Inside: Remembering the Peace Train

In 1995, some 30,000 women attended the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. WILPF organized a Peace Train that took 234 women and 12 men from Finland to China.

Five Years After Beijing
Looking Toward the Future for Women
At a January demonstration in front of the INS building in Miami, WILPF members Phoebe Alling, a Tampa/St. Petersburg organizer (left), and Jesse Kern (far right), who is also a Farm Labor Organizing Committee member, worked with Rev. Lucius Walker of IFCO (center) to protest the treatment of Elian Gonzalez.

Peace and Freedom is published 4 times a year by the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), U.S. Section. Subscriptions: $15/yr.; free to WILPF members. Submissions are welcome, but please query first.

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Typesetting: Sigrid Berkner, Judy Mathe Foley/Penitentiary Printing
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Cover Photo: School children on the Maleku indigenous reservation in Costa Rica. The Maleku are one of eight Costa Rican indigenous groups that live on 22 reserves in the country, accounting for 1 percent of the country’s total population. This photo is part of a photo/essay documentary of Central and South America by Angela Jimenez (photographer) and Amanda Scioscia (writer). See pages 16 and 17.

The Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) has been working since 1915 to unite women worldwide who oppose oppression and exploitation. WILPF stands for equality of all people in a world free of racism, sexism and homophobia; the building of a constructive peace through world disarmament; and the changing of government priorities to meet human needs.

National Program: WILPF envisions a world free of violence, poverty, pollution and domination — a genuine new world order of peace and justice. WILPF’s program stands firm for disarmament and against oppression. The 2000-2003 program cycle has three key campaign areas: Challenging Corporate Power, Asserting the People’s Rights; Disarmament; and Uniting for Racial Justice: Truth, Reparations, Restoration and Reconciliation (UFORJE). Each campaign area focuses on local and national effectiveness in creating lasting social change.

WILPF has sections in 37 countries coordinated by an international office in Geneva. U.S. WILPF carries out its work through grassroots organizing by WILPF branches, coordinated by a national office in Philadelphia. WILPF supports the work of the United Nations and has NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) status.
The theme of this issue is the review of the World Conference on Women, held in Beijing five years ago. Sponsored by the United Nations in September 1995, the Beijing meeting established a Platform for Action and followed on the heels of earlier conferences held in Nairobi, Denmark and Mexico.

Goals were set in Beijing, and by the year 2000, targets in 12 “critical areas of concern” affecting women throughout the world were to have been met. Those areas of concern include: Poverty, Education and Training, Health, Violence, Armed Conflict, Economy, Decision-Making, Institutional Mechanisms, Human Rights, Media, Environment and the Girl Child.

Beijing was more than just a meeting of U.N. delegates and official representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) coming together for sessions in China’s Great Hall of the People. Before the conference began, the NGOs convened and turned Beijing into a massive gathering place for women seeking a better life for their sisters.

When I remember Beijing, I think of Huairou, the suburb of Beijing where the NGOs were accommodated. I think of the kaleidoscope of color at the Tent City where the NGOs held workshops, exhibits, demonstrations, a marketplace, seminars and evening entertainment. I think of the women from every continent garbed in their national dress, working together, arguing, mucking through mud on the rainy days, singing, protesting, holding sit-ins on the street, cutting through the language barriers as best we could, buying and selling, making decisions, expanding our minds beyond the far reaches of our imaginations.

The peace tent in particular was a remarkable place. Inside, women from many nations worked together for disarmament and nonviolent conflict resolution. They came together to announce their intentions to actively oppose war and violence. There were Japanese women singing “We Shall Overcome” and marching against the use of nuclear weapons; women from Somalia demonstrating for a peaceful solution to the conflict in their nation; U.S. WILPF women drawing attention to domestic violence with the Clothesline Project, and travelers from the WILPF Peace Train reporting on their fantastic journey.

In June, women from around the globe will meet at the United Nations for the Beijing+5 review meeting. NGOs and official U.N. delegations will discuss and debate how successful their governments and other institutions have been in attaining the goals set in the Platform for Action that evolved in Beijing. They will try to measure our progress and strategize about how to best continue the search for equality, development and peace.

Around the world, there have been mini-conferences to prepare for the Beijing+5 review. WILPF is among those NGOs contributing feedback and motivation in these preparatory conferences. Each of the 12 “critical areas of concern” is important to WILPF women. With our three campaigns, we can concentrate on Armed Conflict, the Economy and Human Rights. Each of us has the opportunity—the mandate—to help translate the Platform for Action into reality in our own communities.

We are at five years and counting. As we measure how far we have come, let us prepare to continue the journey to fulfill the dreams born in Beijing.

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**RESOURCES FROM THE D.C. OFFICE**

Do you know how your senator and representative vote on peace issues? Which members of Congress took the most military PAC money? What corporations with strong military interests sponsor PACs to distribute money?

Through the WILPF D.C. office, you can get a Congressional Voting Record for 1999 created by the Peace Action Education Fund, as well as an eight-page Congressional Directory for 1999-2000 from the Friends Committee on National Legislation.

WILPF ImPEACEment kits - for issue advocacy work in key electoral districts - are also ready. Call (202) 546-6727.

See page 12 for information and additional reports from the Washington, D.C. legislative office.
Kudos
Congratulations on a beautiful piece of work! On too many previous occasions, I have written letters expressing my displeasure with a particular edition of Peace & Freedom. It feels so good to rave about this issue.
Claire Vogel
Flushing, NY

Writer Responds
I appreciate the responses to my article, “Wrestling with Intervention,” (Sept./Oct. P & F), and to my earlier email query asking if others disagreed with WILPF’s anti-intervention position on Kosovo. I believe our debate on humanitarian intervention is healthy for WILPF....

I agree with Ruth Hubbard that much can and should have been done to prevent the conflict in Kosovo from reaching crisis proportions. For example, at last year’s Hague Appeal for Peace, a Swedish-based peace foundation cited 57 things the international community could have done to preserve peace in the Balkans. (Visit www.transnational.org). However, this question remains: What action do we support when diplomatic and conflict resolution strategies have not been used adequately, or fail?

As Mary Caldor of the Helsinki Citizens’ Assembly told a Hague Appeal workshop, peace groups and governments must adjust to the reality of today’s warfare, in which battling sides are targeting civilians, who make up 80 percent of a conflict’s casualties, rather than each other. In such situations, she believes, the international community must intervene through police-type actions to arrest perpetrators and protect civilians.

Many participants at The Hague, myself included, believe any long-term solution must include a standing U.N. rapid deployment police force or army.

In the short run, I believe, peace activists must resist the temptation to fit all conflicts into Cold War “us vs. them” thinking. I feel WILPF should lend its weight to efforts calling for Security Council reform and establishment of a U.N. rapid deployment force; and give more weight to groups like Human Rights Watch in weighing its response to a crisis.

Re: Ruth Hubbard’s suggestion that I didn’t do enough “homework,” Michael Sell’s book The Bridge Betrayed: Religion and Genocide in Bosnia and The Hague workshop on “Reappraising Humanitarian Intervention” were particularly helpful. Re: her comment that the Holocaust can be used to silence discussion, in my case it has provided a moral compass by which to judge current events. How would I have wanted the world to respond if I was on a transport to Auschwitz? How do I think the targets of today’s human rights crimes want me to respond?

Roberta Spivek
Philadelphia, PA

No Safe Haven
This is in response to Carol Bernstein Ferry’s criticism of my final comment (in the article “No Safe Haven,” Nov/Dec P & F) “Those of us women not in prison cells are just in more comfortable cages.” I am disappointed that Ferry totally missed the point I was making that women in prison are not “others.” All women are sisters who need to work together to fight sexism, racism and classism. These factors land some women in prison as scapegoats, while others not in prison can ignore injustice if they so choose... I see injustice on a continuum. Oppression that deprives women behind bars of their freedom is the same force that deprives women reasonable access to abortion or pays women at a lower rate than men.

Lori B. Girshick
Arden, NC

Questions on Kosovo
The article on Kosovo (“The Path to War,” Jan/Feb P & F) leaves me as confused as ever . . . No one has explained what crimes have been committed by Milosevic, which caused us to destroy the ecology of central Europe. I must try to figure it out from snippings of various journalists, who claim the Kosovo Liberation Army had its origin as wealthy drug-traders. Allegedly, they picked up their drugs in Afghanistan and brought them through Kosovo to sell in Switzerland, Germany and the Netherlands. These traders flourished financially, resisted the Belgrade government’s attempts to control or disband them, and formed their Army, demanding independence. It all resulted in violence.

The Western powers, eager to fracture the old Yugoslavia, used the word “genocide” and called upon NATO to bomb the cities, the industry, the Danube itself, while ethnic fighting continues.

Ethnic conflicts of a much greater magnitude are going on in other parts of the world, but the Western powers close their eyes. This brings me back to my first and foremost question — what has Yugoslavia or its President actually done that we want to destroy its people and its ecology?

Clara Avis, Brooklyn, NY

Send letters to Peace & Freedom, Editor, 1213 Race St., Philadelphia, PA 19107-1691 or email peacefreedom@wilpf.org. We reserve the right to choose and edit letters.
Remembering the Peace Train and Beijing

In September 1995, the United Nations held its Fourth Conference on Women in Beijing, China. Over 30,000 women converged on Beijing from all parts of the world and by all transportation means. I was one of these women. With my husband, I attended both the unofficial Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Forum and the U.N. Conference. I traveled to Beijing on the Peace Train organized by WILPF.

The train trip that started in Helsinki and ended in Beijing holds at least as many images as the thousands of kilometers traveled, and the innumerable experiences of the 234 women, 12 men, and the car staff and engineers riding in it.

For 21 days, I lived fully and actively in the midst of the Peace Train experience. Yet, every time I hear someone recounting bits of their experience, or see one of the several videos about the journey and of the destination, I am made aware of how much I missed. I learn of situations that I had been unaware of, I am presented with interpretations foreign to me, vistas that I did not see and fascinating travel companions that I did not meet.

At the NGO Forum in the village of Huairou, I attended relatively few of the sessions listed in the program. Instead, I had many impromptu meetings when stopping someone to ask for directions and ending up sharing our experiences, hope, and plans. I also spent a large part of every day at the Peace Tent that WILPF organized. It was the fulcrum for women living in war situations to come and tell their stories, be supported, weave new linkages, and make plans on how best to influence the official decisions to be discussed at the conference.

