

International Peace Update



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ENVISIONING A JUST AND PEACEFUL SOCIETY

At the centre of our 26th International Congress in Helsinki is the Seminar on Building a Secure and Sustainable World Society. There could be no better time than this, WILPF's 80th anniversary year, in which to clarify our vision and substance of a just and peaceful society, and begin to develop a blueprint for how to get there. Time is pressing for change as we experience a disintegration of societies around the world.

As WILPF women we are challenged to put the building of a secure and sustainable world society in the forefront, while at the same time we cannot escape the immediate actions we must take in response to ever-changing circumstances and crises. Our vision of peace is not one of "being quiet", but one of seeking justice, freedom, equality, harmony with nature, with ourselves and one another, and of achieving a "prosperity" not tied to ownership of property and currency.

In preparing the seminar we are building on the results of the exchanges we had on "the meaning of democracy" and on "the effects militarization and military activities have on the natural and human environment", and of discussions at WILPF meetings, such as the 25th International Congress in Bolivia, the 1991 International Executive Committee meeting at Lillehammer in Norway, the Seminar "In Search of Alternatives to the Current Exploitative Market Systems" at Bossey, Switzerland, and in particular the 1994 International Executive Committee meeting in Musashiranzan, Japan, where the preparations for the seminar were begun.

There, Edith Ballantyne put the discussion of "building a secure and sustainable world society" in a framework intended to initiate thought and discussion. Her essay (see *pax et libertas*, September 1994) ends with some typically difficult Ballantyne questions.

The questions Edith puts before us are only a few examples by way of indicating the challenge we face. These and others you will add require thought, imagination, study, discussion. New questions result. This difficult work is the basic WILPF work. We have a vision or view of the world we want. The vision is set in the context of ever-changing natural and human environment. To translate that vision into reality:

- ◆ we need to make the vision clear and concrete, without losing its dynamic character;
- ◆ we must recognize and create ways to transform this vision into reality.

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NOTES

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WILPF aims at bringing together women of different political and philosophical tendencies united in their determination to study, make known, and help abolish the political, social, economic and psychological causes of war and to work for a constructive peace.

The primary objectives of the League are the achievement of total and universal disarmament, the abolition of violence or other means of coercion for the settlement of all conflicts, the substitution in every case of some form of peaceful settlement, and the strengthening of the United Nations and its family of Specialized Agencies for the prevention of war, a sustainable environment, the institution of international law, and for the political, social and economic cooperation of peoples.

Conscious that under systems of exploitation and oppression these aims cannot be attained and that a real and lasting peace and true freedom cannot exist, the League's duty is to facilitate by non-violent means the social transformation which would permit the inauguration of systems under which would be realized social, economic and political equality for all without discrimination on grounds of sex, race, religion, or on any other grounds.

The League sees as its ultimate goal the establishment of an international economic order founded on meeting the needs of all peoples and not on profit and privilege.

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Your articles are welcome. Deadlines: January 10, March 10, May 10, July 10, September 10, November 10.

Opinions expressed in signed articles are not necessarily endorsed by WILPF.

This is a task for all of us in WILPF and for all who are close to WILPF. It needs the participation of the widest number of members. We are asking you, readers, to contribute to this discussion. We are calling on you to prepare the seminar with us and work with us on this project beyond the Congress. We would like you to:

- ◆ Discuss the possibilities and implications of "building a secure and sustainable world society" in your family, in your WILPF branch, in other groups in which you are active, and with your friends, and send us the results of your discussions and your ideas;
- ◆ Send us articles, proposals, essays, any creative expression of your thoughts, of examples of alternatives and of successful solutions.

Building a secure and sustainable world society needs your participation. Send us your first comments, if possible before 10 June. You can send them to me R.D. 1, Box 134, Irwin, PA 15642, USA, or c/o WILPF, Case postale 28, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland. -Regina Birchem, Convener of the Congress Seminar

A RECIPE FOR PEACE

11-year old Virginie Vinas' recipe for peace has been widely praised and published, including in *Ed. Etre les meilleurs amis* and *UN Special* April 1995.

