

Peace & Freedom

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

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WILPF'S INTERNATIONAL PEACE PERSPECTIVE



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

INDIA • CUBA • HAITI • PALESTINE

DRONE WARFARE • WATER RIGHTS • CORPORATE POWER

WELCOME TO PEACEWOMAN MARIA BUTLER

Friends and members gathered for a fundraising brunch for WILPF U.S. introducing Maria Butler, the new PeaceWomen Associate, and featuring a dramatic reading by Vinie Burrows (*at right*) at the home of Lenore Migdal Lloyd and Bill Lloyd in Manhattan.



Left: Swedish Section President Kirsti Kolthoff and PeaceWomen Associate Maria Butler

Right: Blanche Wiesen Cook and Mary Lloyd Szumski

Photos: Pat O'Brien

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Cover Photo: From the World March for Peace and Nonviolence, young girl, Mauritania. **Credit:** Pressenza. See <http://www.nyc.wordpress.com/>. Many WILPFers participated in the march, which called for an end to wars and the abolition of nuclear weapons.

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

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

WILPF has sections in 37 countries

coordinated by an international office in Geneva. U.S. WILPF carries out its work through grassroots organizing by WILPF branches. WILPF supports the work of the United Nations and has NGO (non-governmental organization) status.

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WILPF's International Advantage

By Nancy Munger, Laura Roskos, WILPF Co Presidents

We made many new friends at the International Board meeting in India and appreciated anew how WILPF women are able to connect the dots, time and time again, in their analysis. We don't become overwhelmed into inaction, especially when we work together.

One example? The ongoing efforts among Colombian women to utilize Security Council Resolution 1325 as a tool for building peace and ending violence against women in the midst of conflict fueled by outside interests. We heard other examples of similar 1325 Action Plans developed collaboratively by WILPF members and their national governments. WILPFers always resist forces of oppression and complacency, taking to the streets if that seems effective, but also fearlessly engaging institutionalized power at the highest policy levels they can access.

During one session, Dr. Sushma Pankule, member of the Nagpur branch and vice president of the Indian section, shared how their section strategically called upon WILPF International co-president Annelise Ebbe as an outside expert. Ebbe added weight to the section's petitions in defense of internally displaced women from Orissa whose human rights were being violated. After visiting the camps and interviewing many people, the WILPF team developed a set of recommendations drawing on a variety of international instruments including 1325, CEDAW and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. WILPF members documented where the living conditions of internally displaced persons in state-constructed camps did not meet international standards, and have since been using their report to advocate for improvements – but also for the establishment of a new governmental agency devoted to the monitoring and protection of women's human rights in acute crisis situations.

C.J. Minster has written about this and other projects shared at the International Board meetings on the WILPF blog, and we encourage you to read her postings closely, as well as the report from the International Board published in this expanded issue of *Peace & Freedom*.

One day during the meeting, Dr. Ila Pathak, president of the Indian WILPF section, whisked six of us away to a demonstration held elsewhere in Ahmedabad. There, about 50 people stood on a large traffic island with banners and signs, the press bunched in front of them. A half dozen policemen clustered across the street from us. One of the few signs in English read: "We believe Land, Water, Jungle



In this photo from a Gujarati newspaper, WILPF U.S. Co-President Nancy Munger speaks at a protest demonstration held by the "People's Struggle Gujarat" against the sale of uncultivated land to a private enterprise. Also pictured are Annelise Ebbe, International Co-President (Denmark); Christina Hyllner (Sweden); and Dr. Ila Pathak, president of the India section.

Belongs to the People."

We were led to the microphone, and Ila spoke first in Gujarati, then translated for the rest of us as we each spoke a few words of solidarity. The contention, occurring all over India, is over the displacement of farmers – in this case, due to the permitting of a new cement factory and lime quarry in the Mahuva area. After spending millions of rupees in the last decade to promote water conservation and prevent salinity ingress in this most fertile area of the Gujarat state, the government is overriding farmers' concerns and supporting the cement plant and quarry, which will employ only 418 people, compared to 50,000 farmers who will be devastated by the loss of their land, and ensuing air and water pollution.

This is but one example of the struggles in India, a country whose population is projected to double by 2050 and where over 50 percent of the people are rural. Similar scenarios are played out over and over again as farmland is reallocated for industrial purposes, whether by the building of dams or by the government taking land and selling it cheaply to corporations. Of course, we've been hearing for years about farmers committing suicide due to the debt incurred by purchasing genetically modified—and corporately controlled—seeds that do not naturally replenish themselves for the next year's planting.

"The inhuman industrial-urban vision"—as it is expressed by the India resistance movement Sanhati—is

Continued on page 17 ►

Keepers of the Water: MN Metro's Groundbreaking Program Women and Water Rights

By Carol Bessler

When a great idea becomes a great mission, the results might surprise even the organizers. After years of planning, an art exhibition and program our branch planned on water rights opened with astounding success. At the opening night reception of the Women & Water Rights (WWR): Rivers of Regeneration art exhibition over 800 guests packed into the Katherine E. Nash Gallery at the University of Minnesota's Regis Center for Art.

The exhibition opened to the public amidst celebration, and a month-long schedule of events. This project has a long genesis rooted in thoughtful and ambitious organi-



The inspiring Water Wall featured women and the organizations they founded to address water rights around the world.

zation and unwavering volunteer commitment. In the tradition of WILPF, WWR is designed to provoke action through shared perceptions, the building of awareness, and the creation of value.

WWR events concluded with a three-day call to action Speakers Series, featuring women activists Sandy Spieler, artistic director of Heart of the Beast Puppet and Mask Theatre; Gemma Bulos, founder of A Single Drop worldwide water organization; and Vandana Shiva, internationally known author and water/food activist.

On the opening night at the art gallery, guests were greeted by three generations of Ojibwe women, "Keepers of the Water," who performed a traditional water ceremony. Soon the gallery was vibrating with the drumming and percussive beats of the Stirring the Waters Band.

We believe that access to safe water is a universal human right.

Water connects everything and everyone. Emphasizing that the arts both reflect and alter societal attitudes leading to cultural change, WWR examines how the inclusion of women in the management of local, regional, and global water resources could improve our social, economic and environmental results.

The project arose from conversations among Minnesota WILPF members, who are also artists, during their attendance at the 1995 United Nations 4th World Congress on Women. With deep concern for the global water crisis and responding to the Beijing Platform for Action and U.N. Millennium Development Goals, members of the Minnesota Metro Chapter of WILPF formed an Arts Committee to consider how their art could be used for advocacy purposes. WILPF member Liz Dodson – who is also a board member of the Women's Caucus for Art (WCA) and an artist focused on water themes – came up with the idea for an exhibition, especially when she learned that the Nash Gallery accepted exhibition proposals from the community.

That was the catalyst. Over time a three-way partnership developed and the elements gelled: We'd create an exhibition about women and water rights using images combined with words – created by women artists. WILPF and WCA members worked to unite the two organizations around this issue and engaged the co-sponsorship of the WCA Minnesota Chapter, the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities Department of Art and the Katherine E. Nash Gallery. With years of planning, the project grew to include programming that involved the community. As programs grew, so did partnerships, which included individuals and organizations spanning artistic disciplines and social and environmental causes.

Under the leadership of Marilyn Cuneo (representing WILPF), Liz Dodson (representing WCA), and University of Minnesota Art Professor Diane Katsiaficas (representing the university and gallery), a core committee was created

“The branch received a WILPF Minigrant Award, which has proven critical in developing the materials and relationships to drive attendance, promote and document the exhibition, its mission, and its related programming.”

to drive forward the project goals, which included fundraising. Turning to the national WILPF office for assistance, the branch received a Minigrant Award which has proven critical.

The extraordinary quality of the exhibition, which ran through late March, drew new audiences to the gallery. A record 800 people attended the opening. The exhibition included invited artists, as well as a juried selection of work by women from the upper Mississippi River basin. Noted art writer/critic Lucy R. Lippard juried this component of the exhibition and also delivered her lecture “Ripple Effects” to a capacity audience as part of a two-day symposium we organized, called Women & Water Rights: Global Policy – Local Action. Co-Director of the University of Minnesota’s Water Resource Center, Deborah Swackhamer served as moderator for the symposium’s afternoon sessions, which brought together 10 leading experts – all women—who shared their perspectives across scientific, social anthropological and artistic disciplines and generated inspired discussion of solutions leading to accountable water guardianship.

The culmination of WWR’s eco-education programming was the performance of Water Dance: a youth celebration of water through poetry, visual art, music and dance, under the direction of McKnight Foundation Composer Fellow Janika Vandervelde. Over 200 student performers traced the cycle of water in poetry set to their original music compositions and choreography. Over 700 students from area schools, along with family and supporters, filled a 1,200-seat auditorium.

Poetry continued to play an important role in WWR programming, as St. Paul Poet Laureate Carol Connolly led Minnesota women poets in a “Water Lights Poetry Reading” at the gallery.

Plans are underway to extend the life of WWR through a traveling exhibition, which has the potential to replicate our message around the country and the world. During the run of WWR, other galleries throughout the Twin Cities metro area supported our water rights mission by organizing and hosting their own water-themed exhibitions.

The result is that more women artists have their works shown and the WWR message is reaching an even broader audience. Without question, WWR has brought new visibility to WILPF in this region and reinforces MN Metro’s role as a powerful force in addressing women’s issues. It is expected that membership recruitment will be impacted positively as a result.

Throughout all these events, we challenged people to think about their own relationship to water. We asked questions, for example: Water runs hot and cold down your kitchen sink, but do you know the source of your water? Do you leave your house in the dark morning hours to look for water for your family? Are you a scientist? A

hydrologist? Are you a pregnant woman drinking tainted water from the only source available?

Change begins with one person, and together we can change the world. For full information about Women & Water Rights: Rivers of Regeneration, our motivation and sponsors, visit the program website at www.womenand-water.net.

Carol Bessler is a member of WILPF’s Minnesota Metro Branch. She can be reached at: carol1145@live.com.

Making music — and connections — on opening night



The gallery vibrated with the beat as members of Stirring The Waters band distributed shakers (plastic water bottles filled with beans and grains) so the audience could join in the music. Keepers of the Water (at left) featured a grandmother, daughter and granddaughter collaborating on a Native American Water Ritual.

Photos courtesy WWR

WILPF meets in India

In January, WILPF's International Board held a successful meeting in Ahmedabad, India. Board members and attendees came from 16 different sections. During the meeting, discussions on all aspects of the WILPF international program resulted in some good practices being shared. Each of these fit into at least one of the 2007 agreed program pillars, and some stretched across several.

CHANGING EVERY NATION'S THINKING ON SECURITY - CENTS

WILPF's U.N. office is currently fundraising for a new project. CENTS proposes activities under each of WILPF's programmatic pillars. This project brings together WILPF's unique strengths, namely the holistic analysis of the interconnectedness between gender, economic and social inequalities, war and peace, as well as WILPF's long history of activism, global reach and powerful record of coalition work. The project will, by 2015, achieve a demonstrable reduction in military spending by a majority of U.N. member states.

The project will do this through three main areas – education, law and activism. Each section will be asked to organize educational events focused on the U.N. charter and mission. These events will teach attendees U.N. advocacy-related skills, including shadow reports, build WILPF membership and raise funds. The project will use law, specifically legal and human rights advocacy, as tools in the campaign to reduce military spending directed at international Treaty Body Review Committees through shadow reporting and expert analysis. A current of activism will run throughout all of these activities, leading to a big public relations event in 2013: a fact-finding mission to the U.N.

CHALLENGING MILITARISM

The German section was asked to present on this piece of the WILPF program and highlighted their activities implementing the 2008 Board statement “No to War: No to NATO.” The section described their participation, along with the French and U.K. sections, in demonstrations against 60 years of NATO that took place in Strasbourg last year. The section also highlighted their efforts during the alternative summit, which included presenting a workshop (with other women's organization and networks) on the Feminist Case Against NATO and EU Militarization. The workshop brought together issues of patriarchy, militarism, nationalism and capitalism. The section requested that WILPF find space to talk about civil disobedience in the future, and how far WILPF is willing to go with peace-

ful civil disobedience activities.

