per year, and 80% of these deaths are due to airborne contaminants from large-scale animal farms, including ammonia emissions mainly from livestock waste and fertilizer application. There are multiple gases released from these manure mountains including nitrous oxide, methane, CO<sub>2</sub> and hydrogen sulfide. Emissions from animal factory farms account for more annual deaths than pollution from coal power plants. Those at greatest risk for negative impact are infants and young kids, the elderly, pregnant and the immune compromised. The pathogens in the air can be transmitted through inhalation of dust and toxic particles, and also through drinking water that has absorbed contaminants through the ground.

### Sacrifice Zones

Naeema Muhammad, an organizer in North Carolina's Environmental Justice Network, tells us that people who own land in these areas cannot enjoy time outdoors. Children cannot play outside. There can be no birthday parties or family reunions, and no way for people to enjoy communing on their land. She has witnessed the unbearable burden on communities of color, Black and Indigenous people, who are forced to fight back against the intrusion of the cheap meat industry. The unfortunate homeowners also suffer the degradation of their land's financial value.

Dr. Steve Wing of UNC and his colleagues reported in a 1996 study that Black, Latino, and American Indian residents in North Carolina were approximately twice as likely to suffer



from health problems associated with toxic fecal waste in the air because they were more likely to live within three miles of such operations.<sup>2</sup> As explained in our Congress presentation by Donna Chavis, an Indigenous leader in NC and a member of the State's CAFO roundtable, the location of these polluting industries in proximity to low income people and people of color exemplifies the principle of "sacrifice zones". Naomi Klein further explains that residents in these sacrifice zones are "whole subsets of humanity categorized as less than fully human, which made their poisoning in the name of progress somehow acceptable."<sup>2</sup> This is what we ask of people in order to have cheap meat on our tables.

In the business model of swine and poultry factory farming, a processing company owns and controls all stages of the production process, from the hatcheries for chicks to the feed mills, slaughterhouses, packaging and trucking for distribution. These businesses are no longer based in local areas supporting local communities. The farmer, or grower, contracts with the company to raise the animals and is responsible for capital investments of equipment and facilities, as well as the management and disposal of animal waste. Growers often have little market power and little to no autonomy over their farming operations. The processing company pays the farmer a set price for labor and pits farmers against each other, determining their efficiency and ranking their pay. A handful of powerful corporations control the growing and distribution of the majority of our nation's meat, each selling their product under an array of different brands.

In an effort to reduce the amount of greenhouse gas produced by CAFOs, anaerobic digesters are being used to cover the lagoons of animal waste and convert the waste to methane. Some have called this "bio-gas", but it is actually factory farm-created methane. Energy companies are given incentives by the EPA in its Renewable Fuel Standards to create and inject bio-gas into the natural gas grid to offset fossil fuels. However, there is far too little bio-gas that can be produced compared to our use of fossil fuels. There have been ventures designed by energy companies, such as Duke, and factory farm corporations such as Smithfield, to create methane in digesters on farms. Pipelines then transfer it to refineries, often some 30-40 miles away. This risks leakage of a potent greenhouse gas, which would result in significant damage to the atmosphere. A major explosion due to methane has already occurred in a digester located in Wisconsin. There have been some farmers using the gas produced on their own farms for energy, and this seems a much safer endeavor.

Resolving these complicated food production issues is extremely difficult. Many organizations are pressing for action to address animal welfare, environmental degradation and human health concerns. Ballot initiatives have been more



effective than legislation in providing relief to animal confinement issues, as they are created and voted on directly by the people. Both California and Massachusetts voters have approved measures that address the cruelty of close confinement.

Nationally, Senator Cory Booker and Rep. Ro Khanna have introduced the [Farm Systems Reform Act](#) which addresses the following and more:

- Imposes an immediate moratorium on the construction of new CAFOs and phases out the largest existing CAFOs by 2040
- Imposes the liabilities and costs of pollutions, accidents, and disasters on the agricultural conglomerates that control the market rather than on the independent farmers who contract with them
- Creates a \$100 billion fund to help farmers who are currently running CAFOs transition to other agricultural operations

Ask your Senators and House members to support the [Farm Systems Reform Act](#). Also find local, smaller farmers near you and support their business by buying from them directly. You can let your voice be heard by running for public office or volunteering to serve on public boards and agencies that have input on local food practices and regulations. Lastly, do not minimize how much you as an individual can bring change by consuming less meat and dairy products and influencing others to do the same. Let's all commit to helping contain the production of greenhouse gases and, through our food choices, lessening the demand for precious environmental resources such as land, water, and energy.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Kaplan, S. (2021, May 11). Air pollution from farms leads to 17,900 U.S. deaths per year, study finds. The Washington Post. Retrieved November 18, 2021, from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2021/05/10/farm-pollution-deaths/>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/095624789600800214>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/sep/19/this-changes-everything-capitalism-vs-climate-naomi-klein-review>

# Who's Coming to Dinner, and What's on The Menu?

## Challenging the UN Food Systems Summit

**W**hen the United Nations Secretary General, António Guterres, announced two years ago that a United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) would be held in the Fall of 2021, the news was welcome. We all realize that food systems have a huge impact on many of the crises that we're currently confronting. Rising hunger, ecological harm from food production including deforestation, soil degradation, loss of biodiversity, decimated fisheries, polluted water, rural poverty, displacement, and climate change all pointed to the urgent need for change.

But it was puzzling that the 2021 Summit was called by the UN Secretary General. Past food summits were convened by the FAO as **multilateral** events where governments negotiated agreements based on human rights, with clear decision making processes and accountability mechanisms. Beyond puzzling, it was alarming that the 2021 event was not a multilateral event, but instead was advertised, structured and framed as a **multi-stakeholder** event.

The clue to this new arrangement lay in the fact that some months before the announcement, the Secretary General of the United Nations had signed a strategic partnership with the World Economic Forum (WEF), the platform for the thousand largest corporations in the world. Initially the WEF was even listed as the official co-host of the Food Summit; this endorsement has since disappeared from the UN website.

### Multilateralism, Inclusivity and Conflicts of Interest

The key involvement of the World Economic Forum and the big move from multilateralism to multi-stakeholderism has shaped the organization and focus of the summit.

While "multi-stakeholder" sounds inclusive, inviting all the stakeholders to participate as equals without any consideration of power imbalances or the position of various actors in the food system, is not actually inclusive. The fiction of equality leaves the powerful around the table unchallenged and unaccountable, and hides conflicts of interest. Conflating



private corporate interests with the public interest serves to override and erase the latter.

As Maywa Montenegro put it "The move from multilateralism to multistakeholderism signals the corporate capture of the United Nations, and could even be a strategic move to possibly privatize the United Nations system altogether. This shift could represent a partnership with the corporate sector and agribusiness that would help to establish stakeholder capitalism as the governance model for the entire planet."

The processes leading up to the Pre-Summit in July 2021 and the Summit on September 23, 2021 included a dizzying array of platforms, dialogues, consultations, committees, and forms for participation. Although they emphasized "inclusivity", the UN strategically invited individual participants, bypassing and undermining autonomous democratic organized sectors, and handpicked individuals to serve in many of the Summit's forums.

While some of the materials on food systems transformation were useful and well researched, the processes and outcomes remain opaque. More than 2000 solution ideas were received, and these were collated into 15 action areas with more than 50 "solution clusters". How were these solutions graded and selected? On what criteria? Who was actually making decisions on this? Who is accountable, and to whom?

In the face of this lack of transparency, we at the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples Mechanism of the Committee on World Food Security, along with many people's organizations and researchers, joined together and mobilized to highlight key problems and dangers of this [UNFSS](#): the lack of human rights grounding, the lack of transparency, accountability and legitimacy and the outsized presence of corporate and financial interests at the heart of the processes.

## Addressing Gender Disparities — A Feminist Process

Noting the strong criticism from civil society organizations and many others, Summit organizers added more human rights language and emphasized their inclusion of youth, women and indigenous peoples. But the focus remained on technological "solutions" including more sophisticated data collection and usage, more integrated global markets, intensification of production, more financial investment (corporate concentration) and strategies to integrate women and youth into this "transformed" food system.

As Maywa Montenegro said, "The language of inclusivity [in Food Summit materials] is very ornate and flowery; there's 'women's empowerment', there's Youth Ambassadors. But, we understand that a food sovereignty approach and the feminist approach is very attentive to process. We know that you don't bake a cake and decide to add your yeast, sugar and your key ingredients after you've stuck the cake in the oven. It doesn't work that way. Indigenous groups, women, and civil society are being treated like icing on the cake. We're going to make this attractive, we are not going to be transparent about how decisions are made about how some solution clusters thrive and others don't."

Jessie McInnis added succinctly, "The underbelly of this summit is really perpetuating the contemporary standard for a very hetero patriarchal capitalist food system that at the end of the day is treating food as a commodity and nothing else."

## How Will Women Fare in This Proposed System Transformation?

It is obvious that women are key actors in food systems and the primary provisioners of food in most households in the world. But neither the process nor the content of the Food Summit accorded the equality, agency and rights to women that a just, sustainable food system transformation requires.

Jessie McInnis contends "corporate agriculture has never been and is not feminist in nature. It's a business transac-



tion. And it's concerned with the bottom line, as business transactions are, and not with the fact that women, despite producing, storing, and preparing much of the world's food still struggle to own land, access resources, or have much agency over the systems of production on farms and through the food chain."

