

# WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR

# PEACE AND FREEDOM

MAY, 2010

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ST. LOUIS BRANCH



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[WWW.WILPE.ORG](http://WWW.WILPE.ORG)

St. Louis Branch WILPF

## Annual Meeting and Pot Luck Dinner Sunday, May 23, 2010 5:30 p.m.

Regional Arts Commission, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
6128 Delmar (one block east of Skinker – street parking)

Raging Grannies, Table talk, Nuclear Update  
Great Food, Lively Conversation

### SAUDIS DEBATE MINGLING SEXES (Celebrate with us not being born in Saudi Arabia:)

Saudi religious scholars are for the first time in decades openly debating a previously untouchable hallmark of Saudi society: its strictly enforced gender segregation.

King Abdullah, who launched the country's first coeducational university, is sending an implicit message to his subjects that some outdated social strictures – especially when it comes to women – will need revising if the kingdom is to develop into a modern, diversified economy less dependent on oil.

Cont'd on Page 6



## RATIFY WOMEN! CEDAW Women's Rights Treaty

*The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is the most complete international agreement on basic human rights for women and was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979. To date, 185 countries have ratified CEDAW. Even though the U.S. helped draft the treaty, it is the only industrialized country left to ratify.*

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm>

### • WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

*CEDAW is the most comprehensive international agreement on the basic human rights of women and girls.*

*U.S. ratification would lend weight to the treaty and the principle that human rights of women are universal across all cultures, nations and religions and worthy of being guaranteed through international human rights standards. Until the U.S. ratifies CEDAW, it can neither credibly demand that others*

*live up to their obligations under the treaty, nor that it is a leader in the global human rights community.*

### • WHAT CEDAW HAS HELPED ACHIEVE IN OTHER COUNTRIES

*Reducing the sexual enslavement and trafficking of women and girls; Securing basic legal recourse to women and girls against violence and abuses of their human rights; Freeing access to primary education and health care where it had previously been denied;*

*Saving lives during pregnancy and childbirth; Acknowledging the basic right to own and inherit property, including helping to secure essential development loans to poor women.*

### • WHAT THE SENATE MUST DO: RATIFY WOMEN!

*CEDAW can be ratified with a two-thirds majority of the Senate (at least 67 votes). Women have already waited 30 years. Demand President Obama and the Senate RATIFY WOMEN by prioritizing and passing CEDAW without restrictions.*

*— NOW e-mail of 4-12-10*

## LANDMINE TREATY AND SENATOR BOND

The Friends Committee on National Legislation has contacted WILPF to ask MO Senator Christopher Bond to sign on to a letter organized by Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-Vermont) to President Obama, urging the President to finish a review of U.S. policy on landmines and sign the global treaty banning these weapons. Leahy already has signatures from 63 senators, including seven Republicans (Lugar, Gregg, Hatch, Bennett, Snowe, Collins, and Voinovich).

Yvonne Logan is trying to get a meeting with the Senator, but in the meantime, **please call** Bond's office and follow up with a short note or email. The President needs 67 senate votes to ratify the Landmines Treaty, if he decided to sign it. Sixty-seven signatures on the letter would send a powerful message.

Leahy's letter calls on the Administration to complete a thorough but timely review of US policy interests relating to the decade-old Landmine Ban Treaty, with an eye to identifying publicly any outstanding obstacles to accession and working to overcome those obstacles.

Polls overwhelmingly show the US public has supported the US joining the global ban on these weapons, which are triggered by the victim, whether the victim is a child, a farmer, or a soldier. In March, more than 50 heads of national US organizations wrote the President in support of the US signing this treaty.

Senator Bond's contacts: 202-224-5721; 314-725-4484; Fax: 202-224-8149.

## RATIFY RATIFY REMINDER

We need to hold U.S. senators' feet to the fire until they ratify the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty

President Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev signed the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty on Apr. 8 in Prague. The New START treaty makes modest reductions in the number of deployed nuclear weapons, setting the limit at 1,550 warheads – a 30% reduction from the previous Moscow Treaty signed in 2002. Additionally, the treaty will ensure transparency and verification between the U.S. and Russia and give a timeline of seven years to implement the new reductions and measures. This treaty is an important step forward.

## STRATEGIES FOR ISRAELI/PALESTINIAN PEACE

**"Criticizing Israel has long been the equivalent of touching a third rail in many Jewish families and friendships, relegating disagreements to a conversational demilitarized zone where only the innocent and foolhardy go."**

– Stephen McGee,  
The New York Times, May 5, 2010

The same day, Jane Mendelson used the above quote in her introductory remarks for the WILPF panel on "Strategies for Israeli/Palestinian Peace: What Can I Do" Thursday, May 5 at the University City Library Auditorium. If not a "third rail" for the gathering that night, it was certainly a conversation stimulus.