The German Women's Security Council was also discussed. This network was founded in 2002 when

Germany held a seat on the U.N. Security Council. It has become a think tank that also does political lobbying on Resolution 1325, especially for women's participation in decision-making and in conflict resolution negotiations.

WILPF Sweden presented their “Paying the Price” project. Through this project, the section seeks to link the international pillar of challenging militarism to the pillar of investing in peace. “Paying the Price” looks at military spending and uses a gender perspective to analyze how military spending takes money from other spending that could create true human security including health, education and aid.

Through the project, the section arranges seminars and study circles. As 2010 is the year of a nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, the project will focus on nuclear weapons and three members from the section will go to the Review Conference in New York. The project has had a lot of contact with Reaching Critical Will staff, who have been sending helpful information. The project is a demonstration of how one section has been using information from the Geneva and New York offices of WILPF for its work at the national level.

INVESTING IN PEACE

The Dutch section presented its work on the 1325 National Action Plan and resulting follow-up as an illustration of WILPF's Investing in Peace program implementation. The section created an active and effective cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defense and several civil society organizations to create a national action plan. Both civil society and the government signed the action plan, as a way to hold one another accountable to the agreements within it.

The Colombian section delivered a presentation about the nearly six decade long conflict that continues in Colombia, the forced displacements, the forced recruitment of girls and boys, and the increase of U.S. military presence at the eight U.S. military bases in the country. The section is currently developing an advocacy strategy to



After one of the evenings of dance performances at a university, WILPF delegates join the dancers onstage. (WILPF co-President Laura Roskos at right, front row.)

Photo credit: Joan Bazar

Continued on page 24 ►

From Philadelphia to Gaza

Branch helps Palestinian children

By Dory Loder

When asked what they wanted most, children at a refugee school in Gaza quickly answered: "Water to drink." That answer was not lost on members of WILPF's Philadelphia Branch, where "Water for the Children of Gaza" is an attempt by the Middle East and Save the Water committees to provide just that.

Gaza has experienced a water problem since 1948 when 30,000 refugees poured into Gaza. There is only one water source here – the Gaza Aquifer, which is near the sea and prone to becoming brackish and producing water that is not potable. With the Israeli invasion in December/January 2009 (which destroyed the infrastructure of Gaza) and now Israel's blockade of Gaza's borders which precludes building supplies from getting in, the clean water problem is dire.

WILPF's Maine branch is also working with MECA in a collaboration to help a water purification and desalination unit at a kindergarten in Rafah, Gaza and educate people about the issue. In March they launched their project at an International Women's Day event called "Women and Water."

Last year the Philadelphia branch, hosted a dinner meeting with Hanan Awwad, president of WILPF Palestine Branch, where she told the difficulties of life in Palestine. So the Save the Water Committee got in touch with her, and she wrote back that the clean water work "is very important" and that her branch was "ready to help make it possible."

Philadelphia also made a connection with the Middle East Children's Alliance (MECA) in San Francisco, which has a project that builds well water purification and desalinization units for Gaza schools and keeps them maintained. The branch is working to aid that project,



MAKING A WATER CONNECTION: WILPF's Philadelphia branch, in a meeting at the Fairmount Waterworks (far left) have established a connection to the Maghazi Refugee Camp in Gaza. At left: A kindergartener has access to a drink of clean water, thanks to a Maia Project unit installed in December 2009.

called Maia Project. (See: www.mecaforpeace.org)

In preparation for learning more about the situation, members met with Deborah Agre, a staff person, who was visiting her mother, a long-time WILPF member, in Philadelphia. Agre explained that the Maia Project works with *Afaq Jaddeeda* (New Horizons) in Gaza, and it is desperately in need of money to get the wells and water systems built and maintained. Labor, materials and technical support for the wells and purification are all provided locally, and each water unit provides drinking water for 2,000 children. New Horizons also works with the children, providing them with an opportunity to join a dance troupe, do arts and crafts and see mental health professionals if needed.

In March the Philadelphia branch held a major event on the limited sources of water. Similar to one held last year, it included a PowerPoint® presentation, speakers, a children's Middle East dance group, and Middle Eastern music and food; and raised interest in both WILPF and its support of Gaza water projects. Proceeds from admission paid most of the expenses.

The event was held at the Fairmount Water Works Interpretive Center in Philadelphia, a completely renovated, original building of the first public water system in America – beautifully restored as an educational museum with fascinating modern, technological exhibits.

Dory Loder is a member of the Philadelphia Branch. She can be reached at: doryloder@verizon.net.

Photo Credits:
Girl in Gaza, Mohammed Majdalawi/mecaforpeace.org;

Black and white reproduction of the Philadelphia Waterworks is from a limited edition, full-color watercolor (22 x 38) by Keith Mountford (www.keithmountford.com).

“March to Fulfill the Dream” Will Unite North and South to Claim the Rights to Health and Housing

By Mary Bricker Jenkins

The Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign (PPEHRC), long an ally of WILPF, is organizing a march/caravan to the U.S. Social Forum to highlight the demand to fulfill Dr. Martin Luther King's dream of ending poverty. Set to begin on April 4, the anniversary of King's assassination, marchers traveled from the Mississippi Delta to Detroit, mobilizing people all along the route to unite in the fight to claim their rights to the basic necessities of life. The march will arrive in Detroit on June 21, the day before the opening of the 2010 U.S. Social Forum, where tens of thousands will converge under the banner, “Another World Is Possible; Another U.S. is Necessary!”

WILPF chapters and members are asked to join in this effort anywhere and everywhere along the route to underscore, as Dr. King did, the connections among militarism, racism, and poverty—the convergence of the denial of human

rights. Marchers will spotlight two of the most pressing economic rights: health care and housing. Marchers will continue to press for universal, single-payer health care, uniting with Healthcare Now! in its demands. On the hous-



Those who wish to support the activities surrounding the Forum but cannot participate directly are urged to sponsor those who can and to publicize the events. For further information contact www.economichumanrights.org or the WILPF/PPEHRC liaison, mbricker@temple.edu. For information about the U.S. Social Forum, see www.ussf2010.org.

ing front, where millions have already lost their homes to foreclosure, many families, unable to find affordable rentals, are swelling the ranks of the homeless. Marchers will call for “Zero Foreclosures/Zero Evictions!”

The route links the Gulf Coast, where “Katrina Recovery” has meant primarily the appropriation of funds and land to benefit investors and the abandonment of poor; Mississippi where memories of the collective actions inspired by MLK’s call for the Poor People’s Campaign continue to inspire; Appalachia, where undocumented workers, recruited aggressively for factory work only a few years ago, are now scattered through the hills, hiding from ICE, desperate to keep their families together; Tennessee “boom towns,” where huge increases in unemployment, homelessness, and denial of health care among the new poor starkly contrast with the still-lavish lifestyles of the new rich; Kentucky, epicenter of the fight to resist the removal of children from their families; and finally Ohio, symbol and reality of the transformation from the USA’s Manufacturing Belt to its Rust Belt, where hun-

dreds of thousands of workers have lost their homes and their jobs forever and now struggle in the face of privatization to maintain even their access to water. Standing together in the toxic fallout of global capital's pursuit of cheap labor, buffeted by the U.S. government's complicity in casting them off, thousands of people from these different regions—people who have seldom if ever been united in common cause—are preparing to march together to claim the economic human rights for all that the Electronic Age makes possible—and necessary.



Author Mary Bricker-Jenkins

Mary Bricker Jenkins is a Life Member at Large of WILPF and serves on the Cuba/Bolivarian Issues Committee. She has been working with the Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign (PPEHRC) and its predecessor organization, the Kensington Welfare Rights Union, since 1995.

WILPF at First Social Forum in Atlanta in 2007

At the 2007 U.S. Social Forum, WILPF members were busy and active on many fronts, including the closing plenary on nuclear threat and weapons on space.



WILPF's water table was a popular spot for sharing information.



Judy Claude Photos



Speakers at Opening Ceremony honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



WILPF member Linda Richardson (*above right*) addresses the closing plenary on the nuclear threat and weapons in space (*far right*).



WILPF members gathered for breakfast and morning briefings in the hotel courtyard.

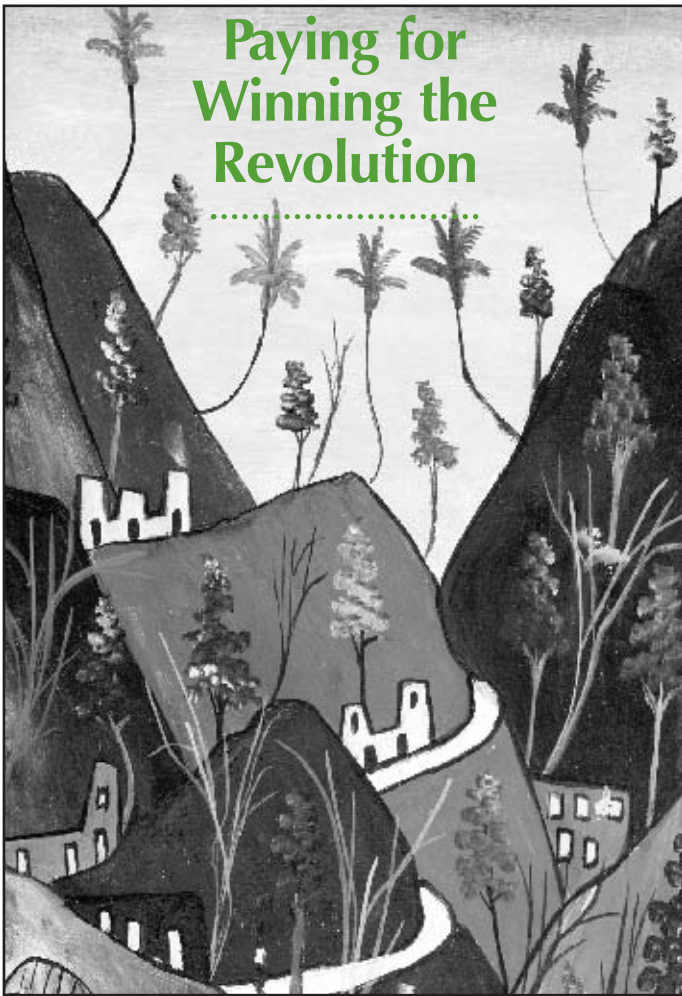


ABOVE: Coordinated Strategy to Prevent War workshop co-sponsored with WAND.



AT LEFT: Gillian Gillhool and Mary Zepernick at the Women's Working Group reception.

Paying for Winning the Revolution



By Shirley Pate

Following the victory and establishment of the Haitian Republic in 1804, the U.S. and France blockaded Haiti and refused to open diplomatic or trade relations with the country. Throughout the 19th century they also blocked relations between Haiti and other nations so Haiti went from being the most prosperous island in the Caribbean to one stuck in abysmal poverty. While it had been the major exporter to Europe and the U.S. of coffee, sugar, rum, indigo, slaves and other prized goods, after 1804 it became a debtor nation, unable to market its goods for cash on the world market.

Approximately 21 years after Haiti trounced General Bonaparte's army in the Revolution, France proved that it was incapable of accepting the defeat.

In 1825, France promised the Haitian government that it would not invade Haiti again if it paid \$90 million in gold francs (approximately \$22 billion in today's currency) for restitution to France and French slave owners for lost "property." (Yes, this included slaves.)

The idea of being colonized by France again combined with France's mammoth economic power left Haiti little choice. To make the first payment, Haiti had to close down all of its public schools and it took until 1947 to pay off the debt entirely. It's no wonder that Haiti is considered the first case of structural adjustment.

Paintings used on these pages are by Haitian artist Prefete Duffaut, 1969.

When President Aristide came to office in 2000, he began to think about the ransom that Haiti was forced to pay France. Aristide thought if anyone owed money it was France to Haiti. He asked his executive attorney to draw up a lawsuit to file in French courts seeking reparations in the amount of \$22 billion. Much to everyone's surprise, the lawsuit was moving fairly quickly through French courts.