The outcomes of the Summit include encouraging stakeholders to form "coalitions of action" to implement "solutions". Governments are encouraged to develop "national pathways" with stakeholder coalitions, many of which will inevitably be dominated by the big corporate and financial interests that can fund them.

However, at the recent CFS 49<sup>th</sup> Sessions (October 11–14, 2021) many governments did not agree to abandon multilateralism and their governance roles. So the transformation of food systems remains a contested arena of public policy where women must take a leading role in resisting corporate exploitation, protecting human rights, building food sovereignty and creating ecologically sound, healthy food systems.

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*This article came out of a curated conversation at the WILPF Triennial Congress moderated by Nettie Wiebe, an organic farmer based in Saskatchewan, Canada, leader and activist with the National Farmers Union and representative of the [Via Campesina](#) movement in the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples Mechanism at the UN Committee on World Food Security. She spoke with panelists Jessie McInnis, a Canadian farmer in Nova Scotia; Maywa Montenegro, Assistant professor of Environmental Studies at UC Santa Cruz; Patty Naylor, organic farmer in Iowa and U.S. focal point for the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples Mechanism; and Jennifer Taylor, an organic small scale farmer in Georgia and associate professor at the Florida Agriculture and Mechanical University.*



# Water is a Human Right

## Growing the Water Justice Movement

By Maude Barlow and Mary Grant

### The Blue Communities Project pushes back on the corporate water privatization agenda

**M**ore than a year ago, when COVID-19 first hit, we were all told the most important thing to do was wash our hands with soap and warm water — but over half the population of the world doesn't have a place to wash their hands.

We face a global water crisis. The planet is running out of clean, accessible water because of our abuse and overuse of the existing supplies, and because of social inequity. While the wealthy elite and corporations may have access to all the water that they want, many people in the world do not have any clean water. More than 2 billion people are forced to drink contaminated water every single day, and 2.5 billion people don't have basic sanitation. The pandemic has brought this crisis to the forefront.

Although people sometimes assume that water issues are the result of the climate crisis, in many ways, the water crisis contributes to the climate crisis. The ways we have abused water — taking it from wherever nature put it to where we want it, over-extracting groundwater, damming rivers to death so that they don't reach the ocean anymore — are actually major [causes of the climate crisis](#). At the same time, growing demand for water is leading to an increase in energy-intensive pumping, treatment and transportation, thereby raising carbon emissions and exacerbating climate change. The restoration and protection of watersheds is one of the most important solutions to that crisis.

### Water Is Not A Commodity

There is a mighty contest between those who say water is a commodity, like oil and gas, and should be put on the open

market for sale, and those of us who say no: **it's a human right and a public trust that must be protected as such forever.**

Large corporations have recognized that water, a necessity for life, is declining while demand is growing, so there is going to be a rush on it. Those who would control supplies of water will become more powerful and certainly wealthier. It's extraordinarily important that we keep water in the public, under public control.

In this battle between corporate interest and the public trust, the Blue Communities Project found its genesis. The Blue Communities Project started in Canada in 2009, under the right-wing government of then-Prime Minister Stephen Harper. Much as the World Bank has done to poor countries, Harper did to Canadian municipalities by forcing cash-strapped communities that needed support to privatize and upgrade their water infrastructure through public-private partnerships. To push back against this privatization agenda, the Council of Canadians and Canadian Union of Public Employees held a conference and launched the Blue Communities Project. Rather than being against something, it offered a positive vision.

### To become a Blue Community, the municipality must agree to three key principles:

1. To protect and promote water as a human right, which will mean different things in different places
2. To protect and promote water as a public trust, which will stop privatization
3. Where there is clean, safe public tap water, to phase out bottled water on municipal premises and at municipal conferences.

There is a fourth commitment for U.S. Blue Communities: to support passage of the WATER Act (HR 1352, S 916) in Congress to fully fund water and wastewater systems in the United States. The WATER Act is the most comprehensive funding solution that would make corporations pay their fair share to fully fund our water infrastructure, providing \$35 billion each and every year, with grants prioritized to disadvantaged communities.

Many U.S. communities, particularly Black, Indigenous and other communities of color, have been historically under-funded and exploited, with resources taken out and not put in. These communities tend to simultaneously bear a disparate burden of the pollution caused by corporations, industry and the military.

## Blue Communities Around the World

The positive vision of Blue Communities took off in Canada. Since March 22, 2011, when Burnaby became the first Blue Community, 50 Canadian municipalities including Vancouver and Montreal have become Blue Communities, and the movement has started to spread. In 2013, Bern, Switzerland, where Nestlé is headquartered, became the first city outside of Canada to become a Blue Community. It didn't stop there — the University of Bern became a Blue Community and the Reformed Church — the biggest church in Switzerland, also joined. Across Switzerland there are now dozens of Blue Communities.

The principles of Blue Communities spread further. Paris, France, had recently brought their water system back into public hands after years of control by Veolia and Suez, and decided to make public control permanent by becoming a Blue Community. Berlin, where there was a huge battle and referendum to end the privatization of water, also became a Blue Community, along with Munich and Brussels. The World Council of Churches, with 600 million members around the world, became a Blue Community and put out a beautiful statement of ethics and principles about what they will do through their faith commitments to protect water and the human right to water.

A Blue Schools movement was started in Germany, integrating the principles into a curriculum for young people. Canada will soon launch a Blue Schools project to teach youth not only about the responsibility of caring for water, but the human right to water and issues related to the lack of water in Indigenous communities.

Municipalities have decided to make this vision real in different ways. In Berlin, the city committed to addressing the lack of sanitation access in migrant communities, in parks for the homeless, and in the red-light district.

Almost 25 million people now live in official Blue Communities, but in the United States, there are so far only two:



Maude Barlow with Los Angeles City Officials at Blue Communities Certificate Ceremony. Photo by Nareh Sargsyan.

Northampton, Massachusetts, and Los Angeles, California. There is much more work to be done to turn every community in the United States into a Blue Community. That's why we created an organizing guide and toolkits to help grow the Blue Communities movement. The guide walks volunteers through a strategic plan for passing a resolution to commit a town to become a Blue Community.

It's incredibly important for us to act on the human right to water and resist privatization of this natural resource. The global water justice movement must have a positive vision and a plan. We need to have hope and a real sense of what we can accomplish together. Join us and help turn your town into a Blue Community!

### Six Key Steps Toward Becoming a Blue Community:

- Launch the campaign
- Develop the strategy
- Get public support
- Meet with the council members
- Pressure the council members
- Celebrate the victory

Our [toolkits](#) include communication strategies, sample scripts for meetings and calls, petitions, social media images, and more.

*Mary Grant is the Public Water for All Campaign Director at Food & Water Watch. Maude Barlow is an activist, author, and Board Chair of the Food & Water Watch.*



# The Lasting Impact of the Trinity Nuclear Test

Radioactive Exposure Compensation Act Seeks Justice for the People of New Mexico

By Tina Cordova



**T**he Trinity Nuclear Test took place July 16, 1945, in the desert of South Central New Mexico. From the beginning, the government has controlled the messaging around the test. They claimed the area was remote and uninhabited, that no one lived here and no one was harmed. As someone who was directly impacted by the Trinity event, I am here to stand up and say that is absolutely not true.

16 years ago the [Tularosa Basin Downwinders Consortium \(TDBC\)](#) was founded to call attention to the negative health effects suffered by the people of New Mexico as a result of their exposure to radiation from the Trinity test site. A brilliant student at the University of New Mexico named Bryan Kendall has now provided positive proof that the area around Trinity was in fact populated, not a desolate area. Using the 1940 census data map of New Mexico, Kendall calculated the population in every census tract and then drew a 10 mile incremental radius around Trinity to encompass 150 miles. Why 150 miles? Because after the test was complete, Dr. Stafford Warren, one of the physicians assigned to the

test, wrote a memo to General Groves that has since been declassified. The memo read: "We can never do this here again, because we overexposed people to radiation. Any future test must be held on a site without people within a 150-mile radius."

When the Trinity nuclear bomb was detonated, there were close to 15,000 men, women and children living within a 50-mile radius of the test site, and within a 150-mile radius, the area of exposure encompassed Albuquerque and Santa Fe to the north and El Paso and Ciudad Juarez to the south. It reached the Arizona border to the west, and it almost reached the Texas border to the east. Half a million people lived within this area.

At the time of that first nuclear test in 1945, much was unknown. It was, however, well-known by physicians that radiation caused negative health effects. The meteorologists assigned to the test knew that the weather in New Mexico during the month of July is monsoon season when we receive much of our annual rainfall, and that this was not the best



time for detonating a bomb of this type. They waited the night of July 15<sup>th</sup> for a break in the thunderstorms to detonate the bomb. Some of the scientists working at the test site made bets as to whether they might ignite the entire atmosphere.

What scientists didn't know was the exact amount of plutonium necessary to detonate the bomb. Packed with 13 pounds of weapons grade plutonium, which has a half life of 24,000 years, it turned out that only three pounds of plutonium were necessary for the fission process. A full 10 pounds of plutonium went up in the fireball that exceeded the atmosphere and penetrated the stratosphere. For days afterward, a radioactive ash fell from the sky over the communities closest to the test site.

Scientists also didn't anticipate the extensive fallout of detonating a bomb 100 feet above the ground. The blast crashed into the earth, took up dirt, sand, animal and plant life, incinerated it, and created a fireball that ascended between 50,000-70,000 feet. The explosion produced more heat and more light than the sun. The desert floor around the test site was left coated in trinitite, a unique element formed as a result of the New Mexico sand melting and joining with plutonium, other radioactive isotopes and metals.