Mazen Badra, a Palestinian living in the U.S. for the past eight years, led off by explaining the rationale for the Mind of Peace Experiment, which consists of five two-hour discussions between Jews and Palestinians on ways to solve problems and achieve peace in Israel and Palestine. Badra and Sapir Handelman organized two groups for discussions at UMSL in late 2008, early 2009, and since then, seven other groups have been organized, two or three in Israel, one in Canada, and the rest in the U.S. "If grassroots people can come together and arrive at solutions, certainly diplomats should be able to achieve a peaceful solution."

Hala Abdelaziz, a Palestinian-born architect, explained the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions campaign's goal as pressuring Israel to conform to international law and UN resolutions and pressuring the U.S. to comply with the same. She said the purpose is not anti-Semitic, is not to destroy Israel, and targets Israeli, not Jewish products, in a non-violent way. Current boycott campaigns are aimed at Ahava, an Israeli cosmetic company based in a West Bank settlement; Caterpillar of Peoria, IL, selling weaponized bulldozers to Israel for building the Wall and for demolition of Palestinian homes; Motorola, which provides mobile phones in Israel; and at the UC Berkeley, a boycott

of General Electric and United Technology is being planned.

Robert Fares, a Washington University mechanical engineering student and leader of The J Street U group there, began by telling of his experience in Lebanon in 2006 when Israel bombed the airport there, his discovery that many of his Wash. U friends were Jews (his father is Lebanese, his mother from northern Virginia, U.S.), and his participation in the campus peace movement through the Union of Progressive Zionists, which morphed into J Street U. Within U.S. society, the latter organization works for peace, an end to violence, security for Israel, and a two-state solution. "We care about Israel and its future; we care about Palestine and its future; we care about Israeli and Palestinian people," he said.

After the three panelists spoke, a long line formed of people with questions and comments, such as: Palestinians in the West Bank are enduring taxation without representation; Israelis are terrorized by the rockets launched from Gaza; BDS directed against the government, not against civilians; BDS not a fraction as hard as the blockade of Gaza; if agreement cannot be reached, what about binding arbitration; both sides need to negotiate, no one else can enforce a solution; a two-state solution is impossible as long as there are settlements in the West Bank; Israeli children in camps [like summer camps in the U.S.] sing for peace; and the final remark from a young Palestinian woman: "Israeli children sing for peace; Palestinian children sing for freedom."

About 80 people attended, among whom were many new faces and many young people. As usual, Jane was a gracious moderator and Suzanne Reinhold a fair timekeeper, allowing the last four a minute's worth of commentary before the session was adjourned for more refreshments and conversation, which spilled over into the parking lot after we vacated the library. If we can keep talking and listening, maybe we can arrive at a solution to all the world's problems.

– Mary Jane Schutzius

## WILPF INTERNATIONAL BOARD JANUARY 2010 RESOLUTION ON ISRAELI/ PALESTINIAN SITUATION

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, meeting at the International Board Meeting in Ahmedabad, India in January 2010:

– Reaffirms its previous resolutions on the Middle East, passed every year since 1989, which affirm the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people including: the right to self-determination, the right of return and the right to establish an independent state of Palestine at the pre- 1967 borders and call for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 252, 338, 465, 1322 and UN General Assembly Resolution 194.

– Welcomes the January 2010 initiative of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas calling for non-violent resistance against Israeli occupation.

– Recognizes the disproportionate suffering of the people in Gaza, supports the efforts of the Gaza freedom march and calls on the Egyptian and Israeli governments to allow for the marchers free passage to Gaza.

– Recognizes Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine state according to International Law.

– Congratulates the president and people of Palestine for successfully having Jerusalem recognized as the Capital of Arab culture for the year 2009 by UNESCO, despite Israeli attacks on cultural and religious places and institutions,

including the destruction of historic parts of the Al-Aqsa mosque.

– Welcomes the Goldstone Report adopted by the UN Human Rights Council in its 12<sup>th</sup> Special Session (October 2009), and calls for the full implementation of all of its recommendations.

– Calls on the governments of Israel and Palestine to immediately conduct the independent investigations called for in the report as to whether their activities during Operation Cast Lead violate international human rights and humanitarian law and were war crimes or crimes against humanity.

– Further supports the recommendation in the Goldstone Report that if these independent investigations are not conducted by May 2010, that the case should be deferred to the International Criminal Court.