In December 2003, then French Foreign Minister, Dominique de Villepin sent his sister to visit Aristide. The message she brought was that Aristide's presidency was in trouble and that he should step aside. Obviously, Aristide told her he would do no such thing. Just two months later, France collaborated with the U.S. and Canada in a coup against Aristide.

After Aristide was gone, the U.S. installed TV talk show host and Boca Raton, FL, resident Gerard Latortue as prime minister. Latortue's first act in office was to withdraw the reparations lawsuit from the French courts.

To read more about Haiti, some good recommendations include *In the Parish of the Poor* and *Eyes of the Heart: Seeking a Path for the Poor in the Age of Globalization* by Jean Bertrand Aristide; *The Uses of Haiti* by Paul Farmer; and any books by Madison Smartt Bell, including *Touissaint Louverture: The Stone That the Builder Refused*, and *All Souls' Rising*.

For an interesting blog full of resources, including posts on Haiti and debt relief, check out Jubilee USA's Blog the Debt - http://jubileeusa.typepad.com/blog_the_debt/.

Joan Drake contributed to this article.

REPRESENT WILPF U.S. AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

WILPF's International Congresses are the highest decision making venue in the organization; quite literally, where the direction and fate of the organization is decided. Depending on size of membership, each section can send voting delegates to participate. The next International Congress will be held in Costa Rica in August of 2011, and will last about a week.

Delegates chosen by the national board to represent WILPF U.S. will have their travel expenses paid, but will need to raise the money for registration. If you are interested in serving in this capacity, please send information about yourself responding to the following criteria to dialogue@wilpf.org or to the National office at 565 Boylston Street, 2nd Floor, Boston, MA 02116 no later than September 30, 2010.

Qualifications: 1) Current WILPF member (Dues up to date); 2) Demonstrable familiarity with WILPF U.S.'s program of work; 3) Committed to reading the section and committee reports distributed in advance; 4) Able to participate as a member of a delegation representing WILPF U.S. Preference will be given to individuals with at least a conversational knowledge of Spanish. ♦

The Haiti/Gaza Connection: The Politics Behind the Disasters

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By Barbara Taft
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Attention was riveted on Haiti in January, the world anxious to ease the effects of the enormous earthquake that devastated the capital of the Western Hemisphere's poorest nation. Many nations rushed to aid the victims of this natural disaster.

One of the first nations on the scene, with a fully-equipped field hospital, was Israel. They rightly received praise for the work they did in Haiti, which probably saved hundreds of lives. They were repeatedly applauded for this effort. But for those of us who have been involved in trying to ease the ongoing tragedy that has been unfolding in the Gaza Strip over the past two to three years—a predominantly man-made disaster—our response has been muted.

It's all well and good that Israel rushed to help victims of the Haitian earthquake, but while they were saving lives in Haiti, Israel was bombing Gaza and taking lives there. The actions of the Israeli government are bringing about more misery for the Gazan people, their own immediate neighbors. And that man-made disaster is of Israel's own making. It is part of an ongoing effort by Israel to divide the Palestinian people and make an independent Palestinian state totally impossible to achieve. Although Gaza has taken the brunt of the attacks since the elections in which Hamas was democratically chosen to lead the Palestinian government, we cannot forget the militaristic and destructive Israeli policies against Palestinians both in the West Bank and in Israel.

In Gaza today, following three weeks of unremitting assault in late December 2008 and early January 2009, thousands of people subsist in tents or in the rubble of their homes that cannot be rebuilt because of a ban on bringing in cement. People there continue to suffer the grief of having lost nearly 1,500 of their 1.5 million population during those three weeks, added to the hundreds who have been killed over the past few years in individual assaults by the Israeli Defense Forces.

Children and adults in Gaza languish in hospitals that find it difficult if not impossible to relieve their pain. Others die of easily preventable illnesses and infections. Children suffer from malnutrition, and many are denied the right to an education. Many are traumatized by noises, as they recall the three weeks of bombardment that destroyed



many homes and created hundreds of orphans.

While Israel is proud of what it is achieving in Haiti, it is that same Israel that prevents aid from reaching Gaza and has prevented aid workers, as well as supplies, from entering. Israel was also responsible for the destruction of Gaza's airport and the electricity generating plant, which has led to many illnesses and deaths from contaminated water and the lack of electrical power to operate essential hospital machinery, such as dialysis machines and incubators.

In spite of their own misery, and receiving far less attention than the giant field hospital contributed by Israel, the people of Gaza were also moved to send relief to Haiti. We should give more attention and greater applause to these Gazans for their relief efforts, especially when we know that the majority of Gazans are getting by on less than \$1 per day. Their generous gift to the poorest of the poor in the Western Hemisphere came out of their ability to feel the pain of the suffering Haitians, not so unlike their own misery.

The people of Gaza have endured occupation, crippling sanctions, the destructions of their infrastructure, homes, businesses, livelihoods, and health, to say nothing of the deaths and disabling of their children from aerial bombardment. All of this constitutes a preventable, man-made disaster.

It's time to end the siege of Gaza, to end the crippling sanctions. It's time for the parties—Israel, Fatah in the West Bank, and the elected Hamas government in Gaza—to begin recovery by sincerely working for peace. The people of Gaza are no less in need of aid than those of Haiti. They, too, need a better quality of life. We ask you to join the WILPF Middle East Committee's campaign to End the Siege of Gaza.

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Barbara Taft is a member of WILPF's Middle East Committee. She can be reached at beejayssite@yahoo.com.

Haiti & WILPF: Historical Reports, Modern Films

By Robin Lloyd

I'd been traveling and making films in Haiti for several years before I learned about Emily Greene Balch's historic trip there.

In 1926 Balch, who helped found WILPF with Jane Addams, led an interracial WILPF delegation to Haiti. Afterwards, the delegation issued a report critical of the U.S. occupation (1915-1934).

Ellen Mass of Boston WILPF made the connection for me. Ellen had organized and videotaped an event marking the 50th anniversary of Balch's receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1946. At Ellen's request, we used her footage to make a video about Balch's life. The video, *The Proper Bostonian*, is available and is 23 minutes long. In the process I read Mercedes M. Randall's 1964 biography of Balch, *Improper Bostonian*. I also read Balch's original report, *Occupied Haiti*.

The WILPF delegation to Haiti took place midway through the American occupation. The reasons for the occupation varied. World War I was imminent and the United States had concerns about a German presence in Haiti. American officials said they were there to maintain peace and help stabilize the Haitian government. Their attitudes were typically paternalistic. In fact, during the occupation military force was used to impose a democracy by undemocratic means (ask yourself if this corresponds to any other occupations you're aware of).

Elections under the occupation were rigged. A treaty was passed by force, martial law was declared, military tribunals were held, the press was censored and the Haitian senate was dissolved. Any opposition to the occupation was violently repressed. The ideology of the occupation forces was that might could make right in Haiti.

Balch's delegation was made up of two white women, two black women and two white men. The fact that the mixed party of four women shared their sleeping quarters "in most friendly fashion" did not, Balch wrote, "recommend us to the military." The party stayed in Haiti for three weeks and found a highly explosive situation of con-



fused responsibilities, increased racial self-consciousness, frustration and loss of self-respect.

The final report, which Balch was able to present to President Calvin Coolidge, stated that the occupation should be withdrawn and actual self-governance restored. An official commission three years later came to the same conclusion. The Wellesley College website on Balch claims that "her report may have hastened the withdrawal of U.S. forces."

I've also produced another DVD celebrating the First Black Republic, titled *Haiti Rising*. It features two award-winning films, animation, an interview with Danny Glover, and other special features. Another film, called *Haiti's Piggy Bank*, is also available. It tells the story of what happened to the Creole pigs which used to be found all over Haiti's rugged countryside. The pig was a Haitian family's most important economic asset. Selling a pig could help pay for school, seeds and health emergencies; it often meant the difference between life and death. Pigs paid for one's future. In 1980, swine flu spread to Haiti from the Dominican Republic. The United States, desperate to protect its own swine industry, pressured Haiti to kill its pigs. The Haitian Creole pig was eradicated. Already among the poorest people on earth, Haitian peasants faced a degree of impoverishment they had not known in decades. This powerful video tells the story of an American non-profit development organization, Grassroots International, joining forces with the National Peasant Movement of Papaye, to reintroduce the Creole pig to the Haitian countryside. Information about all these films can be found online at www.greenvalleymedia.org. You can also write to: Green Valley Media, 300 Maple St., Burlington, VT 05401.



Resources from Green Valley Media

Robin Lloyd is the founder of Green Valley Media, a filmmaker, activist and former member of WILPF's National Board. She can be reached at robinlloyd@greenvalleymedia.org.

The Political Score?

Corporations, 1 - The People, 0

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By Marybeth Gardam, Nancy Abbey, Mary Zepernick
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Early this year, the Supreme Court announced its widely anticipated decision in the case *Citizens United v. FEC* (Federal Election Commission). Weighing whether free speech protections under the First Amendment prevent Congress from restricting corporate political campaign expenditures, the decision overturned federal campaign regulations for corporations that were first enacted in 1907. It also overruled Supreme Court cases decided in 1990 and 2003 that agreed restrictions on corporate money in politics do not violate the Constitution.

However, despite the fact that today's communication technology enables a wider awareness of and response to this decision, the problem of money's driving political decisions is hardly a new development.

Thomas Jefferson, in a letter written in 1816, expressed his hope to "crush in its birth the aristocracy of our moneyed corporations, which dare already to challenge our government to a trial of strength and bid defiance to the laws of our country."

Jefferson and many others have not prevailed, so it's likely that most people who followed the fortunes of *Citizens United v. FEC* were surprised but not shocked by the Supreme Court's decision, which virtually eliminated the remaining barriers to corporate funding of electoral candidates.

The sharply divided 5-4 Court overruled two precedents limiting First Amendment corporate rights, the slim majority prohibiting the government from banning political spending by corporations in candidate elections.

As many WILPF members learned during our 1990s campaign to Challenge Corporate Power, Assert the People's Rights, the corporate form gained the "personhood" rights of due process and equal rights under the law in 1886, *Santa Clara v. Southern Pacific Railroad*. This was all the more deplorable since these rights were based on the 14th Amendment, passed to grant newly freed slaves the rights of legal persons under the law. Over the generations since, courts and corporate managers and lawyers have piled rights upon rights – now including virtually unfettered financing of our electoral candidates.

It's important to note that corporations were small and few in number early in U.S. history. Since the "crown" corporations, such as the East India Company, were instruments of English rule over the North American colonies, once independence was secured, the new country made sure to keep corporations on a short leash. They were char-

tered for specific, narrow purposes, like making shoes or building and maintaining turnpikes, with clear conditions under which they operated. When these were violated, corporate charters were often amended or revoked by courts or legislatures.

An example of the stance toward corporations early in our history is the following declaration of the Pennsylvania legislature in 1834:

"A corporation in law is just what the incorporating act makes it. It is the creature of the law and may be moulded to any shape or for any purpose that the Legislature may deem most conducive for the general good."

Of course this was no golden age of democracy, with the franchise only available to white propertied men and slavery not yet seriously challenged. However, insofar as the corporate form was concerned, it was subordinate to a public process.

What happened? The coming of the railroads, the growth of manufacturing, and the Civil War created a corporate managerial class that chafed under the restrictions imposed by legislators and charters. The three postwar amendments to the Constitution caught the imagination of corporate executives: the 13th abolished slavery; the 15th gave the vote to Black men. The mighty 14th, the plum, gave to African-Americans the legal personhood of due process and the equal protection of the laws. Corporate lawyers, railroad barons and their compliant legislators mounted an effort to give to corporations these same rights and protections.

Finally, by hook and crook, a note in an obscure railroad tax case (*Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad*) declared that without argument, a private corporation was a natural person under the U.S. Constitution, sheltered by the Bill of Rights and the 14th Amendment.

Sixty years later, Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas wrote: "There was no history or logic to support that view." But there it was and there it remains to this day – bolstering the Supreme Court's finding in *Citizens United v. FEC*.

So what does this decision have to do with WILPF issues? With disarmament and foreign policy? Environmental concerns? Racial justice? Middle East politics? We only have to scratch the surface of most of the problems WILPF addresses to find corporate rights, power and profits lurking underneath.

