

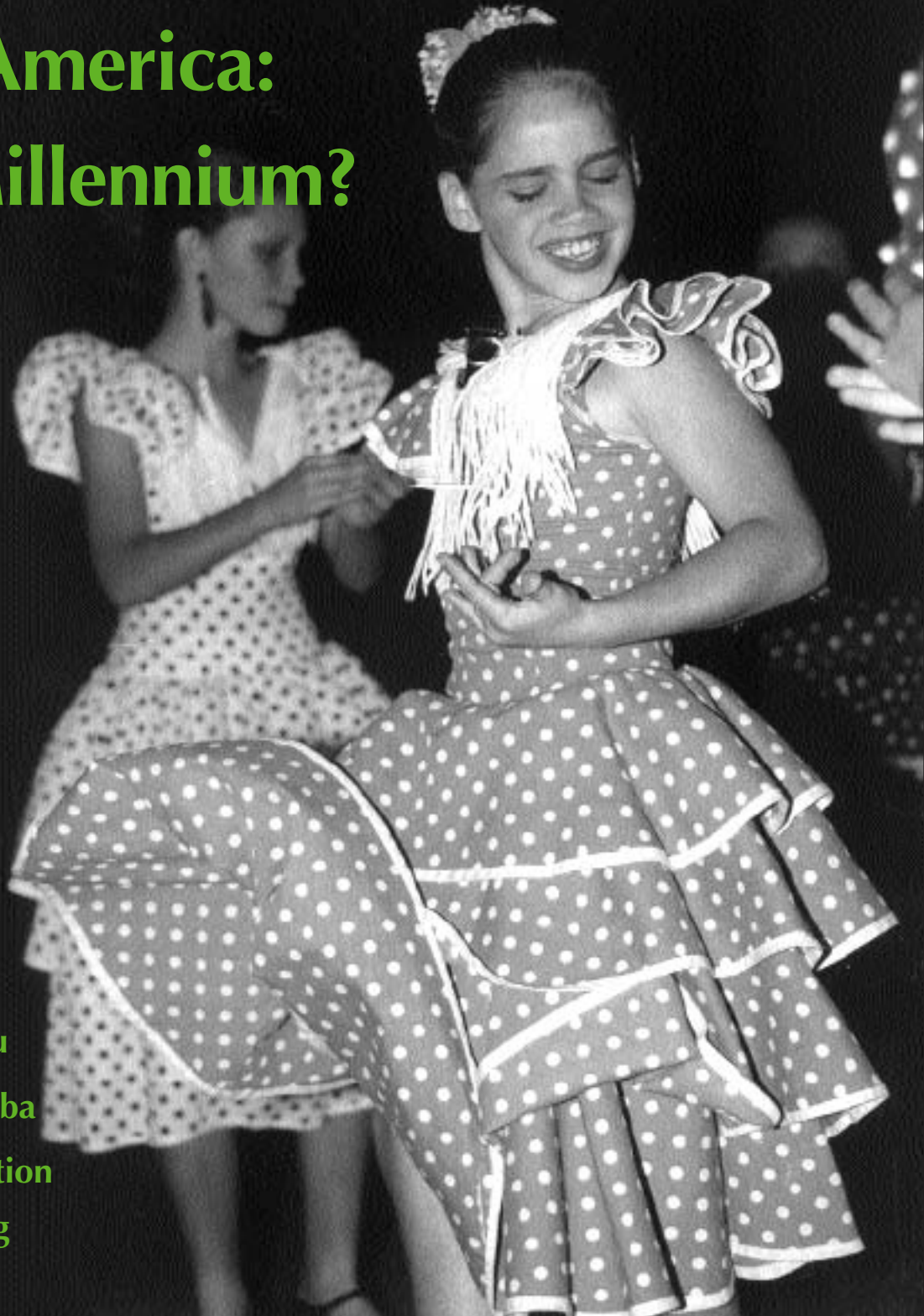
Peace & Freedom

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

June•July•August, 1999

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Latin America: Her Millennium?



Inside

Fighting for
Change in Peru

Inspired by Cuba

Stealth Legislation

Deconstructing
Columbus



WILPF board members and staff take a break from the national board meeting in Philadelphia during late March to protest the bombing of Kosovo. Many people stopped to get leaflets and the event was written up in *The Philadelphia Inquirer* on March 27, 1999.

FEATURES

The Great Century of Women6
 Peace & Justice Treaty of the Americas ..7
 Pressuring Latin America9
 Columbia Support Network11
 WILPF Policy Statement
 on Yugoslavia18
 Change Mavens on the Move20
 Iraq Suffers Under Sanctions21
 The Real Danger
 to Social Security22
 Remembering Ingrid Washinawatok ...30

DEPARTMENTS

Reader's Forum4
 International WILPF News5
 WILPF Action
 Bilingual WILPF Branch
 Blazes New Ground10
 Inspired by Cuba12
 Cuba's Environment13
 WILPF in Washington17
 Peace Education
 Deconstructing Christopher Columbus ..24
 Branch Action News28

Cover: Young dancer performs on International Women's Day at a block party held in Havana, Cuba in honor of the March 1999 WILPF/Hermanas Conference on Women's Health and the Environment. Forty five women went on the trip.

Photo: Lauren Draper

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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.

National Program: WILPF envisions a world free of violence, poverty, pollution and domination—a genuine new world order of peace and justice. WILPF's program stands firm for disarmament and against oppression. The 1997-2000 program cycle has four key campaign areas: Disarmament; Ending U.S. Intervention; Racial Justice; and Women's Rights/Ending Violence. Each campaign area focuses on local and national effectiveness in creating lasting social change.

WILPF has sections in 37 countries, coordinated by an international office in Geneva. U.S. WILPF carries out its work through grassroots organizing by WILPF branches, coordinated by a national office in Philadelphia. WILPF supports the work of the United Nations and has NGO (Non Governmental Organization) status. We invite all people who support our goals to join us.

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Concluding the Adventure

Betty Burkes
President, WILPF U.S. Section

Although I expect to remain a lifetime active member of WILPF, this is my last letter as President of

the U.S. Section. For your support and confidence, I am deeply grateful. The last three years have been among the richest as well as the most demanding in my life. Like the ebb and flow of the tide outside my window on Cape Cod, the experience has brought change and renewable resources. Serving WILPF has provided cherished moments of instruction about conflict, security, community and perseverance.

I began my term as President in the true spirit of a pioneer, inspired by the breadth of the landscape, open to the mystery of the journey before me and confident that all things were possible. After numerous stumbles and scuffed shins, bouts of cold feet and sweaty palms, I conclude this adventure feeling wiser about the roots of

Never in our history has the combination of economic and political power menaced so many in the interest of so few.

violence and the structures that inhibit the realization of WILPF's fundamental principles. I am sobered and dismayed by the galloping consolidation of corporate greed and power that distorts human relations and threatens survival. Never in our history has the combination of economic and political power menaced so many in the interest of so few.

The committed women of WILPF whose stubborn resolve to resist these life-destroying forces and to agitate for social, political and economic justice have sustained our organization for nearly 85 years. WILPFers are women who bring an intensity of compassion and outrage to uncovering the cruel relationships between oppression and capitalism, injustice and violence.

This issue of *Peace & Freedom* is dedicated to the Peace and Justice Treaty of the Americas. The Treaty is a

concept and a document that emerged from the work and vision of women in Bolivia attending the International WILPF Congress in 1995. Originally, it served as a tool for strengthening relationships between men and women in the Americas and for framing a program to study the policies and politics that link issues of peace and justice in the Americas. The WILPF-sponsored delegations to Cuba, Colombia and the tour of South American women in the U.S. are examples of the Treaty in action. See their reports in this issue.

A recent development in ongoing efforts to make the document viable and real is its adoption as an International WILPF priority. We can look forward to its mission being reexamined and clarified.

Bruna Nota, our new International President, reports in this issue about her recent trip to the South American Sections. Brunas language and administrative skills, combined with her vigorous leadership, are securing the immeasurable contributions of Edith Ballantyne and deepening the global relationships she established.

Finally, International WILPF is preparing to launch a Planned Giving Campaign to ensure WILPF's financial future. The U.S. Section is playing a major role by providing staff, information and resources to make this project a success. The Jane Addams Peace Association (JAPA), WILPF's 501c3 and Education Fund, is the legal support that assists donors in processing tax-deductible gifts. We thank Edith Ballantyne and Ruth Chalmers who will launch this Planned Giving Campaign on the East Coast in June.

We have learned important lessons about the nature of conflict and styles of resolution rooted in a profound respect for differences. Community building through the collaboration process has encouraged understanding and trust within the leadership of JAPA, U.S. WILPF and International WILPF. Reflecting on the meaning of security and how to achieve it requires an analysis of our personal values as well as external realities. Perseverance is an abiding and indomitable quality of WILPF.

We are the women we have been waiting for. ❖

WILPF's International Executive Committee will meet in San Jose, Costa Rica from August 2 - 6. Prior to the IEC meeting, a seminar on Women Workers, Globalization and Human Rights will be held from July 29 - 31, with some English translation available.

WILPF's Latin American sections will meet from July 31 - August 1.

For more information, contact Barbara Lochbihler at WILPF International office:



Reader's Forum

To the Editor:

Congratulations on a terrific issue of *Peace & Freedom!* You dealt with the most important issue confronting WILPF and leaders of the world. So many perspectives and details on nuclear weapons and their horrific dangers.

Now for an issue devoted to poverty, the other all-important scourge of humanity.

Too often WILPF fails to prioritize our concerns, goals, and deals with less crucial issues. Let's keep focused on eliminating nuclear weapons, the critical steps leading to this, and poverty and hunger in the U.S. and the world. This will increase membership funding.

Yours for a just world,

Vivian Plonsey, Chair of the Chapel Hill-Durham WILPF Branch

To the Editor of *Peace and Freedom*:

We misquoted Leonilda Vargas on the distance members of her community marched last summer, from their homes in Chapare to La Paz: the distance is closer to 300 miles.

In addition, some WILPFers have questioned Leonilda's statement that there are ingredients of the coca leaf in Coca-Cola. The name is well taken: there are. Coletta Younger of the Washington Office on Latin America says that the government has given Coca-Cola a special license to import coca leaf for America's most popular drink. The justification for this is that Coca-Cola uses essences from the leaf that are not addictive. So it's okay to have A coke, but not to have SOME coke!

Robin Lloyd, Chair, WILPF Drug Policy Committee

Dear Felicity Hill and P&F staff:

I have finished reading my Jan/Feb issue and found it excellent. Betty Burkes set the tone with her thought-

ful editorial and the entire magazine devoted to disarmament, related topics, and regular features was just packed with good information on this enormously important issue.

However, I was disappointed to see how little was devoted to landmines in Felicity's otherwise excellent update. It rather makes it sound as if the landmine cleanup could be easily accomplished—which it cannot. "Even \$2 billion dollars per year for 10 years..." does not really address the problem, and where is the \$2 billion dollars to come from? Surely not from the dozens of war-torn countries where the landmines are buried, as those countries are already hard pressed just to keep their meager economies and shaky democracies alive. Surely not from the U.N., whose budget woes are largely due to the intransigence of the U.S. Congress. Surely not from the U.S., which could possibly afford it if its priorities were lodged firmly in world disarmament. In fairness, I believe the U.S. has appropriated a large sum for cleanup.

Instead, what little is being done is coming through the efforts of ordinary people in developed countries, mostly working through their NGOs.

In the Boulder/Denver area, an Adopt-a Landmine Initiative is under way. Under the joint sponsorship of the two United Nations Association (UNA) chapters and the "Boulder Friends of UNICEF" (WILPF member, Virginia McConnell of Boulder, was the originator of the idea).

Just here in Boulder, the UNICEF chapter has set up a fund for donations, has sponsored a fund-raising karate demonstration, has scheduled a fund-raising concert and has joined with the Boulder and Denver UNA chapter to solicit some corporate contributions—all to try to raise \$99,000 this year to ensure landmine

cleanup in just one country, Mozambique. The task is enormous!

Thank you again for such a good issue, as always. I will pass it on, hopefully to a receptive fellow female!

Nina Johnson, WILPF Boulder Chapter

To the Editor

LaVange Barth did a great job boiling down my very complicated life to a few coherent paragraphs, (Jan/ Feb 1999, "From the Army to Peace Activism"), but she did get a few facts discombobulated, not surprising given the many things we talked about during our phone interview.