In Beijing, the frantic work at the official conference catapulted me into another world. Here, the warmth and support of the women’s community was largely replaced by the discipline required to draft texts for submission to sympathetic delegations. The wording of every clause became all-important as we tried to maintain the integrity of our demands in a manner that would be accepted by the government delegations. We did have some impact. One part of the text is paragraph 28 in the Beijing Declaration. It says: “We [governments] are determined to ... Take positive steps to ensure peace for the advancement of women and, recognizing the leading role that women have played in the peace movement, work actively towards general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control, and support negotiations on the conclusion, without delay, of a universal and multilaterally and effective verifiable comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty which contributes to nuclear disarmament and prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects...”

I know that such a paragraph would not have been there had not Edith Ballantyne, Babsi Lochbihler (former Secretary-General), and I, building on the ideas of the participants at the Peace Caucus, worked to all hours to get it ready.

Unfortunately, what we have in the Beijing Platform for Action falls far short of what is needed to make our world a better place for all. We must be fully aware that if we are not present, even these little steps will not be taken.

- Bruna Nota
International WILPF President

At every national and international gathering of WILPF, I have found that veterans of the Peace Train meet to compare notes with fellow travelers who shared in that awesome three-week experience. Many of us have written about it. In the United States, Beth Glick-Rieman, in her book Peace Train to Beijing and Beyond called it “the break in my cosmic egg.” Joan Chittister compared herself to Marco Polo when she contemplated taking the Peace Train across the great steppes of Russia and China.

As a videographer, I lived with 42 hours of images from the Peace Train and the NGO Forum in Huairou. I logged and edited through the winter of 1995, winnowing all that footage down to one hour. I cherished the opportunity to continually relive the experience. Co-camerawomen May Ying Welch and Marilyn Clement stayed at my house for several days in the midst of it, helping me figure out how to tell the story more dramatically.

It was like being in a Mardi Gras parade in Haiti; you’re dancing, and moving forward at the same time. On the Peace Train we were talking, eating, sleeping, thinking and yes, dancing, as we moved forward through regions of the world we never thought we would see, towards an awesome destination: Beijing and thousands of feminist women from around the world.

— Robin Lloyd
WILPF board member
Women 2000: Measuring Progress After Beijing

Felicity Hill

Five years ago, thousands of women went to Beijing for the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women.

Each of the major U.N. world conferences of the 80s and 90s has a built in review mechanism to examine and discuss the past and set goals for the future. These “+5” follow-up meetings take place five years after each conference. Between June 5 - 9, the United Nations will hold a meeting — “Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-First Century,” better known as “Beijing + 5” — in New York to assess progress since the conference in 1995.

A host committee has organized many celebratory events around New York and an international committee has been set up to facilitate the activities of women lobbying at the United Nations. Women’s organizations from around the world have produced alternative reports to fill in the perceived gaps in their government’s official reports. These reports will be compiled and presented as the non-governmental sector’s contribution to the debate. Due to space considerations, and due to the fact that this is not a major conference but a “+ 5,” there is no NGO forum planned. However, a two-day working session for NGOs is planned for the weekend before the meeting, and various panels and cultural events will take place within and around the United Nations.

How will we measure progress? What will our “measures of success” be? Is the Platform for Action (PFA) really making a difference in the lives of women most in need? These are the questions that immediately arise as women worldwide begin to look at actions taken to implement the Beijing Platform of 1995. These issues have also been discussed at preparatory and regional meetings.

Many feel that women have not achieved much, while others feel that we have taken significant first steps. In essence, the whole course of the debate during Women 2000 is an attempt to accurately perceive how women as a gender class are situated internationally and nationally.

In preparation for the June meeting, regional, governmental meetings were held in Bangkok, Beirut, Addis Ababa, Geneva and Lima, with many non-governmental observers from the women’s movement watching. (Full reports of these regional conferences, background documents and more can be found at www.womenaction.org.) The PFA has 12 interrelated “Critical Areas of Concern,” including Women and Poverty, Women and Armed Conflict, Violence Against Women, and the Girl Child. (Visit www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform to view it in its entirety). This document is easily one of the most far reaching that the U.N. conferences of the 90s produced, but it is particularly lacking in details, specific targets, and benchmarks for success. For example, it talks about equal rights and closing the wage gap, but is weak on specific and measurable tasks and programs for governments to work towards this end.

Why should NGOs help governments develop concrete targets for their country and for their region? Because targets make progress visible and measurable, they allow for the monitoring of trends, and they translate idealistic goals into concrete tasks and smaller goals, that, when broken down, seem manageable. Among other things, targets provide incentives and help determine who is responsible for achieving certain goals. Progress also needs to be rewarded, and giving recognition is easier if there is a specific target.

The necessary characteristics of these targets or benchmarks are that they are measurable and information about them is publicly accessible with reliable data, they are regularly updated, and a mechanism to monitor them is set up. Targets should be ambitious, but also achievable.

After reviewing the answer to a questionnaire sent to all governments, the U.N. Division for the Advancement of Women analyzed the obstacles and grouped them into six categories:

1. Governments report that the deeply culturally embedded attitudes and stereotypes remain the biggest obstacle to change in women’s lives.

2. Economic change and instability have deeply affected the lives of women and the ability of governments to commit resources to women’s services. Responding governments often cited the phenomenon of globalization in their questionnaires.

3. Political conflicts and natural disasters also feature prominently in the reports — governments indicate that policies and institutions are geared towards conditions of normality — and that often these conditions do not exist. For example, around the world there are 37 wars and conflicts raging as we speak.

4. Another obstacle mentioned is the lack of data and monitoring mechanisms within countries, making it hard to identify and address problem areas.

6 Spring 2000 Peace & Freedom
The lack of resources in some states make the goals set by the PFA impossible to meet.

The issue of “backlash” was also frequently mentioned by governments.

The Division for the Advancement of Women has also identified the following six trends, or global changes, since the passage of the PFA:


2. Change in the labor market and the demand for labor has affected women in different forms. Women are entering the global market on a bigger scale, but the working conditions are very bad.

3. Political identity is changing. The public representation of being a woman and the cultural messages about what it is to be a woman — a beautiful woman, a successful woman — are changing and in some places, narrowing.

4. Shifting boundaries of conflict.

5. New communications technologies.

6. The role of the United Nations is changing and examining the trends in global governance find governments and NGOs working more closely.

Women and Armed Conflict: A Case Study
Each of the four World Conferences on Women have had “Equality, Development and Peace” as the theme. As a litmus test, let us examine one of the least popular chapters of the PFA among governments: Women and Armed Conflict. Structured around six strategic objectives, it reveals what needs to be done to bring peace back into the picture.

The documents resulting from these conferences, held in Mexico, Nairobi, Copenhagen and Beijing, make it clear that the end of the Cold War has reduced the emphasis on issues of peace and security as centrally important. At the same time, security has lessened and the incidence of intra-state and ethnic war has risen drastically.

At the Asia and Pacific Preparatory meeting in Bangkok, it was noted that governments have done little or nothing to implement the commitments made in this chapter.

The first commitment was to increase participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels, and to protect women in situations of armed conflict. However, we have seen few women involved in Middle East or Kosovo peace talks and negotiations. Only two women were present at the six-week negotiations in Lome, Togo to end the war in Sierra Leone. There are no women ambassadors in the Security Council. Moreover, there is only a meager scattering of women throughout the decision-making structures governing peace and security. While gender-sensitive training has begun and policy units have produced analysis on the gendered nature of war and post-war zones, no changes in the gender makeup of policy and decision-making institutions have resulted.

This review should set quotas for women in international diplomacy. Adequate representation of women at every negotiating table must be asserted as essential. The Security Council should implement technology and the Internet to ensure that women at the grassroots level can provide input and information and have access to the decision-makers.

The second commitment is to reducing excessive military expenditure and controlling the availability of armaments. This area has resulted in the least change and the most culpable misplacement of resources and actual slaughter. The current annual global military budget is set at $800 billion dollars, and a new arms race is...
MARY DAY KENT BRIEFS CONGRESS ON WOMEN AND ARMED CONFLICT
For the first time ever, the National Council of Women’s Organizations included international issues on its calendar of regular monthly briefings to Congress this year.

WILPF led the planning group for the March 17 program, which was presented in cooperation with the bi-partisan Congressional Caucus for Women’s Issues. The briefing, primarily for congressional staffers, was titled “Addressing International Concerns: Outlining Our Commitment to the World’s Women.”

Mary Day Kent, WILPF’s executive director, spoke about the suffering armed conflict imposes on women and encouraged congressional leadership to reduce military spending, curb the arms trade and stop U.S. support of abusive foreign militaries.

The session provided a timely opportunity to urge voting against a $1.5 billion military aid package to Colombia and a fine occasion to build support for H.R. 2269, Rep. Cynthia McKinney’s (D-GA) bill to establish a Code of Conduct to prohibit weapons transfers to repressive regimes.

Other panelists spoke on ratification of CEDAW, an aid bill to be introduced this spring called Investment in Women and Girls, and the effect of the global gag rule on women’s access to reproductive health services in developing countries.

INTERNATIONAL DELEGATIONS OUTNUMBER U.S. WILPF VISITORS TO D.C.
The courageous women who compiled a report on the situation of women in conflict areas of Burma presented it to the 22nd session of the CEDAW Committee in New York. They also spoke at a congressional briefing and spent an afternoon with WILPF and other NGOs while in Washington, D.C. in January.

One of the Burmese Women’s Union representatives broke into a happy smile during introductions. It turned out she had been a WILPF human rights intern in Geneva not long ago. Another one of the women had attended WILPF’s 1998 International Congress in Baltimore. The D.C. office also hosted a delegation of Vietnamese women in February.

Another group, led by Rebecca Shen of Fresno WILPF, made good use of the office in March. Eight men and women from Indonesia, Canada and the U.S. met with members of Congress, State Department officials and human rights groups to lobby for effective sanctions against Indonesian army leaders for the systematic, mass rape of ethnic Chinese and other women in Indonesia.

85TH ANNIVERSARY WILPF PEACE MISSION TO WASHINGTON EVENTS
Come one, come all, branch delegations, members-at-large! Sign up now for two to three days in Washington, D.C., where you can work in the WILPF office to help move Congress along. Plan your trip around our upcoming action events. Call (202) 546-6727 to say when you’re coming and reserve your place on the WILPF Peace Mission calendar. All events are held in Washington, D.C. unless otherwise noted.


June 17 - 19, Bethesda, MD Results Conference on Ending Hunger. Speakers include Marian Wright Edelman, (202) 783-7100.