Continued on page 14 ►

This decision hands over the power to decide our nation's most critical issues to profit-driven corporate CEOs and their shareholders by allowing unfettered spending to purchase votes, media and silence. Corporations already have compelling advantages over individuals. With this latest gift to corporate policy makers, media moguls and lobbyists, corporations have been given a megaphone, while Jane & John Q. Public are forced to whisper.

A bright spot, boding well for future decisions, was provided during the Court deliberations by Justice Sonia Sotomayor, the Court's newest member:

".... [What] you are suggesting is that the courts who created corporations as persons, gave birth to corporations persons, and there could be an argument made that that was the Court's error to start with, not Austin or McConnell, but the fact that the Court imbued a creature of State law with human characteristics."

In the coming months, multiple voices will weigh in on this case and much hand-wringing will be done. WILPF is fortunate to have a decade and a half of study and work on the issue of corporate constitutional rights. In the mid 1990s a campaign was launched to Challenge Corporate Power, Assert the People's Rights. From an eight-session study group curriculum it has been updated and expanded to 10 sessions.

One of the most valuable resources for the challenges ahead is the timeline of cases created by Jan Edwards. As far as we know, this study packet is the most comprehensive resource for people who want historical and legal context for the Supreme Court decision to open the corporate coffers for our elections.

Because of WILPF's years spent informing members and others about the effects of corporate personhood, we are in a strong position to provide resources and leadership in our communities for people to organize a response to the Court decision.

WHAT CAN YOU DO? RAISE A RUCKUS!

- This is an ideal time to establish study groups, using the WILPF course; go to **www.wilpf.org**, to the Corporations v. Democracy Committee page for the packet to Challenge Corporate Power, Assert the People's Rights.

- Join WILPF's Corporation v. Democracy (CvD) Committee and consider becoming part of its Working Group; if you are working on another WILPF issue, explore how corporate power and rights affect it.

- WILPF is a founding member of the growing coalition to

Legalize Democracy. Visit the web site, **MovetoAmend.org**, for analysis, actions and resources to mount a campaign using a 28th Amendment to abolish corporate personhood as an educating and organizing strategy.

- Through op-eds, letters to editors and talk shows, keep the issue of illegitimate corporate constitutional rights in your local media.
- Call, email or visit your elected officials to express your concerns; meet with the chairperson of your Political Party and ask them to stand up to big corporate contributions and defend the integrity of our free elections.

- Create street theater, using an outsized corporation festooned with illegitimate constitutional rights it has accumulated, and systematically removing them; hold a mock funeral outside your federal building, mourning the loss of critical constitutional rights of the people. Take video to post on YouTube, invite the media, and make sure your political officials are invited to speak in memory of people's self-governance.

- Organize a town meeting to explore how the increasing accumulation of corporate rights is affecting your community. Need a speaker? Maybe we can help. Contact us.

- Ask the Candidate. Go to Candidate Forums and ask, "Do you support the opinion of the five un-elected Supreme Court majority that corporations are persons and therefore have the rights of free speech under the First Amendment?"

- Submit a Resolution to your local municipal (City Council, Town Hall Meeting) and county (Supervisors) governing body for discussion and vote.

- Take a group to visit each elected official and candidate for office. Explain the issue and ask for their support. Depending on your local government, follow the process for requesting an item be put on the meeting calendar for a vote of the governing body (municipal and county government meetings are seen live and rebroadcast on community T.V.)

*Marybeth Gardam is WILPF's representative on the Steering Committee (mbgardam@gmail.com). For a First Amendment strategy, see **www.freespeechforpeople.org**.*

This article was jointly written by Nancy Abbey, Marybeth Gardam, and Mary Zepernick, members of WILPF Corporations v. Democracy Committee.

A Century of Commitment

By Nancy Ramsden

It hardly seems possible that the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom will be 100 years old in 2015. There are great plans in the works for celebrating our 100 birthday. Do you know about the Committee of 100?

Our foremothers identified the root causes of war which must be eradicated as a basis for a permanent peace – inequality between nations, between races and between men and women, and putting profit and privilege before the needs of people.

The women of WILPF have helped to bring about many critical changes through the establishment of the United Nations, treaties and movements that have banned landmines, stigmatized the arms trade and nuclear terror, and ended Apartheid in South Africa. The inequalities between races, nations and between men and women continue, and war profiteering continues to kill, starve and enslave.

Yet 100 years later, WILPF continues the struggle to empower women, eliminate war and militarism and to participate in the construction of a strong United Nations system. In the historical year 2015 we should give our best to make WILPF known to as many people as possible.

Plans for our 100th birthday celebration are in process. The celebration will take place April 26 to 28, 2015 in The Hague, where WILPF had its first gathering. Events may include celebrations, workshops, plenary meetings and events wherever WILPFers are active. These events could be occasions where celebrities, heads of state, Nobel Prize winners and other prominent persons come together to promote the cause of WILPF and to reach out to new supporters and sponsors for the future.

Picture the following: The History and the Future of Women's Peace Activism – featuring leaders of the women's and peace movements reflecting on the lessons learned from their different eras and involvement, followed by workshops and discussions.

Peace Women: Working for Peace and Freedom in Conflict Zones could feature well-known experts and practitioners sharing their knowledge with the participants on five conflict zones: Palestine/Israel, Great Lakes, India/Pakistan, Afghanistan and Pacific, followed by workshops and discussions.

These are just some of the ideas envisioned for our centennial birthday by the International 100th Anniversary Planning Committee. As you can imagine, all of this will need financing. In 2006 the concept of a Committee of 100 was proposed as a means of identifying 100 donors who are fully committed to WILPF's future to donate \$1,000 US,

Swiss francs, or Euros to a fund for the anniversary. The contributors could be WILPF or non-WILPF members, individuals or groups.

At the recent International Board meeting in India, some of the sections shared their anniversary plans. The Australian section, for example, has formed a national sub-committee for the 100th and has applied to the Australian post for an anniversary stamp for WILPF. The Queensland branch will be holding Peace Awards for the 95th birthday celebration. The German section is working on a historical brochure which focuses on the big conflicts in the German section before, during and after WWII. Once the booklet is done, the section will hold a conference to launch it. The U.K. section has been holding birthday celebrations for the last few years and has used an exhibition received from the Secretariat for a number of occasions. The Section has also put on a talent show as a fundraiser for the 100th anniversary.

It was agreed that each International Board member will encourage their section to continue refining and implementing their plans for the 100th anniversary. Copies of a booklet made from the updated material for the WILPF exhibition are available from the Secretariat and electronic copies are also available if national sections would like to modify it. Each year the International Co-Presidents will send out a letter encouraging all Sections to have WILPF birthday events, preferably fundraisers.

The opportunity to become a member of the Committee of 100 is open not only to individuals, but also to groups of individuals, branches and sections. The goal is to have 100 members who have donated 1000 units of their currency for a final total of approximately \$100,000 to bring our visions of our 100th birthday to fruition, which will bring us more members and funds to continue our vital work in the world. You too can be a member by contributing yourself, or joining with others to contribute \$1,000 to the "Committee of 100."

As we look back over our many achievements in our first 100 years let us work not only towards a major celebration in the Hague, but many celebrations all over the world to commemorate our history and to look forward to the future, to all that we are doing and have yet to do to achieve peace and justice in our world.



Nancy Ramsden is International WILPF Treasurer. She can be reached at njramsdn@aol.com.

Is the U.S. backpedalling on Cuba?

By Cindy Domingo



Barely a year ago, many activists had high expectations that the newly-elected Obama administration would take steps to end the antiquated, cold war policies towards Cuba. Early in 2009, Obama took initial positive steps by lifting the travel ban for Cuban Americans living in the U.S., lifting the limits on the amount of remittances, discussing the establishment of postal service between the two countries and recently, restarting bilateral migration talks. The administration has also approved a handful of visas for Cubans participating in cultural exchanges, among other categories.

Today, 20 charter flights a day leave Miami to bring Cuban Americans back and forth to the island. In his speech at the Summit of the Americas hosted by Trinidad and Tobago in June, 2009, Obama promised a new period of engagement and openness to dialogue towards establishing new relations with Caribbean and Central/Latin American countries. While Cuba was not present at the summit, most countries pressed the U.S. to begin normalizing relations between the two nations.

However, on February 3, 2010, as Cuba marked the 48th anniversary of the imposition of the U.S. blockade, hopes for a change in U.S. foreign policy towards Cuba

The health care debate has consumed time and impacted congressional action on the Freedom to Travel to Cuba Act. Currently, it has 177 backers in the House, 40 votes short of the needed 218 votes and the Senate Bill has 38 co-sponsors.

were dwindling. Despite public support, including from the business community, for bills in Congress that would lift the travel ban to Cuba and barriers towards agricultural trade between the two countries, things don't look good.

Representative Bill Delahunt (D-MA), one of the authors of the Freedom to Travel to Cuba Act stated, "It's clear that the debate over health care has consumed the first year of the [Obama] administration and has had a similar impact in terms of Congressional action [on the travel bills]." Currently, the travel bill has 177 backers in the House, 40 votes short of the needed 218 votes, and the Senate bill has 38 co-sponsors. Representative Jeff Flake (R-AZ) said the votes were there to pass the travel bill, but the Democratic majority in the house was divided over whether to bring it to the floor for fear the issue would further split the Democrats.

Continuance of the Bush doctrine towards Cuba is also reflected in Obama's budget request for fiscal year 2011, which includes \$20 million to "continue to promote self determined democracy in Cuba...funds to be used to provide humanitarian assistance to political prisoners, their families and other victims of repression; advance human rights, strengthen independent civil society organizations; and support information sharing into and out of Cuba." These programs were part of Bush's program for "regime



The author, *third from left*, with members of the Federation of Cuban women during a July 26 event several years ago commemorating the attack on the Moncada Barracks. This is a national holiday in Cuba. Above, left: View from the Malecon (the seawall) in Havana.

Photo Credit: Cindy Domingo

change" before Raul Castro became the new president of Cuba and were part of the U.S.'s efforts to affect the standards of democracy in Cuba.

Yet Cuba is not the only country in the Caribbean and Latin America whose relationship with the U.S. remains strained. The Obama administration's weak response to the military coup in Honduras that overthrew the democratically elected President Manuel Zelaya, the use of drones in Venezuela and the establishment of more U.S. bases in Colombia have only exposed Obama's backpedalling on his promise for a new relationship between the U.S. and the region.

With eight countries now members of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA), the U.S. continues to be fearful of the political and economic influence of an alternative to imperialism that is developing in

the region. ALBA, the international-cooperation organization based on the idea of social, political and economic integration between the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean was first proposed by Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez as an alternative to the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).

As part of this agreement in 2004, Venezuela agreed to deliver about 96,000 barrels of oil per day from its state-

Despite a new bill, pressure to retain the travel ban may only mount.

owned petroleum reserves to Cuba at favorable prices in exchange for 20,000 Cuban medical staff and thousands of teachers to Venezuela. Since 2004, the other countries joining ALBA are Bolivia, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Dominica, Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Honduras joined in 2008, but upon the coup of President Manuel Zelaya the Honduran Congress withdrew from ALBA on January 13, 2010.

Other initiatives of ALBA include the creation of a regional currency, regional media outlets and sharing of natural and human resources including Bolivia's natural gas, Venezuela's oil reserves and Cuba's doctors and medical personnel and services. Cuba supporters have not given up hope even in light of setbacks in Congress around Latin America policy or the failure to pass legislation around the travel ban.

On February 23, 2010 a new bill, HR 4645, was introduced that tied ending the travel ban with fixing agriculture sales regulations. Introduced by Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin Peterson (D-MN) and Congressman Jerry Moran (R-KS) and at least 31 of their House colleagues, the bill would facilitate needed U.S. agricultural sales and help bolster the U.S. economy.

But the pressures to keep the travel ban in place may only mount especially given the recent death of Orlando Zapata Tamayo, who was originally jailed in Cuba in spring, 2003 as part of a crackdown on counterrevolutionary activities funded by U.S. money. Tamayo died after an 85-day hunger strike to protest alleged beatings and poor jail conditions. In addition, the case of a U.S. contractor arrested in December, 2009 for allegedly distributing sophisticated communication equipment and for being a spy remains unresolved.