I got my B.S., not B.A., after my Army enlistment (not before). That is why I know so well the pressures of the economic draft. I signed on with The Peace Farm (it is incorporated under that name) several years after graduating. The Peace Farm is physically located in or near Amarillo, Texas, across the highway from the Pantex nuclear weapons plant, but the Farm's parent organization, the Red River Peace Network, is a Texas, New Mexico and Oklahoma-wide group. The small city of Amarillo is too conservative, isolated, and dependent on relatively high-paying, blue-collar jobs from Pantex, the second largest employer in the area after the public school system, to support the Farm. Actually the Farm has supporters from around the world, but I was one of the very few to actually come from Amarillo.

I am flattered by the attention and quite pleased with the article, but did just want to help my story sound a little more logical. Thanks, LaVange!

*Ellen Barfield
Baltimore, MD*

Letters to the editor are welcome. Send them to Peace & Freedom, Editor, WILPF, 1213 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107-1691 or via email to peacefreedom@wilpf.org. Please try to keep your letters to about 300 words. We reserve the right to choose and edit letters.



International WILPF News



Bruna Nota, WILPF International President

DEAR WILPFERS AROUND THE WORLD,

How good it is to have friends everywhere and to be able to really connect with them even if it is occasionally! I have just experienced this in my almost-five-week tour of most of the sections in South America. This note does in no way do justice to the work they do and much less to the energy, intelligence and love of all WILPFers there. I will be sending out more extensive reports, but this is just a quick “thank you” to them, and a “there I was” to the rest of you.

In Argentina, I spent a lot of time with Maria Pagano (La Pocha, as she is affectionately known in her barrio and pretty well everywhere). I met with a good number of WILPFers there, and had an appreciation of their work although it was summer vacation. I was particularly excited about the project that they are putting together, an offshoot of their five years work with sex workers. They will present it at the International Executive Committee meeting in Costa Rica. Let me just mention it in a nutshell: It is a training course for judges and police on how to work with women who have been sexually abused, so that their search for legal redress does not turn into another abusive experience. The dean of the College of Lawyers in Peru was very interested in hearing about this, and wants the Peru WILPF to work with them in implementing it (or something similar).

Other projects they are involved in also deal with substantively changing the texture of society. They are working with different resettlement/squatters neighborhoods towards, in the words of the WILPF program accepted in Baltimore:

“Strengthening peoples movements through people-centered governance.”

The Colombian section, although decimated and under a pall of suspicion for a long time, is working very energetically on these themes with some of the millions displaced by the ongoing internal war and more recently, by the earthquake. It is wonderful to see the wisdom, thoroughness and pride the citizens of these settlements express when — given the chance and a bit of support — they take their life in hand and start building peaceful communities. Creating a culture of peace is a central theme here, because the fighting, indeed the violence they have lived with for over two generations, exhausts them.

In Chile and in Venezuela, for different reasons and in different circumstances, the WILPF sections are in the process of re-structuring, widening and strengthening their bases. In these sections, we spent a large part of our time together reviewing what WILPF stands for, different ways of organizing ourselves, and of keeping the communications active among the Spanish-speaking sections and with the International Secretariat. These subjects were discussed in each section, but there they took a particular emphasis given their specific development stage. I expect we will hear soon from two vibrant sections. I was unable to contact the section in Uruguay and Paraguay, and it is now left to Maria Pagano to work with them. Apparently in Uruguay, a lot of good work is being done, but we just do not know much about it.

Bolivia has two branches: in La Paz and in Santa Cruz. In La Paz

they are working mostly on human rights issues and on a

joint project with a mining union that represents women miners. In Santa Cruz, they have a program on peace education and legal assistance in a re-settlement barrio. They are going to be approaching their work from a more fundamental perspective of societal change, and less from an individual support stand.

Peru is at the same juncture: their “House of the Woman” and the “Battered Women Centre” are very worthy projects, and from a WILPF principles standpoint, they must be re-thought so that they will “...enable[s] the inauguration of systems under which social and political equality and economic equity for all can be attained...”

These countries are so rich, so endowed with all kinds of abundance and beauty! It is such a crime that so many of their citizens are living in inhumane conditions and there is no end in sight to their suffering. The real saving grace from total despair, for me, was to meet so many people dedicated to changing these situations, and to see how relevant and powerful WILPF can be in supporting and helping in this change.

I expect we will see a large contingent of these sections’ members at WILPF’s International Executive Committee and at the Latin American section meetings beginning in late July in Costa Rica. Many plans are afoot to find the money and dip more deeply into the spirit of WILPF, and share the work done and the lessons learned. ❖

The Great Century of Women

Linda Lema Tucker and Ana Maria Salvador Riera

The last International Women's Day of the 20th Century on March 8 offered Peruvian women and their organizations an opportunity to measure their successes and to look at the challenges facing them in the 21st.

In 1956, Peruvian women gained suffrage — the right to elect and to be elected to public office — and were recognized as citizens. In the last several years, institutions have been created which are dedicated to advancing the status of women. In 1995, the Peruvian Congress approved the formation of the Commission for Women. In 1996, the Ministry for Women and the Rights of Women were formed, along with a Permanent Commission of Women's Rights in the Ministry of Justice. There has also been progress in the area of family violence and law.

Nevertheless, the creation of institutions and legal norms is not synonymous with true advances in the search for equality. Much remains to be done. There are big obstacles impeding advances in the areas of equality and development. As long as we do not eradicate physical, psychological, sexual, racism, poverty and the lack of equal opportunity, women's suffering will persist. Rape, domestic assaults, forced prostitution, sexual abuse of children, assaults in the work place— these and other forms of violence against women will continue. Between 1990 and 1998, approximately 46,225 attacks against women were reported in Lima alone.

At the national level, there are seven commissioners

for women, one of which attends all of the reported cases of attacks on women in Lima. The police are incapable of protecting women, and the number of cases of aggressive husbands that have been detained is unknown. Of the four shelters that exist in Lima — “la Casa Refugio de LIMPAL Peru” (House of Shelter of LIMPAL Peru) — does not have the necessary resources or personnel to attend to the great number of victims. All of the personnel are volunteers.

Sexual abuse constitutes the most common form of aggression against women and children, who become the population most affected. Rape and other sexual assaults rank third in the most frequent crimes in the country.

Education for peace and conflict resolution is urgently needed in a country which has experienced 14 years of internal war. Such education constitutes an indispensable instrument to gain the objectives of equality, peace and development.

The current system of minimum quotas for the political participation of women in government is indisputably important, as illustrated in the 1998 municipal elections. The results were surprising: Today 2,313 women hold real power in their communities for the next four years. Before this election, women occupied about 8 percent of these positions but that number has now risen to 24 percent.

We are committed to joining all the energies of women and striving together so that the 21st century, as we all believe, will be the great century for the women of Peru and of the world.

Linda Lema Tucker is president of the WILPF section in Lima, Peru. Ana Maria Salvador Riera is vice president.

Give Meaning to Peace

Amparo Elisa Guerrero

We know that our country [Colombia] has modernized and improved qualitatively in the last four decades in comparison to some Latin American countries— if we look at social indicators such as housing, education, and health. However, these improvements are not sufficient.

Ongoing problems include the gradual increase in the number of dispossessed and displaced in the country and continued high rates of unemployment. At the same time, the government's land distribution policies are timid. The country that actually exists is different from what the government has invented.

In political terms, the only things that are well distributed in our country are poverty and social inequality. Peace in these present circumstances is an ideal. It is an ideal that negates the complexity of the conflicts . . . and

one that forgets the political, economic, social and psychological causes that create violence and war.

The traditional manner in which these conflicts have been resolved has led to more violence and coercive methods. Even the population that is not fighting becomes a part of the conflict, cultivated by the many armed actors. We must conquer the dogmas that justify

The only things well distributed in our country are poverty and social inequality.

violence, and involve noncombatants in finding resolutions to the conflict.

It is important for women to give a new meaning to peace, since, from our perspective, women are more susceptible in situations of armed conflict given the patriarchal culture.

The proposal that comes from women and groups of women such as WILPF calls for the creation of a peace

The Peace and Justice Treaty of the Americas

Andrea Saenz, former Peace and Justice Treaty Coordinator
and Rosemary Burke, WILPF Development Director

The United States has spent more than \$25 billion dollars on the so-called “War on Drugs.” In Latin American, this ineffectual war is seen as an excuse for the United States to intervene and control the politics and economies of these countries. Latin American and North American women and their families are caught up in the violence generated by the misguided policy of this “drug war.” The violence is fanned by the lack of any effective solutions to the growing problems associated with drug dependency and poverty throughout the hemisphere.

The Peace and Justice Treaty of the Americas was developed in 1992 by WILPF’s International Congress in Bolivia. At the congress, the cycle of violence resulting from U.S. “anti-drug” policy was identified as the source of a wide variety of serious social and economic problems throughout the region. The Peace and Justice Treaty called for “Indemnification by the United States to Nicaragua, Panama, Grenada and other countries, which have suffered military intervention by the United States.”

The treaty recommended that a protest be lodged against “U.S. Intervention in Latin America under the pretext of a ‘war against drugs,’ to expose the war as a fraud, and to denounce the existence of the U.S.’s agenda of control.”

In 1996, WILPF decided at its U.S. Section

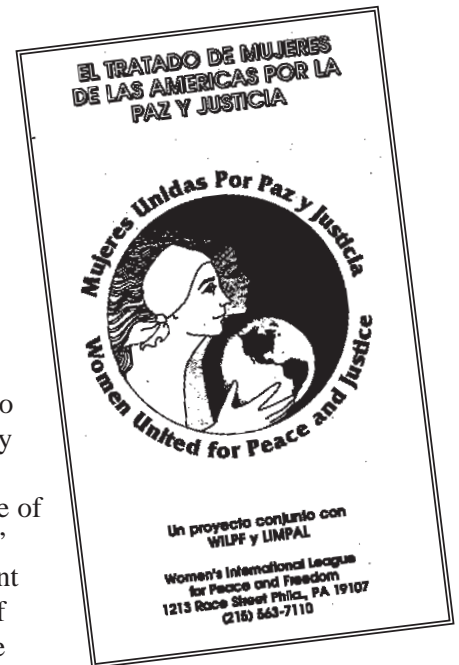
Congress in Greeley, Colorado to make the treaty a priority.

Under the guise of the “war on drugs,” the U.S. government has sent millions of dollars of aid to the Colombian, Mexican and Peruvian militaries and promoted brutal fumigation and police programs across the hemisphere. Not only are these operations carried out without regard for the rights of families living in the countryside of those nations labeled as “drug producing,” they also jeopardize the civil and human rights of impoverished urban communities in the U.S. Warrantless raids and searches in the U.S., “profiling” drug consumers, and separating families under absurd mandatory minimum sentencing laws that keep people in prison for many years for minor drug offenses are all part of the problem.

These policies, which punish poverty, destroy communities, pollute the environment, and decimate acres of the precious Amazon rainforest, must stop.

Despite these outrageous expenditures and actions,

Continued on page 8 ➤



➤ culture. A culture that will strengthen our capacity of questioning and self-criticism as well as our capacity for dialogue.

As an organization, we promote the rights of women, looking for a new space outside of oppression, subordination, discrimination, marginality, inequality and poverty . . . We work for empowerment, self-esteem, leadership, and organization.

WILPF works together with the United Nations and its special agencies for the prevention of war and the promotion of human rights to create a healthy and sustainable environment and to establish an international economic order that satisfies basic human needs instead of profit, consumption, the free market and globalization. WILPF in Colombia cooperates with all who work to obtain similar objectives. One of the objectives of the



Meredith Davenport/Impact Visuals

Women protestors demanding the resignation of President Ernesto Samper during a 1996 demonstration in Bogota, Colombia. Samper, who was accused of knowing that funds from narco-traffickers had gone to his 1994 electoral campaign, was later voted out of office.

League is to gain total universal disarmament, to dismantle the trafficking and sale of weapons, and to make evident the huge military budgets of the government.

Amparo Elisa Guerrero is Chair of the Colombia section of WILPF.

Greetings from Guaviare



Editor's Note: This letter was written by Omayra Morales, a WILPF friend from Colombia and a member of the Committee for the Protection of Life and the Environment. She took part in WILPF's North/South Tour last November.

Dear Friends of WILPF:

Our greetings and best wishes to all of you.

Our town of Guaviare continues being fumigated to the maximum, specifically Miraflores where even the home gardens are destroyed. This has caused us a terrible economic crisis to the extreme that we have nothing to eat. In other times, we had some platanos, yuccas and some oranges, but now there is nothing. Fishing is gone because the waters are contaminated. As usual, the government tells us that we should abandon the area, but in other areas we would have no means of support and would become part of the displaced people to roam the streets. There is much talk about the thousands and even millions of dollars for assistance, but this is just talk from the government. In contrast, what we have seen are the new Black Hawk helicopters of the anti-narcotic forces.