June 19, Juneteenth events celebrating the day Texas slaves heard they were free. Washington Peace Center, (202) 234-2000.

July 1 - August 9, daily events for the “People’s Campaign for Nonviolence,” Fellowship of Reconciliation, featuring WILPF. (914) 358-4601, peoplescampaign@forusa.org for 40-day list, (202) 546-6727 and www.wilpf.org for WILPF Aug. 1 “Women in Black” activities.

July 7 - July 13, Baltimore, MD national conference for National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. (410) 366-3300.

With Cup In Hand We Talk About Women Meeting in Beijing

Valerie Lawrence

Women develop ways and means to save babies from diarrhea, measles and no food. Women grab on to each other and find courage to raise our value. Women commiserate to fertilize common ground that nurtures revolution for schools, medicine, clean water, sanitation, shelter, our right to dictate language of our bodies.

I wanna be Harriet Tubman
develop a way out of no way freedom road for enslaved Africans.

Be like Mother Teresa like
Mary McCleod like Ma’at live
justice be righteous like
Ida Wells in rhythm with
Nature like harmony.

MAKE ME YAA ASANTEWA,
QUEEN NZINGHA, HATSHEPSUT
RAISED WARRIORS, SCHOLARS TO
PRESERVE TRADITIONS, MAINTAIN
LAND, KEEP INTRUDERS OUT, SAVE
MY GIRL CHILD, RAISE UP MY BOY CHILD!

Make me like women of kinship aid societies to help my sisters cause refugees don’t always speak foreign languages, but always flee abuse, war, droughts, no work no land no money no way out.

Many women, girls, sisters can’t locate Beijing on a map didn’t know there was a meeting there didn’t know they were the subject didn’t know decisions were made about them didn’t know governments argued about them being treated with respect, dignity, good medicine; didn’t know women at the meeting looked like them, cared about them, hoped for them, cried with them, celebrated them, and swore promises to return home to them, and make ways to talk, help, be with each other, to work with each other beyond a dot on a map too many women girls sisters don’t know how to locate.

Valerie Lawrence is a poet, teacher and musician in Pittsburgh whose work has been published in numerous anthologies and collections.

A Woman’s Question

Linda Hunt

If we be sisters
let’s tell of our union
of our dreams
of our nightmares
If we be sisters
let’s embrace our differences
acknowledge our similarities
celebrate our rituals
If we be sisters
let’s drink from the same cup
share of our bread
soothe one another’s wounds
If we be sisters
If we be sisters
then let’s sing with one voice
of our sisterhood

Or are we third cousins twice removed?

Linda Hunt is an actress, social activist and teacher in Pittsburgh. She attended the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing through the auspices of Pittsburgh Beijing and Beyond. She is currently at work on a documentary about women whose male family members are in prison.

To begin, I would like to make a brief review of the recent history of North American “aid” against drugs in our country, and how this “aid” has led to tragic social consequences—not only for the Colombian people and the democratic organizations of workers and peasants, but for the people of North America as well. In 1989, when President George Bush declared war on drug merchants, he claimed that he was taking on “the most difficult internal challenge in decades.” Over $400 million dollars was cut from U.S. social programs, affecting the poorest sector of the population. Bush cut over $100 million dollars from public housing and juvenile justice programs.

During 1989 and following years, drug use in poor African-American and Latino neighborhoods skyrocketed. What the President facilitated was a tragic program of despair and frustration among youth. The only beneficiaries of this program were drug dealers in the ghettos (see Noam Chomsky, *Deterring Democracy*, 1991).

During July 1988, the United States also supported suspending international coffee agreements; at the time coffee accounted for more than 50 percent of Colombia’s exports. This led to a drop of more than 40 percent in the price of coffee. Since then, it has been essentially impossible for the small coffee producers to recover. Colombia now faces the possibility of having to import coffee in order to fulfill its international commitments.

We could ask, “What happened to Juan Valdez and his family?” Where are those hundreds of coffee growers and small landowners who had to sell their lands to pay off loans and the impossible interest rates of a system incapable of implementing a just and democratic land reform for more than 40 years? Those growers have gone into poverty and the unemployment lines, which are now the longest they have ever been. (Colombia has a 20 percent unemployment rate.)

Above all, we must ask what happened to the thousands of coffee pickers, the agricultural labor force that made a subsistence living from coffee? The answer is easy: They are growing and harvesting illegal crops in the Colombian rainforests. One side effect of that is the destruction of animals and vast areas of forest that will never recover. The forests also suffer from the spraying of fumigants, encouraged by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. This spraying not only destroys sensitive vegetation, but also hurts the surrounding ecosystem, including the communities of indigenous people living in these remote areas.

This phenomenon, which systematically damages the legal agricultural products of Colombia, follows the laws of “free trade” and “equality” in the current neoliberal global economy, ruled by agreements that are highly disadvantageous to Latin American economies. Whether it involves breaking the coffee agreements or undermining...
the banana producers’ union, it always suits the interests of North American business. The one absolute law of neoliberal capitalism is that a small minority becomes disproportionately rich beyond all reason, causing extreme poverty for the rest of humanity.

Over 50 percent of Colombians, some 19 million souls, live below the line of absolute poverty and another large percentage are living off the informal “hustler” economy, which essentially means leaving their cardboard shelters each morning to see what they can do to get food for the day. These statistics can be researched at the World Bank (the same bank that comes to the rescue of bankrupt Latin American economies when they make adjustments to allow for the free operation of the capitalist market economy).

In the last 10 years, more than a million and a half people have been forcibly displaced. As this article was being written, 300 families displaced by violence had taken over local Red Cross offices, demanding help and protection so they could return to their homes in rural areas.

In the meantime, billions of dollars are being made in illegal commercial drug trafficking between the United States, other countries and Colombia. There is also the illegal arms trade, whose profits, along with the drug profits, go into U.S. banks or their local branches throughout the world. There is also money going to the producers of the chemical products needed for making drugs, and these profits also go into U.S. banks. This is a simple game in which the products are legal in the country that produces them, but criminalized in the countries to which they are exported.

At this point, we must ask, where are the taxes of the U.S. citizens going? Only a very small part goes to prevention or to the ambiguous policy of “harm reduction,” which still does not consider the socioeconomic reality in the producing countries. The bulk of funding goes to repression, to a military solution, in the belief that by eradicating the peasant producer drug consumption will be reduced. Have you noticed that U.S. wars always take place in other countries? Why would the “War on Drugs” be an exception? We are not surprised by the new U.S. proposal for $1.5 billion to extend the internal war in our country. We are surprised to see that this new package includes funding for strengthening human rights and the justice system, since capitalism itself is the essence of human rights violation.

**THE COLOMBIA SECTION OF WILPF**

The section works with women in Bogota and Cartagena who have been displaced by political violence. We have founded the “Bolivar League of Women Displaced by Violence.” The organization started with 20 women and their families, but there are now 70 women seeking to join. Our work is done in the poor and squatter neighborhoods of Cartagena and Bogota. In the past year, more than 50,000 refugees from political violence have come into Cartagena. The majority of these refugees are women and children. WILPF of Colombia has carried out this work without any international funding, which it needs to continue its work.

Patricia Guerrero lives in Cartagena, Colombia and is secretary of the WILPF section in Colombia. This article was translated from the Spanish by Mary Day Kent and edited by Theta Pavis.

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**United States Counternarcotics Assistance for Latin America**

![Graph showing U.S. counternarcotics assistance](image)

* Source: USAID Congressional Presentation Documents. Does not include Pentagon Funding

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**Drop Some Names**

Here’s your chance to help WILPF. Why not contact some of the famous people you know and help support our Celebrity Auction! In September, WILPF will hold an online auction to raise money as part of our 85th Anniversary. We need autographed books, scripts, poems, personal items and other celebrity donations. You make the contact, get the item, and send it to us. We’ll do the rest. Contact Sandy Silver at (831) 458-1200 or silver@cruzio.com

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Peace & Freedom  Spring 2000
Editor’s Note: This article is excerpted from a working paper by Molly Morgan, Virginia Rasmussen and Mary Zepernick, members of the Challenging Corporate Power: Asserting the People’s Rights campaign, with input from members of the U.S. and other WILPF sections.

While the power wielded by giant corporations and its resulting extremes of wealth and poverty are unprecedented in scale, the worldview that supports it reaches back between five and 10 millennia.

WILPF sponsor Starhawk, as well as Riane Eisler and others, describe the “power-over” model of society, which replaced more egalitarian cultures in the transition to large centers of population, with the accumulation of surplus and its accompanying rule-based structures.

As Starhawk puts it in Dreaming the Dark, “We like to tell ourselves that there once was a time when we were free, that power-over is a human invention, not an imperative of nature. The story of the rise of power-over is the story of the literal dismemberment of the world, the tearing apart of the fabric of living interrelationships that once governed human life.”

The power-over model assigns unequal value to human difference, establishing dominant and subordinate categories and the political concept of “other” as the basis for discrimination and exploitation. Though rooted in male dominance, patriarchal behavior applies to all of us when we exercise power over others and the Earth. Global corporatization is a logical extension of the “dismemberment” that accompanied the development of “civilization.” Far from being natural and inevitable, the transnational corporation, with its vast supporting infrastructure, is the most virulent manifestation of power-over to date.

The standard teaching of U.S. history emphasizes wars, land acquisition and industrial “progress” rather than the ongoing struggle of people of color, women, the working class and poor. As these oppressed groups slowly gained ground, the wealthy changed the nature of corporations, whose operations for the first century were restricted and enforced by state-issued charters. After the Supreme Court in 1886 declared the corporate form equivalent to a natural person under the law, people’s already limited sovereignty was further subordinated to the large corporation. Thus, a major corporate achievement has been to convert the corporate form from that of a publicly defined institution to one that receives constitutional protection from effective public control.

The primary protection of markets and investments today is in the hands of international institutions that serve the interests of transnational corporations rather than people and planet. Out of the Uruguay Round of negotiations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the profoundly anti-democratic World Trade Organization was established in 1995. Its authority on behalf of unlimited mobility for capital and production has the legislative, judicial and enforcement power to undermine, in the name of “free trade,” national and even local laws passed to protect workers, communities and the environment.

What is the impact on women of so much power vested in a single institution?

Today, what author bell hooks calls the “white supremacist capitalist patriarchy” dominates not only its own people, but also the less developed nations of the global South. Within all countries, females are the most disadvantaged and exploited, particularly women of color, the poor, and lesbians. The Women’s Caucus of organizations from the South and North attending the Third Ministerial Meeting of the WTO in Seattle made this statement:

“(T)he majority of the world’s women and girls are adversely affected by the unequal power relations created at the national, regional and international levels by the new trade regime . . . We believe the WTO undermines major international agreements that women have worked hard to get their governments to commit to.”