## Nuclear Impact on Local Communities

Most people in the small towns surrounding the test site had no running water. We collected rainwater off our roofs for drinking and cooking, and relied on our irrigation ditches, creeks, rivers and lakes for water used for bathing, cleaning, watering our animals and our crops. After the blast, our complete water supply was contaminated and destroyed.

Electricity wasn't widely available in New Mexico in 1945, and we had no refrigeration. All the meat, dairy and produce we consumed we produced ourselves, from our own farms and gardens. July would have been the peak of the harvest when women would have been canning and drying as much as they could from their gardens and orchards for the upcoming winter; all of that was also contaminated and destroyed. The government never warned anybody before or afterward to take precautions, even though we were maximally exposed.

Another sad truth is that women and children have always been the most affected. After a 10 year decline in infant mortality in New Mexico because of the advent of antibiotics and better hygienic practices, there was a spike in infant mortality in the months just after Trinity, possibly linked to high concentrations of radiation in breastmilk. Health care workers in New Mexico sought answers, but the government denied knowing anything that might be causing the deaths. It's unconscionable that when the government was contacted

to intercede on behalf of our most vulnerable children, they looked the other way. Many women and their families were left to wonder about why their children were being born with birth defects and why their babies were not surviving. Imagine the guilt and shame they felt.

## Amending The Radiation Exposure Compensation Act

I was diagnosed with thyroid cancer at age 39 and am the fourth generation in my family to have cancer since 1945. The first question I was asked when I was diagnosed was, when were you exposed to radiation? I knew my exposure came from fallout produced by nuclear testing. My two great grandfathers, both of my grandmothers, and my father have also suffered terribly from cancer. No family should have to say goodbye to their loved ones this way.

The Radiation Exposure Compensation Act ([RECA](#)) was established in 1990 to pay partial restitution to Downwinders of the Nevada Test Site. The people of New Mexico were never included, and have been left on our own to deal with the tragedy of losing our loved ones to cancer from radiation exposure. We've had no opportunity to accumulate any generational wealth because we spend all that we have taking care of our health needs. 47% of the people in New Mexico, the highest number in the nation per capita, utilize Medicaid to access health care. This issue has robbed us of our opportunity to pursue life, liberty, and happiness. We don't ask ourselves if we're going to get cancer, we ask ourselves when, because it's happened to everyone around us.

We must lobby for the bills now introduced in Congress to amend RECA to include the people of New Mexico along with Downwinders from places like Idaho and the Pacific Islands that have been left out of restitution for 31 years. U.S. House Bill 5338 and Senate Bill 2798 will also provide restitution and health care coverage to the Post '71 uranium Miners, many of whom live in New Mexico. The people of New Mexico were the first people ever exposed to nuclear radiation anywhere in the world, and yet we've been excluded from RECA. The original bill will sunset in July 2022. If we don't pass this bill now, it will likely never happen!

We need people from all across the United States to lobby with us to get these bills passed. This is a social and environmental justice issue that must be corrected. I urge you to join with us to make certain that these bills are passed before the original bill sunsets and this opportunity for justice is lost.

*Please go to our website at [www.trinitydownwinders.com](http://www.trinitydownwinders.com) for more information about our work and ways to support the amendment of RECA.*

# Feminist Foreign Policy

A Path to Peace, Freedom, and Justice



By Patricia Hynes

**I am not free when any woman is unfree, even when her shackles are very different from mine.**

—Audre Lorde

**A** **U.S. feminist foreign policy:** how recently these words and their meaning are being explored! New-born yet nascent for years, and needed for centuries. One starting point for feminist foreign policy is the situation today of women and girls in the United States and worldwide regarding our freedom, power, rights and equality. Here is a brief, but necessarily incomplete snapshot.

The [Generation Equality Forum](#) of June 30-July 2, 2021 carried a tough message for women and girls: "...not one country can claim to have achieved gender equality."<sup>1</sup> Poverty, discrimination, and violence are still universally present in the lives of women and girls. Under-representation in power and decision-making is still the norm. All this must change.

Consider the following data-based findings and past-present comparisons on the status of women and girls presented at the Generation Equality Forum—all are departure points for feminist foreign policy.

## *Women in Politics*

Only 1 in 4 seats in national parliaments are held by women. The U.S. languishes at just 24% women in its own Senate and only very recently achieved 27% in the House of Representatives. Today's Senate is a majority elderly white men, in a country of 40% non-white people.

Perhaps the biggest obstacle for women's political equality is bias against women in power: a large share of women and men globally, 43% women and 53% of men respondents, believe men make better leaders.

## *Economic Inequality*

On average women are paid 16% less than men; only 1 in 4 managers are women. Women commonly do three times as much unpaid care and domestic work as men, with long-term consequences for our economic and social security in older age.

## *Sexual and Physical Violence Against Women and Girls*

Worldwide, 1 in 3 women experience sexual and physical violence across a lifetime. Thirty-four percent of adolescent girls aged 15-19 have undergone female genital mutilation in 31 countries.

### *U.S. Feminist Foreign Policy*

Feminist Foreign Policy modeled on the goals of the U.S. State Department would include the following:

- Assure that U.S. women are secure from all inequalities in society, including personal, political, economic, and educational. These inequalities are the most serious threat to women's national security.
- Advance democracy and human rights for women in all policy, negotiations, agreements, aid, and treaties with other countries, the UN, and international organizations, building in data-based evaluations.
- Include advancing women's rights in all international forums and country-to-country meetings.
- Assure that at least one half of U.S. diplomats, government officials, and all related personnel are women who mirror our diversity and are committed to the equality of women at home and abroad.

With commitment and progress toward these goals, **our chances of achieving democracy for all — women equally with men**, both in the U.S. and in other countries of the world; of **building toward peace** here and in our relations with other countries; and of reversing our acceleration toward environmental degradation, are heightened. Recent, groundbreaking analysis validates this conviction.

A team of statisticians and experts on security studies have created the largest global database on the status of women, [WomanStats](#), and compared the security and level of conflict within 175 countries to the overall equality of women in those countries. Their findings are profoundly illuminating: the degree of equality of women within countries predicts best—better than degree of democracy; better than level of wealth, income inequality or ethno-religious identity—how peaceful or conflict-ridden their countries are. Further, democracies with higher levels of violence against women are more likely to choose force rather than diplomacy to resolve conflict.

What difference can women bring to issues of power and national security? Nearly 200 women in politics surveyed in 65 countries agreed, “Women's presence in politics [increases](#) the amount of attention given to social welfare, legal protection, and transparency in government and business.”

Experimental studies of women and men negotiating post-conflict agreements have found that all-male groups take riskier, less empathic and more aggressive positions. They

also break down more quickly than negotiations that [include women](#). Further, men are more satisfied with decisions made with women involved than with all-male groups. Yet, 70% of climate negotiators and almost all peace negotiators are men, according to the recent Generation Equality Report.

## **Women belong in all places where decisions are being made.**

—Ruth Bader Ginsburg

It is impossible to consider a feminist foreign policy for the U.S. without confronting the juggernaut of U.S. militarism.

The United States has a war budget equal to 38% of the entire world's budget and is the largest weapons maker and seller in world, selling American military hardware to 96 countries, with almost [half](#) going to the Middle East. Our discretionary budget for war and militarized national security is greater than the sum of allocated funding for genuine domestic security, including agriculture, infrastructure, housing, workplace safety, sustainable energy and environmental protection. And the proposed State Department budget for 2022 is less than 8% of the of the proposed Pentagon budget.

Feminist foreign policy would necessitate a **Department of Peace**, funded by reducing the entire military budget ideally in half to assure that our efforts for peace surpass our military efforts. After all, recent public policy research at Harvard University demonstrates that nonviolent resistance is [three times](#) more effective than violent resistance.

Feminist foreign policy would redefine national greatness by its cooperative agreements with countries based on partnering on climate, pandemics, biodiversity, aid for humanitarian purposes, trade and astute diplomacy to avoid militarized conflicts.

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### **Notes**

<sup>1</sup> Action Nexus for Generation Equality , A Feminist Agenda for People and Planet: Principles and Recommendations for a Global Feminist Economic Justice Agenda, [https://wedo.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Blueprint\\_A-Feminist-Agenda-for-People-and-Planet.pdf](https://wedo.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Blueprint_A-Feminist-Agenda-for-People-and-Planet.pdf).

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# Neighbors as Friends, Not Enemies

## A Path to Peace, Freedom, and Justice

### A speech by Ingeborg Breines

Norwegian Peace Educator & Senior Advisor to  
the Nobel Peace Summit  
Sigerfjord, Norway, August 28, 2021



#### Dear Friends,

I am with you from some beautiful islands in the north of Norway, way north of the Polar circle, made rather comfortable for living by the touch of the warm Gulf Stream. Norway, as you may know, has a common border with Russia in the extreme North and

a negotiated dividing line in the Barents and North seas, regulating the rich fisheries, especially cod, as well as oil, gas and mineral drilling. This is important in a period when interest in the Arctic is growing, as climate change opens more exploitation of natural resources, transport and traffic in the now partly ice-free North-East Passage.