They have installed the electric and telephone lines for the national networks and this is good. On the other hand, these are luxury items. Also, we are pleased to tell you that because we are not in a war zone all the soldiers were removed and coincidentally, all the robberies and violent deaths have decreased. The death rate has decreased from 50 to 60 violent deaths to three elderly deaths. This is in Miraflores, because now the paramilitary is active in Villavicencio, the city through which we must get out. This is where people disappear. As you realize, the situation has not changed. On the contrary, it tends to get worse and peace becomes more remote every day.

I want to send a special thanks to all the families that gave me their hospitality and to every one who allowed us to share our daily experience while we were in your beautiful country.

God protect you and allow us to see you soon, hopefully with better news.

Hasta pronto,
Omayra Morales

► STEMMING MILITARISM *continued from 7*

the production of coca continues to increase. Using taxpayer money, the United States has sponsored the School of the Americas (SOA) in Columbus, Georgia to train the South American military in tactics of terror. WILPF has called for its closure and continues its vocal and visible advocacy against SOA's operations.

WILPF hired a coordinator for Peace and Justice Treaty activities in the summer of 1997 to move our many treaty-related activities forward. In October 1997, WILPF participated in the Second Drug Policy Reform Conference, sponsored by the Drug Policy Foundation. In 1998, WILPF co-sponsored the International Women's Solidarity Conference in Cuba and focused on the embargo and its negative effects on the population of Cuba. WILPF continues its uncompromising opposition to the embargo against Cuba and supports Sister Cities between Cuba and the United States.

In June 1998, WILPF received a grant from the Drug Policy Foundation to take action against the misguided "drug war" policy by promoting the need for drug policy reform. This resulted in a speaking tour in the fall of

WILPF continues to be a voice against U.S. military intervention in the Americas, North and South.

1998 — "America/North and South: Women on the Realities of War and Drugs" which was carried out with joint support from the Drug Policy Foundation, the Peace Development Fund, and the United Methodist Church's Women's Division. The speaking tour was regarded as an excellent avenue to reach many more people and urge them to take action to change the present policy of U.S. intervention and to talk with their representatives and their communities about alternative non-violent means of stemming the serious problems associated with drug use and production.

WILPF continues to be a voice against U.S. military intervention in the Americas, North and South. The Treaty of the Americas will continue to be a major activity of WILPF. The treaty document is available to the public in both Spanish and English. To get a copy of the treaty, contact Rosemary Burke at WILPF at (215) 563-7110 or at: rburke@wilpf.org ❖

Structural Adjustment Policies of the World Bank, IMF and U.S.

Karen Hansen Kuhn

Despite the growing evidence of the failure of the neo-liberal model around the world — particularly the dramatic financial crises in East Asia, Russia and Brazil — the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the U.S. government continue to insist that governments toe the line on structural adjustment policies.

It has been clear for years that these policies have led to increased poverty, inequality and environmental degradation, as well as the destruction of local productive capacity. Recently, growing doubts have emerged in official circles about the wisdom of unregulated flows of speculative capital — so called “hot money” — around the world. Still, there has been little openness towards taking a new direction in domestic economic programs. This has been demonstrated by recent events in Venezuela and Brazil.

In Venezuela, which was experiencing an economic crisis last year, a new president, Hugo Chavez, was swept into office on an essentially anti-adjustment campaign. He said he would seek a moratorium on foreign-debt payments, limits on foreign and government investment in the oil industry, and revisions in the government’s privatization program. His campaign attracted tremendous popular support, especially among the poor, who felt cheated out of the benefits of the country’s oil exports.

The day after his election, President Clinton sent President-elect Chavez a letter agreeing that the promised reforms would be difficult and should be dealt with in a “democratic manner.” The Washington Post reported that, behind the scenes, the Administration warned Chavez that the adoption of “radical” economic measures, including the debt moratorium and changes in the privatization program, could lead to reassessment of U.S. relations with Venezuela. Within a few days, Chavez announced a new set of priorities. These included cuts in the public payroll and changes to his campaign pledges. He also promised not to touch foreign investment in the oil industry. Similar anti-adjustment electoral campaigns in Costa Rica and Honduras resulted in equivalent about-faces once the incoming Administration met with the World Bank and IMF officials about the existing commitments, and the possibility of being cut off from international lending.

Since last summer, investors, economists and media

pundits had expressed growing alarm over Brazil’s economic stability. In November, the Brazilian government agreed to a \$41 billion “rescue” package orchestrated by the IMF and the U.S. Treasury. As a condition of those credits, IMF and Bank officials — trying to avoid a devaluation that would have significantly diminished the value of the assets of foreign investors and bankers — insisted on cuts in the government’s budget deficit in order to put downward pressure on the overvalued exchange rate. The Brazilian government did make some



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attempts at setting more independent policies, setting temporary controls on short-term investments in the country, and, in a surprise move in January, allowing the real, local currency to float — resulting in its losing nearly half of its value at the time.

The Brazilians, however, soon responded to pressure from the World Bank and IMF, as well as from the U.S. government, to avoid inflation and achieve economic “stability” at all costs. The government increased interest rates to over 40 percent, putting thousands of Brazilian consumers and businesses at risk of bankruptcy and lending to immediate increases in unemployment rates. In addition, after a protracted battle, the Brazilian legislature finally acceded to demands to begin to tax government pensions. Even the IMF is now predicting a four-percent drop in Brazil’s GDP this year; other estimates are even higher.

Brazilians have reacted strongly against the IMF dic-

Continued on page 15 ➤



Bilingual WILPF Branch Blazes New Ground

Chris Morin, Leadership/Outreach Coordinator

The seeds for the WILPF branch in Pajaro Valley, California — a unique, bilingual group — were planted in 1991.

That year, the local Green Giant Corporation announced that it was closing its plants and moving the business to Irapuoto, Mexico. Hundreds of jobs were eliminated from the Watsonville community and women in the area began organizing.

Shortly after that some of these women, who had been WILPF members but were not part of a branch, decided to form their own branch.

“We have a commitment to being a bilingual branch,” said Chris Ballin, a member of the Pajaro Valley branch. “Most of us joined because of that — we want to work through the struggle.”

Since then the branch has worked hard to stay together as a group. A few years ago, the branch considered dissolving because very few members had the energy to continue. Sandy Silver, a Santa Cruz WILPF member who sits on the national board, stayed in touch with the Pajaro Valley branch by virtue of making sister-branch calls. These calls are WILPF’s process of staying in touch with branches across the country. Maria Brough, a Santa Cruz member at first, was a link between the two and, given time, branch members realized that their involvement in local community activism was doing WILPF’s work.

Coinciding with this commitment to staying together, new members joined with fresh ideas and energy. The branch’s biggest struggle is the language barrier. Lucina Jimenez, co-chair, says that women who come to the meetings need to feel comfortable and welcomed. You cannot feel wel-

comed if your language is not spoken or acknowledged, she said.

The biggest struggle of being a Spanish/English speaking branch is the language. Since most members are English speaking or bilingual, the temptation is to slip back into English, but when that’s done the branch runs the risk of turning away Spanish-speaking members. Jean Piriano, co-chair, also mentioned that members are always looking at how best to meet the needs of the “melting pot” of cultures and language in the Pajaro Valley area.

The branch needs to have a plan and a process to assure that all can understand and participate. They have tried different ways of meeting the needs of both Spanish-and English-speaking members. Speakers at their programs have had translators, and speakers have translated as they speak. Both these styles are disruptive and disjointed. Having headphones available for non-English speaking participants is the most effective way to meet the needs of the bilingual branch. A translator translates simultaneously into a microphone and those with headphones receive immediate translation. The branch is researching how to purchase/borrow/rent these headphones. The system is expensive and they are looking at ways to fund the headphones through donations, contributions and a JAPA grant.

The other barrier to a bilingual branch is that WILPF literature is available only in English. The Pajaro Valley newsletter, with a mailing list of 75, is twice as long as most other branches because it is in both languages. New members obviously feel

more welcomed and included with literature available in both Spanish and English.

Since the group is committed to being a bilingual branch, they are moving forward despite the struggles they have had. Right now, the branch is working on two projects: They are co-sponsoring a Racial Justice Initiative with the YWCA. This is a two-year initiative, working in coalition with other local organizations, to address racism. The other project is a bimonthly video program, with polit-



In Pajaro Valley, CA, WILPF members, a few of whom are shown here, have been at work for several years to create an effective bilingual branch.

ical issues as the topics. This program is held at the public library and they have had increasing attendance. This project is also helping branch members meet people from other organizations, share WILPF’s mission and reach out to new members.

If anyone has questions or would like to make a donation to the Pajaro Valley branch towards the purchase of a headphone system, you may contact Maria Brough at 831-728-8824, e-mail: litamb@aol.com or Sandra Martz at sandymartz@aol.com Donations can be sent to Pajaro Valley WILPF, P.O. Box 1991, Watsonville, CA, 95077; checks made out to Pajaro Valley WILPF, to the attention of Jean Piriano. ❖

Colombia Support Network

Cecilia Zarate Laun

The Colombia Support Network (CSN) is a grass-roots organization, created to give solidarity to the Colombian people through sister city projects, accompaniment, delegations, and petitions to lobby members of the U.S. government and more. CSN does outreach through its publications, the newsletter Action on Colombia, the magazine the Colombia Bulletin, its web page (www.igc.apc.org/csn) and its Listserve. CSN also has an Urgent Action service to provide immediate action on emergency cases in Colombia.

CSN works for a negotiated solution to the Colombian conflict and peace with justice in Colombia, through strengthening civilian society. By civilian society CSN means giving support to the myriad of budding groups that come from the grass-roots in Colombia, such as women's groups, teachers, cooperatives, unions, environmental groups, indigenous movements and different associations that make a society a vibrant group of human beings. CSN believes that the armed struggle has destroyed so many lives for such a long time that it is time to experiment with peaceful means.

CSN is developing an organized movement with chapters around the country. To be a chapter, we request that a group of at least five people get together and start organizing in its community around a sister community in Colombia besieged by the war. The war is very real to people living in remote rural areas of the country. We support the sister city concept because we believe that it reflects the idea that civilian societies have a duty to be an integral part of the reconstruction of a social fabric that has been destroyed by the war.

The activity of a sister community, including participation of common U.S. citizens in the daily life and struggles of the Colombian people, is a powerful mechanism to challenge the counter-insurgency plans of the Pentagon. Constant communication through faxes, telephone, e-mail, delegations and letter-writing campaigns have effectively helped to save lives and prevent atrocities. As an example, we cite the valiant former mayor of Apartado, Gloria Cuartas, who credits CSN (and the Madison sister community) for saving her life. Sister cities also make campaigns to pressure the Colombian government to comply with agreements made with communities. Sister cities also provide material assistance for small projects that focus on strengthening organizations from the community, such as fishermen's cooperatives or sewing groups.

CSN chapters participating in the sister cities program organize events to make their representatives in

Congress aware of what is happening in Colombia and how U.S. government policy has an effect on events in the Colombian sister community. The sister community relationship provides a concrete example of effects of U.S. policies, such as support for the military and police in Colombia or chemical spraying of drug crops there. And Senators and Representatives who hear of the negative effects of U.S. policies upon the Colombian peasants and townspeople from their own constituents in the U.S. sister community are much more likely to react to change those policies than they would be without such direct constituent pressure.



CSN also sponsors delegations to Colombia each year to allow people in this country to gain first-hand knowledge of the problems and aspirations of their sister communities' residents. CSN also invites speakers from Colombia to address chapters in the U.S. and to meet with governmental officials here to express their views as human rights workers to sister community representatives on

developments in Colombia. Likewise, representatives from the CSN national office and local chapters frequently speak to local groups, such as schools, churches or human rights organizations to raise awareness of what is happening in Colombia and to promote policies to effect positive changes.

The accompaniment project encourages U.S. citizens who wish to donate their talents and time to accompany communities in distress. Volunteers should be at least 23, fluent in Spanish, have flexibility and adaptability, strong knowledge of the political situation in Colombia and capacity for quick analysis and action.

Accompaniers should "let the community work" without interfering; they should not play a role in the organizational process and should not come with any political agenda. They should have an ability to work independently and in a group.

If you are interested in organizing around Colombia please contact CSN at (608) 257-8753 or fax (608) 255-6621.

Cecilia Zarate Laun is the executive director of the Colombia Support Network and a WILPF member.



Inspired by Cuba

Kristyn Joy

Eileen Nelson, a labor activist from Seattle, said her first trip to Cuba was a moving experience. “I’ve lived for 50 years and cannot remember ever being congratulated and thanked for being a woman — until I went to Cuba!” said Eileen, who works as a grocery clerk and went to Cuba as part of the recent WILPF/Hermanas International Women’s Day Solidarity Delegation.