The corporate form and its national and international institutional protectors is especially damaging to the lives of women, who comprise the majority of the poor in every country. In the United States, many women work in low-wage categories that are particularly vulnerable to downsizing as corporations compete for “ideal” profit-yielding conditions.
State and local governments, held hostage by corporations seeking tax relief and subsidies, are strapped for funds to meet social program obligations, with much of the resulting slack taken up by already overworked women.

The same phenomena are infinitely more disastrous for women in the debtor nations on which the International Monetary Fund and World Bank have imposed Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) policies. SAPs demand that nations reduce their own economic planning in favor of a commodity-based, export-oriented economy and a “liberalization” that includes deep cuts in expenditures on social programs, the privatization of state-run industries and services, and increased labor flexibility.

When SAP policies result in recession, wage and job cuts most drastically affect women, for whom the “informal economy” is their last resort. Alicia Sepulveda, Foreign Secretary of the Mexican Telephone Workers Union, describes the “explosion in the number of street sellers, most of them women,” with nearly a quarter of employed women earning less than the daily minimum wage of $3.50. Women who migrate as domestic workers, caregivers, or farm workers are particularly vulnerable to sexual as well as financial exploitation.

Reduced social services add to women’s responsibility for the functioning of their families and communities. Throughout the world women work more hours than men — the so-called double burden — but much of their labor is not reflected in official statistics; according to a recent United Nations Development Program’s Human Index Report, women contribute $11 trillion annually in unpaid “household work” to the global economy.

Most of the sweatshop workers in developing countries are women, who put in long hours for below minimum or living wages and receive no overtime pay, sick leave or medical benefits. Susan Tompson of the Colombia Justice and Peace Society says: “You can see it in Mexico, in Honduras, and in a number of other countries where women — particularly young women — are working in the maquiladoras, the factories that put together clothes or electronics. Because the country desperately needs export dollars, officials often turn a blind eye to the abuses suffered by the women in the factories.”

Author, activist and researcher Vandana Shiva declared that “All domestic issues have been drawn into the global economy, bringing women into direct collision with global patriarchal institutions.” Because patriarchal economic institutions are international, so must be people’s movements to resist and replace systems that benefit a few at the expense of the majority of the world’s populations. The quest for the rights and powers of self-governance requires us to grapple with who we are as human beings. Do we really believe that power over others is so embedded in “human nature” that the best we can do is picket sweatshop owners, one by one, imploring them to respect voluntary codes of conduct? Or can we rise to the challenge of being self-determining, exercising authority over the institutions and policies that affect our lives?

Vandana Shiva points out that “For more than two centuries, patriarchal, eurocentric, and anthropocentric scientific discourse has treated women, other cultures, and other species as objects. Experts have been treated as the only legitimate knowers. For more than two decades, feminist movements, Third World and indigenous people’s movements, and ecological and animal-rights movements have questioned this objectification and denial of subjection.”

The late 20th century growth of a global feminist movement has brought women together in common cause. A widespread expression and tool of women’s organizing is the Beijing Platform for Action, which, if examined plank by plank, is a solid indictment of corporate oppression and is a democratic agenda for people and their institutions of governance.

From village centers to U.N. forums, women’s ideas, processes and relationships are important models for the world we seek to create. As African-American lesbian poet Audre Lorde put it, “You can’t dismantle the master’s house using the master’s tools.”

Molly, Virginia and Mary are members of the leadership team for Challenging Corporate Power, Asserting the People’s Rights, one of U.S. WILPF’s three current national campaigns. The first phase of the campaign has featured study groups that grapple with the corporate usurpation of our authority to govern ourselves. The study group packet has been used by some two dozen WILPF branches and by other organizations.

The second phase of the campaign is developing local campaigns. In March, a campaign design packet was sent to branches, study group convenors, and members of the Committee on Corporations, Trade & Democracy, which created this program. The packet, as well as the paper, “Gender and Global Corporatization,” is available through the national office, and branches are encouraged to contact committee co-chairs Mary and Virginia for help in designing local campaigns directed toward putting human beings in charge of our communities and their institutions, contact (508) 398-7367; people@poclad.org.
It’s easy to take the international part of our name for granted, yet recent activities remind us that our global audience is expanding and work in our name continues to go on in faraway places. What follows is a brief roundup of some of our international work.

Our Costa Rican sisters have had success recruiting WILPF members in Nicaragua. The Bolivian WILPF group is joining coalitions to end the cultural and environmental damage caused by mining operations. Leaders of that section frequently talk about the challenge of doing peace work while women in their country are starving on the street corners.

Bruna Nota, WILPF international president, was an invited guest in North Korea and China, and she found many people there who had great respect for WILPF. Our organization has a good reputation in these countries, and Bruna said WILPF was an important factor in peace and freedom work there.

Our new Secretary General, Michaela Told, and one of WILPF’s vice presidents, Cherry Padilla, also accompanied Bruna to an important globalization conference in Japan.

Michaela started her work in Geneva by representing us in testimony at a European Caucus of Non-Governmental Organizations. She said women’s organizations like WILPF want and merit a place on peace negotiating teams as “equal partners, effective actors and experienced contributors.” (At the peak of hostilities in Bosnia, women’s peace groups in Belgrade, Croatia and Bosnia were in contact with each other and mutually supportive. Five years ago, Chechen and Russian mothers of fighting soldiers were able to meet together to explore disagreements as well as shared concerns for their sons. Despite their efforts, in neither case were these women included in peace settlement deliberations).

Meanwhile, our Russian section reports that a new branch has been formed in Tuva, which is located outside of northwest Mongolia.

The Netherlands WILPF section has devoted its “wise women” energies to promoting WILPF positions in a multitude of international organizations.

Regina Birchem, a vice-president who is also on the U.S. National Board, continues her extensive work on African affairs.

While there may seem to be little uniformity in these different national WILPF agendas, all of these efforts provide vital contributions to our common goals. There are, however, obstacles that hamper both increased participation in WILPF at the international level and the creation of new WILPF sections - lack of funds and language barriers seem to be the biggest.

Action: If you only can do one international WILPF action this month, make it Colombia. Our members there continue to push for the United States to stop funding what is a repressive, murderous, military government under the guise of the “War on Drugs.” Let your representatives hear that. (With U.S. civilian and military advisors on the ground there, we could easily be on our way to another Vietnam.)

Welcome Charmaine

Charmaine Sprengelmeyer, WILPF’s new program coordinator, joined the national staff in March. Charmaine’s experience in administration, program planning, advocacy and community organizing provides her with an outstanding background with which to begin her work with WILPF’s campaigns.

While attending the University of Minnesota-Duluth, Charmaine spent a semester in Mexico through the Aausburg College Center for Global Education, where she studied human rights and international development. She was also a peer advisor with the Hispano / Latino / Chicana organization of her university. After graduating, she studied Spanish at the University of Havana through Global Exchange.

Charmaine has worked for several non-profit social service organizations. She was the community campaign coordinator at the Minnesota Fair Housing Center and, most recently, she was a case manager at La Causa in Milwaukee, which participates in Wisconsin’s new W-2 welfare reform program. Charmaine recently moved from Wisconsin to Philadelphia and is very excited to be working for an organization with such a rich history of human rights and peace advocacy. We are delighted to welcome her.
**Will Power: Reaching Critical Will at the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference**

*Yoshiko Ikuta, Jody Dodd*

The U.S. and International WILPF Reaching Critical Will project mobilized many activists to attend the month-long meeting in New York to push, agitate, cajole and impress country delegations (including the United States) that critical, political will is forming worldwide to insist on progress toward nuclear abolition.

From January through March, over 40 WILPF house parties were held around the country. Screenings of the nuclear weapons de-alerting video *Back From the Brink* were shown to jump-start mobilization plans. Branches in Ann Arbor and Chapel Hill used the video and project materials for town meetings, which sparked more community showings.

Between February and April, Jody Dodd, U.S. Section project coordinator, and Stephanie Fraser, U.N. WILPF project staff (and the creator of the [www.reachingcritical-will.org](http://www.reachingcritical-will.org) website) presented preparatory workshops in Santa Cruz, Berkeley, New York, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. These workshops were very well received by WILPF members and other activists who attended. Jackie Cabasso from Western States Legal Foundation and Marylia Kelley from Tri-Valley Cares joined in presenting the West Coast trainings. Those not coming to New York will use the resource materials and organizing tools to generate critical political will in their communities.

Along with the materials created for this campaign, the question of who is really profiting from the proliferation of weapons is highlighted. Indeed, this is the core inquiry of WILPF’s Dismantling the War Economy Campaign. To investigate and challenge weapons corporations as part of this campaign’s Mil-Corp ConnexXion project, contact Pat Birnie, 5349 West Bar X Street, Tucson, AZ, 85713-6402, (520) 908-9269, birnie@gci-net.com. In addition, check out the Tri-Valley Cares’ website [http://tvc.org](http://tvc.org), where Dr. Robert Civiak’s analysis of the Department of Energy’s Fiscal Year 2001 budget request is featured.

To join the ImPEACE the Congress project educating voters about peace issues and candidates’ campaign funding sources, contact Val Mullen, 695 North Road, Vershire, VT 05079-9702, vmullen@together.net. Or, contact WILPF’s new Program Coordinator, Charmaine Sprengelmeyer (215) 563-7110, or email, csprengelmeyer@wilpf.org.

**U.S. Comes Up Short on Women and Armed Conflict**

With its swollen military budget and almost 50 percent market share of the world’s legally-sanctioned traffic in weapons, the United States has done little in the past five years to advance the objectives declared in the Beijing Platform for Action’s chapter on Women and Armed Conflict.

The U.S. report to the United Nations [http://secretary.state.gov/www/picw/beijing](http://secretary.state.gov/www/picw/beijing) makes only glancing reference to the topic. In this area, as throughout the report and the Beijing process, prospects for significant implementation suffer from lack of information and specific goals for measuring progress. This failure must be addressed at the Beijing+5 meeting in June if the Platform for Action is to make a real difference in women’s lives. (The U.S. report relies on publications from the President’s Interagency Council on Women, PICW, which was created in 1995 to coordinate implementation of the Platform and the commitments made in Beijing. PICW’s *America’s Commitment: Federal Programs Benefiting Women and New Initiatives as Follow-up to the UN FWCW (1997)* describes a potpourri of programs relating to the Platform).