Norway has never had armed conflict with Russia. The people of the North have over the centuries relied for their survival on exchange of goods, trade and good neighbourhood. All the countries of the Arctic, including USA and Canada, are members of the Arctic Council, an exceptionally important body for cooperation and understanding, which it is vital to keep non-militarized and non-politicized.

New possibilities in the Arctic unfortunately also attract strong commercial interests and add to the already high tension between the West and Russia. This tension is a major driver behind the present militarization and arms race, involving both conventional and nuclear weapons. Enormous resources are used on both sides for surveillance, including nuclear submarines hiding in the deep Norwegian fjords and under the polar ice. NATO and US military exercises in Norway are growing and undertaken ever closer to the Russian border. Imagine if the same was done by Russia in Mexico on the US border! American weapon and ammunition depots, surveillance radars and bases with soldiers and fighter jets are being established in Norway close to one of Russia's most important military installations, on the Cola Peninsula. It undermines the building of trust, so vital for real cooperation and for our survival, and puts Norway at risk since none of the big powers would like a potential war to take place on their soil. This madness must stop. Both missiles and submarines are symbols of an outdated and testosterone filled masculinity, based on muscular strength and might, which for too long has been allowed to rule international relations.

It is important to look at the role of NATO in this context. NATO was established in 1949 to stand up against what was perceived as a communist threat from the Soviet Union. As a counter move, the Soviet Union established the Warsaw Pact in 1955. When the Soviet Union was dismantled, the Warsaw Pact ended and the Cold War was over, there was no longer a rationale for the existence of NATO. However, NATO has enlarged its domain way beyond the North Atlantic, becoming by far the world's largest military might.

Now, most of the former Eastern European states are members of both the EU and NATO. The US is in fact encircling Russia with military bases, which is viewed as a provocation and spurs counter-actions. We are witnessing a new arms race and a race for military power in space, even though Russia expresses the intention to avoid the situation of the last Cold War, when so much was spent on the military that it left the people impoverished.

Russia is presented as a threat, both in the media and in mainstream political rhetoric; enemy images are created and leaders are demonized, creating suspicion and fear. Several questions arise: Why are these enemy images created, and by whom? Who benefits from such a situation? Simultaneously, enemy images of the West are created in Russia, although perhaps not so dominantly, as the wish for normal relations seems to be stronger on the Russian side.

The US and NATO are far stronger than Russia both economically and militarily; the US' military expenditure is more than 10 times that of Russia. There are no longer major ideological differences. Why would the West need to behave so negatively towards Russia? The only plausible answer is the exceptionally strong role of the military industry and "security machinery". Without a dangerous enemy, people would not accept spending such enormous sums on military build-ups. If there are no enemies, there will be no military confrontations, and no need for military industry.

In May 2018, some 30 people from different Nordic countries undertook a cultural and peace journey to Russia under the heading "*Neighbours as friends, not enemies.*" Our intention was to learn more about Russia, to network with the peace movement and, in a modest way, contribute both to mutual understanding and reducing tension. We wanted to show that not everybody in the West is suffering from Russo-phobia.

We met with academics, activists, artists and journalists, mainly in Moscow and St. Petersburg. At the Veteran House in Moscow, we enjoyed the dialogue and were told how pleased they were that we came "with open and friendly faces". They

## Suggestions for Peace Building from the Oslo Seminar

- Continue the sharing of knowledge and ideas
- Get inspiration from each other's culture and art
- Work for the strengthening of civil society and democratic practices
- Seek ways of producing and consuming which ensure the wellbeing of all and the integrity of the biosphere
- Establish permanent structures for peace, such as ministries and departments to promote peace at all levels
- Cherish and use the UN, diplomacy and multilateral cooperation
- Help implement the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement
- Strive for a non-militarized and nuclear-free Arctic and Baltic Sea basin
- Maintain the Arctic Council non-militarized and operational
- Gather individual signatures and cities in support of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons
- Continue to warn against nuclear and other hazardous waste and make waste management safer
- Seek closer cooperation between the peace movement and environmental organizations
- Actively learn to work across generations and share knowledge and priorities
- Cross borders and seek new partnerships with "sister" groups and organizations

invited lots of people to meet us; they offered song and music, food and food for thought, and we were overwhelmed by the warm reception. Language was sometimes a barrier, and we remain grateful for the valuable help from the Russian Embassy in Norway. And, let it be said, there were no attempts whatsoever of recruitment by any intelligence or spy facility.

Our experience increased the wish to strengthen contacts between the Nordic countries and Russia. Upon return, a statement was developed and sent both to the media and to parliamentarians in the Nordic countries, saying:

- Stop creating images of people as enemies, using the rhetoric of the Cold War. This belongs to the past!
- Support Nordic-Russian people-to-people communication politically, practically and economically.

- Promote real and positive knowledge about Russia through visits, dialogues and exchange through the media and in political discussions.
- Re-evaluate the sanctions against Russia.
- Invite President Putin and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Lavrov, for conversations among all the Nordic countries.
- Sign and ratify the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

As a follow up to our trip, in order to consolidate our efforts, WILPF Norway, and the Norwegian Peace Association organized a Nordic-Russian civil society seminar at the Peace Research Institute Oslo in February 2020. At the Oslo seminar, participants had open discussions on how to promote peace, disarmament and a sound environment, and agreed to continue strategic, forward-looking initiatives and solution-oriented dialogues.

The majority of world leaders continue to act as if military might is the answer to the challenges of the day, totally immersed as they are in the old Roman motto: *If you want peace, you have to prepare for war* (Si vis pacem, para bellum). We need to prove that this thinking is dangerous, naive and obsolete. If we want peace, we must prepare for peace and we need to address the root-causes of conflicts, not only the symptoms.

We cannot continue to misuse the world's resources, both financial and intellectual, for military purposes. According to SIPRI, the world spends more than 1.9 trillion dollars a year on the military, which corresponds to more than 600 regular UN budgets. With this imbalance, how can the UN do its work properly? Additionally, this excessive military spending cannot provide the security we want. The military makes us less safe, both economically and ecologically, by taking so much of the resources that are needed for other purposes and producing enormous greenhouse gas emissions, radiation and pollution. It is high time to understand that we cannot allow the military to be an exception to international climate agreements and continue to make very heavy boot prints on the soil, the water, the air and even the atmosphere.

We risk destroying our beautiful planet, home to all life as we know it. Existing military forces should be retrained to fight the global climate and environmental crisis, which warrants urgent remedial actions and a holistic approach to change attitudes and rethink unsustainable, destructive patterns of production and consumption. We all have work to do!

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### Notes

"World Military Spending Rises to Almost \$2 Trillion in 2020." SIPRI, 26 Apr. 2021, <https://www.sipri.org/media/press-release/2021/world-military-spending-rises-almost-2-trillion-2020>.

# Just Follow the Pipelines

## How Oil Contributed to Endless Wars in the Middle East

By Charlotte Dennett

**In 1947, a plane crash in Ethiopia** en route to Addis Ababa killed six Americans. One of them was my father. He was America's sole master spy in the Middle East, and he had just completed a top secret mission to Saudi Arabia.

I was six weeks old at the time of the crash, and during my adulthood I spent many decades investigating the mysterious events of my father's death. While working as a journalist in Lebanon, I began to put some of the pieces together, and discovered a major factor that would become relevant to the many endless wars that followed half a century later. That factor was oil, and the pipelines that distribute it to markets.

Most people suspect oil has something to do with the conflicts in the Middle East but may not be aware of the specifics, the logistics, and the covert interests accompanying what I call "The Deadly Politics of the Great Game for Oil".

During our Middle East Committee presentation at the WILPF 30th Triennial Congress, I decided to focus on a particularly important piece of real estate: the Eastern Mediterranean and the countries that surround it. The Levant region (French for rising, as the sun rises in the East) comprises Israel/Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria, and is known to tourists as the "Gateway to the Middle East," but to oil planners, it is known as the "Gateway to Middle East Oil."

### Pipeline for US Adds to Middle East Issues

In 1975, when I began my investigation in earnest, I discovered two documents in a steamer trunk in the family attic — my father Daniel Dennett's last report and his last letter home. These priceless documents showed that his final mission as head of counter-intelligence for the Central Intelligence Group (the immediate predecessor to the CIA) was to Saudi Arabia. His task: to determine the route of the planned Trans-Arabian pipeline (TAPLINE).

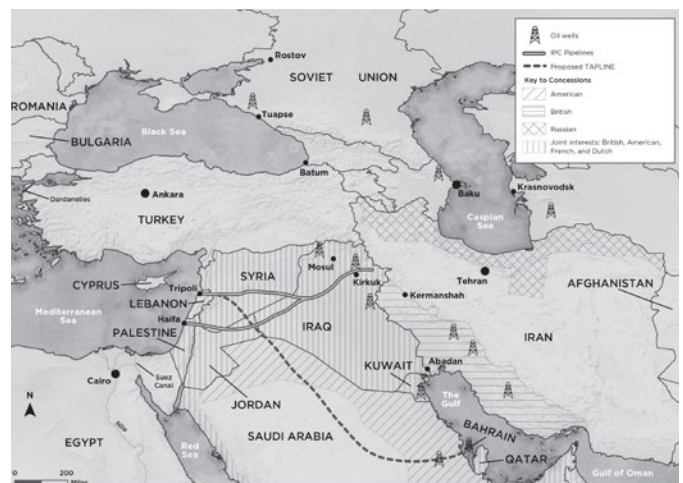
After researching newspaper archives, I found a most revealing article in the New York Times dated 3/2/47 (three weeks before the plane crash) that indicated that Saudi oil was highly prized and vital to rebuilding a devastated, post war Western Europe. The article, titled "[Pipeline for US Adds to Middle East Issues](#)," was a rare piece of geopolitical analysis, even by today's standards, and identified all the countries that would be affected by that pipeline, as well as the obstacles that TAPLINE (and the U.S.) faced. Its subtitle ran: "Oil Con-

cessions Raise Questions Involving Position of Russia", since this was the beginning of the Cold War.