On March 11, 1999, Eileen broke personal ground with her public presentation at the WILPF/Hermanas Conference on Women’s Health and the Environment. Talking with her Cuban sisters, Eileen shared examples of the types of working conditions endured by many U.S. women workers. She talked about how these conditions often lead to debilitating injury and constant pain.

“My knees are shot from standing on concrete for 40 hours a week for the past 21 years,” Eileen said. “I’ve had two operations on each hand for carpal-tunnel syndrome. And all my employer seems to care about is how quickly I can be back on the job.”

Eileen believes that her conditions and struggles in the U.S. are in sharp contrast to the protections won by her Cuban sisters through their 1959 socialist revolution. Cuban women credit the revolution with laying the groundwork for passage of some of the world’s most progressive labor legislation and the development of the trade union movement, which guarantees a voice for ordinary workers in Cuba’s national labor and economic policies.

“In Cuba, health care is free, higher education is free, children are a priority and women are treated with respect. Through the delegation I got to meet with a top woman leader in the National CTC (Central de Trabajadores de Cuba — comparable to the AFL-CIO in the U.S.) and ask questions about the benefits available to Cuban workers. I could hardly believe my ears when I heard that women workers get 18 weeks of paid maternity leave, at 100 percent of their salaries! They get six weeks leave before they have a baby — and that’s mandatory, an employer can’t pressure you to stay on the job — and 12 weeks afterward. They can then take

another three months to stay home with their baby and receive 60 percent of their salaries. That law alone tells me that Cuba values women and families much more than we do in the U.S.”

In addition to having the opportunity to compare Cuban workers’ lives with those of workers in the U.S., Eileen praised the way in which the delegation helped advance the work of her organization.

“For the past year I’ve been an activist in LELO (Northwest Labor & Employment Law Office), a group in Seattle that works to advance the rights of workers of color and women workers and build links between ordinary workers across national borders. While in Cuba we gave out invitations to the CTC and the Federation of Cuban Women to select two workers to attend a meeting we’re organizing in Mexico City in July.”

The North American Regional Workers Meeting will bring together 50 workers from the U.S., Mexico, Canada and the Caribbean to strategize about responses to harmful global economics and trade agreements. LELO is raising funds to pay the expenses of the Cuban delegates.

“While we have struggled to convince labor groups in the U.S. that this meeting makes sense, we received an incredible response from top leaders in the Cuban labor and women’s movements,” Eileen said. “Seeing



WILPF members gather with Cuban women at the community center in La Güinera, outside of Havana, during the WILPF/Hermanas Conference on Women’s Health and the Environment.

Cuba convinced me that LELO’s mission to give ordinary employees access to workers’ experiences from other countries makes all the sense in the world. We have so much to learn from our sisters and brothers in Cuba!”

Kristyn Joy is a member of the Seattle WILPF branch.

The Challenge to Cuba's Environment

Bryony Schwan

I have just returned from my first visit to Cuba with WILPF's "Women's Health and the Environment" delegation. As the director of Women's Voices for the Earth, I was particularly interested in seeing how women in Cuba were addressing these issues, especially the environment.

Our trip included visits to community urban gardens, a river-restoration project, a women's agricultural cooperative, health care facilities, a meeting with the Minister of Science, Environment and Technology, and meetings with many other women. While I came to Cuba with some preconceived notions, I didn't really have any idea what to expect with regard to the state of the environment. What I found was a country seriously challenged by the U.S. embargo, yet a people driven by a desire to work for the common good.

Unlike most government officials and bureaucrats in the United States, Cuban leaders appear to have a clear vision for protecting the environment and creating a sustainable economy. The problem is that, because of the U.S. embargo, they do not have the tools to fully implement the vision. An example is the use of alternative energy. Cuba is trying to move away from its dependence on oil and has been developing solar, wind and other sources of alternative energy especially in rural areas. The problem, however, is that while the country has developed this technology they often cannot import certain parts that are manufactured or designed in the United States.

Cubans understand that protecting their environment is paramount but the embargo limits what they can accomplish. Manufacturing facilities like pulp mills, for instance, are unable to purchase the pollution-prevention technology needed to protect the environment.

What I was most impressed with was Havana's community gardens. The city now has 8,000 community gardens, which not only feed a significant portion of the population but are also organic. A garden we visited was run by 24 volunteers from a senior home and grew enough produce to feed 1,000 people per day.

The embargo has placed many hardships on the Cuban people but it has not weakened their resolve to create a society that takes care of all its people.

Bryony Schwan is the executive director of Women's



Above: Students at the School for Disabled Children in Havana.

At right: Sherry Welch from Maine puts together material aid in Havana.

Below: Barbara Joseph, a WILPF member from New York City, sings "This Little Light of Mine" at the conclusion of the WILPF/Hermanas Conference.

Bottom: Mary Rossi, a nurse/midwife from Minneapolis hands humanitarian aid to a doctor at an AIDS Sanatorium on the outskirts of Santiago de Cuba.



Stealth Legislation and the War on Drugs

Robin Lloyd, Chair, WILPF Drug Policy Committee

The War on Drugs continues to provide an excuse for military aid being sent to Latin America, especially to the three Andean countries that grow the most coca leaf.

Many of us missed the stealth legislation that passed the House of Representatives last September, which increased drug prohibition and supply reduction programs in Latin America and the Caribbean by \$690 million. Called the Western Hemisphere Drug Elimination Act, it made the incredible claim that the trafficking of illicit drugs from Latin America to the United States could be cut by 80% in three years if the United States pursued a sufficiently integrated, aggressive and well-financed attack on the problem.

Covering everything from expanded radar coverage of the drug transit zone to new interception and inspection toys for the United States Coast Guard, the Navy, and the Drug Enforcement Administration, the bill reads like a wish list for international drug warriors. Even the Department of Agriculture got \$23 million to test new herbicides and crop-eradication technologies. According to a report by the Washington Office on Latin America, one Department official said they were having a hard time figuring out how in the world to spend so much money.

Some of the money for the three countries that make up the Andean region — Peru, Bolivia and Colombia — will go toward alternative crop development, but most will buy hardware and provide training for the police and military. Funding for Colombia is especially flamboyant— \$201 million will support eradication efforts in Colombia between 1999 and 2001. This includes DC- 3 transport aircraft and six Blackhawk helicopters for the Colombia National Police, the upgrading of 50 Huey helicopters equipped with powerful “miniguns,” and funds to repair and rebuild an anti-narcotics base in southern Colombia that has been repeatedly overrun and destroyed by the guerillas. This is in addition to the regular International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement programs included in the spending bill.

In short, military aid to Colombia will rise from \$88 million to \$289 million in one year. Colombia is now the third largest recipient of U.S. direct foreign assistance, after Egypt and Israel. (Despite fumigation and other counterinsurgency operations in Colombia over the last few years, coca production increased 28 percent in 1998, according to Drug Czar Barry McCaffrey.)

This is happening as a new President in Colombia is trying to implement a peace process. President Pastrana



has withdrawn the military from five municipalities in southern Colombia as an assurance to the guerillas — the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC — that he is serious about negotiating. Civil society in Colombia has repeatedly shown — through votes, demonstrations and their own peace conferences — that they are tired of the instability in Colombia that has given it the reputation of the worst human rights violator in the western hemisphere.

The impact of all of this on the women of the region will be immense. Already women are suffering from the internal displacement caused by violence by death squads that are given license by the military — and the elite behind them — to wage a war on the poor of Colombia. The drug war is camouflage for a civil war in Colombia that has been raging for decades.

Publicizing the devastating effect of U.S. military aid on the poor of the Andean region was the purpose of WILPF’s speaking tour, “America/North and South: Women on the Realities of War and Drugs” in the U.S. in November. We heard Omayra Morales tell audiences in six cities: “What Colombians want is that not one more dollar be invested in war, that the money being sent for the military be used for social programs.”

WILPF’s Drug Policy Task Force will continue to point out the damage the U.S. military response causes to women and men on both the supply and the demand side of this ‘war.’

Much of the information for this article comes from Cross Currents, a new quarterly newsletter published by WOLA about events, decisions, and policymaking processes taking place in Washington that have an impact on democracy and human rights in Latin America. As we seek to implement WILPF’s Women’s Peace and Justice Treaty of the Americas, this newsletter will be must reading. To subscribe, write WOLA at 1630 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20009. ❖

► STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT POLICIES

continued from 9

tates. Demonstrations against the policies have been organized around the country, and *The Financial Times* reports there were dancers at Carnival wearing costumes



depicting the IMF negotiators as devils. Former President Itamar Franco, now governor of the state of Minas Gerais, and Governor Olivio Durta of Rio Grande do Sul (from the opposition Workers party) have

vigorously opposed the imposition of austerity programs in their states. The two governors suspended debt payments to the Central Bank, arguing that they would be unable to maintain normal government operations.

In response, the World Bank cut off those states from development loans already underway, stating that the project monies would be released only if states renewed their payments to the federal government. In February, President Henrique Cardoso met with 26 of 27 state governors and made a number of concessions to ease their financial problems, but refuses to discuss the debt issue. Governor Franco, however, refused to attend the meeting or to back down from his demands.

“Our trench is ready,” he said. “We will resist in it as long as possible.”

As the crisis spreads in Latin America, most recently to Ecuador, it is hard to see how the IMF and the U.S. treasury can keep the genie in the bottle.

Karen Hansen Kuhn is the Latin American Program Coordinator for The Development Group for Alternative Policies in Washington, D.C. For more information, call (202)898 1566 or visit The Development GAP website at www.igc.org/dgap
Editor’s Note: This is an excerpted article, reprinted

Crossing the Line

Liz Wolz

from the SOA Watch Northeast newsletter.

“Close the SOA!!!” read the sign taped to the back of the rental van. The sign was one of those spontaneous creations, hurriedly designed while we pumped gas at our first “pit stop” on our journey to Ft. Benning, Georgia. There were nine of us in the van, thrown together by our mutual desire for traveling as cheaply as possible. When we began our journey, the types of relationships ranged from “complete stranger” to “sibling.” Four days later, we returned to Philadelphia and despite our different perspectives on faith and religion, we glimpsed the reality of our common humanity, of our relationships to each other and to the people of Latin America, as sisters and brothers in creation, struggling for a more just world.

We gathered Saturday morning outside the gates of Ft. Benning, home of the infamous School of the Americas (SOA). Speakers and musicians followed one another in an inspiring procession of tribute, commemo-

ration, and observance...

Already, more than a thousand people were gathered — the youngest one was just a few months old, and while there was a substantial amount of college students, I was impressed to see a number of high school students holding signs representing countless states. There were older folks, greeting old friends, but most memorable were all the new relationships being formed between people of all ages and cultures...

Sunday, November 22nd will always be one of those “Sacred Days.” We gathered outside the gates at 8:30 a.m., and by 10:00 a.m. the liturgy had begun. There was beautiful chanting and drum beating by a contingency of Lakota tribe members who drove in from South Dakota... The “Peace Keepers” trained to maintain and organize the crowd — which now numbered approximately 7,000 — began the preparations of pulling the “line crossers” together. Among the “crossers” was actor

Continued on next page ►

► CROSSING THE LINE continued from 15

Martin Sheen, who has been supporting the movement for many years.

At noon, the procession began. The beat of the Lakota's tribal drum was resonating throughout the crowd, embodying the spirit of the litany. In the foreground we could hear the reading of endless names and the ages of those killed by soldiers trained at the SOA; following the reciting of a name, the thousands of participants resounded "Presente!" This symbolized that those killed were present with us: "Ignacio Ellacurio" — "Presente!" "Jean Donovan" — "Presente!" "Oscar Romero" — "Presente!" We walked four abreast, arms intertwined, hundreds carrying crosses inscribed with the names of martyrs, others carried the Star of David, while some held banners. We slowly filtered onto the base, literally — crossing a line (which was painted on the road) — as we marched towards the SOA...

The road we walked along was beautifully lined with autumn-colored leaves. It would have been difficult to realize that this was the infamous training grounds for the SOA if it weren't for the fact that men and women donned in military fatigues were running in and out of the wooded area, walkie-talkies in hand, monitoring our progress. "784,788,792..." I could hear a soldier counting as he approached us. We assumed he was counting the number of people they would have to process.

At that moment I looked at the long line ahead of us, and when I looked behind, unable to see the end of the

line, the tears of solidarity and hope welled up in my eyes. As the procession began to slow, we heard a loud roar from the crowd, which remained back at the gates. I later learned that this was the moment the last of the participants had crossed onto the base. A few minutes later we were asked by an MP to relinquish our crosses, our Stars of David, and the banners.