– Also agrees to support the international Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel and calls on our sections to distribute information, including lists of companies to boycott, to their membership. WILPF also calls on all our sections to encourage their governments to stop all trade with Israel as part of this movement.

WILPF 1,  
rue de Varembé, Case Postale 28,  
1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland

– See Page 6

## INTERNATIONAL and NATIONAL WILPF

**Susi Snyder**, WILPF's Secretary General resigned in January and has taken a position with Pax Christi in the Netherlands. At the International Board meeting in India early this year it was announced that to save money and allow for an adequate international search, the position of Secretary General would not be filled until late spring. In May, Madeleine Rees will fill the job, who most recently served as head of the OHCHR Women's Rights and Gender Unit.

**Sam Cook** left her job as director of WILPF's Peace-women project in mid-December and was replaced in early March by Maria Butler. Maria has "close professional ties to Mary Robinson, former High Commissioner of Human Rights" – WILPF U.S. Co-presidents' Report to the Board.

**Stacey Ferguson**, the U.S. Section's Director of Operations, resigned effective Jan. 15, 2010, and was replaced in early February by Laurie Roberts Belton.

The Iran-Iraq Issues Committee and the Afghanistan Committee have merged into an "End the Wars" committee, which is seeking more members.

The Fall 2010 U.S. Section Board meeting will be held in Bloomington, Indiana Oct. 23-25, and all WILPF members are invited. Consider running for a board seat in the next election, scheduled for 2011.

## ANTI-ABORTION ZEALOT HAS NO TIME FOR KIDS

**WARNING:** Rep. Cynthia Davis, R-O'Fallon, is dangerous to children. Although she's Chair of Missouri's House Standing Committee on Children and Families, she refuses to handle important issues such as child abuse, to focus on her own agenda, anti-abortion.

She has refused to hear "Sam Pratt's Law," a child care safety bill named in honor of an infant who died in February, 2009 at an unlicensed in-home day care near Farmington. The 3-month-old boy allegedly was killed by his day care provider who, though charged with manslaughter and child abuse resulting in a fatality, continued to care for children in her home. Her trial is set for October. Because she is not licensed and is not subject to state regulation, she could still technically care for children. That's a matter of concern to child care advocacy groups such as the Missouri Child Care Resource and Referral Network who are backing the bill to protect vulnerable children.

Under "Sam Pratt's Law" state child care regulators would have power to close down unlicensed day care providers accused of criminal child abuse, the same power regulators currently have with licensed providers.

In a St. Louis Post-Dispatch article May 2, Nancy Cambria wrote that Davis told the Pratt family that the bill appeared to be drafted to soothe their grief. Davis e-mailed the Post-Dispatch that she felt for the family but didn't believe the bill would succeed, and that devoting time to it would be a waste of effort given

the other important bills her committee was considering; that abortion legislation was a higher priority. (Davis spoke out against school lunch subsidies last year, arguing that hunger can be a motivator for children.)

Davis doesn't deny she's narrowed the focus of the committee, and says her committee is secondarily focused on vetting bills that strengthen marriage and make it harder for couples to divorce; that her job is "to limit government interference in families while strengthening such institutions as marriage."

Rep. Jeanette Mott Oxford, D-St. Louis, is among Democratic members of the committee who condemn the focus on abortion, arguing that Davis has been missing out on critical issues while bringing in questionable outside expert testimony to promote her agendas.

Rep. Mike McGhee, R-Odessa, asked Davis to allow the committee to consider Sam Pratt's Law, and said he was disappointed that it hadn't been heard, but wasn't critical of Davis. "She's doing a bunch of important legislation," he said. "Some of it's very complicated and has taken three weeks to hear. She's let a lot of people come in who've written books. She's taking telephone testimony from Canada. They're taking a half hour apiece."

Since Davis took over the committee last session, no bill on child care safety or on policy in the state's children's division, which oversees child abuse investigations and foster care, has had a hearing. But she did schedule

hearings on abortion bills.

According to Cambria, Davis' committee has just 13 bills before it, four of them dealing with abortion restrictions and one on embryo donation. Only two have gone to the full House so far. In 2007 under Chair Ward Franz the same committee fielded 45 different bills, and its work resulted in laws to protect foster children and support adoptive families.

"Sam Pratt's Law" is expected to be re-introduced next year and referred to a different committee. Meanwhile Davis is challenging Sen. Scott Rupp, R-Wentzville, for the 2<sup>nd</sup> District Senate seat.

SB793, "the abortion bill of 2010," has passed the Senate and gone to the House floor, where passage is expected. The bill by Sen. Rob Mayer, R-Dexter, would provide women seeking abortions information about fetal development, pregnancy resource centers, alternatives to abortion, and child support obligations of the child's father under state law. It would bar taxpayer-funded insurance coverage for elective abortions in plans offered through health insurance exchanges established by the new federal health care law. It would "offer" to show the woman an ultrasound at least 24 hours before an abortion.