Preparation time: As quickly as possible

Cooking time: Lifelong

Ingredients: 1 person from every country and representing all religions, 1 Black, 1 White, 1 Asian, 1 Indian, 1 Buddhist, 1 Catholic, 1 Jew, 1 Muslim, a drop of doves, 6 olive branches, a little understanding, a pinch of aid, 1 kilo of tolerance and 100 litres of love.

Utensils: A pot which can hold the whole of humanity.

To Prepare:

1. Take all persons and wash them of their intolerance, cover with the doves and add the 6 olive branches.
2. Add the pinch of aid accompanied by the kilo of tolerance and mix in order to vanquish war.
3. Marinate in the 100 litres of love for a good moment, then boil a little and add the little understanding.
4. Do not hesitate to mix the Black and the White, it will give colour to the sauce. Eat with a big salad of brotherhood.



SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The final documents adopted and signed by governments at the WSSD are devoid of any analysis of the causes of the social crisis the Summit was called to address. They did give due recognition to the need to achieve equality between women and men and women's full participation at all levels of economic and social activity.

While all three main themes — eradication of poverty, productive employment for all and social integration — were dealt with, the question of poverty received by far the Lyon's share of attention in the discussions.

However, the focus was on poverty in the "south". In fact, there was hardly any discussion about economic and social misery in the 'rich', industrialized countries. Poor people in the "north" were admonished that many people are much worse off; they should therefore not complain, and accept cuts in social security, health and other social benefits. Poverty in the North was not considered important, and it would seem that only if the situation deteriorates to the point at which people are starving might it be seen as a real problem. Thus, it is highly unlikely that the poorest of the world — more than 1.3 billion people — can have any real hope that their lives will improve. The WSSD closed without any binding responsibilities or financial commitments towards the eradication of poverty on the part of participating States.

Inevitably, the global debate is dominated by the G7 States, which have assured for themselves control over the main parts of the global economy: control over the raw materials and resources of the planet, control over international financial markets, control over the mass media, control over weapons of mass destruction (including nuclear weapons subsequent to the disintegration of the Soviet Union), and access to the latest technological developments.

While there was criticism of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund and a call for initiatives to ensure that structural adjustment programmes promote sustained economic and social development, the principles of a liberal market economy were not questioned. Problems of poverty were left for future solution by market forces, despite the fact that it is precisely these forces which have, for decades, proved unable to reduce poverty. The necessary changes required to solve existing problems need a long-term perspective. Even within this process, solutions can only be found if there is a fundamental change in production and consumption pat-

terns. In the short-term it is necessary to limit market forces as much as possible, be it by campaigning against child labour, supporting peoples' movements and networking with NGOs which have similar perspectives.

Although the documents adopted by the WSSD are general and not binding on governments, the heads of State and government attending the Summit made ten Commitments to which they should be held and which should be monitored by peoples' organizations and groups. (See page 5.)

The NGO Alternative Declaration, which was read at the governmental conference, denounced the official Declaration for its excessive trust in free market forces as a base for the planning of national and international economies, and declared that such false promises put in danger the realization of the objectives declared by the Social Summit. It called for the introduction of a special tax on speculative foreign exchange movements, cancellation of developing countries' debt, democratization and monitoring of the Bretton Woods institutions and the completion of a code of conduct for transnational corporations. It is reaching, via the Internet, many NGOs not present at the conference in Copenhagen.

WILPF was actively involved in the parallel NGO Forum, holding workshops on the democratization of the United Nations system, on the so-called 'peace dividend' and the women's budget, and on WILPF's 80th anniversary. - *Annalisa Milani, Human Rights, Specialist, University of Padova, Italy.*



POVERTY KILLS

"Poverty is the world's deadliest disease. It wields its destructive influence at every stage of human life from the moment of conception to the grave. It conspires with the most deadly and painful diseases to bring a wretched existence to all who suffer from it" (*World Health Report 1995*). Poverty kills.