They loaded us all onto the awaiting busses. It appeared they had about 26 busses reserved for us (enough for approximately 1,040); they had underestimated the number of people committed to cross by more than 100%...

November 22, 1998 was a tremendous victory for all of us. It signified a unifying voice, which can only grow stronger. It is a voice of the people who have said — basta! — Enough! Thousands peacefully walked in opposition to the training at the School of Americas — the School of Assassins. It is my hope and commitment to end the violence and persecution borne of the SOA. The journey's just begun; and we invite you to raise your voice, now louder than ever, in solidarity with our sisters and brothers who continue to struggle, and cry out for peace and justice!

Liz Walz is the founder of the Germantown Catholic Worker in Philadelphia and is a member of the SOA Watch steering committee. For more information on SOA Watch, call (202) 234 3440 or write to P.O. Box 4566, Washington, D.C. 20017.

HELP IMPEACE THE CONGRESS

WILPF members are calling for a national movement to ImPEACE the Congress. Some historians are saying that this century has been the bloodiest in the history of humankind. But nobody has yet committed genocide in the 21st Century; nobody has yet used weapons of mass destruction, including Atomic bombs, in the 21st Century; no war corporations have yet given money to election campaigns for the year 2000.

The Congress that will be elected in the year 2000 is not yet in place. But the budget decisions, including billions of dollars more promoting war (and wars all over the world) are being made now for the next century. Our country has a 44 percent "market share" of world arms sales and is the largest stumbling block to the negotiations for nuclear disarmament.

We excoriate and bomb other countries for producing weapons of mass destruction, and yet we have many times more destructive capability than all other nations combined. We use bombs, tanks, F-15s, and NATO instead of intelligent diplomacy and the United Nations.

There are actions we can take to ensure that the next century begins with a Peace Congress and a Peace Economy.

Activists in WILPF's ImPEACE the Congress 2000 Campaign are building a popular education and action program to draw attention to war corporations in key congressional districts. We are also alerting members of Congress to reject campaign contributions and lobbying pleas for higher military spending from those who profit from and market war. We are calling on members of Congress to reject military spending increases — or lose their seat.

We are asking students to call for the divestment of war stocks and for an end to war-related research on their campuses. We call on churches, peace groups, advocates for decent childcare and education to join us to ImPEACE the Congress in the year 2000.

For an ImPEACE the Congress Report Card for your Congressional district and a kit to launch ImPEACEMENT Proceedings in your district or state, contact WILPF at 110 Maryland Avenue NE, Suite 102, Washington, DC 20002, (202) 546-6727, or look for information on WILPF's website, www.wilpf.org



WILPF In Washington

Gillian Russell Gilhool, WILPF Legislative Coordinator

A PEOPLE'S TRADE AGREEMENT FOR THE AMERICAS

The Second Summit of the Americas in Santiago, Chile last spring gathered presidents and prime ministers from 34 countries to advance the creation of "an historic Free Trade Area of the Americas" (FTAA) by the year 2005. Even more historic, however, was the convergence in Santiago of 1,000 men and women from throughout the Americas for the jointly held Peoples' Summit. Expressly rejecting the FTAA's undemocratic vision and intent, the Peoples' Summit focused on building a hemispheric social alliance around concrete, viable alternatives to the "neo-liberal" governmental orthodoxy which promotes trade and investment liberalization, deregulation, privatization and market-driven economics.

The Santiago gathering produced a living document entitled *Alternatives for the Americas: Building a Peoples' Hemispheric Agreement*. Widening circles of people's organizations are being welcomed to rework it. Missing — omitted when disagreements over approach stymied the working group — is any address of gender-differentiated concerns. WILPF U.S. is part of an ad hoc group now creating a gender chapter to offer new language and "engender" the document throughout.

Keeping in touch with Latin American sections, being attentive to inclusion, and joining with others in this work provides an opportunity to forge new links with other activists and organizations in pursuing the program objectives adopted at International Congress last July.

Not surprisingly, the official structure for FTAA negotiations marginalizes the participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), compared to the access given to corporate representatives and interests.

By letter and in an April meeting with Bryan Samuel, Chair of the Civil Society Committee and chief negotiator for the United States, WILPF and others requested parity among all consultative groups. We also wrote a letter stressing this, and further requesting the United States "initiate and/or participate in the studies to assess social and economic impacts of the FTAA on women and their families." The working group is pressing for acceptance of these basic requests by the FTAA at the Ministerial meeting in Toronto in early September.

Do join us in this work. Download Discussion Draft #2 of the Alternatives document — in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese — from the Canadian Challenging Free Trade in the Americas project website at: <http://www.web.net/comfront>. For a hard copy, in English or Spanish, call or write WILPF in Washington,

D.C. and send \$5. A working draft of the gender chapter will be available by June. Look for it on the WILPF website.

"EXTENSION SERVICES" IN LATIN AMERICA

For decades, universities have offered Extension Services to bring the benefits of higher education to off-campus sites. The Pentagon, which operates the School of the Americas at Fort Benning, GA, runs its own version of "extension services" — deploying military training teams around the world under such programs as the Joint Combined Exchange Training Program (JCET). JCET teams traveled to more than 95 countries around the world in 1998. Special Operations Forces conducted 69 JCET exercises in 21 Latin American and Caribbean countries in the first nine months of 1998.

Under the 1996 Leahy Amendment, foreign military units cannot participate in other Pentagon training programs if their members have been charged with human rights abuses. Evasion of the Leahy strictures is widely seen as the reason that the Pentagon launched the JCET program. Guatemala has been disqualified from other training since 1996, but it hosted JCET in 1997 and 1998. Representative Chris Smith has introduced a bill to attach similar restrictions to JCET, spurred by the Pentagon's disregard for abuses by Indonesia's military. WILPF supports passage of H.R. 1063.

The Secretary of Defense is required to submit a report to Congress by April 1 each year on the previous year's JCET training activities. Check the WILPF website, www.wilpf.org or call the Washington, D.C. office for updates. The Center for International Policy's website has an excellent database on militarization of the Americas, <http://www.ciponline.org>. It is jointly maintained with the Latin American Working Group. <http://www.igc.org/~lwag>.

TRADE POLICY AND WOMEN

WILPF is working to ensure that the impact of trade policy on women is recognized and included as an issue in the mobilization of NGOs swelling around the upcoming World Trade Organization meeting, which will be held in Seattle from November 29 to December 3. Help raise women's voice and visibility! Start making your plans to come to Seattle. Get in touch with Nancy Dolan (425) 483-1680 or WILPF's Washington, D.C. office.

WILPF's Legislative Office in Washington, D.C. can be reached at (202) 546 6727 or at 110 Maryland Avenue NE, Room 102, Washington, D.C. 20002.



Kosovo, Yugoslavia: Albanian women and children flee Drvare in Kosovo during Yugoslav army shelling on March 3, at the same time as Albanian negotiators in Rambouillet agreed to sign the NATO peace plan.

WILPF Policy Statement Regarding the Bombing of Yugoslavia

Issued March 26, 1999

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) calls on its branches and other allied organizations in the United States to organize protests at federal buildings, court houses and Congressional district offices nationwide on April 2nd, Good Friday, and /or April 15th (tax day) to notify President Clinton and members of Congress that we oppose this ill-conceived and illegal bombing in Yugoslavia.

Ethnic cleansing is wrong. The U.S. military action in response to ethnic cleansing is wrong. In Yugoslavia, U. S. policy has again offered massive bombings as its solution to a complex situation. Hundreds of thousands of refugees have left their homes rather than remain in harm's way. Massive bombings do not provide a lasting peace. Constructive U.S. policy for sustainable security is needed in the region.

Republican and Democratic members of Congress are correct in their criticism of this action as a simplistic response to a complex conflict situation. WILPF admires and thanks Congress member Barbara Lee, the only member who finally voted against this aggression.

The interests of U.S. arms manufacturers are intimately tied to the expansion of NATO as the policeman of the European continent — and beyond. Therefore, the world's citizens are treated to advertisements for U.S.

stealth bombers and other weapons, displayed minute by minute on the international billboard supplied by CNN. We deplore the use of space satellites to direct bombs to their targets, which is accelerating the militarization of space.

The United States is spending hundreds of billions of dollars on advanced weaponry in this bombing campaign. For example, some 16 B2 Stealth bombers — at \$2 billion each, for a total of \$32 billion — are being used in combat for the first time.

This money would be better spent on economic development and humanitarian aid to help Yugoslavia ease its transition into the commerce of dialogue and trade in this new economic period. More than 200,000 people have been displaced. Escort protection and humanitarian aid are needed. Refugee Assistance is needed to help refugees return and rebuild their homes and communities. This requires the participation of all civil society, especially women who have already been engaged in meeting across borders.

The diplomatic and humanitarian efforts of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the European Union and United Nations agencies should be encouraged and utilized more fully in the effort to reach lasting and non-military solutions to this tragic situation. ❖

**Military action
is a . . . simplistic response
to a complex conflict.
Constructive U.S. policy for
sustainable security is needed. . .**

Interns for Peace

.....
WILPF wouldn't make it without our wonderful, talented and hard-working interns.

WILPF now has 12 paid interns each year who handle a variety of projects for the organization. Internships usually last for 12 weeks and are paid \$2,000. Many interns often stay on for longer.

The internships are funded by a generous donor who said she decided to support the program in the belief that "many of these young women will go on to work for peace and freedom."

Every couple of months, WILPF gets about 100 requests from college students looking for information about WILPF internships. Most women learn about the organization through WILPF's website or through their school's career services office.

Here are some brief profiles of our current interns:

Jacqueline McCafferty - Jackie has been involved with WILPF from November 1998



to the present. She now works exclusively on WILPF's Truth and Reconciliation program and produces the T & R Faxnet. Jackie is finishing her graduate degree in Education and Anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania. She will pursue a career in Intercultural

Communications. She plans to continue working on T & R in Philadelphia as an active WILPF member.

Wanda Jones - From January to the present, Wanda has been an indispensable part of *Peace & Freedom*. A grad-

uate student at Temple University in the journalism program, Wanda has worked to improve the publication, helping to write, edit and plan the design of *Peace & Freedom*.

Recently, she joined the Truth and Reconciliation committee.



Wanda Jones and Jen Kalafut

Jen Kalafut - From March to May, Jen helped raise money for WILPF's Truth and Reconciliation work. Jen is a graduate student in Public Administration at Rutgers University. She is focusing on international NGO development and in May left for a two-year position in Slovakia at an environmental NGO.

Firial Aberra - From September to March, Firial was a development intern at WILPF. She worked on the Fundraising Cookbook and many other projects and mailings. Firial is an undergraduate at Drexel University and plans on becoming a social worker.



Firial Aberra and Patti Soh

Patti Soh - From January to the present, Patti has worked on improving WILPF's website. After teaching herself web design, Patti has greatly improved both the design and content of the site. Patti plans to attend law school at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. in the fall. She is interested in civil law and constitutional rights. ❖

Wow! 85 YEARS OF WILPF — AND COUNTING!

WILPF is planning a two-year series of activities and events to celebrate and honor our 85th Anniversary, which falls on April 27, 2000. Some ideas for activities so far include: Train 85 Women to meet with Congress about disarmament • Develop 85 school partners to reach out to our young women • Honor our members in their 70's, 80's, 90's and beyond — and seek their advice for the next Millennium • Raise \$85,000, over two years, for WILPF's programs • Hold 85 events across the nation to raise awareness and program resources.

We call on all branches and members to share thoughts and ideas for celebrating. Send us your input, and help us identify our honored elder members so we can show our appreciation to them for their dedication and commitment to peace, and seek their advice for the next millennium.

It is your 85th Anniversary — how would you like to celebrate, who would you like to honor?

Let us hear from you! Contact Chris Morin, Chair, 85th Anniversary Committee at rthis1@aol.com or (757) 229-3384 or 608 Capitol Landing Road, Williamsburg, VA 23185. ❖

Change Mavens on the Move

Mary Zepernick, Chair, Change Mavens Committee

“To create a joyful and empowered WILPF that contributes to the achievement of a peaceful, safe and just world.”

This vision statement, articulated by the U.S. Section National Board in early 1993, has provided the framework for a restructuring that culminates at the St. Louis Congress, June 23 - 27. It was also adopted three years later by the International Executive Committee, to accompany WILPF’s longtime “mega-mission” of working “to achieve, through peaceful means: World disarmament, full rights for women, racial and economic justice, a sustainable environment, and economic and psychological conditions which can assure peace, freedom and justice for all.”

In the fall of 1996, I was asked to chair the Change Mavens Committee, the second phase of the restructuring project. Since “maven” is a Yiddish word for expert, it signifies that all of us are about creating change in our communities and the world. Two rounds of extensive input by members and branches produced a clear mandate: Increased field work, leadership development and greater program focus.