For more information on the travel bills in Congress, please visit www.lawg.org or www.wilpf.org – “Women and Cuba.”

Cindy Domingo is co chair of the Women and Cuba Issues Committee and has traveled extensively in Cuba. She can be reached at cindydomingo@gmail.com.

► PRESIDENTS

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exacerbated by a changing climate, like the ongoing drought in Gujarat, which is forcing farmers to give up and move to the cities.

On our way home from the International Board meeting in India we first learned about the earthquake in Haiti—from a T.V. screen in Heathrow Airport, three days after it had occurred. WILPF U.S. has had a special concern for Haiti as it has been subjected to racist fears and imperialist manipulations by our government for centuries now. As



Roskos and Munger at the U.N.
Photo: Theta Pavis

late as 1970, Haiti produced all of the rice it needed to feed its population but it has not had adequate food for decades, a situation that underlies and exacerbates the damage caused by this winter's earthquake. The nexus of climate change, “free trade” policies, world monetary

lending practices, and environmental degradation all meet in Haiti's current catastrophe.

India and Haiti's suffering are two reasons why WILPF has chosen Food Security and Sovereignty as the theme for our 2011 International Congress. Food, like other resources necessary for human subsistence, is foreseen as a root cause of future—as well as past and present—armed conflicts and these links are what WILPF, as an organization, hopes to explore in the months leading up to our gathering which will be hosted by the Costa Rican section in August 2011.

Also, in the months leading up to the 2011 International Congress, WILPF U.S. intends to strengthen its regional work in the Americas, collaborating with our sections in the global south to devise effective strategies for challenging and closing U.S. military bases in Latin America and shared understandings about the threats militarization poses to women.

During the coming months, we hope to hear from more of our members about how they would like to engage in strengthening WILPF's work in the U.S. While we appreciate the support of all members, these political times demand a more robust response. Working internationally and strategically, learning from WILPF members next door and across the globe, we are changing the world. In March, we launched a new website to tell the story of WILPF's peace work through the decades; visit www.ja1325.org to learn more or to submit the story of your peacebuilding to the archives. Take some time this summer to learn more about where and how WILPF works, and how your particular skills and talents fit into the big picture. Oh, and don't forget to bone up on your Spanish! ♦

WILPF Supports Indictment of President Bush and Others for War Crimes

. . . and other developments in this important issue

by Sue Gracey

When the Australian Section brought a resolution on war crimes committed in the illegal war on Iraq to the International Board (IB) meeting, the discussion that ensued centered on two questions. First, there was grave clarity about the need to prosecute and passionate unanimity behind the proposition that impunity for war criminals must be shattered for the sake of future generations.

However, the second question, regarding the appropriate venue for such prosecution was more divisive. Several members of the IB have professional training in international law, and therefore take a more technical approach to such questions. While WILPF has endorsed the International Criminal Court (ICC) — even before its realization — as the necessary and appropriate court of last resort for matters such as those listed in the Resolution on War Crimes, the fact that neither the U.S. or Iraq are parties to the Rome Statute establishing the ICC makes prosecution in that venue less than feasible. Despite the difficulties of navigating jurisdictional issues, the prosecution of high level officials, including the former President and Vice-President, remains a key agenda item for WILPF U.S. in its strategy to end the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

While the resolution adopted by WILPF's International Board is silent on the question of venue, in January 2009 WILPF U.S. signed onto a letter to Attorney General Eric Holder asking that he "appoint a non-partisan independent Special Counsel to immediately com-

Following is the text of the WILPF resolution in support of an indictment against the leaders named therein:

"The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, meeting at the International Board Meeting in Ahmedabad, India, in January, 2010, Noting that President George W. Bush of the United States of America, Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom, Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar of Spain, Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende of the Netherlands, Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen of Denmark and Prime Minister John Howard of Australia, forming a "coalition of the willing," took the decision to invade Iraq in the absence of a resolution from the United Nations Security Council;

"Noting that their decision to invade Iraq has been subsequently recognized as an illegal war; Noting that these heads of state were operating in well developed democracies, yet their decisions to invade Iraq were taken without the support of their own populations;

"Aware that millions of people in the U.S.A., the UK, Spain and Australia rose up, along with still more millions of people in other countries around the world, in the biggest anti-war protests in human history to voice their opposition to the war proposals of these leaders;

"Deeply concerned that the invasion of Iraq has seen millions of Iraqis displaced internally and externally, untold deaths and millions more injured physically and mentally;

"Also deeply concerned that the land and natural environment of the Iraqi people has been despoiled and polluted for many years to come;

"Concerned that the reasons given by these leaders for their invasion of Iraq have been discredited as false and inaccurate;

"Believing that these six leaders should be made answerable and stand trial for their actions, so that society and future generations can learn the lessons of their mistakes, resolves that WILPF will support any well considered attempt to bring such an indictment against these leaders."

— Adopted January 5, 2010

mence a prosecutorial investigation into the most serious alleged crimes of former President George W. Bush, former Vice President Richard B. Cheney, the attorneys formerly employed by the Department of Justice whose memos sought to justify torture, and other former top officials of the Bush Administration."

This letter, circulated by After Downing Street and endorsed by over 200 civil society organizations, has not, thus far, merited an official response.

Then, on January 19th of this year, Professor Francis A. Boyle, a leading expert in international law, filed a Complaint against George W. Bush, Richard Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, George Tenet, Condoleezza Rice and Alberto Gonzales with the International Criminal Court in The Hague for their practice of "extraordinary rendition" upon "...about 100 human beings, almost

all of whom are Muslims, Arabs, Asians and People of Color."

Stating that since these practices as implemented by the accused are both "widespread and systematic within the meaning of Rome Statute article 7(1)" and that the "enforced disappearances of persons constitutes ongoing criminal activity that continues even as of today." Boyle argues that because these activities have taken place in several countries, most notably European, that are party to the Rome Statutes, these U.S. nationals can indeed be tried by the ICC.

See Related Book Note, page 20

Sue Gracey, Boston branch, serves on the Disarm committee. Reach her at sggracey@gmail.com.

Advancing Women as Peacemakers

Building on a Legacy

The Advancing Women as Peacemakers project has an exciting new website with a unique mission. Launched this spring, the site, “Building on a Legacy: from Jane Addams to SCR 1325” www.ja1325.org, contributes to the ever-growing demand for organized and reputable scholarly content online. The purpose of the site is to provide both historical and current information about women working for peace. Specifically, the site provides an overview of scholarly resources pertaining to the history of women and peace, as well as original essays. It further provides a forum in which scholars and activists can discuss issues of concern.

The site also ties the past to the present through a section that tells the stories of “current peace women.” On these pages, we ask readers to share their life stories with us. This is a community, and WILPF members are encouraged to log on and tell their stories. We’ll feature these testimonies alongside the stories of women from our past, who also endeavored to promote peace and justice. As this website continues to grow, this interactive aspect will help us understand how we are all making history.

— Kristen Gwinn

A Chance to Celebrate and Learn

This fall, Advancing Women as Peacemakers delegations will be speaking and leading workshops at many WILPF

branches. The delegations, similar to the panel that recently spoke at the workshop at the Commission on the Status of Women, will be comprised of two to three women experienced in building peace and implementing Security Council Resolution 1325 in situations of armed conflict. These events will be scheduled between September 6 (the 150th anniversary of Jane Addams’ birth) and October 31 (the 10th anniversary of SCR 1325) to strategically raise the profile of women’s contributions to peace-building and WILPF.

In addition to sharing their own experiences, these women will act as “peace trainers” leading U.S. women through workshops designed to identify and build skills in conflict transformation at the community, municipal and national levels. Using a format similar to that developed by Gillian Gilhool and Theresa DeLangis for the Coordinated Strategy to Prevent War (2006-7), branches will be asked to gather women from a diversity of local organizations to learn from and embolden each other.

Advancing Women as Peacemakers events are already planned for New York City and Ann Arbor (MI). If your branch is interested in hosting an event featuring experienced peace women from conflict regions abroad, please contact WILPF’s co-presidents at dialogue@wilpf.org or phone the national office at (617) 266-0999.

— Laura Roskos

New York Peacemakers Panel

About 80 people attended the Advancing Women as Peacemakers panel at the Commission on the Status of Women meetings in New York to hear several presentations.

Harriet Hyman Alonso (WILPF member and professor of History at the City College of New York) spoke about 1915 at the Hague and made comparisons to WILPF’s work around Security Council Resolution 1325. Bibienne Tshetu (WILPF DRC and NY Metro) spoke about the “chain of solidarity” created between WILPF U.K. and WILPF Congo and how having this international connection has empowered Congolese women. Khadija Hussein acknowledged how much her international connection to WILPF provides strength for her in organizing Sudanese Mothers for Peace. Her appearance drew the Ambassador from Sudan, who during the discussion segment was challenged quite forcefully by Maria Butler on the issues of impunity for perpetrators of sexual violence

in the Darfur conflict and on concrete steps taken (or not taken) to include women in peace processes. AnnJanette Rosga, U.N. Office Director in New York, also spoke.

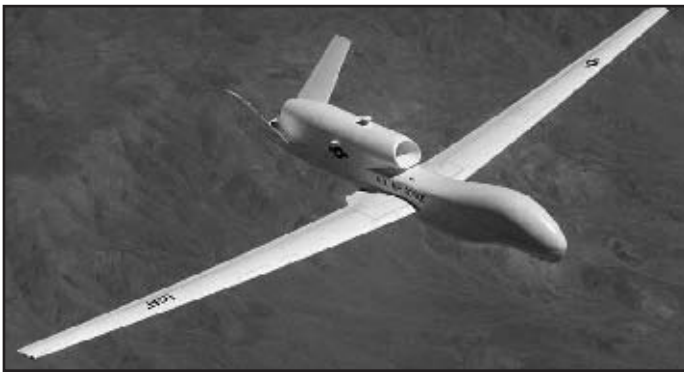


Left to right: Bibienne Tshetu (WILPF DRC and NY Metro); Khadija Hussein (Sudanese Mothers for Peace); and Harriet Hyman Alonso (WILPF member and professor of history at the City College of New York).

Photos: Sobaika Mirza

At the U.N. event, left to right: Laura Roskos, Pat O'Brien, Maria Butler, Robin Lloyd





Drone Warfare = Terrorism

By Marge Van Cleef

The use of unmanned drone aircraft is futuristic, high-tech warfare made real. Creech Air Force Base in Nevada is the headquarters for coordinating these aerial systems of surveillance and the increasingly lethal attacks in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iraq. The Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) take off from runways in the country of origin, controlled by a pilot, nearby, “on the ground.” But once many of the UAVs are airborne, teams inside trailers at Creech Air Force base begin to control them. When the pilots “fly” drones over actual land in Pakistan and Afghanistan, they can see faces; they can gain a sense for the terrain and study the infrastructure. A drone’s camera can show them pictures of everyday life in a region, or even inside someone’s home.

Jane Mayer, an investigative journalist writing in the *New Yorker* (10/26/09), calls the CIA’s covert Predator drone program a “push-button” approach to fighting Al Qaeda. This “represents a radically new and illegal use of state-sanctioned lethal force.” Any civilians close to the targeted individual will be killed, a violation of international law. She calls this “the Predator War.”

Defense Secretary Robert Gates recently announced that the U.S. will provide a dozen spy drones to Pakistan for the first time, thus expanding this illegal warfare in the region. As the attacks kill civilians, while officially searching out “insurgents and combatants” in Afghanistan and Pakistan, they meet the definition of terrorism. Families in the targeted regions have been wiped out simply because a suspected individual happened to be near them or in their home. No proof is needed. Thus the entire region is further destabilized and militarized while the U.S. military makes more enemies among civilian populations, and billions of dollars are wasted.

We can’t see what the drones’ “pilots” can see through the camera eye of the surveillance vehicle. But we can see a pattern in the way our government sells or markets yet

United States Air Force Global Hawk un-manned reconnaissance aircraft. U.S. Air Force photo reproduced with the permission of Airforce Link

another war strategy in an area of the world where the U.S. interests probably include control of precious resources and control or development of transportation routes.