The chapter on Women and Armed Conflict states the objective of reducing “excessive military expenditures and control(ling) the availability of armaments.” However, it offers no specifics or figures to work from on military spending or curbing the U.S. domestic arms industry. The chapter also lists a commitment to promote “women’s contribution to fostering a culture of peace,” but there is no further information on the topic. A 1999 supplement to the report merely mentions two refugee initiatives in Kosovo and a speech made by the First Lady in Uganda as work to be credited under “Women and Armed Conflict” for the year.

A mid-1999 report cites the creation of a new Woman and Armed Conflict working group. Yet, as of March, this group was not listed on the PICW website. When we called the office of the assistant secretary of the Navy — who is supposed to serve as chair — an aide said there was no such working group.

WILPF may be able to contribute constructively to the working group, when and if it is actually constituted and convened, since official reports say that all of these groups should have “extensive contact and consultation with non-governmental organizations as they go about their work.”

*Yoshiko Ikuta is chair of the Disarm! Dismantling the War Economy campaign. Jody Dodd is the Reaching Critical Will Project coordinator.*
Five years after the Beijing Platform for Action was established in 1995, experts say not enough progress has been made in the area of Education and Training.

Dr. Patricia Flor, chairperson of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, said it is important to evaluate both the successes and failures of the Platform, but she called education an area of “disappointment.” Flor cited a decrease in girls’ secondary school enrollment. She also said governments have not allocated enough funds from their budgets to support new programs. Because of this, goals for education and training for girls and women have not been reached.

Education is one of the 12 critical areas of concern recognized by the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The Platform recommends action to ensure equal access to education, eradicate illiteracy, improve women’s access to vocational training, develop non-discriminatory education, allocate sufficient resources for educational reforms and promote lifelong education and training for girls and women.

The office of Development of Women within the U.S. Agency for International Development estimates there are 75 million fewer girls than boys in school. Despite an increase in the proportion of girls enrolled, enrollment rates are higher for boys than girls in developing countries. The obstacles that maintain this gap in education are broad in scope.

Engrained cultural beliefs that place little value on girls’ education still have a stronghold in many parts of the world. For example, a headline last November in the New York Times read: “School a Rare Luxury for Rural Chinese Girls.” When the government cuts funding for education and school fees rise, girls are the first to lose out. This is especially true when sons are preferred over girls. Girls are expected to do household chores and the cost of educating females is seen as outweighing the many benefits.

In spite of these attitudes, several countries have found ways to create advancements in girls’ education. One way is to link academic learning with practical skills in order to make education seem viable for poor families. This means domestic training, hygiene and nutrition skills are combined with basic literacy education. In places where girls are still marginalized by cultural beliefs, home-school programs have proved beneficial. In Uganda, an NGO called Red Barna has introduced a system where teachers travel to the homes or gardens of young women to provide education. Uganda has also implemented a kind of affirmative action system to provide incentives for girls’ enrollment, including at the university level.

In order to combat poverty and unaffordable tuitions, an Indian organization called the Tamil Nadu Women’s Development Project organized a network of self-help groups so that poorer women can send their daughters to school. Women from the community pool their savings into a common fund, from which the poorest women can take out loans for school fees.

Just getting girls into school is hard enough, but they
must contend with violence and gender-insensitive education once they are there. The failure of schools to deal with sexual harassment persists as a serious obstacle to girls’ education. Violence against girls is often ignored due to poorly trained teachers. South Africa, for example, responded to rising rape statistics with a program called COLTS-Culture of Learning and Teaching Services, which encourages students to use visual arts and drama to express how they feel about the environment in their school. Many depict problems of sexual abuse, rape and sexually transmitted diseases. Government money for the training of teachers and the creation of textbooks free of gender stereotypes are essential to the creation of a gender-sensitive educational system.

Along with poverty and sexism, lack of childcare and inconvenient class scheduling are yet further obstacles. Women in Bombay developed a system in which rural women who are literate take turns teaching illiterate women, rotating childcare responsibilities among themselves. The University of California-Berkeley has developed a policy that makes it easier for women in graduate school to balance motherhood and education, allowing graduate students who are parents to have more time to meet deadlines. Distance education has also provided a method where women can raise their children and educate themselves via correspondence courses by computer, mail or fax. Enrollment comparisons of women and men in higher education show only a small disparity in industrialized countries, but many women are still in conventional fields of study. Gaining access to higher education has not automatically meant economic advantages for women in the labor market.

An important solution is to encourage women’s participation in fields of study such as science and technology from an early age. Also, measures and policies that incorporate women into leadership positions at the university level must be implemented. Policies to eliminate sexual harassment at the university level should include gender training for the faculty and feedback from the students. Sexist images and messages in textbooks are also a concern.

In places where basic needs are not met, it is difficult for some to see education for women and girls as a priority. However, educated women have fewer children and tend to be healthier. They are more employable, earn higher wages and are more active in civic affairs. Educated women are more likely to avoid the cycle of poverty that traps so many of the world’s women.

Amanda Scioscia recently worked as Peace & Freedom’s intern. She is currently a reporter at the Phoenix New Times newsmagazine.
As this will be my last report from the United Nations, I feel an urgent need to make it particularly meaningful. I have settled on outlining the development of this complex global organization, because I have a sense that what happened more than half a century ago and where we are now is not understood.

Those of us present at the creation of the United Nations in San Francisco felt it was a very fragile time. Would the United States join, or would it refrain as it did with the League of Nations? President Roosevelt, the United Nations’ strongest supporter, had just died. However, 50 countries eventually signed the Treaty for an International Peace Organization, including the United States. The Security Council was developed in order to ease the concerns of the “winners” of World War II that nothing could be forced upon their nation-states, because each of the five countries on the Council had veto power (and still do). The General Assembly was to be a world parliament; each of the 50 members had one vote. The membership of the Assembly has since more than tripled, but the same guidelines apply.

The overwhelming presence that has developed at the United Nations has surprised and pleased all of us who wanted it to succeed. Yet U.S. citizens must remain cognizant of what our congress people do at the United Nations. Often what is done in the name of our citizenry is either not known by our citizens or considered inappropriate.

I speak specifically of the recent visit to the Security Council (it now has 15 members, but still only five with veto power) by Jesse Helms, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. Helms said, “the United States would withdraw if the U.N. sought to impose its presumed authority on the American people without their consent.”

Senator Helms was wrong on two counts. Actually, most people in the United States have very positive feelings about the United Nations, a body that has no powers that are not given to it by its member states. It can only act when they decide it should.

Despite Senator Helms’ lack of information, Ambassador Richard Holbrooke may have produced a modest coup. Some of the monies owed by the United States were finally approved for payment ($1 billion) and the international protocol banning the use of child soldiers was signed.

However, the real man of the hour is Secretary General Kofi Annan. He recently appointed an Under Secretary for Disarmament, which gave disarmament a much greater focus. He accepted and took responsibility for errors and problems created by the United Nations (in conjunction with the United States) and said there were inappropriate and inadequate responses in both Bosnia and Rwanda. He went even further when he said: “Through error, misjudgment and an inability to recognize the scope of the evil confronting us, we failed to do our part to help save the people of Srebrenica from the Serb campaign of mass murder.”

Indeed, the most serious U.N. problems have always been regarding peace. In its role as the world’s largest database and initiator of reform, the United Nations has been very successful. The largest international environmental report (The Brundtland Report) was started by the General Assembly and began the environmental movement. The World Health Organization has eradicated smallpox, provided health care to children in countries where no significant care existed, and is developing a global approach to the problems of AIDS and drugs.

The formulation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to which all member states commit themselves, has delineated the goals of freedom, justice and security for all people. The U.N. Transition Assistance Group, when requested, works to provide free and fair elections around the world.

The United Nations has also acted as a catalyst in the great movement toward decolonization that marked the last half of the 1900s, and the U.N. Development Programme has launched more than 5,000 development projects in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America. For the past 16 years, I have had the great fortune to work for WILPF at the United Nations — an exciting and gratifying time. I must mention the wonderful women who worked with me: Ruth Sillman, Betsey Fehrer, Ethel Panken, Anne Florant and Ruth Chalmers.

Paula H. Tasso is the former United Nations representative for U.S. WILPF.
The World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and related Intolerance (WCAR) will be the first major U.N. conference of the 21st century. It will be held in South Africa, during July 2001.

For 25 years, WILPF member Edith Ballantyne has been devoted to this issue. She was instrumental in forming a sub-committee of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that works on organizing support for the United Nations to combat racism, racial discrimination, apartheid and to support decolonization. The group is now called the Sub-Committee Against Racism, Racial Discrimination and for Decolonization. For quite some time, they have lobbied to get governments to support a conference like WCAR, with Edith at the helm.

Of course, WILPF is proudly listed as a supporter of WCAR. The fact that Mary Church Terrell, an outstanding leader and organizer in the African American community, was a founding member of WILPF speaks volumes about our early commitment to the creation of a society free of racism and racial discrimination.

Obviously, this conference is of tremendous significance to the Uniting for Racial Justice campaign. Countless contacts have been made by committee members and by WILPF staff, including Executive Director Mary Day Kent, Legislative Organizer Gillian Gilhool, U.N. Office Director Felicity Hill, P & F Editor Theta Pavis, Metro N.Y. member Gloria Korecki and WILPF interns.

We have been working to understand how much involvement the United States will have in the conference and identifying ways to participate.

An article last year from the Inter Press Service announcing the conference repeatedly quotes Edith, who spoke at a seminar in Geneva, and said the phenomenon of racial discrimination was increasingly becoming a part of society. “The World Conference should chart a course to stop this trend,” Edith is quoted as saying. “There is also a need to obtain the commitment of world leaders to end racism.”

In the same article, the following statements were made: “Amid strong U.S. objections, the United Nations decided in December 1997 that it should convene a conference on racism. . . ‘Under current restrictions on U.S. funding for U.N. activities, U.S. assessments to the United Nations cannot be used to support expenses associated with a U.N. World Conference,’ U.S. delegate Craig Kuehl told the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee.”

Kuehl went on to say it would be a wasteful exercise to use scarce resources on a big talk-fest when the 185-member General Assembly in New York can discuss the same issue. “In our view, the issue of racism, vital as it is, is an example of precisely the kind of theme that could be brought to the General Assembly, in a Special Session or otherwise, as a means to enhance its standing and relevance,” he said.