The Change Mavens and the National Board have fashioned a structure to better connect branches with one another, the U.S. Section and International, and provide members a variety of training opportunities. Six fieldwork areas, each having a fieldwork coordinator on the National Board and a support team in her geographical area, will replace the current four regions. In St. Louis, Congress participants will have an opportunity to meet in their area, generating ideas and resources for their fieldwork coordinator. If you are interested in being on a support team, please contact Betty Burkes ASAP, c/o the national office.

Our national issue committees are being strengthened as a central way for members to be more effective-

ly engaged in developing and implementing WILPF programs. Last fall campaign proposals were solicited from committees, branches and individual members, and 51 were submitted — a substantive and enthusiastic response! In February, 18 members of the Steering, Program, Restructuring, Congress Program and Site committees met with staff in Philadelphia to winnow the proposals down to the ones that will be presented in St. Louis for the selection of three campaigns for the next program cycle. These seven proposals are on: The Convention to End All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, corporations and democracy, disarmament, dis-

Photo: Theta Pavis



Members of the Change Mavens Committee joined WILPF board and staff for a national board meeting at the Philadelphia office in late March.

mantling homophobia, racial justice, U.S. and Cuban women’s solidarity, and the Women’s Peace and Justice Treaty of the Americas. All proposals will be available at Congress, regardless of the national program focus; WILPF members and branches will work, as always, on the issues that best fit their concerns and community.

With the new structure in sight, I recall a conversation earlier this year with a friend who asked what I was up to. I replied that I was poring over the WILPF by-laws to see what changes the new structure will require. She said it sounded like dull, dry work. On the contrary, even when overwhelmed by e-mails and details, I’m aware of the honor and responsibility it is — for all of us — to hold this very special organization in our hands.

None of us was at The Hague in 1915 and not all of us will be in St. Louis. However, each of us can choose our niche and play a role in the ongoing, unfolding story of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom. ❖

Iraq Suffers Under Sanctions

Suzy T. Kane

In early March, the new Executive Director of the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR-USA) Rev. John Dear led a seven-person delegation to Iraq. Dear traveled with Nobel Peace Laureates Mairead Corrigan Maguire of Northern Ireland and Adolfo Perez Esquivel of Argentina.

“What we saw in Iraq,” Dear says, was “not just heartbreaking, but horrific.”

According to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), Dear says, over one million Iraqi civilians have died since sanctions were first imposed in August 1990; 6,000 Iraqi children continue to die each month from malnutrition and preventable disease.

Remember how horrified and traumatized Americans were when the Oklahoma City bombing took 169 lives, including the deaths of 19 children? Remember the famous photograph of the defeated American firefighter holding the tiny dead baby in his hands? Dear held a dying Iraqi baby in his arms. Is there any less anguish among Iraqis, whose children are dying at the rate of over 315 Oklahoma City Bombings a month?

Dear is the first Catholic priest to head FOR, the 85-year-old interfaith peace organization that counts among its members Jews, Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, people of other faiths and those with no formal religious affiliation. As he observed the Iraqi mothers keeping vigil over their dying children, Dear said that “As a Christian and priest, it was like seeing Christ on the cross with his weeping mother — hundreds of thousands of Calvaries. We could only weep with them.”

The delegation toured the Al Mansour Pediatrics Hospital. “Imagine a hospital like Sloane-Kettering,” Dear suggested, “packed with the best and brightest doctors and staff, every bed taken and beside every bed a mother. And no medicine, technical equipment, or electricity. No clean water, even in the hospital.” Dear says Iraq needs \$22 billion just to make its water clean.

“One of the surprises I had was about medicine getting in,” Dear says of his trip to Iraq. “Some of the medicine gets held up because the U.S. has destroyed Iraq’s infrastructure. You may get the medicine, but it might sit in a warehouse because there is no transportation. But even if the medicine makes it to the hospital and cures the child, the next day the child has to drink the water. The water is sewage.”

Almost six years ago, Dear was arrested

at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in North Carolina in a Ploughshares protest with peace activist Daniel Berrigan. Dear’s crime of hammering once on an F-15E fighter bomber to symbolize “beating swords into ploughshares” cost him nine months in prison. Dear says that during his stay in Iraq, those very same F-15Es were bombing every day.

“The only way to solve the problem of Iraq — if they really want to solve it — is to begin to dialogue,” Dear said. Yet, as Iraq’s Prime Minister Tariq Aziz told the delegation, “Not one U.S. elected official has been to Iraq since early 1990.”

“The crime of economic sanctions against the Iraqi people is not just a crime,” Dear says, “but a moral and spiritual disaster.”

The FOR/Nobel Peace Laureate delegation to Iraq is calling for an immediate end to economic sanctions on Iraq as well as an end to the bombardments by the U.S. and U.K. and the beginning of dialogue. Dear makes it clear that when he speaks of sanctions, he means “economic sanctions.”

“We should keep the military embargo on the whole region,” he believes, “and the U.N. should make regional disarmament a key element of its efforts in Iraq.”

Until a grassroots movement in the U.S. succeeds in getting economic sanctions lifted, Dear will remember what an Iraqi he met on his trip said to him: “We wish you have a very happy stay in Iraq, but we are suffering and dying, but you can come suffer with us.”

“That may be all we can do for now,” Dear thinks, “walk with them, befriend and suffer with the Iraqi people.”

Suzy Kane is a member of New York City WILPF.

Photo: Alan Pogue



Iraqi mother comforts her sick child in a Baghdad hospital.

The Real Danger to Social Security

Judy Gallo and Vicky Knight

Is Social Security in trouble? Will it run out of money soon, as some would have us believe? Powerful corporate/Wall Street interests, backed by the media, want to “reform” Social Security in ways that will hurt most Americans who depend on it for their very existence. They are spending vast sums to convince us a crisis is imminent, and to prepare Congress and the administration to privatize it.

Social Security is in danger, but the danger comes from those who would profit from “reforms” that hurt most working people.

When President Clinton and others talk about using part of the budget “surplus” to bolster Social Security and using the rest for defense, Medicare and other domestic programs, they’re really talking about using Social Security’s own reserves. According to the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office, the U.S. discretionary — or “general” — budget will not be balanced until 2001, and only *then* will the potential for a surplus in that budget exist. In the meantime, Social Security reserve money should not be used for other purposes.

Proposals to decrease Social Security benefits, to increase the retirement age, and to reduce cost-of-living adjustments even further all place the burden on those who can least afford it.

Proposals to invest part of the Social Security reserves in the stock market are also dangerous. They would tie our social insurance to corporate profits, and would subject Social Security to the uncertainties of the market and to possible severe downturns and recessions. Individual savings accounts open the door to privatization of the entire system, and would eliminate guaranteed security for retirees.



Administrative costs under our present, government-run system run less than 1 percent. In Chile’s privately run system, these costs are about 30 percent. (Source: *The Left Business Observer* newsletter, No. 87, 1998).

As cited in the article, *Social Security: The Truth Be Told*, written by WILPF’s Committee on Corporations, Law & Democracy, “By privatizing Social Security, corporations gain more power to control our decisions, manage our wealth, determine our future and tear generational bonds. In the bargain, potential opposition to daily corporate assaults upon life and democracy are silenced. When working people have retirement savings invested in the corporate marketplace, it will be hard to

lift a voice against the growing dominance of corporations.”

Indeed, Social Security is actually the most successful social insurance program this nation has. It covers not only retirees but survivors and people with disabilities as well. It is the main source of retirement income for two out of three working people. Women depend on Social Security even more than men do. Only 26 percent of women earn a pension, compared to 46 percent of men, and it is usually much smaller. Many women depend entirely on their spouse’s Social Security when he dies. Most minority retirees also depend solely on Social Security and would be thrown into abject poverty without it.

By the most conservative estimates, Social Security funds are more than adequate until the year 2032. Only then, if no changes are made, will the fund begin to fall short of what is needed for retirees. This is because the large number of “baby-boomers” will be retiring and drawing on the fund, while a smaller workforce will be contributing to it. Thus, a successful struggle for a “living wage” and jobs for the unemployed and underemployed could help keep Social Security solvent.

What You Can Do

The AFL-CIO has launched a campaign to save Social Security, setting up “Action Teams” all over the country. For local actions, call (202) 637-5000. The AFL-CIO wants to use the budget “surplus” for Social Security and lift the cap on taxable earnings above the present level of \$72,600. Others call for taxing unearned income (such as interest, dividends and capital gains) most of which goes to the very rich.

Call your elected representatives today and organize a group to visit them the next time they are home. Tell them you want: no cut in benefits, no increase in the retirement age, no investment in the stock market or personal savings accounts. Tell them you want to see Social Security reserves used for Social Security. Tell them you want true Cost of Living Adjustment benefits, adjusted by annual changes in the Index based on goods and services seniors actually purchase.

The battle for Social Security is the most important political struggle this year. Securing the future for seniors, their children and their grandchildren depends on actions we take now.

Judy Gallo and Vicky Knight are both members of Women Speak Out for Peace and Justice, WILPF’s Cleveland Branch.

WILPF HONORS PHILADELPHIA ACTIVIST

On March 8, International Women's Day, WILPF honored Philadelphia activist and restaurateur Judy Wicks.

About 30 people attended the cocktail/buffet, which raised money for WILPF. The event was hosted by WILPF member Patsy Hunt.

Wicks, a WILPF member, runs the White Dog Cafe restaurant in Philadelphia and has a long history of social activism. Numerous socially conscious programs are held at the White Dog Cafe, and Wicks has opened sister restaurants in Camden, NJ and in Nicaragua and Cuba.

National Program Coordinator Marilyn Clement presented Wicks with a necklace with a wooden peace dove carved by Canadian WILPFers. Wicks praised WILPF's commitment to peace and freedom and passed around a picture from Chiapas, Mexico where she had recently made a visit.

The evening event began with several students from the Philadelphia High School for the Performing Arts reading several inspiring poems, including Adrienne Rich's "Implosion."

Philadelphia City Councilman Angel Ortiz also addressed the group and lauded WILPF's work.

As a special treat, Wicks' good friend, Ben Cohen — President of Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream — attended the event. Cohen said Wicks' activism inspires him.

Cohen is a founder of Business Leaders for Sensible Priorities, which runs a program called Move Our Money (MOM) which focuses on moving money

out of the Pentagon's budget and into funding Head Start programs and childcare, among other things.

Cohen displayed a banner showing where citizen tax dollars go and how much is spent on the military versus social programs. He praised WILPF for its work, saying that its members are on the front lines of fighting for change.

"I am indebted to you," he told the room full of WILPF members.

"I look at you as women of wonder — WOW. Turn it upside down and it's MOM!" ❖



Judy Wicks, shown above receiving a gift from National Program Coordinator Marilyn Clement, was honored at an event where Ben Cohen of Ben and Jerry's spoke about military spending compared to money spent for social service programs.

MARCHING FOR MUMIA

Wanda H. Jones

Saturday April 24, 1999 was Mumia Abu-Jamal's 45th birthday and the date of several large protest marches held on his behalf. It was also the anniversary of the federal Effective Death Penalty Act, which was originally signed by President Clinton on April 24, 1996.

An outpouring of people marched in San Francisco. In Philadelphia, organizers of a demonstration there said more than 15,000 people participated in the demand that Abu-Jamal be granted a fair, new trial. A Philadelphia journalist, Abu-Jamal is currently on death row. In 1981, he was arrested in the shooting of a police officer. Witnesses have said they saw a man flee the scene who did not look like Abu-Jamal.

Supporters of Abu-Jamal say there is concrete evidence of witness tampering and misconduct in his trial. Late in 1998, the same judge who originally sentenced him to death denied his appeal for a new trial. When a person is found guilty of shooting a police officer in Pennsylvania, they are automatically given the death penalty.

At least 100 buses from all five boroughs of New York brought people to the rally at Philadelphia's City Hall. People

from across the United States and around the world attended, including 50 delegates from France— among them Danielle Mitterand, the wife of the former French prime minister. Artists, activists, religious leaders and tens of thousands of students and Youth for Mumia, as well as Latinos for Mumia, Labor for Mumia and other people's organizations, joined the protest.

The national office of WILPF played a major role in the protest by opening the doors of its main office to provide housing and information to participants in the march.

A student walkout was also held on April 23, as well as an ecumenical service at the Church of the Advocate in Philadelphia, PA.

The participants and organizers of this march not only demanded freedom for Abu-Jamal, but also freedom for all political prisoners, an end to racism and repression, abolishment of the death penalty, an end to police brutality, and social and economic justice for all people.