A key sentence in the 1947 article stated, "Protection of the pipeline will become a prime objective of American foreign policy in this area...a focal point of rivalry between East and West." That meant *military* protection. The huge military expenditure that continues to go into this region, I argue, is to protect the oil.

The article came with a map titled: "New Pipeline for the Middle East." It actually showed three pipelines.

For years, I focused on the Trans-Arabian pipeline. But I eventually came around to looking at the other two — The Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) pipelines, which began as one pipeline from Kirkuk, Iraq, headed west toward the Mediterranean, and branched into two pipelines. The northern branch fed to northern Lebanon, which after WWI was controlled by French mandate. The southern branch fed to Haifa (then Palestine), which was controlled by the British mandate.



I learned that the IPC pipelines were built in the mid 1930s. But when, I wondered, were they conceived? Especially the branch to Haifa?

That took me back in history to World War I, between 1917-1918, when seizing the oil of Iraq became Britain's "first class war aim." Why? Because in 1911 the British Navy converted its fuel source from coal (of which Britain had plenty) to oil (of which Britain had none.) Winston Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty, famously said, "We will have to fight on a sea of troubles" to get oil for the British Navy. And he was right; the oil of Iraq became a coveted opportunity and the great prize of WWI.

Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour declared "it is all important that this oil [of Iraq] be available." But how was it to be piped overland to the British Navy? And where to? All he had



to do was look on a map to understand the important location of Palestine, right next to the Mediterranean Sea.

Enter the Balfour Declaration of November 1917, the famous document which declared that the British favored the establishment of a Jewish home in Palestine. There is an oil connection to this Declaration that people are just beginning to realize. Palestine was determined the perfect place for that pipeline. Bernard Ashavi, author of *The Tragedy of Zionism*, writes that Haifa was deemed an ideal port — “and the natural place for a pipeline terminal.”

This information forces us to re-examine the creation of Israel. Was it solely to help the Jewish victims of the Holocaust, or was there also a geopolitical imperative?

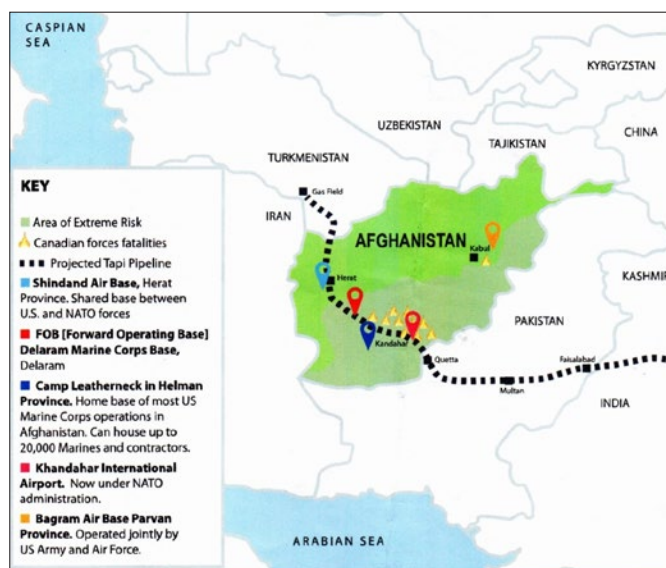
- The southern branch of the pipeline was controlled by the British, and terminated in Palestine — a region to be occupied by European Jews
- The northern branch of the pipeline was controlled by the French, and terminated in Lebanon — a region headed by a pro-French Christian president

In short: this was a Judeo-Christian alliance that avoided Muslim countries (like Syria and Egypt) as pipeline terminals for security reasons.

Now fast-forward to President Bush’s invasion of Iraq in 2003. Restoring the IPC pipeline from Kirkuk (Iraq) to Haifa (Palestine) was envisioned before the U.S. invasion. The Iraqis had closed the pipeline during the 1948 Israeli War of Independence. Benjamin Netanyahu wanted it re-opened, boasting: “Soon Iraqi oil will flow to Haifa. It’s not a pipe dream.” But it was, and still is, a pipe dream.

My father said in 1943, “God help us if we ever send troops to the Middle East.” I think he had a premonition of things to come. The great game for oil continues, and it now includes Afghanistan. Troops were sent in to protect the projected Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India pipeline, or TAPI. John Foster, a Canadian economist who had worked for the World Bank and British Petroleum revealed that the purpose of the invasion was to protect this major energy project, “so the energy could flow south.” Military bases, now evacuated, were stationed along the projected route of the pipeline across Afghanistan. Turkmenistan is now seeking security measures in Afghanistan to avoid attacks on pipeline builders. The Taliban, once seen as TAPI’s pipeline protectors (until relations with the U.S. soured after 9/11), are once again promising to secure the pipeline route. Welcome to pipeline politics.

We need to connect with our own pipeline warriors and climate activists now, in the U.S. and around the world, to raise consciousness of yet another evil of the fossil fuel



industry — endless wars, and oil as a danger to human kind. To this end, Canada’s John Foster and I will be setting up a website called “Follow the Pipelines” which will track pipeline struggles around the world. Entries by fellow pipeline trackers are encouraged. A good place to begin is documenting (and supporting) a major struggle against a Tarsands pipeline crossing Minnesota — the Enbridge Line 3 pipeline.

Julie Macuga, a self-described “local fossil fuel resistance organizer,” recently spoke at a rally in Burlington, VT of her experience in Line 3 resistance camps. Here was the interconnectedness I’ve been hoping for.

“The Ojibwe, Anishinaabe, and their allies,” Julie shared, “have been tending to this land for thousands of years, and defending this stretch of it from Enbridge for the past several. It should all seem familiar to us: Vermont Gas, an Enbridge subsidiary, has been doing so many of the same things here in our home. Permits and treaties were just pieces of paper — effigies for the industry to burn in our faces. Vermont Gas is still under investigation for their haphazardly-constructed pipeline, and I’m sure Enbridge will be, too.”

Charlotte Dennett is a WILPF ME Committee member, journalist, attorney, and author of *The Crash of Flight 3804: A Lost Spy, A Daughter's Quest, and the Deadly Politics of the Great Game for Oil*, and various other books.

Map of Afghanistan designed by Anne Linton. Middle East map by Jon Van Hoesen. Copyright 2020 by Chelsea Green Publishing. Reprinted courtesy of Chelsea Green Publishing from *The Crash of Flight 3804: A Lost Spy, a Daughter's Quest, and the Deadly Politics of the Great Game for Oil* by Charlotte Dennett.

## Remembering Phyllis Yingling, Former WILPF US President



Educator, writer, activist, artist and beloved family member Phyllis Stuckey Yingling died peacefully at age 90 on August 30, 2021 at the Charlestown Retirement Community in Catonsville, MD. Phyllis served as WILPF US President from 1999-2002. We are saddened by her loss as well as grateful for her years of commitment to WILPF and her lifelong dedication as an activist.

Phyllis was a devoted minister's wife who traveled extensively around the world with her husband, Reverend Doctor Carroll Yingling, yet she always remained proud of her roots in the Back Creek Valley of the eastern panhandle of West Virginia. While living in Washington, DC from 1969-1974, Phyllis and her family attended many demonstrations in protest of the Vietnam War on the National Mall, setting the foundation for her deep commitment to social justice. After moving back to Baltimore, Phyllis completed work on a Master of Education from McDaniel College (formerly Western Maryland College) and began teaching hearing-impaired students.

Phyllis joined WILPF in the 1980s and was an active member for 40 years. She was co-chair and co-founder of the Catonsville, MD Chapter from 1995-99, and served on the National Board before becoming President of WILPF US in 1999.

Phyllis stepped up to serve as President at a time of major transition for WILPF US. With the turn of the millennium, the hard work of the "mavens" brought forth a new set of national bylaws and a new WILPF structure, presenting challenges and adjustments for all — members, staff and the Board. Additionally, Phyllis and members of the Board were working toward the success of a new program, Uniting for Racial Justice.

Phyllis navigated these transitions with kindness and sincerity. She worked diligently to address the organizational and personal stresses that accompanied them. Once her time on the Board concluded, she continued to be active at the national level with the Past Presidents group.

Over the years, she was actively involved in many WILPF conferences; Phyllis also attended the NGO Forum on Women in 1995 held in Huairou, China and the adjacent United

Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, a significant turning point for the global agenda on gender equality. Then First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton provided the keynote which included her famous quote, "If there is one message that echoes forth from this conference, it is that human rights are women's rights...and women's rights are human rights."

Phyllis wrote and published poetry, short stories, plays and children's books throughout her life including four books designed for children with dyslexia and learning differences. Her 72-year friendship with British pen pal Diane Brace brought their families together across the Atlantic. Diane became involved in UK WILPF through her long friendship with Phyllis. The two friends marched in parades and stood on city street corners with WILPF and Women in Black. Phyllis was also active in Educators for Social Action and other charities.