Proponents of the use of drones insist that there is a great advantage to fighting wars in “real-time” by “pilots” sitting at consoles in offices on air bases far from the dangerous frontlines of military activity. With less risk to the lives of U.S. soldiers the program is popular among politicians and the deaths of “enemy” noncombatants by the thousands are considered acceptable. Thus the illusion is promulgated that war can be waged with no domestic cost except the dehumanization of U.S. military people and the civilians who accidentally happen to be in the wrong place when the attack comes. In March, Democracy Now! And the New America Foundation reported that one out of three people killed in Afghanistan is a civilian.

Call your Congress members and urge them to discontinue this program of drone warfare. Contact the WILPF End Wars Issue Committee for more information and leaflets we have prepared.

Marge Van Cleef is co chair of WILPF’s End Wars Issue Committee. She can be reached at mvc@igc.org.

This article was compiled using information from Kathy Kelly, Brian Terrell and Jane Mayer

Book Note: The People v George Bush

WILPF’s own Charlotte Dennett, an attorney, released her book, *The People v. Bush*, in January. Dennett credits noted criminal attorney Vincent Bugliosi with much assistance with this eminently well-researched, readable and persuasive work. In it, she recaps Bugliosi’s case in support of prosecuting former President Bush for murder in local or state courts within the U.S. The legal case would hold the President personally responsible for the deaths of U.S. citizens serving in an illegal war. Charges, however, would need to be brought on behalf of a county or state that has lost a resident in the war by the district attorney or Attorney General. Every DA in every county where a soldier died has now received a copy of Bugliosi’s book, *The Prosecution of George W. Bush for Murder*, but thus far none have stepped forward to take up his call for action.



Inspired by Bugliosi’s ideas, Dennett made indicting President Bush the core issue of her 2008 campaign for Attorney General of Vermont. Charlotte’s campaign website (<http://chardennett.org/>) provides a wealth of resources for those interested in pursuing this strategy.

See Related Story on page 18

WILPF Program Retreat Tackles Tough Issues

As members of WILPF's eight Issue Committees (and one Initiative) settled around a fireplace at the Walker Center near Boston recently, we faced a challenging question: How can a multi-issue organization like WILPF connect the dots and still present a coherent face to the public? Or, to use a womanist image, how can we weave our threads together, creating a fabric that is strong and acknowledged as such by the public?

Our conversation reflected the fact that the vaunted "economic recovery" is not in fact happening. The current crisis feels like being in a pressure cooker: it's a crisis that is affecting everyone. The safety net is full of holes.

Capitalist forces cannot solve environmental problems. Meanwhile, there is a corporate stranglehold on decision making. Yoshiko Ikuta summed up: "We sometimes feel bogged down. We need to splash cold water on our faces."

As members gave reports on their issue committees, we sought to connect the links that bring us together. Sha'an Mouliert of Building the Beloved Community



Georgia Pinkel,
Portland
Co-Chair, Program
Committee

commented that what has happened to this country has disproportionately affected people of color. Meanwhile, the left all too often hesitates to criticize Obama. We're not coming together: the divide is bigger than ever.

In reporting on the Middle East committee, Odile Hugonot Haber said that the Palestinian leadership has become more non-violent. Meanwhile, Israel continues to oppress the peace movement, and activists don't know what to do. The two-state solution is

withering away. She said that more Jews in America are turning away from The American Israel Public Affairs Committee and towards the more moderate J Street. The committee is supporting the initiative Divest, Boycott, Sanctions. Marge Van Cleef of End Wars, (formerly called Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan Issue Committee), argued that we have to bring all the issues together to stop the wars. We have to move, to take the message beyond our circle.

Cindy Domingo of the Cuba Committee pointed out that developments in Latin America are a bright spot for activists. She and Mary Brinker-Jenkins are considering changing the name of their issue group to Cuba and the Bolivarian Alliance. She argued that we should study the Bolivarian Revolution as implemented by Chavez in Venezuela and Morales in Bolivia, and apply it to our com-

munities in order to revive our democracy.

Nancy Price of Save the Water wondered how we could develop a women's agenda for water issues. Currently 25,000 people in Detroit are without water. Arguing against bottled water is a contentious issue in communities of color because their tap water supply is often contaminated. It's hard to have a uniform platform when issues are different in each community. She is pondering how to do a statewide program in California.

Laura Roskos, speaking for the Advancing Human Rights issue committee, said that human rights are more an approach than an issue. "Now there is a more robust human rights movement in the

U.S., violations are not just 'over there.' Obama wants to be respectable and respected. He is, obviously, more open to dialogue than his predecessor." The committee wrote a shadow report on abusive military recruitment. International WILPF wants to strengthen sections' capacity to monitor human rights as well.

We struggled to identify the theme that connects all our issues. Clare Gosselin argued persuasively that economic injustice is the connecting issue. We have to speak and act out against the budget cuts. Our voices are called for – are needed – now.

Nancy Abbey of Corporations v. Democracy reminded us that we are very competent, but we need to be more effective. She stressed making more contact between branches. Carol Uner of Disarm! said we have to remember that a lot of wonderful things are happening; for example, Ban Ki Moon's "We Must Disarm" campaign provides a new take on WMD. She added that we shouldn't completely write off Congress; as many there agree with us.

As we continued to meet over the next two days, our energies were riveted by a slide show developed by the International Communications Committee to assist WILPF in building effective campaigns through SMART planning. The biggest challenge in smart planning is to move beyond vague goals of "educating" ourselves and outside audiences, to envisioning concrete changes in policy or behaviors as the eventual outcomes of our activities. We also need to set realistic benchmarks for assessing how far we've come toward achieving these more ambitious outcomes. We experimented with using this model to generate plans for participating in the upcoming U.S. Social Forum and for organizing the next WILPF National Congress.

— *Compiled by Robin Lloyd*



Margaret Harrington
Tamulonis, Vermont,
Disarm Committee

We have to move, to take the message beyond our circle.

New Director of Operations: Laurie Belton



Laurie Roberts Belton, WILPF's new director of operations, moved into our Boston office in early February. Laurie previously served as executive director of WorldTeach, a Harvard-based NGO that sends volunteers to developing countries to teach English. Prior to that, she was international director of field management for Earthwatch Institute, the world's largest environmental volunteer organization. Laurie has completed the coursework towards a Ph.D. in Archaeological Studies at Boston University and has done fieldwork in Greece, Italy, Iraq, Latin America, Tanzania, Kenya and the U.S.

Since 2006 she has also been a member of the steering committee of the Brookings Institution Initiative on International Volunteering and Service, and served on the executive committee of the International Volunteer Programs Association. She is also a Community Grant Reviewer for Americorps and Commonwealth Corps for the Massachusetts Service Alliance.

Laurie brings to WILPF an unwavering commitment to cross-cultural communication as a means to global understanding, sustainability and peace. She recently talked with *Peace & Freedom* Editor Theta Pavis about her background and new position with WILPF. Her email address is: lbelton@wilpf.org.

What are your goals for this job?

This spring I'll be working on producing new branch resources, such as an updated member directory, a brochure focusing on the Issue Committees, and new banners and buttons. We're also kicking off a major membership drive to coincide with WILPF's birthday in April, including a targeted effort to get an email address for as many members as possible. As someone who comes from an environmental background, I'd like to encourage everyone to use electronic resources as much as possible, to minimize our organizational use of paper. I am also becoming familiar with DIA (Democracy in Action), the organization through which we maintain our membership database. One of my big goals is to give our membership appropriate support in using this database so it's as current and accurate as possible. I also jumped in headfirst to coordinate the CSW Practicum in March at the U.N., and learned a lot of about WILPF in the process. We're working now on the details of the NPT Practicum that will take place in early May; I'm very much

looking forward to being part of that. In the future, I'd like to work on growing communication and cooperation amongst the branches worldwide. It would be great to be in regular contact with WILPF staff in other countries and at International. I've already enjoyed getting to work with the staff in Geneva and especially my colleagues at the U.N. office in New York. I think there's fertile ground there for shared projects.

How does someone who started out as an archaeologist, and spent a decade in international volunteerism, end up at WILPF?

I've been extremely lucky to have worked on archaeological projects in many parts of the world, Europe, the Middle East, and East Africa. As much as I loved the archaeological field work, the more I traveled, the more I realized that it was the people I met that I found most compelling. I wanted to pursue a career that was directly involved in addressing the issues that were facing them. For instance, one of the most rewarding projects I worked on at Earthwatch was the establishment of an environmental research station in the Samburu region of northern Kenya. Our approach was to have a series of community meetings in which we asked the people what they viewed as the critical environmental issues facing them. Then we actively sought out Kenyan scientists who were working on research that shed light on those issues. Through this unique collaboration between community members and scientists, we were able to begin addressing such issues as how people, domestic animals and wildlife can all share the same water resources, fairly and safely. It was enormously satisfying to me to see how effective it was to engage the local community rather than impose top-down solutions. I found that I really wanted to pursue a career that involved bringing people together to understand each other's challenges and address them together.

What will you bring from that experience that you think will be particularly relevant to your work at WILPF?

Firstly, having been responsible for the smooth operation of about 120 research projects in 45 different countries at Earthwatch made me extremely organized and a good time manager. The Director of Operations attends to many different demands on a daily basis, and they are all important. I

think my experience balancing competing demands in a calm and thoughtful way will stand me in good stead at WILPF. My experience as a student at a women's college, and later on the Board of the Bryn Mawr Club of Boston has given me lots of experience and a great deal of ease in the company of smart, driven, passionate women. I am one myself.

How does your past experience relate to working for WILPF, which is a membership-driven organization?

Earthwatch is also a membership-driven organization so I have years of experience in minding the integrity of the organization's identity in its members' eyes. I think it's so important to listen to the concerns of the membership and work to address them. The character of the organization comes from the members; they must feel enfranchised. Also, in order for the branches to function smoothly, they must be certain they are supported by a smoothly run and responsive infrastructure. I see that as one of my most important mandates; to make the operations of the National Office as seamless as possible, to free the members and branches to carry out the essential programmatic work of the organization.

Clearly you have an interest in environmental issues. Can you connect the mission of Earthwatch to WILPF's work on environmental issues? Do you see continuity for yourself here?

I spoke earlier about trying to use electronic resources rather than paper when possible. One of WILPF's central tenets is Care for the Earth. I am particularly interested in WILPF's work on water. Access to clean water or lack thereof, is behind much of the world's conflict, as I saw firsthand in Kenya.

Can you tell me about your work in archaeology and your fieldwork in Iraq?

I spent part of 1988 and 1989 excavating in Iraq, about halfway between Baghdad and Basra. This was just after the end of the Iran/Iraq war and before the first Gulf War, one of the rare moments of peace for Iraqis in the last several decades. We lived in a small Shi'ite village on the edge of the desert. It breaks my heart to know that the children who happily played in the courtyard of the house next door to ours probably have very different lives now than they did when we knew them. And they probably think very differently about Americans as well. I was able to stay in touch with people I knew in Iraq up until the invasion during the second Gulf War. Now I have lost contact, evidence of the destruction of the country's basic infrastructure. I will always wonder what happened to them. ❖

2009 WILPF Grants Awarded

Several innovative projects were funded last year through WILPF's Grant Program. Below is a short list. WILPF funds projects that serve our mission and vision by building our program. We favor projects that can be duplicated and shared, and that will have a national impact. For information about branches visit our website, www.wilpf.org.

- **Minnesota Metro** produced "Women and Water Rights: Rivers of Regeneration," a month-long art display and series of events, held Feb 23 – March 25, 2010. Part of the art exhibition will be taken on tour nationally and internationally over the next three years. (*see page 4*).
- **Ashland, OR** branch is improving its creation of a "Nuclear Alley," a large canvas and wood structure with photos and text designed to teach about the history of nuclear weapons and their impact on local and international communities that will be available for other WILPF branches and organizations to use.
- The Western Asia group of the **Cape Cod** branch produced an eight-part video series entitled *The Plight of the Palestinians*. Copies available.
- The **Washington DC** branch is co-sponsoring the Disarm Issue Committee's co-chair Ellen Thomas on her Proposition 1 tour this spring, educating the public about the need to make nuclear disarmament and economic conversion the law. After walking with a group from D.C. to New York for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty review in May, Ellen will continue on her national speaking tour.
- **Bloomington, IN** held a one-day conference on "The Commons," the concept of which is a challenge to corporate control of our economy and our democratic institutions.