For more information, contact the Millions for Mumia Mobilization at (212) 633-6646, 39 West 14th Street, #206, NY, NY 10011 or see the website at www.peoplescampaign.org ❖

Wanda H. Jones is WILPF's Peace & Freedom intern.



Deconstructing Christopher Columbus

Jacqueline McCafferty

Christopher Columbus is possibly the most popular historical figure in the United States. History textbooks written for children are filled with stories of his heroic venture into unknown seas. Teachers design lessons around his glorious “discovery” and the great changes this brought to the history of the world. Since the 500th anniversary of this “great discovery” however, there has been a growing movement to paint a different picture of Columbus. Some people have asked how a single man could be credited with discovering land that had been inhabited for centuries before his arrival. Moreover, what happened to those inhabitants?

As one begins to search for the answers to these questions, the unfolding of a rather unsavory historical figure begins to take shape. The shape it takes is one that most people do not want to know, because it means admitting not just the horrific acts against humanity that were committed 500 years ago, but also making the connections to the continued acts of injustice in 1999.

Fortunately, there are people willing to unveil the truth in the hope that history can be reinterpreted to better reflect reality. Students at one public school in Philadelphia are lucky enough to have an English teacher who is one of these people.

In this English class, students have a chance to escape from the usual diet of white patriarchal fiction and historical literature that is usually fed them. In this English class, one is sure to find Jamaica Kincaid on the reading list before Somerset Maugham. In this English class, stu-

dents begin to question, probably for the first time, the man they had always heard referred to as “the great discoverer.”

This “deconstructing” of Columbus takes place over the entire month of October, while other classes are reaffirming the myth of Columbus. First, the teacher Paul* explores the students’ prior knowledge about Columbus, and usually finds the responses to be fairly uniform — explorer, founder of America, etc . . . Paul said that in the 12 years he has been teaching this

when he read Howard Zinn’s book *The People’s History*. Because of the great influence this had on him, he uses parts of this book in class to support his continuous exposé of Columbus, and the many other myths we’ve come to call facts. For the month of October, however, the main sources Paul uses are *Rethinking Columbus*, a resource guide for teachers published by Rethinking Schools, and original excerpts from Columbus’ journal. These two pieces are examined side by side as Paul and the students begin to deconstruct

“They were well-built, with good bodies and handsome features . . . They do not bear arms, and do not know them, for I showed them a sword, they took it by the edge and cut themselves out of ignorance. They have no iron. Their spears are made of cane. . . They would make fine servants. . . With fifty men we could subjugate them all and make them do whatever we want.”

— From an entry in Columbus’ log after he landed on the shore of the Bahama Islands, as quoted in *A People’s History of the United States* by Howard Zinn

new perspective of Columbus he has rarely had a student question what they have been told about Columbus.

For Paul, the beginning of his own questioning began years ago

the history previously told to them.

Initially, students are fairly unresponsive to this new information. Paul believes this is not necessarily because they do not believe what they are reading, but because, in part, the students weren’t expecting Paul to tackle such a topic. Paul is a middle-aged white man and his students are African American and Latino. Being faced with a white teacher raising critical questions about another white man leaves some students wondering what to make of the situation. Should they trust Paul? For

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

Continued on next page ➤

Paul, what is most important is that the students start asking their own questions.

As they continue reading together, Paul begins to see that the students are starting to make connections. Disparaging remarks that Columbus made referring to the indigenous people of the Americas as “savages” and “animals,” and his talk about selling these people back in Europe, strikes a chord with many of the students. They immediately relate to the terms being used, and to the concept of slavery.

In this way, Paul is able to thread opposition and resistance throughout everything his students read in class. The slavery of Africans in America is related to the genocide of Native Americans, which is related to the internment camps built for Japanese Americans. Pointing out the threads that run through different cultures of oppression, Paul focuses on the forms of resistance among these cultures. He is more interested in relaying models of strength as a response to the oppression than focusing solely on the oppression.

In the readings there are many references to the Tainos (indigenous people of the Caribbean islands who were subject to genocidal acts, and are virtually non-existent today). Paul said many of the students recognized the word “Taino,” having heard it at home. More connections start being made as the children begin looking into their own backgrounds and realize the mixed history of their own families. They began by reading Columbus, and ended up exploring their genealogy.

This is exactly what Paul hopes to see. He believes in students being active learners. Part of the Columbus lesson includes designing a questionnaire to survey common knowledge about Columbus among the adults in the school. The outcome of the questionnaire showed

that most adults didn’t know the real history of Columbus. The purpose of this exercise is not the results, but rather to develop the students’ ability to generate questions — to become seekers of knowledge. Paul is creating little researchers in his students who, by questioning historical interpretations, learn to question daily events in their life. There is so much to look at when deconstructing history, such as how language is



used as a tool to maintain stories that don’t represent reality. With Columbus, students connect the threads to their own lives — not just that he was a slave-owner and murderer, but how that connects to their lives today.

Realizing that the work he is doing takes time, Paul does not expect to see significant changes in his students after only one year with him. Some students who are significantly affected by what they learn do maintain contact and seek advice from Paul. However, in a school where one-half to three-quarters of

the students don’t make it to graduation, it’s hard to evaluate the long-term influence of this class. Some of Paul’s students do wind up staying in school longer, however, and other teachers recognize when they have a “Paul student” because those are the students asking questions.

In 1992, there was a “Celebrating Columbus” essay competition among the local public schools. Teachers were asked to choose the best students to represent the school in writing an essay honoring Columbus. A ninth grade history teacher chose two of her top students. When the students — who had studied with Paul — learned of the essay topic, they refused to write it. They refused to celebrate this man because “it wouldn’t be telling the truth about Columbus.”

The vice-principal was called in to talk with them, but they persisted in not taking a celebratory perspective in the essay. Rather than allowing these students to write a different account of Columbus, they were uninvited from entering the competition. When Paul heard about what happened with his former students, he couldn’t have been prouder. For him, the risk these students took in questioning their assignment reaffirmed the importance of continuing to deconstruct Columbus and other historical myths in the classroom.

Jacqueline McCafferty is WILPF’s Truth and Reconciliation Intern.

* Because this English class falls outside of any official school curriculum the teacher’s name in this story has been changed.

For more information, or to get materials from Rethinking Schools, call 1-800-669-4192 or visit their website at www.rethinkingschools.org

Stand For Children

Stand For Children is a grassroots group dedicated to helping communities ensure that every child can grow up safe, healthy and educated.

This year, the theme for the fourth annual Stand For Children Day is "Ready to Learn, Ready to Succeed." More than one million people nationwide are expected to take part in over 1,300 Stand For Children Day events on and around June 1, 1999 as part of the effort to improve children's education in and out of the classroom.

In addition to caring and supportive parents, there are other essential things that children must have, for example, health coverage. Children who can't see the blackboard, who can't hear the teacher, or are distracted by pain, can't learn to the best of their ability. Stand Day events will help children succeed by signing children up for health insurance under the new Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

Substantial new investments for affordable, quality childcare need to be made. Young children need proper care and nurturing, stimulation and early education so they can enter school ready to read and to succeed.

Children also need productive after-school activities that are safe. Enriching after-school programs can help the nearly five million young people who are home alone each week to stay out of trouble, and also give them the extra boost they need to succeed in school and in life.

We need schools that challenge all of our children. With smaller classes, skilled teachers, high standards and involved parents, every child can perform at high levels.

These supports and expectations, both in and out of school, can help children succeed.

Become a Stand For Children member today. For \$24 a year, you can be a member of a grassroots movement and receive a variety of benefits including: "The Stand Update" quarterly newsletter, discounts on Stand For Children merchandise, a personalized Stand For Children membership card, an official member decal, an application for a Stand For Children affinity credit card, and access to a "members only" section of our web site.

If you choose to form or join a local Stand For Children Chapter, \$6 of your dues will be returned to support your local work and you will also receive a Stand For Children organizing manual, technical assistance from the Stand for Children organizing staff and invitations to the Stand For Children Leadership Institute and other training.

To find out more about how you can get involved with a Stand For Children Day event in your community, call Stand For Children at (800) 663-4032 or visit the



Support an Indigenous People's Struggle for Land, Liberty and Democracy

JOIN THE YOUTH BRIGADE TO CHIAPAS, MEXICO: JANUARY 5 - 15, 2000

The IFCO/Pastors for Peace Youth Brigade to Chiapas, Mexico will support an indigenous struggle for peace with justice and dignity. The brigade will provide an international presence in an indigenous community that has been victimized by state authorized paramilitary and police violence. The Brigade will also make a concrete contribution by helping to build schools, a health care clinic and other urgently needed infrastructure. Urgently needed construction tools and materials will also be delivered.

Indigenous community leaders throughout Chiapas have continuously stated that an international presence

helps protect their communities against human-rights abuses by Mexican soldiers who are based within or nearby their communities. Notoriously violent paramilitary groups are similarly dissuaded by an international presence.

Your participation in this project will make a direct, tangible contribution to this revolution in progress. Join the Youth Brigade to Chiapas today.

IFCO/Pastors for Peace
PO Box 408130
Chicago, IL 60640-8130

p4p@igc.apc.org
www.ifconews.org

Songs Of Trauma and Triumph

Ruth Hunter

All of the musicians in the Grupo Morazan ensemble fled El Salvador with their parents when they were children. Now adults, they sing songs about war, their frightening experiences and their dreams of hope.

The musicians and their parents fled from the Scorched-Earth Policy inflicted by the El Salvador military in the 1980s. During the dangerous flight, the lives of 8,000 people hinged upon silence. Children were admonished repeatedly; tears or words would betray their presence. Painstakingly, the refugees made their way through the underbrush, crossed the surging river and reached Honduras in safety.

Our peace delegation, coordinated by Witness for Peace, Epica and School of Americas Watch, listened to this remarkable tale as we sat under an open air pavilion high in the mountains of the Morazan Province, former stronghold of the guerillas of El Salvador. A representative from the Christian Base Community Segundo Montes spoke of their 12 years in exile and told the wondrous story about the songs the children had sung describing their frightening flight and how healing slowly began as the refugees coped with their memories.

The improvisations by children, most of whom were under the age of eight at the time, were songs about the trauma that affected their lives and included echoes of things they had heard from the adults. Through the music, healing turned into hope, fueling dreams that one day everyone could return to their homeland. The dreams, nourished by children's voices, burned brightly over the years of exile.

This is the story of Grupo Morazan, now professional musicians.

While in exile, the children scavenged the nearby forest for materials to create crude instruments. Several years later, a Belgian woman with a rich background in music visited the refugees. Mia Vercrysee recognized the potential talent among the children. She stayed on, teaching reading and writing through music, encouraging them to keep their memories alive with folk songs. Mia was instrumental in obtaining instruments to replace the makeshift ones. Within a few years, she arranged to have the teenagers tour Belgium, earning honorariums and sales from CDs; their success triggered an ambitious plan to have a music school one day, when they return to El Salvador. Nine years ago, thousands of refugees left Honduras and began to build their community. One of the priorities was a music studio.

Grupo Morazan musicians were waiting for us as we approached their round building, constructed with acoustics in mind. They gave us a tour of the music school, proud that music lessons are available to anyone in Segundo Montes for the modest sum of \$2 a month, which they subsidize from their concerts. The curriculum, still under the expertise of Mia Vercrysee, includes piano, voice and instrument instruction. For more than 13 years she has continued to inspire young and old to express their painful past through song, to enjoy the present and build a peaceful future.

The real treat came when Grupo Morazan, now young adults, performed. Through instrument and voices we listened to their memories envisioned through the eyes of children. Later on, we met at the pavilion for a lively session of jazz and classical music. The exuberance of both the musicians and our delegation gave birth to a challenging plan. After much plotting the following evening, plans were made for the young adults to give concerts on the East Coast, a first in the United States. The tour would culminate with a performance in front of the White House at a May protest to close the School of the Americas, the infamous military training facility for Latin America.

Grupo Morazan has come a long way. They continue to enhance their legacy of Segundo Montes by providing ongoing musical education to the younger generations. Their gifts lift the spirit of all who listen; their success has become an inspiration and model for others. Peace prevails in the Morazan Province, strengthened by the songs of the past, nourished by their accomplishments, as they continue to build their community.

Ruth Hunter is a member of WILPF's Santa Cruz branch.



Grupo Morazan



Branch Action News

Leslie Reindl, Branch Action Editor

Editor's Note: In early February, I attended a weeklong elderhostel in New Mexico where I met some wonderful women. After a few minutes in their company at dinner, I wondered why they all seemed so well informed. And then I found out — they were all WILPFers from the **Portland** branch. Among them was Barbara Drageaux, a dynamite activist whose visit to her local mayor and county commissioners with informational packets about the Multilateral Agreement on Investment was featured in the last edition of Branch Action News.