However, when I attended a meeting at the United Nations late last year on WCAR it was obvious from many of the comments made regarding U.S. involvement that our officials were being hesitant when it came to planning the event.

In March, at the urging of the UFORJE committee, WILPF Legislative Organizer Gillian Gilhool spoke with Elaine Sampson in the State Department’s International Organizations Bureau. She assured Gillian that the U.S. had never been opposed to participation in the conference, but had merely wanted it to be in one of the established U.N. cities to cut costs, etc.

Now, what do WILPFers do? Perhaps contacting our local channels, such as congressional representatives, can provide us with better sense of what the United States’ position is regarding this conference. Any information can be sent to the WILPF U.S. Section Office in Philadelphia, or reported to your regional contact.

In a document released by the sub-committee Edith Ballantyne chairs, the following suggestions were made

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AFRICA ISSUES

The Women Waging Peace forum was held in Boston on December 16, 1999. It consisted of 100 women peace activists invited to Harvard’s Kennedy School for two weeks to exchange strategies. Pamela Saffer and Virginia Rasmussen, who each wrote a report, attended a one-day public forum. Both felt that day was worth attending and that the program should be followed. (A separate report is available).

WILPF member Isha Dyfan (who regularly aids Felicity Hill with advocacy work at the United Nations in New York) attended the National Summit on Africa, held February 16-20, as a New Jersey State delegate along with Regina Birchem as WILPF delegate at large. While the original idea of the Summit and many elements of the Plan of Action for U.S. Policy are laudable, the overall outcome of the Summit confirms that voices are needed to counter exploitive economic globalization interests. We endorse neither the final document nor the plans for the Summit as they now stand.

Another initiative of the Africa Issue Committee is the formation of the International WILPF Working Group on Africa. This group/committee currently includes the International Executive Committee (IEC) representative from WILPF-Sierra Leone as well as the WILPF Burundi Group. We welcome all interested, including members not attending the IEC to join.

The Africa Issue Committee is in need of more members, contributions, and hands-on activism to help this group run more effectively. Any aid you can provide would be greatly appreciated.

Additional program-related information is posted on the U.S. WILPF and WILPF International websites.

ABOLISHING THE DEATH PENALTY

Abolishing the Death Penalty became an official national committee of WILPF in January 2000. This means that we now have space in Peace & Freedom and a small budget.

In order for our group to function, we will need input, and home and email addresses. Since the states vary so much on practices, it is difficult to pick one thing to concentrate on. However, I suggest we focus on the “Moratorium,” which calls for a suspension on the death penalty until certain injustices can be changed. The recent passages of the Moratorium by both the state of Illinois and the city of Philadelphia demonstrate that change is indeed possible. Still, other much smaller groups are also needed to take on this legislation.

I can send you a copy of the Moratorium so you can make copies to use in your area. Send to MORATORIUM, Lynn Furay, 5929 Queensloch, #134, Houston, TX 77096. Send email to lynnfuray33@aol.com.

CIVIL LIBERTIES

There are some victories in the continuing struggle against the use of secret evidence to detain immigrants. Nasser K. Ahmed, an immigrant who had been jailed for three and a half years on secret evidence, was released at the end of November 1999, due to the efforts of the National Coalition to Protect Political Freedom (NCPFF).

“I’m pleased that he’s released,” said Rep. David E. Bonior of Michigan (D). “But we still have about 20 others who are being held and it’s a travesty of justice that this continues in our country without people having the right to face their accusers.”

Twenty other immigrants are still being held in spite of the fact that Federal District Judge William Walls, when releasing Hany Kiarldeen, ruled, “The use of secret evidence creates a one-sided process by which the protections of our adversarial process are rendered impotent.”

Judge Walls declared unconstitutional the use of secret evidence to lock up immigrants while their deportation proceedings are underway.

Reps. Bonior (D) and Tom Campbell (R) have introduced The Secret Evidence Repeal Act of 1999, HR 2121, which would prohibit all uses of secret evidence. In introducing HR 2121, Bonior and Campbell wrote, “Since 1996, the INS has increased the detention and deportation of non-citizens based on evidence kept secret from the detainees and their attorneys. The use of secret evidence has resulted in the detention of non-citizens based on unreliable allegations or erroneous information.”

HR 2121 has 63 cosponsors and needs more.

Action: Urge your representative to both cosponsor HR 2121 and to push for hearings in the House Immigration Subcommittee of the Judiciary Committee. Call Capitol Switchboard (202) 224-3121 or write House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515.

Write Attorney General Janet Reno to tell her to stop the use of secret evidence in deportation proceedings. Send to Reno at U.S. Dept. of Justice, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20530 or fax (202) 514-4371.

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Teacher Kattia greets her students on their first day of school in Quesada, Ecuador.
under the title: How to Contribute to the Substantive Preparations (for WCAR).

- Make WCAR known in your country
- Build coalitions in support of WCAR and its objective
- Intensify the struggle to combat racism
- Lobby governments to support WCAR financially and politically
- Share your ideas and expectations of WCAR with others and the (WILPF) NGO planning committee

One comment made at U.N. meeting I attended stands out. The WCAR organizers made a strong plea for organizations to ensure that those affected by racism would be able to attend the conference. The expense of traveling and staying in a foreign country cannot be met by many of us who are daily affected by racism. One participant expressed concern about having a meeting with “the suits” who did not have a clue about the impact of racism in people’s daily lives. Perhaps WILPF branches would consider strengthening their ties with groups of color and help raise money to finance a person of color attending the conference.

The New Millennium offers us many opportunities to effect change in our world. It is up to us to seize the moment and tackle these seemingly unsolvable issues. With women like Edith Ballantyne in the forefront, we know we can only move UP!

Laura Partridge is the chair of the UFORJE Campaign.

The third commitment is about promoting non-violent forms of conflict resolution and reducing the incidents of human rights abuses in conflict situations. To many women, the goal of eliminating conflict situations, not reducing the harm done within them, is a more reasonable goal. War is the disregard for principles, laws and respect for human rights and attempting to give war a human face seems a farce to many, especially those who have survived conflict. Since 1995, we have seen the legitimization of armed intervention rather than non-violent forms of intervention in Kosovo, Chechnya and East Timor, among others—a dangerous trend that Beijing + 5 should protest.

The fourth commitment is to promoting women’s contribution to fostering a culture of peace. It is obvious that women have been engaged in peace-building activities before, during and after conflict, yet they have been given little recognition. These activities do not attract media attention or financial commitment, yet their values are immeasurable. It is hoped this meeting will find ways to link these activities and practices in a more cohesive manner.

The fifth commitment is to provide protection, assistance and training to displaced and refugee women. The biggest gap that has been observed recently in conflict zones is the unequal treatment of refugees by the international community. While refugees in the north have been getting immediate and adequate materials, provisions and asylum, those in the south lack the basics to survive; many die of preventable diseases while others experience the spread of AIDS and HIV. Often the time it takes to deploy peacekeepers costs many people their lives, as refugee camps are left vulnerable and unprotected. Rapid response in deployment of peacekeepers is necessary if we are to actually prevent conflicts, rather than mopping up after them.

Women are working throughout the world by contributing to alternative reports, lobbying their governments, coming to New York and following the debates through the Internet. To find out more, contact the WILPF U.N. Office, (212) 682-1265 or wilpfun@igc.org.

Felicity Hill is director of WILPF’s U.N. office. Email her at flick@igc.apc.org.

INTERNET RESOURCES:

- [www.wilpf.int.ch](http://www.wilpf.int.ch)
- [www.reachingcriticalwill.org](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org).


Review and Appraisal of a document written by the Secretary General after receiving governments completed questionnaires: [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/ecn62000pc2.pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/ecn62000pc2.pdf)

Kay Camp, former International and U.S. WILPF president has been awarded the Martin Luther King Jr. Award by the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) in recognition of her lifetime commitment to peace activism.

Kay, 81, has led peace delegations to Chile, El Salvador, North and South Vietnam, Iraq and Iran. She has participated in numerous acts of nonviolent civil disobedience, been a tax resister and candidate for Congress. This January, for example, she was arrested in Pennsylvania as part of the Brandywine Peace Community’s protest of Lockheed Martin’s involvement in nuclear warfare and their role in welfare cutbacks.

After being released, Kay sent out a message on WILPF’s email about the action. In her message, Kay quoted King: “I refuse to accept the view that humanity is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace can never become a reality.” She went on to say that King was a “seeker of social, economic and non-military global justice, a true revolutionary and a poet. By now he would surely have become an outspoken feminist and challenger of corporate power.”

Since 1979, FOR has presented an annual Martin Luther King Jr. Award to those distinguished activists who have worked for social justice in Dr. King’s tradition of non-violent struggle. Past recipients include civil rights leader Septima Clark, folk singer Pete Seeger and anti-nuclear activists Jim and Shelley Douglass. Recipients of the award receive both a plaque and a $2,500 check.

FOR presented the award to Kay on March 24 in Philadelphia, at an event which coincided with the U.S. Section Board meeting.

Founded in 1917, FOR has been a counterpart organization to WILPF for most of our existence. This latest event is testimony to our shared goals and recognition of both Kay as a courageous leader and her organization.
While doing research on the Beijing Platform for Action, I started to wonder if anybody was keeping tabs on the progress made by our governments, which have made many promises in the last decades during various social world conferences organized by the United Nations. I was surprised and pleased to see that as of 1998 the United Nations has a body charged with exactly that task. However, the result of their work is less gratifying. Let me quote from the 1999 report this body presented in Geneva: “Thus far, the five-year reviews of major United Nations conferences and summits reveal a mixed picture, giving rise to doubts that the goals and targets set at conferences can be reached within their agreed time periods...”

The report went on to say that while considerable progress has been made in many areas — including children’s health, literacy, life expectancy and reproductive health programs — advances have been limited on several fronts and there have also been setbacks. “Progress in the fight against poverty and unemployment has been eroded ... Malnutrition, malaria, diarrhea and communicable diseases continue to kill millions and stifle the economic potential of large segments of the population.”

The report also noted that the HIV and AIDS epidemic is leading to increased mortality in many countries, in particular in sub-Saharan Africa.

The authors went on to state that, “Besides socioeconomic impediments, conflicts... have impoverished countries in a number of major regions, in many cases wiping out the achievements of decades of economic and social development and environmental protection ... Dealing with conflict is also affecting aid flows: the proportion of official development assistance devoted to relief has increased from 2 percent to over 10 per cent in the last decade.”