The World Health Report 1995 to the 48th World Health Assembly, which opened on 2 May in Geneva, states that more than one fifth of the 5.6 billion people in the world live in extreme poverty, almost a third of the world's children are undernourished, and half the global population lacks regular access to the most needed essential drugs. An analysis of disease patterns and mortality rates shows that 40% of deaths worldwide are due to communicable diseases and to perinatal and neonatal causes, from which the richer countries are almost immune.

About 12 million children under five years of age in the developing world die every year from diseases that could be prevented at little cost. Poverty is the main reason why babies are not vaccinated, why clear water and sanitation are not provided, why curative drugs and other treatments are not available, and why more than 500,000 women die every year in childbirth.

The World Health Organization's Director-General is surely right when he writes in the Forword to the Report: "Growing inequity is literally a matter of life and death for millions of people, since the poor pay the price of social inequality with their health".

Eradicating poverty

Eradicating poverty is fundamental and urgent for social progress and peace. But how to achieve it? Earlier this year, in March, 118 heads of State committed themselves at the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen to take steps toward eradicating poverty, creating meaningful employment for all, and achieving social integration. Poverty, unemployment and social exclusion had been identified as the major causes of the growing global social crisis.

At a high-level intergovernmental meeting held in July 1993 in Geneva, the concept of the Summit was articulated. The document that resulted raised excellent questions and exposed with considerable clarity the global social problems which the Summit was to address. But it failed miserably in suggesting serious solutions to the crisis.

There was agreement, for example, that the social crisis the world is facing is inextricably linked to the growing world economic crisis, and that one cannot be resolved without the other. The remedy put forward, however, was basically to further liberalize the market, meaning the introduction of

more privatization, the elimination of government regulation, the dismantling of the "welfare state" where it exists, and so on. It is retrogression to an era of brutal exploitation and a further widening of the gap between the rich and the poor.

After decades of struggle by workers to organize and gain human working conditions and social security as the industrialization of countries proceeded, these hard-won gains, from which all of society benefits today, are being eroded and the workers' organizations are being undermined. This is not the way toward creating productive employment, eradicating world poverty and achieving social integration.

While governments sign lofty declarations, the TNCs relocate their plants from the North, leaving thousands unemployed, to countries in the South where the exploitation of workers and local resources guarantee the companies ever higher profits. While this may provide desperately needed employment for some in the developing countries, it does not contribute to the development of native economies that are sustainable and beneficial to the population. It only robs them further of their resources for the gain of a few.

The World Bank shifts responsibility to the developing countries to increase the well-being of their people. It suggested at the World Summit that efforts to reduce poverty are unlikely to succeed in the long run unless there is greater investment in the human resources of the poor themselves. Undoubtedly governments could and should better allo-

(continued on page 5)



cate available resources. (It would be good if the industrialized rich gave the good example by managing their own budgets better and by reducing to a minimum their defence and other wasteful expenditures). But can the World Bank's suggestion be taken seriously knowing that the bulk of developing countries continue to use most of their hard-earned income to service their foreign debt?

Poverty, unemployment and exclusion will not only remain but continue to grow if the present economic and social relationships within and among nations are not fundamentally changed. There is much searching by committed people and organizations. For many socialism was the alternative to the capitalist system. The defeat of socialism in Eastern Europe

and the Soviet Union has caused confusion but also a serious re-evaluation of alternatives to capitalism. This search will continue.

There is consensus on one urgent need that must be met: the full and equal participation of women at all levels of societies' political, social and economic activities. The World Health Report states: "The potential contributions of women to world development and improvement of the human condition are being willfully squandered".

And at the World Summit for Social Development, the heads of State and government committed themselves "to promoting full respect for human dignity and to achieving equality and equity between women and men, and

to recognizing and enhancing the participation and leadership roles of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life and development". Nothing prevents governments and international institutions from changing this situation and opening the doors to women's inclusion and full participation.