— Nancy Munger

Is your branch or issue committee producing educational or advocacy materials that can be shared or replicated on a national level? Are you are building a strategic political campaign and need financial support to strengthen it? Consider applying for a WILPF mini-grant in 2010.

There will be two grant cycles, open to branches and Issue Committees only; the deadlines are May 15 and October 1. Please find the grant guidelines and application at www.wilpf.org or call our National office at (617) 266-0999 to request a hard copy.

► INDIA

Continued from page 6

increase awareness about the challenges of implementing 1325. In addition, they discussed their work promoting the human rights of women and victims of armed conflict, as well as skills training for those who have been displaced.

CEDAW

WILPF is working toward the formulation of a general comment to CEDAW addressing the challenges faced by women in armed conflict. Towards this goal, but also as a general practice, the International Board encourages all members (and particularly those members living in conflict regions) to actively participate in the CEDAW monitoring and review processes. This can be done using existing resources, including WILPF's established partnership with International Women's Rights Action Watch, which offers technical assistance in the writing of "shadow" or alternative reports, as well as more extensive training and travel support through its "From the Global to the Local" campaign.

STRENGTHENING THE U.N.

The U.S. section was asked to highlight its Practicum project as a demonstration of how one WILPF section is working on this piece of the international program. The Practicum is run in partnership with the National Women's Studies Association and the Center for Women's Health and Human Rights. The program takes place in New York during the first week of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). It's a residential learning opportunity that brings 20 college age women from schools across the country together. They go to side events, main events, and act as delegates of WILPF.

In the evenings, debriefings and special seminars help students learn to connect the work of the CSW with what they do in their own communities. One of the requirements is that each participant go back to her local campus and do something to let people know about her experience. Students pay a fee to participate, and the program is competitive.

The Australian section reported on the seminars they held about the Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) Campaign. They were successful in collecting regional inputs to the process and joined countless others around the globe when on September 14, 2009 the U.N. General Assembly decided to establish this new women's entity. They have also been successful in collecting input from more than 153 participants, representing 91 different organizations, in each capitol city for a comprehensive background paper towards a "National Action Plan on 1325 in Australia." This garnered overwhelming community support for 1325 and has been seen as especially impor-

tant as Australia moves towards securing a seat on the U.N. Security Council. In addition, the section arranged caravans around Australia to consult on the 15-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The input was collected and will feed into the CSW's review of the Beijing Platform.

BUILDING WILPF

During a lively discussion on how to build WILPF, the Secretary General reported that international individual dues-paying memberships have doubled, meeting a challenge issued in November 2008 when the board last met.

The U.K. Section reported a 10 percent increase in membership in the past year, and noted three specific ways that appear to be increasing membership steadily. Members all carry leaflets about WILPF, at all times; they hold "Connect Days" two or three times a year (where new members come together and talk about different aspects of the WILPF program – each committing to a personal action plan for their work with WILPF); hold an annual seminar on a key issue of concern; and work with other organizations to get WILPF's name into the public sphere.

The UK section also has an ongoing partnership with the WILPF core group in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This grew out of 2008 Seminar, "Voices of African Women." This has been kept up as an ongoing project that meets monthly and engages with other African Women's Groups. Marie Claire Faray, a U.K member, recently traveled to the DRC where she held two "Connect Days" for the women there.

The Dutch section reminded the board that grassroots members are the lifeblood of the organization –and that WILPF needs to be strong and connected to sections. They reported on a "Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats" analysis the section took; their results showed that WILPF has to make itself better known. They have engaged help from outside of WILPF, and told the board that there are more people than many might realize who want to help and share their knowledge. The Dutch Section also invited Diane Brace from the U.K. section for training on how they've put together "Connect Days"; this infor-



Adilia Caravaca, representative from Costa Rica, buys fruit at stand near a temple WILPFers visited while doing some early morning sightseeing at 6:30 am!

Photo credit: Joan Bazar

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mation was helpful. The Dutch section has also formed a public relations committee, with the mandate to create cheerful, colorful, stimulating materials to give out.

Amparo Guerrero, International Vice President, traveled to Mexico in August 2009 to work with a group of women who want to become a WILPF section. She met with 10 women to inform them about WILPF and also to engage with local government officials to talk about WILPF's relevant issues. In order to do this successfully, information needs to be translated into the relevant lan-



While waiting for the bus to leave, Sushma Pankule, representative to the board from India, and Amparo Guerrero, representative from Costa Rica, go Bollywood with a bit of spontaneous dancing.

Photo credit: Joan Bazar

guage, and resources are needed to support a site visit and to publicize interest in forming the section.

The Lebanese section reported on efforts to build a new section of WILPF in Jordan. There are about 10 women who are very interested in joining WILPF, and there is a need to have another section in the Middle East. There have been visits arranged between

the women in Lebanon and Jordan to explain more about WILPF and to work together on various programs.

There was also discussion about sending a representative to meet with women's groups in Afghanistan, to share information about WILPF and about women and peace, especially how women can be involved using international law and international mechanisms (like CEDAW or 1325) to better engage in peace building. This would be an opportunity to speak with the women from Afghanistan instead of about them.

BUILDING WILPF MEMBERSHIP —FROM THE SECRETARIAT

In keeping with its ongoing commitment to improving communication with and among all WILPF members, removing barriers to the full participation and cooperation in WILPF projects and campaigns, and increasing transparency and reducing hierarchies of power and knowledge within WILPF, the International Board adopted the following action plan, to be implemented by the Secretary General in consultation with the communications committee:

WILPF will invest in a one-year trial of the Democracy in Action system as an online membership registration tool. This will be done in coordination with the U.S. section. Two sections should be chosen as trial sec-

tions to see if the system is working. If there is a positive evaluation, the system should be rolled out to the entire organization at the 2011 Congress, with commitments made by each section to begin using it as a membership tracking and development tool in advance of the 100th anniversary.

NEW WILPF SECTIONS?

There was great enthusiasm when it came to light that there are a number of WILPF groups interested in becoming sections. In order to help these groups, a committee was created. Amparo Guerrero (Colombia, International Vice President), Ferial Abou Hamdan (Lebanon), and Marie Claire Faray (U.K.) agreed to work on this committee. Their mandate is to work with emerging groups, especially those in Jordan, Mexico and the DRC, to ensure they have the support they need to become sections at the 2011 Congress. ❖

Editor's Note: This article is taken from WILPF's International Board's meeting report and was edited by Theta Pavis and Laura Roskos.

WILPF West Cluster Meeting

Save the date – July 15 – July 18. Everyone is invited to attend our WILPF West III Gathering, starting on the evening of July 15 (Thursday) through July 18 (Sunday afternoon) at the Southern Oregon University in Ashland.

Many years ago, the idea of a WILPF West gathering was organized to take place in between national and international Congress



Left to right: Carol Urner, Yvonne Simmons, Amanda Isaacs-Morgan at 2006 WILPF WEST Gathering II, in Portland OR.

Photo: Mildred Livingston

meetings. This gave members who could not attend these meetings at time to gather, share our ideas and programs, and have a chance to network with each other and set priorities. To quote Joan Goddard, a member of the San Jose WILPF steering committee regarding the gatherings we had in 2003 and 2006, "I see the West Gathering as a way to get WILPF members together, to energize us, and share information, including strengthening connections to the National/section activity...I think that almost anything we can do to increase the connectedness of WILPFers in the midst of daily life distractions can be useful."

For information, contact Fran Petschek, WILPF Ashland, Oregon Branch, at (541) 482-3642, or email hpetschek@aol.com. ❖



Creative Fundraising in Santa Cruz Honors Joyce McLean

By Sandy Silver

As a very active WILPF branch, Santa Cruz members are always in need of raising money to continue our ongoing projects, protests and public relations work. We've found the best way to raise funds is planning something that is fun and of interest to ourselves and the community.

Over the past several years, we've held successful annual fundraisers honoring an outstanding woman. We began with a play about Jeanette Rankin written by WILPF member Jeanmarie Simpson, followed with a dance performance with a narrator telling the story of Isadora Duncan. This year we decided to honor an outstanding WILPF woman from our own branch – Joyce McLean.

Born in Chicago, Joyce joined WILPF in 1960 in Perth, Australia. (While living there she became interested in the Aborigines, but when no one in her circle could answer her questions they directed her to WILPF – which she promptly joined.) Later, Joyce was a member of the San Jose Branch from 1962-1987 and has been a member of the Santa Cruz Branch from 1987 to the present – and is still going strong! Here's a thumbnail sketch of her life's commitment to peace and justice:

1966: Age 32 (5 kids at home.) One of four "Napalm Ladies" wearing gloves, heels, and pearls, blocked the loading of napalm bombs onto barges in Alviso destined for Vietnam. Arrested and put in jail. Went to trial. Pete Seeger wrote two songs about them. Tom Wicker, Washington Bureau chief for the *New York Times* wrote in a book that the arrest was what first made him see the Vietnam War as morally unjust. He originally supported the war, but the "Napalm Ladies" changed his mind.

1970s: While Chair of San Jose WILPF, she and others had an all night vigil reading the names of U.S. dead in Vietnam. Leafleted every Thursday for a year at the San Jose draft board.

Photo Above: Joyce McLean protesting in front of a recruitment center in Capitola, CA shortly before being arrested.

1971: As Vice President of U.S. WILPF, she spoke at the dedication of a stained glass window of Jane Addams at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco.

1972: Led WILPF delegation that attended the Paris World Assembly for the Peace and Independence of the People of Indochina. Delegates were guests of the Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos government officials.

1977: Elected to Loma Prieta school board; helps make important changes to the school district.

1979: Recalled from the Loma Prieta school board after dispute over the hiring of new middle school principal.

1995: Rode the Peace Train from Helsinki to Beijing to attend the U.N. Convention on the Status of Women.

1996: Awarded the "Peace Doll" for her work in the Santa Cruz WILPF Branch.

1997-1999: Co-Chair of the Santa Cruz Branch.

1998-2004: Served on WILPF's International Executive Committee as the U.S. WILPF liaison with International WILPF.

Tom Wicker, *New York Times* Washington Bureau chief, who originally supported the Vietnam War, wrote that the arrest of the "Napalm Ladies" led him to see the war as morally unjust.

2003: Arrested for protesting and blocking entrance to the Army Recruitment center in Capitola. "Part of the Capitola 13."

2004-10: Protests the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; an active member of the Palestine/Israel Action Committee of Santa Cruz. Member and adviser of the Corporations v. Democracy and Building the Beloved Community committees.

Sandy Silver is a long time WILPF member of the Santa Cruz Branch. She served as U.S. WILPF Section Treasurer from 1996 2002 and Co President with Darien De Lu from 2002 2005. She's currently Acting President of the Jane Addams Peace Association Board. She can be reached at silver@cruzio.com.



BranchAction News

Edited by Georgia Pinkel

Although by now it should be feeling like the 21st Century, it seems like we're still trying to disengage from the violent, war-torn 20th Century. This first decade feels like a continuation of neo-liberal market economic thought, "hyper individualism" rather than community solutions, continued multiple wars, and a crisis of identity/values at home. As always, WILPF will be part of the solution, advocating alternatives to never-ending war, involvement of women at all levels of public life, a belief in the effectiveness of personal action at a local level, and a vision of an alternative future through speaking truth to power.

We have news from several branches: **Cape Cod** and **Boston, MA**; **St. Louis, MO**; **Los Angeles, Palo Alto, San Jose**, and **Santa Cruz, CA**; **Portland, OR**; **Minneapolis, MN**; with various editions of paper newsletters, as well as **Des Moines, IA**'s electronic version and **Philadelphia, PA**, **Washington, DC**, **Detroit, MI**, **Houston, TX**, **Boulder, CO** and **Bloomington, IN**'s summary reports. Some branches put their news online: check out **San Jose**'s website for an example: www.wilpfsanjose.org.