The bill also contains pharmacy-refusal legislation and directs clinics to post on their walls: "The life of each human being begins at conception. Abortion will terminate the life of a separate, unique human being."

Abortion is legal in this country. So far.

## WILPF Supports Boycott, Divestment & Sanctions for Israel

The situation in the West Bank and Gaza has become so dire in the last two years that the majority of Israeli peace groups now support Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS). This includes the Israeli section of WILPF. BDS is a global campaign aimed at bringing an end to Israel's brutal occupation of Palestinian lands. Contrary to what many defenders of Israel would have you believe, the campaign is not intended to destroy Israel. Its aim is to end the Occupation.

In order to accomplish this, various groups have targeted specific companies that further the Occupation. At its recent International Board meeting in India, a WILPF resolution regarding BDS was passed and is now a part of WILPF's international program, which each section will implement in its own way.

The U.S. Section's Middle East Committee has been in support of the BDS campaign, as led by other organizations, for quite some time. Corporations further the Occupation either by operating in or supporting the Israeli settlements, which are illegal under international law, or by supporting the apparatus of control and oppression including the Separation Wall, the hundreds of checkpoints set up to impair Palestinian travel, the system of Administrative Detention (imprisonment without trial for periods of six months, renewable without review), a permit system imposing restrictions upon travel and normal building for Palestinians, the confiscation of homes and lands, and the demolition of houses.

The Middle East Committee encourages members to support, specifically, the boycott of Caterpillar tractors (used to demolish homes, and also the instrument involved in the death of Rachel Corrie), of Motorola (which manufactures a multitude of parts used at checkpoints and furthers the Occupation with technology used in weapons, etc.), and of Ahava cosmetics (manufactured in the settlements using ingredients mined on occupied land).

See websites "<http://www.whoprofits.org>" (a project of the Israeli Coalition of Women for Peace, of which WILPF Israel is a member) and <http://www.endtheoccupation.org> ( U.S. Campaign to End the Occupation, an umbrella group that is at the forefront of the BDS movement in the U.S.) The three campaigns are known as Hang Up on Motorola, the CAT Campaign, and Stolen Beauty.

The U.S. Middle East Committee, looking at whether to target a specific company here in the U.S., learned of several U.S. companies that are involved in furthering the Occupation, and is calling for branches to submit mini-grant proposals to the WILPF office to create our own BDS campaign on one of the following companies:

**ACE Hardware.** This chain owns a store in the West

Bank settlement of Ma'ale Edomim. We don't believe U.S. companies should be profiting from these illegal settlements.

**RE/MAX.** This real estate company is a major seller of housing to Jews in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Since it is illegal for an occupier to move its citizens into the territory being occupied, we believe this activity should be curtailed. There are offices of RE/MAX in Ma'ale Edomim, French Hill, and Oramit settlements in the West Bank, and in the Ramot and Pisgat Ze'ev settlements in East Jerusalem. RE/MAX offers real estate for sale and rental in all major West Bank settlements. Owners of the Israeli franchise are Bernard Raskin and Pengold Holdings.

**EDS** (a subsidiary of Hewlett-Packard). This company is the prime contractor in the Basel Project, the goal of which is to develop, install, and continuously support an automatic biometric access control system for Palestinian workers, with hand and facial recognition. This project was financed by the U.S. government following the Wye River Memorandum. During 2008, Hewlett-Packard completed purchase of EDS, which is now a part of HP.

What do you want to do to see the Occupation end? Submit a proposal! We have addresses for the companies listed above, if you need them to submit your proposal. Contact Barbara Taft, co-chair of the U.S. Middle East Committee, to get further information if you are planning to submit a proposal. Meanwhile, continue to support the ongoing activities led by other groups involved in the BDS Campaign.

From Page 1

The ban on public mixing is rooted in tribal customs but became institutionalized as the country urbanized. Clerics claim Islam requires it – a debatable position, since no other Muslim country has similar practices.

Saudi Arabia has the world's most stringent gender segregation. Men and women enter government offices and banks through different doors. Male professors teach female university students from separate rooms using closed-circuit TV. Companies must create all-female rooms or floors if they hire women. And a commission patrols public places to make sure men and women are not mingling.

The debates on eliminating the ban on public mixing are encouraging! In the past the idea was unthinkable. At this stage it's still not doable, but at least thinkable.