Phyllis was also an artist, and enjoyed oil and watercolor painting and making handmade greeting cards. She loved singing, as well as going to the Baltimore Theater and symphony with friends. When she was 79, Phyllis and Carroll walked the 90-mile Hadrian's Wall Walk in the UK — a testament to her energy and vitality! Over the course of her life, through her service, leadership, and her many gifts, Phyllis touched the lives of thousands of people in positive ways.

## Doris Loder: Musician and Water Activist

By Judith Elson



Doris Loder, longtime member of WILPF's Greater Philadelphia branch, passed away on Wednesday, March 11, 2020, at the age of 89. As a 30-year Philadelphia Public Schools strings teacher and

mother of four children, Dory still had time and energy for WILPF. She helped to launch our "Save the Water" Campaign in 2007, moved by her belief that drinking bottled water encouraged privatization which could lead to wars over water. Following her lead, Greater Philadelphia WILPF held a "Ban the Bottle" campaign, boycotting bottled water at

our food co-op as well as our local public schools. She was also concerned about the lack of clean water for children to drink in Gaza and in all developing countries, and made a connection with the Middle East Children's Alliance (MECA) which provides funds for a water purification and desalination unit at a kindergarten in Rafa, Gaza. She helped to organize a fundraiser, and Greater Philadelphia WILPF was able to contribute money towards the water treatment facility. Dory was always at the forefront of anti-war demonstrations and in her later years, demonstrated against fracking. She was an accomplished violinist and violist, playing various stints with the Delaware Symphony Orchestra. She played shows with Sammy Davis, Dionne Warwick, Tony Bennett, and Diane Ross at venues in Atlantic City and in countless church services and concerts. Dory was a true renaissance woman and is deeply missed by all.

## Jean Claire Gore: World Traveler and Lifelong Activist for Peace

This remembrance comes from an obituary jointly written in the words of Jean Gore's daughters, granddaughter and many others who loved and admired her.



Jean Claire Gore, a prolific activist and former WILPF President, passed away on April 4, 2021 at the age of 95. She has been described as passionate, remarkable, spunky, cantankerous,

encouraging, committed, energetic, brilliant, caring, blunt, inspiring, unwavering, a beloved rabble rouser and an indomitable spirit. All true. Throughout the years, Jean never stopped connecting politics with personal action. As a young girl, her first political act came at age 13, when she refused to wear silk hose because they were made in Japan, which had recently invaded Manchuria. When asked how she was able to continue her deep and varied commitments to activism over the course of so many decades, she simply said, "because we are not done yet."

In the 1960s Jean founded the Boulder branch of WILPF as part of the opposition to the Vietnam war. Jean started

the Reading to End Racism reading group, chaired the Jane Addams Book Award committee for WILPF for six years, and was president of the US Section of WILPF from 1993-1996, during which time she visited and learned from branches and members all over the country.

She attended a peace seminar with women from the US and the Soviet Union in 1983 to discuss ending the nuclear arms race and in 1986 she arranged for these women to meet again, in Colorado. She led a women's group to China in 1985 as guests of the All-China Women's Federation, and in the 1990s, she traveled with WILPF to Cuba to bring needed supplies and show support for Cuban women. Jean represented WILPF US in 1995 at the 50th anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. She was also a founding member of the activist singer's group the Raging Grannies.

In addition to her leadership with WILPF US, Jean chaired the Middle East program for the Colorado office of the American Friends Service Committee from 1979-1981, and travelled on expeditions with Food First/Earthwatch to India, and to Guatemala with Peace Brigade International.

When Jean moved to Frasier Meadows Retirement Community in Boulder at age 80, she continued her activism, joining the recycling committee, starting a composting program, an ESL program for the international staff at the facility, and founding a group called "Women to Women" to discuss the problems of the world. She was the recipient of numerous human rights awards, but always said that her greatest legacy of all was her two daughters.

Jean's work lead her around the world in service of justice and building bridges of peace and friendship, and her legacy will endure through the many lives, organizations, families and movements that she helped to grow and support. Rest in power, Jean.

We celebrate the life of **Marge Van Cleef**, long-time WILPF activist in the Boston Branch and at the national level, especially in the Disarm Committee and No Drones work. We are saddened to report her passing on October 26, 2021 from COVID-related pneumonia, despite having had two vaccinations. Please, wear masks and keep six feet of distance. (A full remembrance of Marge will appear in our next issue.)



# Peacemakers for the Future

## Leaving a Legacy

**B**equest gifts are one of our most important sources of support for WILPF; they help us plan for the future and strengthen our many exciting programs.

Thank you for considering a bequest to WILPF as a gesture of generosity and a way to impart continuing impact in the movement for freedom and equality. Your legacy will endow and perpetuate the standards of excellence that our community has come to expect from the Women's International League for Peace & Freedom, US Section.

**We are deeply grateful for the gifts from the following individuals, received in 2021. When people include WILPF in their will, it is news to be celebrated and shared. These thoughtful gifts support the ongoing work of building a world of peace, justice, and freedom for all.**



**Julia W. Bishop** passed away peacefully with family by her side on March 2, 2021, a few days before her 95th birthday. After living in many states with a growing family, she settled in East Lansing MI in 1964. She completed her BA in Psychology at MSU. Throughout her life, she valued gaining new skills and learning about other

cultures. She was a loving mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, aunt, friend, pet owner, and caretaker to the world. Julie was an activist and inspired many with her life of service and her tireless dedication to peace, social justice, and the environment. She was a member of many organizations that supported these ideals and continued to attend marches, demonstrations and protests into her 90's. She never stopped believing in possibilities, hope, and dreams.

We thank Julia for remembering WILPF and providing this legacy support for future generations.



**Patricia Miller Evans Weiss**, 91, of Palo Alto California, passed away on July 14, 2014. Patricia was an untiring social activist whose commitments to justice spanned decades. She worked in the Settlement Houses in New York City in the 1940s and campaigned with the Farm Workers in California during the 1960s. She stood with the

Women in Black in the Middle East, and took part in an action to wrap the Pentagon with peace quilts in 1985. In May of 1989, she travelled with the group Grandmothers For Peace on a mission to the Soviet Union, and in 2003 she marched against the Iraq War. In addition to her activism she was an athlete and swam competitively with the Masters into her 80s. Patricia was a creative and caring wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and friend. WILPF is deeply appreciative of her bequest, which will continue to build the women's justice movement now and for decades to come.

**Harriet Guignon**, who died on December 17, 1998, remembered WILPF among several charitable organizations that received gifts as designated in her will. We are very grateful for her thoughtfulness and generosity.

**Catherine D Hopson** named WILPF US in her will, along with other organizations that were active in peace work. She passed away on October 9, 2020. We appreciate Catherine leaving this gift to our social justice work.

### Bequest Brochure



Our bequest brochure, "Sowing Seeds of Peace", is now available. Contact us at: [plannedgiving@wilpfus.org](mailto:plannedgiving@wilpfus.org) if you'd like one.

**You too could make a difference for the peace activists of WILPF US, now and for years to come.**

# One by One

## Shaping the Future of WILPF, One Member at a Time



By Jan Corderman

WILPF US Treasurer & Member of the Membership Development Committee

**W**e are a membership-based organization built by expanding our networks, sharing knowledge, articulating agendas for action, and being responsive to the grassroots. With that in mind, we initiated the *One by One We Grow* project. Together with Membership Development Chair Shilpa Pandey, Mary Hanson Harrison, Marybeth Gardam, and Darien De Lu, we contacted all of our branches and asked them to join with us to *shape the future of WILPF, one member at a time*.

Two experienced organizers agreed to work in coalition with us. **Deborah Bunka**, the Membership & Fundraising Chair for the Iowa Farmers Union, ran Iowa's first year-round, indoor market for 5 years and also launched a CSA. Her volunteer work as a citizen-lobbyist along with those work experiences prepared her to engage with IFU members to triple their membership in just 5 years.

We also met **Francis Engler**, California and Arizona Political Director of UNITE HERE Local 11, through his mom Joan who is an active member of the Des Moines Branch. As an adolescent Francis found inspiration, opportunity and support from Church, school, and activist organizations. He earned a scholarship to Yale University, where he first encountered and joined the hotel and food service worker union UNITE HERE while working his way through school.

We launched our *One by One* drive on November 11, 2020.

Seventeen members representing fifteen branches met with us monthly to exchange ideas, and our group offered a presentation at the recent WILPF US Congress. We inspired each other by sharing our challenges and our successes. Across WILPF US Branches, members have found their own unique ways to participate in this campaign.

**Judy Adams, Palo Alto Branch**, invites folks to weekly vigils, and connects with them through various lists, newsletters and more. **Madith Burnett of the Des Moines Branch** contacted folks to discuss the political issues of the day during breaks at her workplace, before she retired. She reached out to colleagues and brought three new members into her Branch.

**Marguerite Adelman of Burlington VT** tried something new last Christmas. She gave gift memberships to close friends who said they already had everything. Now they're active with a great group in their community.

**Barbara Nielsen of the San Francisco Branch** shared her business card template, which makes introducing WILPF easy and leaves prospective members with her contact info.

**Odile Haber Hugonot** shared her elevator speech: she asks those who stop by when she's tabling or rallying to "join a great organization that has been working for peace for over 100 years", explaining "WILPF will connect you with women activists in your community and around the world who are passionate about peace and justice".

**Evonne Waldo from Fresno** dropped off materials at a neighbor's home and followed up with a membership card.

**Eileen Kurkoski of the Boston Branch** has created exhibits that include our website and QR code for Branch events, and worked at the National level to create a follow-up guide for



webinar attendees. The library where Eileen held the exhibit asked her to extend the showing.