BEST PRACTICES

Palo Alto included a multi-signature petition to Obama in their fall newsletter regarding the abolition of Nuclear Weapons. **Santa Cruz** started early with their own action to promote local financial institutions rather than those "too big to fail" by having representatives from nearby credit unions and small banks speak about supporting multinational banks versus local institutions. **Los Angeles** WILPFer CJ Minster's article, "What Makes WILPF Unique," is worth using in any local membership drive. Ask her for a copy if you have not yet received one, and then add your own thoughts. Create your own designs on items — T-shirts, cups, water/coffee bottles, bags, pins, cards — to sell to the public or local WILPF community by going to www.Cafepress.com. Get the WILPF logo out there for all to see. Twin Cities' alternative to the high cost of education is EXCO — a community rooted, free Experimental College, as reported in the fall Quarterly newsletter from **Minnesota Metro** WILPF. Check out www.excotc.org to learn more and see whether it can be adapted to your community. **Minnesota**'s Women and Water Rights participated in the Northland Bioneers Conference in October, pointing out (through a multimedia approach) the consequences of excluding women from

decision making about the management of regional and local resources. **St. Louis** WILPFers are often contributors to the St. Louis Post-Dispatch Op-Ed page. **Los Angeles** has an active outreach to new Y-WILPFers in the person of CJ Minster. Check out their blog at

www.ywilpf.blogspot.com and look for others in your area. **Cape Cod** is planning ahead with other community groups to sponsor a Peace Train for May 1. **Minnesota Metro** creates great book marks with the schedule of their "Coffee With" discussion series. **Boston** sponsors a free monthly film series every first Thursday at the Central Square Library in Cambridge, thanks to the hard work of Joan Ecklein.

SPECIAL PEOPLE

Santa Cruz took the opportunity to review the memories of long-time WILPF members Sandy Silver, Pat Miller, Roz and Harold Hastings and 92-year-old Lea Wood. Anjie Rosga, the International WILPF U.N. Director based in Geneva, met with **Minnesota Metro** WILPFers and presented five major objectives to promote greater U.N. involvement: 1) U.N. Educational Events, 2) Treaty Body Review, 3) U.N. Fact-finding Mission, 4) Changing Definitions of Security, and 5) Reduce Military Spending in a Majority of U.N. Member States by 2015. A full document can be obtained from Lisa Boyd or Doris Marquit locally. **St. Louis** celebrated Yvonne Logan's 90th Birthday. Pat Aron of the **Boston** Branch was the point person on a cross-organizational working committee on the Congo, swinging into action for the October "Breaking the Silence/Congo Week" activities. See www.congoaction-now.weebly.com for more on their activities. Two months after moderating **Boston**'s conference, "Reclaiming the Commons," Elinor Ostrom was named a Nobel Laureate in Economics for her work on the management of the Commons.

CALENDAR EVENTS

MO Women's Network celebrated Women's Equality Day in August with their annual brunch and speaker Jean Hardisty, who founded Political Research Associates to analyze right-wing, authoritarian and anti-democratic trends and publishes educational materials. On U.N. Day in October **St. Louis** presented programs on making the U.N. more effective. **Palo Alto** WILPF Grannies sang at the San Jose Peace Fair and in front of Wal-Mart, particularly calling for "No War Toys." They reprinted a 1922 call to "Disarm the Nursery." (We need to say some things over and over again!) **Santa Cruz** celebrated in December with a Holiday Potluck including the music of the Grannies, the Peace Chorale, and other alternative seasonal

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► BRANCH ACTION *Continued from page 27*

songs as well as an annual Human Rights Fair in Spanish and English. **Des Moines** celebrated the holidays with a potluck aimed at de-stressing. **Los Angeles** continued its work against weapons and nuclear power in space, with two protests during the summer. They also worked around September's "International Day of Peace" and "Keep Space for Peace" in October. **Los Angeles** celebrated International Women's Day with a luncheon, speaker Arlene Inouye from the Coalition for Alternatives to Militarism in our Schools,



San Jose Raging Grannies help the branch celebrate its 94th birthday with a special skit.

and singer Linda Fisher. **Catonville** WILPFers marched in the Baltimore MLK day parade together with the Women in Black, and the Peace Puppets. Last October over 100 people celebrated Jane Addams day in **Detroit**, the most successful so far; they gave the Jane Addams Peace Award to three honorees: Helen Samberg, long-time union and peace activist and local WILPF treasurer and member since 1957; Joy Marks and the Huntington Woods Peace, Citizenship and Education Project; and a new and successful neighborhood-based peace group. **Sierra Foothills** WILPF presented a one-act play, "A Song for Coretta" on March 27 to celebrate Women's History Month. **San Jose** celebrated WILPF's 94th birthday with a skit on our history and of course, the San Jose Raging Grannies are widely known.

LOCAL ACTIONS ON NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

Santa Cruz reported on its water-related activities, including monitoring a local de-salination project and state-wide monitoring of California's water infrastructure. The branch is also opposing water privatization in any form or process by lobbying their Congressional representatives. Middle East Cluster advocates supporting the Canaan Community fair-trade cooperative in their effort to re-establish the olive oil industry in Palestine, donating to plant more trees and purchasing their olive oil at the local Santa Cruz Resource Center for Nonviolence. **Minnesota Metro** Women and Water Rights: Rivers of Regeneration exhibition ran Feb. 23 - March 25th at the University of Minnesota (*see story, page 4*). **Los Angeles** highlighted the promise of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty with its protest at Vandenberg Air Force Base. **St. Louis** brought the Gaza situation home as they heard from three area women report on "Our Freedom March to Gaza." **Cape Cod** joined 50 peace activists to

march from the Nauset Light House to the Coast Guard Light House in support of the people of Gaza, noting how much their own coastal region resembles Gaza! **Portland** co-sponsored a workshop in February with Paul Cienfuegos on the fight against Corporate Personhood.

Pittsburgh co-hosted the National Assembly conference in July and organized counter-actions with Code Pink during the G20 meeting in Pittsburgh in September, helping to set up the Women's Tent City – Real People, Real Needs, in solidarity with the refugees and other victims of wars.

Washington, DC met with Joan Drake and Shirley Pate to plan a campaign for action by WILPF's Haiti-Cuba issues committee and with Jay Marx to create a response to the NPT Review Conference. **Des Moines** participated in presenting the *Water Under Siege* film festival in November. In October, they launched the Peaceable Assembly Campaign with a visit to local congressional offices; they plan to continue it with various actions well into 2010. (For information, see www.peaceableassemblycampaign.org) **Boulder** WILPF Middle East Study Group meets monthly and this fall hosted a talk by Julia Halaby, a Compassionate Listening facilitator of Palestinian descent, who spoke about her trip to Israel-Palestine with the Compassionate Listening Project. About 50 people came to the talk and slide show!

LOCAL ISSUES/EDUCATION

Palo Alto's fall program featured Roberta Ahlquist, professor at San Jose State University, who spoke on the need for universal education and the dangers of the neo-liberalization movement which advocates cutting all public expenditures. The branch also covered and promoted a Noam Chomsky event on the "Democratic Deficit," as well as a Naomi Klein event on the "Shock Doctrine, California Style." In November, working with the League of Women Voters, **Santa Cruz** used Bill Moyer's inspiring short documentary, *The Road to Clean Elections*, to educate and advocate for publicly-financed election campaigns. **Portland** presented a workshop at a local ECONvergence Conference on the "Military Effect on Economies and Local Environments."

PEACE ACTIONS

Santa Cruz supports the Peace Committee's weekly tabling on Saturdays, encouraging people to sign pre-written post cards to government officials. Minnesota Alliance of Peacemakers added "food and justice" to its usual peace and justice message and covered international Climate Negotiations in Copenhagen and local Gardening Matters Spring Conference. **St. Louis** sponsored a five-member

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Send your news for Branch Action to G. L. Pinkel, 2718 Falk Rd, Vancouver, WA 98661 or by email to glpinkel@gmail.com.

New Planned Giving Project Lights the Way

By Mary Hanson Harrison

I'm sitting at my favorite locally-owned cafe with a spicy chai and the *New York Times*, ready to write about Jane Addams Peace Association's new Planned Giving Campaign. We have a catchy title: "Lighting the Way: YOUR Legacy." I wonder how best to frame our message – what would make me invest in our future?

I find the answer right here, under a pile of papers I've yet to grade; it's a photo of a little girl at Hull House in Chicago. She is filled with joy and making the peace sign. I stare at it and remember that it's because of our work, and the remarkable foresight of the women who started WILPF, that this young girl could learn about Jane Addams and WILPF, and be inspired to stand up herself for peace and justice.

I sip my chai and my thoughts turn to the special week of "innovation" we've just finished at the community college where I teach. Alan Bean, the astronaut from Apollo 12, spoke, and we held individual sessions for students.

► BRANCH ACTION *Continued from page 28*

panel to discuss "Israeli-Palestinian Peace: Possibility or Dream?" at the University City Library auditorium for a crowd of nearly 100. The World March for Peace and Nonviolence arrived in Los Angeles December 2. The event was noted by a huge press conference, followed with a potluck, and candle-lit march, ending with a Multicultural Peace Concert at Immanuel Presbyterian Church. **Portland** hosted the "2010 Proposition One Road Show" and again hosted the local SOA Watch sendoff. **Houston** is planning its 11th Annual Houston Peace Camp; growing interest means they'll add another week this year. The branch also has a study group on nuclear issues and participates in Disarm conference calls. The Annual Holiday Peace Fair is a major effort for **San Jose** which brought together local peace and justice groups – and children.

BRANCH RECOMMENDED BOOKS

What Does Justice Look Like? by Louise Erdrich

Punishment of Virtue by Sarah Chayes

Three Cups of Tea by Greg Mortenson

Dirty Rotten Strategies: Why We Trick Ourselves and Others into Solving the Wrong Problems Precisely by Ian Mitroff and Abraham Silvers

Silent Theft: The Private Plunder of Our Common Wealth by David Bollier

Governing the Commons: The evolution of institutions for collective action by Elinor Ostrom

One of my sessions was called "Jane Addams – Revolutionary: transcending boundaries." We actually have an entire classroom dedicated to her, with huge, wall-sized photo of Addams and Hull House and its many workers. A contingent of students came to the session, mostly those interested in social work. But the real story was told by Maggie, Jan, Evelyn, and Rita, senior WILPFers (you may have met them at our 30th Triennial Congress in Des Moines). Diane added her sense of inspiration, talking about why people join WILPF and what our activism looks like.

The WILPFers told many stories to the students, from spending time in federal prison (Rita spoke about her experience there, after her arrest for crossing the line at the School of the Americas), to leafleting on street corners, marching in parades and demonstrations, and generally working to making the world a better place.

"Stories are the best democracy we have. We are allowed to become the other that we never dreamed we could be," wrote the young Irish writer Colum McCann. That's why JAPA has decided to put our WILPF stories on a DVD. We've divided up the country into four or five geographical areas and are sending out Des Moines videographer Roger Routh to capture the stories of our WILPF members who are already supporting us with their planned giving. We want to hear why they support WILPF, to hear them talk about their experiences, expectations and activism. When we're done, all of our branches will be able to use the DVD. We hope to have this project completed by September.

The money left to WILPF U.S. by its members in their wills, IRAs, and insurance policies has been incredibly important in sustaining our organization, granting it an impressive longevity. These bequests have also allowed us to undertake new initiatives, such as the Racial Justice Workshops conducted in 10 branches, to help keep WILPF vital and growing.

Do you feel that JAPA and WILPF have helped shape *your* life? Do you want to share your special story with us and make a contribution to sustain our future? Please let me know. You can reach me at: harrison0607@msn.com.

Mary Hanson Harrison is an English professor at Des Moines Area Community College, in Iowa. She currently serves as co president of the 188 member Des Moines WILPF Branch. Her life's work includes three children, seven grandchildren, a book, numerous articles and recently, a lecture at Oxford University on Women and Education in 19th Century Literature.



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