This very bleak picture confirms everything we know. At the same time, the European Community has essentially taken away any hope that military expenditures should be reduced so that money can be reallocated to economic and social priorities of their citizens. — Bruna Nota

International WILPF president

**MAJOR U.N. CONFERENCES OF THE LAST DECADE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Conference/Summit</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, Austria).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, Denmark).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Habitat II (Istanbul, Turkey).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>World Food Summit (Rome, Italy).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Earth Summit (New York). This conference was a follow-up to the 1992 U.N. Conference on Environment and Development.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (South Africa).</td>
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**Around WILPF**

Cape Cod WILPF members (clockwise from bottom left) Suzanne Packer, Virginia Rasmussen, Lynn Hiller, Paula Schnep, and Phyllis Briscoe hold a working group meeting to discuss democracy and corporations.

Sacramento Valley WILPF members at their annual retreat in Auburn, CA.

Millee Livingston
RESOURCE LIST: BEIJING + 5

BOOKS
Beijing! UN Fourth Conference on Women. Anita Anand and Gouri Salvi, Eds. Women’s Feature Service, 1999. Contact Women, Ink at (212) 687-8633 or visit them online for ordering information. (Websites listed below.)

Beyond Beijing: The International Women’s Movement.
Cheryl Miller, Ed. (This book is also available in accompaniment with the Beyond Beijing documentary video, produced by Salome Chasnoff.) The Handbook, 1997. Beyondmedia, 59 E. Van Buren, 14th Floor, Chicago, IL 60605. The text includes the Platform for Action, an appendix for teachers and facilitators and an extensive resources list. Reviewers have called this text a very accurate and informative portrayal of the Beijing Conference and its participants.


Peace Train to Beijing and Beyond.

Seeing the World Through Women’s Eyes.
Naimh Richmond and Marilyn Cuneo, Co-Editors. WILPF MN Metro Branch, 757 Raymond Ave., #204, St. Paul, MN 55114. This text is the collection of Peace Train poems in 10 languages (with English translations) from women in 18 countries.

To Beijing and Beyond: Pittsburgh and the United Nation’s Fourth Conference on Women.

Without Reservation: The Global Tribunal on Accountability for Women’s Human Rights.

VIDEOS
Peace Train Saga: Helsinki-Beijing ‘95: Carnets de Route (52 min., French and English). Produced by Vanja Baumberger. Planisphere Productions, 14 Rue Gourgas, CH-1205, Geneva, Switzerland. This video features interviews, workshops, landscapes, politics and memories of the active women from around the world aboard WILPF’s Peace Train.

Peace Train to Beijing (30 min.); The NGO Forum on Women (30 min.); Peace Train to Beijing and the Fourth Conference on Women (58 min.); plus Tren de Paz hacia Beijing (30 min.), a Spanish version of the Peace Train and NGO Forum experience. Produced by WILPF board member Robin Lloyd. Contact: (802) 862-4929, rlloyd@together.net, Green Valley Media, 300 Maple St., Burlington, VT, 05401. Videos available to WILPF members for $20 each.

To Empower Women: The Beijing Platform for Action (28 min., complete 162-page Declaration and Platform included). Produced by Margo Smith of Off Center Video. Contact The Video Project: Media for a Safe and Sustainable Environment at 1-800-4-PLANET or visit www.videoproject.org for order information. Framed around five planks from the Beijing Platform for Action - poverty, education, economics, human rights and armed conflict.


WEBSITES

www.rci.rutgers.edu/~cwgl/humanright - Center for Women’s Global Leadership with special Beijing + 5 section.

www.un.org/womenwatch/daw - U.N. Division for the Advancement of Women. This website contains links to sites on Beijing+5, the Platform for Action, the CSW and CEDAW, as well as a link to a Publications site.

www.womenaction.org - As a companion website to WomenWatch (the U.N. website for women, www.un.org/womenwatch), it contains links to regional and international women’s media networks providing news on Beijing + 5 initiatives and updates worldwide.

www.womenink.org - Website for books on women and development. This site provides a wide selection of printed material for women on a variety of subjects, as well as some specifically addressing Beijing+5.

- Compiled by Katie Murray, Peace & Freedom intern
International WILPF to become part of this coalition.

In order to propose a resolution to international WILPF (at the International Executive Committee [IEC] in July), it needs to come from the board of a section. Therefore, we proposed to U.S. WILPF at its March board meeting that they present a resolution to International WILPF to join the coalition. Some NGO members of ICN include: Latin American groups such as Accion Andina, CINEP and Andean Information Network; the Foundation on Drug Policy and Human Rights; the Society for Threatened People; Transform (UK); and the Transnational Institute (the Netherlands). The Coalition has been sponsored by, but is independent from, the European NGO Council on Drugs and Development (ENCOD).

ENCOD is a network of NGOs from the Council of Europe countries who are concerned about the impact on developing countries of the illegal drug trade and international policies to control it. ICN, on the other hand, is a worldwide network of organizations that wish to improve drug control policies and make them more just, humane and effective. One can join ICN by signing on to their statement of purpose, which is available on the web at http://www.tni.org/drugs under ENCOD.

An important question for U.S. WILPF is: “What do our sisters in Latin America think about this?” We are in the process of sending the statement in Spanish to our LIMPAL sections in Colombia, Peru and Bolivia, and eagerly await their response.

In order to educate ourselves on this issue, we propose that the Drug Policy Task Force (with the support of the board) lead a workshop on this issue at the IEC.

In other activities, member Theresa Hutsebaut from New Jersey has been participating in the NGO Committee on Narcotics and Substance Abuse at the United Nations. She reports that it is not a cohesive group. Phil Coffin of the Lindesmith Foundation gave a presentation to the group describing the policy called “harm reduction.” (This is the concept that U.S. WILPF supported in a resolution in its triennial Congress in St. Louis last summer, which stated that “the war on drugs is causing more harm than drug abuse itself.”) It was viewed as highly controversial by other NGOs there, such as the Lions Club and the Rotary Club.

As chair of the task force, I have kept up on drug issues by subscribing to the (free) listserve MAPINC. I would highly recommend it for anyone interested in the global ramifications of the War on Drugs.

Notes from the Editor

Dear readers,

I hope you enjoy this latest issue of Peace & Freedom which is dedicated to exploring the remarkable Beijing conference on women held five years ago. Many WILPF members traveled to Beijing for this historic gathering and many others will be in New York in June to take part in the crucial review of the Platform for Action at the United Nations.

I wanted to take a little of your time to tell you about some of the things we’ve been working on at Peace & Freedom.

We continue to get many letters to the editor, which we welcome. Please remember to keep your letters to about 300 words and include your contact information and branch location.

We’ve been fortunate lately to also receive many wonderful photographs from branch members around the country. Please remember to send us pictures of events, actions, demonstrations or special branch gatherings, as we are always looking for illustrations for the magazine. It is easier for us if we do not have to return your photographs.

This year we began accepting advertising which is starting to generate some small funds. This income is reinvested in the magazine to help cover the high costs of graphics, design, artwork and production.

The next issue of Peace & Freedom will focus on democracy and the media. We are already deep into the planning of this issue, but please feel free to send us your ideas and suggestions. Space is always at a premium, but we appreciate your feedback and queries. Copy for the next issue is due May 22 for an August publication date.

The last issue of 2000 will look at consumerism with a deadline in early September.

Please keep in touch.

Peace,

Theta Pavis
Editor
“Progress is not automatic; the world grows better because people wish that it should and take the right steps to make it better.”
— Jane Addams

WILPF has been blessed with many bequests that immortalize the work of peace carried out over a lifetime by both members and friends of WILPF. Many members choose to include WILPF in their will or request that WILPF receive the residual of their estate after it is settled. Some include WILPF as a beneficiary in their insurance arrangements. These are all ways to create a legacy for peace to ensure WILPF will continue to carry out its mission into the future.

Several times a month, WILPF receives notices of memorial gifts to WILPF from friends and family of members who have passed on. We are always touched and often amazed by the messages that tell of the rich lives which WILPF has been so fortunate to share.

The love expressed and the respect for these pilgrims of peace could not be greater or more heartfelt than for a great leader whose name may be well known in the farthest reaches of our world.

Some of our members who have passed on recently include:
- **William Camp** - member of WILPF and husband of Kay Camp, former President of WILPF U.S. Section.
- **Ichiro Hasegawa** - member of WILPF and husband of Marii Hasegawa, former President of WILPF U.S. Section.
- **Milada Marsalka** - longtime President of the New Haven County Branch of WILPF, who died January 21, 2000.
- **Leonard Nelson** - member of WILPF and husband of Anne Nelson, former President of JAPA.

Testimonials and memorials may be sent in honor of these remarkable human beings to WILPF U.S Section. Their families will be informed.

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Please let us know of WILPF members and friends of WILPF who have passed on so we can remember them in our magazine. Please let us know if you would like information about estate planning for yourself or for someone else.

Just complete the form below and send it in or call Rosemary Burke at (215)-563-7110.

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**Confidential Response**

☐ Please send me information about estate planning, planned giving, making a bequest and/or including WILPF in my will.

Name______________________________________________________________

Address___________________________________________________________

City________________________________State__________________Zip__________

☐ I would like to give a gift to honor someone.

Please find enclosed my gift of $_______ in honor of _____________________________.
Please inform ___________________________ of this gift at:

Address:__________________________________________________________

City:_________________________State:_______Zip:_________
REPORTS ON THE WTO SEATTLE MEETING
All reporting branches carried some news about the November Seattle World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting. Catonsville heard a report on WILPF’s participation at Seattle from Victoria Carter, a member of the CEDAW Working Group. Berkeley called its January meeting “Rebels with a Cause?” and heard reports from members who had been in Seattle. Santa Cruz’s December meeting featured a panel discussion with people who had been at the WTO actions and was extremely well attended by the community at large.

Los Angeles and Santa Cruz carried portions of an article, Militarism Goes Global, by Molly Morgan, a WILPF member from San Diego. It calls attention to the “security exception” in the new GATT rules, which allows governments to protect their countries from both external and internal threats. Molly speculates that countries will choose to increase their spending on military programs at the expense of civilian programs, and that this will in turn further protect transnational corporations and private investments.

BEYOND SEATTLE
Tucson joined a community coalition at a town meeting on the impact of the WTO policies. In April, they also helped coordinate street actions in Tucson that took place in conjunction with Washington, D.C. protests against the policies of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and WTO.

Minnesota Metro is running a series of articles taken from the book Women in a World of Money: Making the Local to Global Connection, written by members Corin Kagan and Sally Flax. The book is also being used for workshops on economic literacy. Detroit organized study groups and encouraged its members to conduct their own by printing an invitational flyer and providing them with suggestions for doing so. It also gave a phone number to call to get reading material for discussion during groups.