In March, longtime WILPF member **Theresa El Amin** launched the **Fannie Lou Hamer Branch in Columbus GA**. She didn't stop there, and helped a fellow activist revive the Atlanta Branch. Theresa is the co-founder of SARN, the Southern Anti-Racism Network that develops campaigns and projects in the South to end racial disparities in criminal justice, economic opportunities, education, environmental justice and healthcare. We extend our thanks to SARN for partnering with us by offering gift memberships to new WILPFers.

**George Friday** has worked with other great organizations including SANE (now Peace Action) and since 2017 has been staff to North Carolina Peace Action and United for Peace & Justice. Her long history of activism includes being a founding member of Move to Amend. As a relatively new WILPF member, George invited friends and activists she works with in her community to form a second Branch in North Carolina, the Triad Branch.

A couple of years ago **Mary Bricker Jenkins** had the idea to establish a virtual branch to connect members in states

where we have no Branch. After a couple of meetings it was clear to us that those members were interested in connecting virtually to discuss feminist peace. **Dianne Blaise** agreed to be the convener of the new virtual *Jane Addams* Branch about a year ago and has taken the concept to new heights. Excited to have a branch named after our first President, they share something about Jane at each meeting. Dianne makes sure members know what's happening across WILPF. She recently had the opportunity to sign up a member who discovered the branch online.

We've appreciated the energy everyone brought to our nine meetings and it was awesome to get new ideas from Francis and Deborah. We have great news to share regarding our results. **Thanks to continued participation by members of about fifteen branches, 243 women and men joined as new, lapsed, or gift members.** That's 112 more than the 131 over the same months (November through August) in the preceding year—an **85% increase!**

Will you join us in 2022? Watch for details!

## Breaking White Silence and Stepping Up

by Paul Kivel

### *Resources to Leverage for Racial Justice*

**Money:** Direct donations, hosting house parties

**Time:** Support work, administration, research

**Skills:** Fundraising, outreach, childcare, writing, music, art, carpentry

**Connections:** To journalists, politicians, decision-makers, funders

**Space:** Providing space in your house, office, religious or community organization for meeting and workshops

**Organizational leverage:** Working for organizational change where you work, at school, at your religious or community center

**Information to share:** About racism and other issues of social justice, organizing, fundraising

**Access to white people:** Family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers, classmates

**Credibility with white people**

**Access to young people:** As parents, teachers, youth workers, aunts, uncles, grandparents

**Your body on the line:** Showing up for rallies, vigils, protests, city council meetings, school board meetings

**Witnessing, recording, interrupting, and reporting:** Incidents of police harassment and brutality, overheard personal comments, organizational practices and policies

**Amplifying Black Lives Matter messages:** Through personal networks, letters to the editor, public signs

*Please educate yourself in the issues, work with others, and be accountable to the Movement for Black Lives, Indigenous nations, and other people of color led communities in your use of your resources. Find more toolkits, articles, and exercises at [paulkivel.com](http://paulkivel.com).*



# Treasurer's Report to Members

By Jan Corderman

WILPF US Treasurer

## WILPF US ended 2020 on solid financial ground with a positive bottom line for the year and confidence heading into 2021 and beyond.

### —2020 Report

**I**n 2020, we saw rising authoritarianism, a much-needed racial reawakening, a contentious U.S. election — all underscored by a deadly pandemic.

WILPF's Branch leaders and members, Issue Committees & Initiatives, Board and Steering Committee, and our growing cohort of allies worked with new energy and vision, helping create our vision of a transformed world at peace, where there is racial, social, and economic justice for all people everywhere.

We challenged nuclear madness, led Cuba solidarity activism, and partnered with the Poor People's Campaign to call for a different society. The Women, Money and Democracy issue committee explored an economy of our own with the founder, Ricky Gard Diamond. Earth Democracy and Military Poisons united to expose the military's role in PFAS contamination and is exposing the Military as the Hidden Polluter of water and food. The Middle East Peace & Justice Action Committee's "Bridges Not Walls" campaign brings together many threads by illuminating how border walls bring misery and discrimination.

Drawing on the DISARM/End Wars Committee's stellar resource materials WILPFers all over the Section celebrated the Nuclear Treaty's entry into force on January 22, 2021. Members at 20 different places from sunny Hawaii to frigid Vermont led rallies, car caravans and other Treaty celebration along with partners all over the world.

As together we create our vision, so together we supply the financial support to make that vision a reality. In 2020, as in most years, our largest source of funding, almost \$100,000, came from individual contributions. Membership dues come in second and as our membership increases that income was more than the previous year at \$32,242, a figure that does not include over \$6,000 that members add to the \$35 dues when they send in their renewals. We're also thankful for the

bequests, grants and other income that brought our total income to \$166,682.

Turning to expenses, staff and professional fees are our largest expense. We depend on our staff and extend our deep appreciation for their work. We need hands-on experience and knowledge, and are fortunate to have found that expertise and dedication to a job well done in those who have joined with us. Because their work is done behind the scenes, please allow them to introduce themselves from our [website](#).

The easiest decisions we make when it comes to our expenses are to cover the costs that come up to support our programs and initiatives. You'll see that expense of \$21,557 charted along with similar expenses for member communications. All in all, we ended the year with income exceeding expenses by \$11,422.

Importantly, our fore mothers established savings policies in 2007 that keep us on solid ground. In 2008 they went on to set up an investment account choosing to invest with PAX World Funds, who opened their ESG (environmental, social and governance) mutual fund in the United States in 1971. Since 2018, Pax World Funds has been advised by Impax Asset Management LLC, a sustainable investment firm. The company manages environmentally focused equity investments such as renewable energy, water and waste management through various funds including the Ellevest Global Women's Investor Fund we're invested in. With deposits of \$36,000 and withdrawals totaling over \$29,000 since opening the account, we ended 2020 with \$126,888 in the Fund.

Importantly, bequest gifts don't just allow us to establish reserves and make solid investments. They are one of our most important sources of future planning; they help us predict our future and strengthen our many exciting programs. We're thankful to our friends who make WILPF part of their legacy.

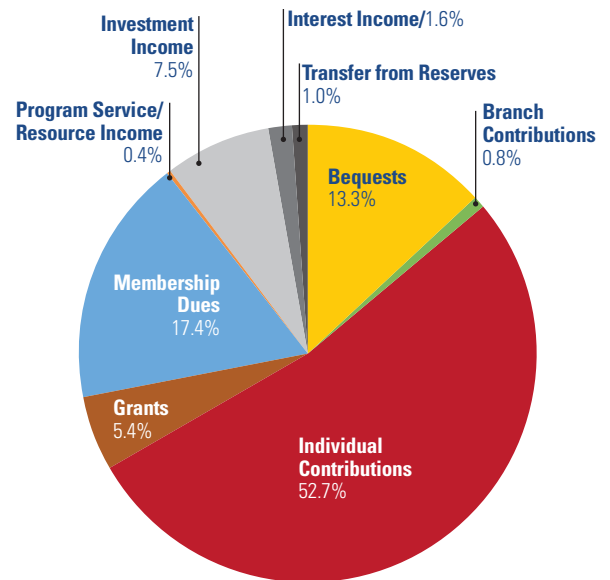
Zooming ahead to 2022, so far in 2021 we have received large bequests that allow us to strengthen our many exciting programs and adopt new ones. Please let any of us who serve on our Board know your ideas on what should be included to continue our work for environmental justice, human rights and a sustainable peace.

# Financials

## 2020 Income & Expenses

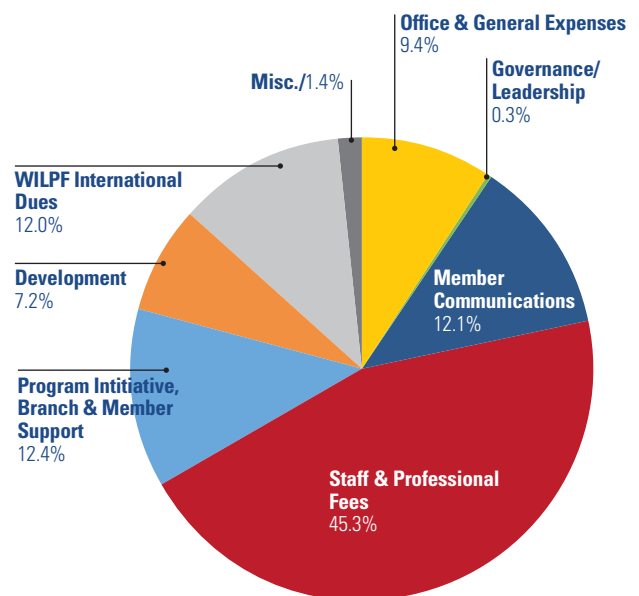
### Income

Bequests	\$24,706
Branch Contributions	\$1,430
Individual Contributions	\$97,626
Grants	\$10,000
Membership Dues	\$32,242
Program Service/Resource income	\$678
Investment Income	\$13,831
Interest Income	\$2,896
Transfer from Reserves	\$1,799
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$185,208</b>



### Expenses

Development	\$12,471
Office & General	16,290
Member Communications	\$21,017
Governance/Leadership	\$500
Staff & Professional Fees	\$78,726
Programs, Initiatives, Branch & Member Support	\$21,557
WILPF International Dues	\$20,768
Misc	\$2,437
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$173,766</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$11,442</b>



# Growing Membership & Building Solidarity in a Pandemic

## WILPF US Continues to Adapt and Thrive Through Branches Across the Country

**S**ince our last update in the Spring, WILPFers across the US have continued to organize, strategize, gather to celebrate, and move their work forward under the limitations of the global COVID-19 pandemic. As it is still not completely safe to gather in-person, members and branches have embraced technology as a way to stay connected.