WILPFers, you are special people, and all of you deserve to be honored for your unflagging work for peace. In this issue, I list some of you who have been called out for special attention in your newsletters:

WILPFERS HONORED

- Lauren Nussbaum, recognized by the *Oregonian* for her scholarship regarding Anne Frank and for her acquaintance with the Frank family during her exile in Amsterdam during World War II.
- Barbara Drageaux, given a leadership award from the **Portland** Chapter of the Older Women's League at their national convention.
- Long-time activists Louise Erickson (**Fresno**) on her 90th and Maggie Drew (**MN Metro**) on her 80th.
- Ruth Edington (Asheville) runner-up for outstanding citizen award at the Martin Luther King Jr. prayer breakfast. Ruth has written a book about 50 outstanding women of color in the Asheville community and is now working on a book about men.
- Gaby Litsky (**Santa Cruz**) honored at YWCA's 10th Women's Human Rights Day.

- **Colorado Cluster** lifted up all of their activist elders on the occasion of Mother's Day!
- Special Congratulations to our **Santa Cruz** activists, who helped get the new University of California Santa Cruz branch started and who continue to mentor the members.

GLOBALIZATION

Fresno, East Bay/Berkeley and workshops with **Santa Cruz** each presented Mary Zepernick and Virginia Rasmussen of the **Cape Cod** branch. Zepernick and Rasmussen spoke on "The Corporate Assault on Democracy: The People's Response." Zepernick and Rasmussen co-administer the Program on Corporations,



Law & Democracy (POCLAD) in Massachusetts. **Santa Cruz** followed up with a talk on who's behind the campaign slogan of "Buy American" and how it fits into the larger framework of economic globalization. POCLAD was a subject of the **Cape Cod** *In Your Face: Listen to Women for a Change* cable TV program. **East Bay-Berkeley** is selling reprints of *Time* magazine's four-part series on corporate welfare at \$2 each. The Beijing Economics Working Group of **MN Metro** had a speaker on the so-called Asian economic crisis. **Catonville** celebrated International Women's Day with a program on

"The Consequences of Wealth, and the Root Causes of Poverty Locally and Globally."

HUMAN RIGHTS

Pajaro Valley sponsored a showing of *Ya no Mas*, about the women of Chiapas, as part of its regular video series. **Boulder** held a reception for Tomislava Vukicevic, who talked about the effects of political control on education in her homeland, the former Yugoslavia. **Germantown-Center City Philadelphia** invited people to a rally against the death penalty, with Father Daniel Berrigan speaking. The branch also advertised a gathering called "Millions for Mumia" to protest the death penalty imposed on Mumia Abu Jamal. The Arts Committee of **MN Metro** offered its first mask-and-puppet show about abuses suffered by women and girls living in Minnesota, *I See Hope in Your Eyes*.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Rockaway made the news in the local paper with its showing of the documentary *Nukes in SPACE 2: Unacceptable Risks*, which provides an update on the Cassini space probe and its scheduled fly-by in August of this year. The film also investigates the U.S. Space Command's desire to become master of space. **Boulder** made a strong endorsing statement on a resolution to control nuclear weapons to the City Council. **East Bay-Berkeley** was a co-plaintiff in a lawsuit against the Department of Energy on plans to clean up radioactive and toxic waste, and won! Part of the award was \$6.25 million to help citizen groups and Indian tribes monitor, clean up and cover legal costs. **Portland** used a chapter meet-

ing to learn more about North Korea's complex history. **Sacramento** published a postcard to President Clinton on de-alerting nuclear weapons and urged members to copy and send it on. The new branch, **University of California Santa Cruz**, has already set up an Abolition 2000 committee.

MILITARY BUDGET

East Bay/Berkeley included a Resolution on the Proposed Rise in the Military Budget in its last newsletter. For a copy call (510) 652-5766. **Sacramento Valley** published a letter to President Clinton on the same subject. **Cape Cod's** February cable TV program In Your Face was on "Tax Resistance and You." Cape Cod is also beginning to assemble a multi-class, multicultural group to participate next fall in a two-day conference on the Women's Budget.

IRAQ

MN Metro cosponsored a March visit by Denis Halliday, the former United Nations humanitarian aid coordinator who resigned to protest U.N. involvement in the sanctions, and Phyllis Bennis, fellow of the Institute of Policy Studies, who spoke on the crisis in Iraq. **Germantown** added members' names to an ad in *The New York Times* demanding an end to the sanctions, and had a letter about this action published as a Letter to the Editor in the local paper. All branches continued various other actions on Iraq.



ORGANIZING

East Bay-Berkeley presented the workshop "Women Taking Charge: Organizing Skills for Social Change," led by Chris Morin from national. It included group facilitation, delegation, the meeting process, and leadership development.

Boulder asked for ideas about what to do with the regional structure, after regions are abolished at the next national congress. **Detroit** had a special meeting to discuss how to make their branch more effective, with a focus on teamwork. How does team-



Marcia McLane spoke on behalf of WILPF at the opening ceremony of a celebration for Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday in Fresno, Ca. Laura Fultz presented a bouquet of flowers to Yolanda King, in recognition of the fact that she and her mother are longtime WILPF sponsors, as was her father. Yolanda placed the flowers at a newly unveiled statue of her father.

work differ from committees, and is it the answer for today's busy activist? **Santa Cruz** decided to create a speaker's bureau.

RACISM

Catonsville showed the film *Truth and Reconciliation: Can it Work in the United States?* Copies of a report of the WILPF November symposium on this subject were also available to help in discussion. Suggestions for improving race relations in their community were: Sponsor a multicultural peace camp or craft show; involve other groups in a multicultural food festival; form a multicultural choir; organize a multicultural WILPF contingent for the 4th of July parade, among others. **Cape Cod's**

Boal Theater Group developed a scenario involving classism for presentation at the Jane Addams dinner in May. The **Young Leaders Caucus of MN Metro** presented a speaker and a young reaction panel on Race Relations. **Rockaway** presented WILPF's Truth and Reconciliation initiative at a Black History Month Observance.

FUND-RAISING IDEAS

The stamp project of **Fresno**: Collect used stamps from any country and sell them to a person who then resells them to stamp collectors. Fresno has

been doing this and the person reselling the stamps is adding his own contribution to each check he sends the branch. How to find a re-seller in your area? Linda Streeter of The Stamp Project may be able to help: 340 Carter #2, Vallejo, CA 94590-3739.

Detroit sold

tickets to a performance of August Wilson's play *Jitney*.

RECOMMENDED BOOK

From **Detroit**: *24 Years of House Work...and the Place Is Still a Mess*, by Pat Schroeder. Who can resist a title like that?

Note: Since the last issue, the Internet address for Gloria McMillan's novel, *Waking the Dead*, has changed. The new address is: www.enteract.com/~flynn

Marilyn Clement has been elected to the WILPF National Board and will serve as chair of the Program and Action Committee.

Remembering Ingrid Washinawatok

Marilyn Clement, National Program Coordinator



Ingrid Washinawatok was my friend — she was almost everybody's friend. She seemed always to have been there, working at the United Nations to build consciousness of the international Indian treaties first signed, and then betrayed, by the U.S. government. The International Indian Treaty Council helped the United Nations bring an understanding of these treaties into the

circle of international law. Ingrid is said to have started this work at age 17, after having labored alongside her father in the politics of her own Menominee nation.

She was a joy to be around, with a quick giggle that oftentimes transformed itself into a hearty belly laugh. You couldn't help joining her. She was always cajoling people to come together to make a stronger impact.

We worked together in many different venues, including for a short time at MADRE, when we were trying to get the national health care campaign kicked off. We were also together at the Center for Constitutional Rights, where we worked to challenge the takeover of Indian lands at White Earth, Minnesota. It was during this period that she brought me a present of turquoise-beaded leather moccasins.

At the time of her death, Ingrid was Director of the Fund of the Four Directions, a foundation supporting the efforts of indigenous peoples all over the world. She served as a program officer there until the end of her short 41 years. She also served as the international co-chair of the Indigenous Women's Network.

We talked by phone many times and I always asked about Ingrid's little boy Macki (14-years-old today) and her husband, Ali Elessa, whom she adored. Years ago, she brought Macki to an event I organized for President

Nelson Mandela after he was released from 27 years in prison. She wanted him to see this great leader.

Ingrid was also very supportive last year when we were preparing for WILPF's international congress with problems galore. She supported Marta Benavides from El Salvador in a difficult and complex time, and fulfilled my expectations of her — always loyal and always generous with her love and attention.

I was not surprised to see that she had been in Colombia responding to the cries of the U'wa people whose lands are being overrun, exploited and desecrated by oil companies. The danger of traveling to remote areas of Colombia was etched in my memory. Edith Ballantyne and I had visited Colombia three years ago. We were told that a huge new deposit of oil had been discovered in Colombia— yet another reason for the U.S. to pour military equipment and training into controlling that mineral-rich land where civil war and paramilitary violence have killed almost 40,000 people in the last few years. It was no surprise either when I heard at the School of the Americas demonstration that more military officers — murderers and torturers — had been trained from Colombia than from any other nation.

WILPF has been trying to respond to Colombia, and I feel that we have an even greater responsibility to help people understand the complex truths about Colombia now that our sister's blood is spilled there. There is a small window for peace there, and we should stop the flow of weapons now. WILPF has lost a good friend. I too have lost a dear and irreplaceable friend.

(Ingrid Washinawatok, Lahe'ena'e Gay, and Terence Freitas were kidnapped in Colombia's U'wa Indian territory across the Arauca River from Venezuela and murdered on March 4th by guerrillas from the FARC movement. To emphasize how strongly the rebels themselves condemned the slayings, another guerrilla commander reading the communiqué said the killer might face the death penalty at the hands of his comrades.)



Dear WILPF Board,

In this report, I hope to give you a picture of who we are and some of the work that comes out of our office. The Jane Addams Peace Association (JAPA) has a staff of one and a budget of \$65,000.

As WILPF's 501c3, we qualify to rent an office in the United Methodist Church Building across from the United Nations. With this prime location, we have been happy to share our office space with the U.N. team, working under guidance from International WILPF. During 1998, JAPA sent \$37,000 to Geneva for international interns from the Freeman Fund. In the United States, we issued \$19,750 in grants from the Jones Fund (which included \$8,000 to *Peace & Freedom*); \$1,500 and \$1,000 was sent to branches from the Lynch Fund and Miami Fund in accordance with the donor's wishes. Through our office, \$82,824 went to the Geneva Fund and \$99,421 to the Philadelphia office.

We signed up three annuities, supported Felicity Hill in establishing herself in New York and organized a wonderful Book Award Ceremony. We completely updated our investment strategy and portfolio; had an impeccable IRS audit; created a new system of accountability for the Philadelphia and Geneva offices; coordinated collaboration with Geneva and Philadelphia and did all of this and much more with one staff member and a budget of \$65,000!

As you can imagine, I am very proud of our accomplishments and I look forward to seeing you in St. Louis.

In Peace,

Linda Wasserman, JAPA President

Phone: 831-338-4233 e-mail: lindabel@cruzio.com

THANK YOU ■ THANK YOU ■ THANK YOU

WILPF would like to thank our many members and donors who have supported the work of WILPF with their membership dues and with extra gifts throughout the year. As a member organization, we depend on you to provide the resources that allow us to accomplish our mission — to promote peace, freedom and justice for all.

Our members are all rich in spirit, but not necessarily in the pocketbook. However, every single cent is equally important. Members sacrifice equally for peace. Those that have more, give more, but their sacrifice is

the same as those who have less and give to their ability. We are all in this together and we all do what we can and must. All is appreciated and put to good use.

Unfortunately, we cannot do our work through membership dues alone — they are important and contribute 25 percent of our costs. That is why we ask for extra gifts during the year for project-related activities. We never know how we will need to respond to the latest show of hate and violence that flares up - but we must respond. So we come to you and you are always there to help us as much as you can — we respond together.

MEMORIALS

We appreciate contributions from the families, friends and estates of some of our dear members who have passed away.

Their spirits remain with us and their legacy of peace will continue.

Thank you, noble friends of peace, freedom and justice for all.

■ Gladys Blum ■ Ruth Burgess ■ Julia Cohen

■ Henrietta Guignon ■ Jean T. Hewitt ■ Leona Krebiel

■ Betsy Fehrer ■ Sally Newmark

Please inform us of members who have passed away so we can honor them also.

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WILPF's new website makes it possible to update information in a more timely manner than *Peace & Freedom's* publication schedule allows. To get information posted on the site, email wilpf@wilpf.org

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