Berkeley heard member Madeline Duckles address the issue of “Where we go from here,” and saw excerpts of the video Showdown in Seattle: 5 Days that Shook the World. It also published The Devil’s Dictionary of Free Trade, with definitions such as “debt: a form of subjugation, formerly achieved by conquest,” and “developing nation: Debtor.”

Portland advocated work against Most Favored Nation status for China, the new NAFTA-level fight against shipment of more production abroad and acceptance of China’s human rights violations. Santa Cruz began six session study groups, with readings and study questions, consisting of eight to 10 participants. They hope to develop actions that will help remove sovereignty from corporate boardrooms and restore it to the people.

After conducting study groups last fall, Cape Cod developed an education packet for use by study groups in churches and synagogues. They also explored developing a localized campaign idea, such as corporatization of our education system. Cape Cod also published an alert entitled “The biotech industry uses ‘organic’ as Trojan Horse to enter Indian market.” The U.N. Development Program held a meeting in February on the Role of Business Partnership in Promoting Trade and Sustainable Development. Mahyco, the Indian seed company bought up by Monsanto, is playing a leading role in the public-private partnership. Monsanto, having failed to entice Indian farmers to carry its GE seed, is now using a private company to enter the market.

ON ABOLITION 2000 AND OTHER NUCLEAR ISSUES
Santa Cruz had an interactive theater experience at its February meeting, to encourage members to join in the Abolition 2000 campaign. Adventurous audience members were asked to participate in a skit during public tabling. Ann Arbor launched its campaign with a teach-in including a community forum. The novelty of the teach-in was that the two political scientist leaders used science to dispel myths about nuclear war, and approached disarmament from the angle of pragmatism rather than principle.

Detroit ran a long article that clarified many of the issues around the transport of plutonium to reactors and the production of mixed-oxide fuel, and offered suggestions for action.

UNITING FOR RACIAL JUSTICE
Fresno had discussion groups about the book Life of a Slave Girl by Harriet Jacob, and had a special meeting at the African American Historical Museum, which was featuring Yoshiko Ikuta, bottom left, and WILPF members at an NPT workshop in Santa Cruz.
an exhibit about the book. The branch was joined there in discussions about the book, with guests from the museum and from the African American community, speaking about collaborative efforts for the 21st century.

**Cape Cod** and the Racial Justice Committee of Santa Cruz are collecting local articles about racism to forward to the national WILPF office, as suggested by that office, so that a national profile on racism can be compiled for the U.N.-sponsored World Conference on Racism to be held next year. **U.C. Santa Cruz** collaborated on “The Color of Violence: Violence Against Women of Color,” a two-day conference. Two members of **Tucson** were arrested on Martin Luther King Jr. day for insisting on a dialogue with the management of the Tucson Raytheon Missiles production facility.

**East Timor**

Pajaro joined **Santa Cruz** at a meeting with a speaker who has been working with the East Timorese for five years. She urged the audience to ask Congress to pressure Indonesia to return captured East Timorese to their homes, and asked for donations to the Sister Maria Lourdes School, where women and girls learn topics such as democracy and equality and develop skills. For more information call (831) 728-4190, or email pam@etan.org. **Fresno** member Rebecca Shen flew to Salt Lake City to meet the new president of Indonesia when he came there for an eye exam. She talked her way through Secret Service, confronted him with demands for an end to human right abuses in Indonesia and punishment of those responsible. He promised to launch an investigation.

**The “war” in Colombia**

Los Angeles urged members to oppose President Clinton’s announced aid package to Colombia of a further $1.5 billion over two years, of which only $238 million is for supporting peace negotiations and economic development. **Tucson** is part of a coalition planning a community teach-in on the Intervention in Colombia.

**2000: The International Year for the Culture of Peace at the U.N.**


**International Women’s Day**

Los Angeles heard Suzan Gallerito, actress and journalist, recreate the character of Susan B. Anthony at a luncheon. **Berkeley** advertised a global women’s strike to take place on International women’s Day. **MN Metro** presented a workshop entitled “Economic Globalization: A look at Consequences for Women in Developing Countries” and sponsored a Beijing+5 Poetry Slam.

WILPF staff and interns handed out literature and recruited members at a farmers market in **Philadelphia** as part of Women’s History Month.

**Election and Political Issues**

There were 20 propositions on the California state March ballot, and all reporting **California** branches addressed them. Perhaps the most egregious were Proposition 21, to increase the punitive nature of treatment of juveniles, and Proposition 18, to expand the death penalty. **Catonsville** signed on to a “Declaration of Health Care Independence,” an effort to provide health care for all in Maryland. **Cape Cod** carried a plea for Mumia Abu-Jamal; his Supreme Court appeal was declined in October, and his lawyer filed for a writ of habeas corpus. This is his last chance to avoid the death penalty.

**Membership**

In 1999, **Fresno** acquired 20 new members, an increase of over 10 percent. Their ideas for how to retain and increase membership and involvement are: be aggressive about asking people to join; bring people to events; carry literature about WILPF with you; increase visibility in the community (public service announcements, flyers); develop connections with the local schools; and get to know members, by carpooling, etc.

**Special Events**

Menominee Valley held its annual brunch to benefit Amnesty International. **Fresno** hosted the Western Region WILPF 85th Anniversary dinner on April 28. Many branches held events for the 85th: **Palm Beach** hosted a luncheon, **Asheville** put on an evening program, Palo Alto did a dinner with **San Jose**. **Catonsville** hosted another event, Los Angeles hosted a luncheon and **Chapel Hill** sponsored a dinner with Phyllis Yingling as speaker.

**What in the world?**

Find out at . . . [www.globalspin.org](http://www.globalspin.org)

*News and Views from Around the Globe*
The following articles appeared in Peace & Freedom in 1999. The first number refers to the issue number, the second to the page number. (No. 1 = January/February, No. 2 = March/April/May, No.3 = June/July/August, No. 4 = September/October, No. 5 = November/December)

**Africa**
A Pan-African Women's Peace Movement, by Regina Birclem (5:21)

**Cuba**
Cuba Action, by Lisa Valanti (2:29)
Inspired by Cuba, by Kristyn Joy (3:12)
The Challenge to Cuba's Environment, by Bryony Schwan (3:13)
Cuba Opens Latin American School of Medicine, by Lisa Valanti (5:28)

**Challenging Corporate Power**
Hundreds Gather at 50 Years Conference, by Njoki Njoroge Njehu (2:20)
The Real Danger to Social Security, by Judy Gallo and Vicky Knight (3:22)
The Corporatization of Prisons, by Virginia Zepernick (5:4,5)

**Disarmament**
Disarmament Update, by Felicity Hill (1:12)
WIND Campaign Supports New Agenda Initiative, by Felicity Hill (1:14)
Depleted Uranium, Another Pentagon Cover-up? By Pat Birnie (1:15)
WILPF urges Atomic Energy Agency to Refocus Its Priorities, by Edel Havin Beukes (1:16)
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Campbell, by Esther Farnsworth (1:23)
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**Hague Appeal**
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The Hague Appeal for Peace, by Barbara Lochbihler (2:16)
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**Human Rights**
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Give Meaning to Peace, by Amparo Elisa Guerrero (3:6)
The Peace and Justice Treaty of the Americas, by Andrea Saenz and Rosemary Burke (3:7,8)
Greetings from Guaviare, letter from Omaya Morales (3:8)
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**Militarism**
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Militarism and Globalization, by Barbara Lochbihler (1:17-19)
Nobel Laureates Seek Code of Conduct, speech by Oscar Arias (1:20)

**Peace Education**
Resources for Building a Culture of Peace, reviewed by Jane Weinstein (1:27)
Free the Children: Conflict Education for Strong, Peaceful Minds, reviewed by James B. Boskey (1:28)
Peace Education Committee Report, by Gabriel Litsky (4:26)
Teaching Nonviolent Action to Children, by Richard Wendell Fogg (1:29)
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**Refugees**
Sierra Leone's Humanitarian and Refugee Crises, by Isla Dyfan (4:9)
Palestinian Refugees, by Hanan Awwad (4:12)
Displaced in Burundi, by Regine Cirondey (4:13)
Human Rights at Home, by Cheri Honkala (4:15)

**United Nations**
U.N. Report, by Paula Tasso (1:11, 2:14, 4:14)

WILPF Peace Camp Manual Completed (4:25)
Creating a Ripple of Peace, by Sherry Wells (4:25)
WILPF Branch Helps Children Visit Moms in Prison, by Joyce R. Best (5:27)
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Truth and Reconciliation
T&R Strategy Session, by Betty Burkes, Jackie McCafferty and Marilin Clement (1:5)

Central Vermont WILPF
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Supports an Indigenous People's Struggle, by Joyce R. Best (5:27)
National Peace Camp in St. Louis, by Gabriel Litsky (5:29)
Peace Camp Manuals Ready (5:29)
MEMBERS AT LARGE

A small group of WILPFers met in St. Louis this summer to discuss the issue of members at large. We want members with no branch to be more useful and feel less isolated. We have well over 1,000 members at large. If we concentrate our attention on one thing - such as a bill in Congress - we could have a big influence. Maybe we can have a workshop at a conference. Perhaps our Washington, D.C. office can choose things for us to work on and those issues can be published in Peace & Freedom. We can matter as a group. Send your ideas, home and email addresses to Kate Kasper. Email her (kkasper@wilpf.org) or write to her at our national office in Philadelphia. — Lynn Furay

Resources on women's rights (2:10)
Me is A Guyanese, Jus' So You Know!, poetry by Karen Job Wills (2:11)
Girls Research Gender, by Jennifer Byrd, Kara Reale and Lily Thom (2:24,25)
The Great Century of Women, by Linda Lema Tucker and Ana Maria Salvador Riera (3:6)
Lori’s Story, by Wanda Jones (5:11)

Abused Behind Bars: U.S. Women Inmates Suffer Human Rights Violations, by Kristen Flurkey (5:12,13)
Creatures of Relationships, photo essay by Marjorie Berman (5:16-18)

Yugoslavia
WILPF Policy Statement Regarding the Bombing of Yugoslavia (3:18)
Wrestling With Intervention, by Roberta Spivek (4:18)

"A must-read." — Kay Camp

Kattia Afaro makes a peg board for her classroom in Costa Rica.
Angela Jimenz photo

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Remembering the Peace Train
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