Various branches have held virtual celebrations of all kinds. Last March, **Maine WILPFers** collaborated with four other Maine peace groups to organize a St. Patrick's Day Zoominar about The Space Force. It was WILPF Maine's first ever live-stream event and one of their most well-attended talks ever. Bruce Gagnon of the Global Network against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space spoke about the militarization of space, co-hosted by Ellen Thomas. The Branch's #NuclearBan Banner Caravan visited the decommissioned Maine Yankee Atomic Power Plant to reflect on the dilemma of nuclear power's dependence on our rivers and waters for cooling, and the inevitable sea level rise caused by the climate crisis.

In April, **WILPF Pittsburgh** hosted a rich discussion after a showing of *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*, a documentary directed by Gini Reticker. The film follows Leymah Gbowee, Asatu Bah Kenneth, and Vaiba Flomo as they lead other Liberian women and their supporters in a grassroots peace movement to end the long civil war in their country. The online showing enabled a small group of women from California, Canada, the UK, and of course Pittsburgh, to share ideas about their successes and tactics and ways those could apply to current work being undertaken.



New WILPF members in **Metro Atlanta** and the **Triad of North Carolina (Charlotte, Greensboro, Winston-Salem)** held a celebratory event via Zoom to announce they had achieved branch status with ten or more members in May. The **Fannie Lou Hamer Branch (Columbus, GA)** held a similar event when it reached over ten members including honorary member Roy Bourgeois, founder of School of Americas Watch (SOA). The branches met again in August to continue to build their momentum.

Branches have also been busy engaging the arts. Last March, the **Humboldt Branch** raised funds through donations and by raffling a beautiful quilt from Open Heart Quilters for the Edilith Eckart Peace Scholarship. The funding encourages local efforts toward Peace and Justice by supporting local individuals and groups in projects that create or increase peace and justice, locally to globally.

The **Westchester Branch** sponsored an exhibit of posters in created by local students on the topic of "Imagining a Peaceful World". The posters were inspired by a contest sponsored by the WILPF Westchester branch in the 1980s and 90s and featured the word of local high school, middle and elementary schoolers on display at the library in Montrose, NY.



On Mother's Day, **WILPF St. Louis** held a Mother's Day for Peace Micro-Action. Drawing inspiration from the Cape Cod Branch's clothesline actions, they displayed a basket of origami paper peace cranes along with a flyer with a QR code that passerbys could scan for more information about the anti-war origins of the holiday. Their artistic and peaceful action raised awareness of how Mother's Day began as a nonviolent pro-





test of war in 1870. About five or six branch members throughout the St. Louis region participated, including Joyce Best, pictured here.

During the virtual Africa Day celebration on May 22, Robin Lloyd shared her history as a third generation member of WILPF-US by telling how her grandmother boarded a ship in 1915 to attend a meeting with women from around the world trying to stop the first Great War. Jan

Corderman welcomed the new branches and thanked the Southern Anti-Racism Network for leading the way to organize three new branches in the South in less than five months. In support of efforts towards full participation of the many new Black women joining WILPF branches in the South, the Black Liberation Caucus was also formed at the May 22 meeting during a 15-minute breakout session

On the West coast during the month of May, the **Monterey Branch** produced a virtual event, "Public banking? Is it viable for our Central Coast area?" featuring Randa Solick, an active member of the Santa Cruz branch of WILPF and a member of People for Public Banking Central Coast and Tyller Williamson, Monterey City Council member.

In October of 2021, the **Des Moines Branch** gathered at the State Capitol to support 13-year-old climate activist Lily Hill and other young women who are on strike, saying they'd "be in school if the world was cool". WILPFers protested in support of the youth strike and urge Democrats and Republicans to recognize the common enemy of the climate crisis and to push for a carbon-free, greenhouse gas-free environment, and urge lawmakers to create this change.

## Inside and Out Initiative Updates

Over the past several months, the Inside and Out Initiative has been active in 5 WILPF US Branches: **Sacramento, San Diego, Des Moines, Boston, and Philadelphia**. Nikki Abeleda, Field Facilitator, has organized and facilitated meetings such as "Collecting Your Stories" and "Exploring Your Gifts, Assets, & Strengths" using the Asset Based Community Development framework.

The first chapter of ABCD's work, "Collecting Your Stories", allowed members to use storytelling as a tool to explore and reflect on their why: What brought them to WILPF, and what brought them to the work of social justice? Members

challenged themselves to be creative, work through their discomfort, and tell their story through a writing prompt, which led each branch to write an empowering collective poem.

After their first Asset Map meeting, the 5 branches further defined their values and goals. The **Sacramento Branch** highlighted the importance of working on anti-racism, and committed to reflection and discussion about which organizations to partner and build solidarity with. **WILPF San Diego** partnered with the Peace Resource Center of San Diego and held a "Peace Meet & Greet" as a catalyst for community building.

The **WILPF Des Moines Branch** focused on environmental justice, clean water and food sovereignty at the UN Food Summit. They also engaged in campaigning for local elections and attended an action uplifting Afghan refugees.

The **Boston Branch** is working on building solidarity with local peace community organizations and writing letters to legislative figures to "Ban the Bomb" and stop the aid of militarization and nuclear weapons.

Nikki Abeleda also supported and encouraged the branches to present their Asset Mapping at Congress. The Sacramento branch presented, "Growing a Peace Camp"; San Diego member Anne Barron presented "Turning Down Post-Trump Escalation" and Orly Benaroch Light facilitated an interview on "A Revolution of Compassion for Peace".

In October, the 5 branches engaged in a professional development training on "De-escalation Starts With Me," led by Anne Barron of WILPF San Diego & the Peace Resource Center and Laverne Olberding, Peace Resource Center.

Through the Inside & Out Initiative, members of the participating branches have been working outside of their comfort zone by challenging themselves. Through the process of ABCD, members have had the opportunity to work on themselves internally, which enables them to provide their strengths externally to the community and for their Branch.

An assessment survey for the Inside & Out initiative will measure how effective the Inside & Outside Initiative has been in providing support to these five Branches. Based on the report of the survey, there may be a second run of the initiative.

If your branch is interested in applying and learning more about the Inside & Out Initiative, please email: Mary Harrison Harrison, harrison0607@msn.com or Nikki Abeleda, nfortuno.abeleda@gmail.com.



# Donors Plant Seeds of Peace

**W**ILPF US deeply appreciates the financial donations, large and small, from our members, friends, and sponsors. Interconnection and interdependence have always been fundamental to WILPF. Your gifts make us stronger!

**Thank you to all of our Donors and Members who contributed \$100 or more in 2020!**

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## The Intersection of Nuclear Weapons and Climate Change



**Next Presentation**


**Action Level 1**

- Use social media to engage with other activists
- Develop phone trees
- Attend informational webinars — invite others
- Write letters to editor




**Action Level 2**

- Phone calls to Congressional Reps
- Congressional letter writing/ email
- Attend a Disarm or Earth Democracy or cross-organization collaboration call



**Action Level 3**

- Meet with Congressional Reps
- Join in protest marches
- Organize and attend Vigils
- Pass Back From the Brink Policy Solutions: [preventnuclearwar.org](http://preventnuclearwar.org)



**Action Level 4**

- Take part in coordinated actions with partner groups such as sit-ins & die-ins, to loudly protest against nuclear weapons

## Please Take Action on These Threats at the Levels You Prefer

### U.S. militarism is a root cause for two existential threats to humanity:

- Nuclear weapons
- Climate catastrophes

**56 countries without nuclear weapons have ratified the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) as of October, 2021. Please ask your country to sign and ratify. In the U.S.:**

- Sign and circulate the petition to the President and Senators at [bit.ly/wilpfus-bantreatypetition](http://bit.ly/wilpfus-bantreatypetition).
- Sign and circulate the petition to the House of Representatives at [bit.ly/prop1petition](http://bit.ly/prop1petition).

### The U.S. Military is the largest consumer of fossil fuels in the world, and the worst polluter.

- The U.S. military's carbon footprint causes global warming, leading to extreme flooding, droughts, crop failures, forest fires and rising sea levels, leading to climate refugees.
- The 1,200 major U.S. and worldwide military bases contaminate land and drinking water sources with PFAS "forever chemicals" that seriously impact the unborn, children and adults.

### Comments, ideas, information?

Please contact Disarm/End Wars Committee: [disarmchair@wilpfus.org](mailto:disarmchair@wilpfus.org).

### The Congressional appropriation committees passed the 2022 "defense" budget for \$780 Billion, ignoring legislation that calls for moving money to human needs and environmental restoration, such as:

- HR 2850, the Nuclear Weapons Abolition and Economic and Energy Conversion Act, languishing in the House Armed Services and Foreign Affairs Committees for years! See [prop1.org](http://prop1.org).
- Compare the next 10 years cost of our military spending, about **\$8 Trillion**, with the much smaller 10 years cost of the proposed "social safety net" Infrastructure Bill: a maximum of about **\$3.5 Trillion**.