– from the Christian Science Monitor, 4/19/10

## Area Legislators:

### 1st District

Wm. Lacy Clay

DC: 202-225-2406

StL: 314-356-1970

StL County: 314-383-5240

Website: <http://lacyclay.house.gov/contact.htm>

### 2nd District

Todd Akin

DC: 202-225-2561

StL: 314-590-0029

St. Charles: 636-949-6826

Website: <http://akin.house.gov/contact.html>

### 3rd District

Russ Carnahan

DC: 202-225-2671

StL: 314-962-1523

Website: <http://carnahan.house.gov/contact.shtml>

### Sen. Kit Bond

202-224-5721

StL: 314-725-4484

Fax: 202-224-8149

<http://bond.senate.gov/contact/contactme.cfm>

### Sen. Claire McCaskill

202-224-6154

StL: 314-367-1364

Fax: 202-228-6326

<http://mccaskill.senate.gov/contact.cfm>

## WILPF BULLETIN

Co-editors: Dorothy Poor and Mary Jane Schutzius

Layout and Design: Marideth Sisco

Articles, reports, and information for the Bulletin are due on the day of the Board meetings. The next Board meeting will be Tuesday, June 1, 2010. Bring or mail articles for the June bulletin to the World Community Center, 438 No. Skinker, St. Louis, MO 63130, or e-mail [mjschutz@prodigy.net](mailto:mjschutz@prodigy.net). Contributions are welcome.

## WILPFers AROUND AND ABOUT

**Betsy Hamra** organized and promoted a Women in Black vigil on Friday, April 30, during the United Methodist Women's Conference in St. Louis. Women from all over the US joined local women in solidarity with women in black all over the world for peace in the Middle East, to end the Israeli occupation, and to free Gaza. At most, 150 women (Bill Ramsey's count) stood across the street from America's Center during the noon to 2:15 p.m. vigil. **Hedy Epstein** plans to join the international flotilla of ships trying to break the blockade of Gaza later this month with building supplies and humanitarian aid.

**Ava Jordan** was pictured on page 2 of the April 16 St. Louis Post-Dispatch while she participated in the annual WILPF April 15 Tax Day protest of our tax money for war. **Joyce Best, Joan Botwinick, Ginger Harris, Yvonne Logan, and Janet Sondin** also leafleted passersby.

**Gen O'Hara's** attendance at a fundraiser for Microfinancing Partners in Africa was recorded by a picture in the Ladue News of April 23, 2010.

**Jane Mendelson** suggested St. Louis scrap its recent parking meter changes covering most of the Grand Center district in her letter published May 3 in the Post-Dispatch.

**Ella Brown** is preparing and organizing for an exhibit of her water colors in the near future. We'll let you know the details when they are finalized.

**Rose and Charles L. Klotzer**, founders of the St. Louis Journalism Review, along with the SLJR Board president and the SLJR editor, announced the transfer of the review to the School of Journalism at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, as of July 1, 2010.

**Linda Belle**, Exec. Dir. of the Jane Addams Peace Association, received a request for the Jane Addams Book Awards seals from the Head Librarian at the Sidwell Friends Middle School in Washington, DC – the school Sasha and Malia Obama attend. The librarian wrote: "I have a number of the Jane Addams award-winning children's books in my library, and I was hoping to put the seal on the jacket covers so the students would recognize them as award winners. Are they for sale anywhere on your site? I could not find them . . ." Linda Belle immediately informed her she'd be happy to send the seals at no charge -which is done for all schools and libraries.

**Yes! I want to join WILPF/ Renew my WILPF membership to work for peace and freedom!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

U.S. Section Membership: Individual - \$35, Household - \$40, Limited Income - \$15  
Student - \$5, Monthly Bulletin Only - \$15. Make checks payable to WILPF and please  
mail to:

**WILPF, 438 N. Skinker, St. Louis, MO 63130-4834**



**WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM**

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00112/0001



**CALENDAR**

- Sun., May 23, 5:30 p.m.: WILPF Annual Meeting (see p. 1)
- Tue., May 25, 1:30 p.m.: WILPF Executive committee meeting, WCC
- Tue., June 1, 1:45 p.m.: WILPF Board meeting, WCC
- Tue., June 8, 11:30 – 1 p.m.: Women in Black vigil, near St. Louis Bread Company, Delmar Loop
- Fri., June 18: Sundance Winner “Winter’s Bone” (with our own Marideth Sisco) opens in Frontenac at the Plaza Frontenac Cinema, 1701 S. Lindburgh

**SAVE THE DATE:**

- Sun., Aug. 8, 6:00 p.m.: Annual Hiroshima/Nagasaki Commemoration
- No Board meetings in July or August; Board meetings will resume Sept. 2