The Fourth World Conference in Beijing in September of this year must not miss the opportunity to build on these admissions and commitments. It must decide on courageous, concrete actions that will bring about true democratization of our governments, institutions and political and economic life. - *Eleonore Romberg, Former WILPF International President, Germany.*

The Ten Commitments signed by Heads of State and Government:

1. We commit ourselves to create an economic, political, social, cultural, and legal environment that will enable people to achieve social development.

2. We commit ourselves to the goal of eradicating poverty in the world, through decisive national actions and international cooperation, as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative of humankind.

3. We commit ourselves to promoting the goal of full employment as a basic priority of our economic and social policies, and to enabling all men and women to attain secure and sustainable livelihoods through freely chosen productive employment and work.

4. We commit ourselves to promoting social integration by fostering societies that are stable, safe and just and based on the promotion of protection of all human rights, and on non-discrimination, tolerance, respect for diversity, equality of opportunity, solidarity, security and par-

ticipation of all people, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and persons.

5. We commit ourselves to promoting full respect for human dignity and to achieving equality and equity between women and men, and to recognizing and enhancing the participation and leadership roles of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life and development.

6. We commit ourselves to promoting and attaining the goals of universal and equitable access to quality education, the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and the access of all to primary health care, making particular efforts to rectify inequalities relating to social conditions and without distinction as to race, national origin, gender, age or disability; respecting and promoting our common and particular cultures; striving to strengthen the role of culture in development; preserving the essential bases of people-centred sustainable development and contributing to the full development of human resources and to social development. The purpose of these activities is to eradicate poverty, promote

full and productive employment and foster social integration.

7. We commit ourselves to accelerating the economic, social and human resource development of Africa and the least developed countries.

8. We commit ourselves to ensuring that when structural adjustment programmes are agreed to, they include social development goals, in particular eradicating poverty, promoting full and productive employment and enhancing social integration.

9. We commit ourselves to increase significantly and/or utilize more efficiently the resources allocated to social development in order to achieve the goals of the Summit through national action and regional and international cooperation.

10. We commit ourselves to an improved and strengthened framework for international, regional and sub-regional cooperation for social development, in a spirit of partnership, through the United Nations system, with broad participation of all sectors of civil society.



USA TO SIGN CONVENTION ON RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

The United States, signalling its intention to become a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, will become the 177th nation to sign this remarkable document. The surprise announcement was made by US First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton at a "celebration of life" service held for James P. Grant, Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) since 1980, who died 28 January five days after resigning for health reasons.

Ms. Clinton prefaced her remarks by the words: "I was very honoured to be asked to speak here today because I consider Jim Grant to be one of the great Americans of our century." She said that the Convention was the last thing Mr. Grant had talked to her about when they spoke shortly before his death. "I know how happy and proud he would have been to see our country add its name to the Convention. We owe it to him and to the children to whom he dedicated his life."

The United States is one of the last major powers to sign the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly 20 November 1989, opening for signature and ratification 26 January 1990, and coming into force 2 September 1990 when the required number of signatures had been received.

The US announcement came on the eve of a major international conference in March 1995, the World Summit for Social Development, which

dealt with poverty, unemployment and social exclusion. It also comes on the fifth anniversary of the 1990 World Summit for Children, which agreed on a series of specific goals for improving the lives of children — including measurable progress against malnutrition, preventable disease and illiteracy.

Since the goals set by the Summit, some practical progress has been made. For example, malnutrition has been reduced, with 21 developing nations on target to achieve a 20% reduction by the end of 1995. Eighty percent immunization has been sustained or increased in most countries. Large areas of the world are becoming free of polio. Measles deaths are down by 80% compared with pre-immunization levels. Vitamin A deficiency — a major cause of blindness and early death in children — will soon be eliminated in at least half of the affected nations. Oral rehydration therapy (ORT) is preventing more than one million child deaths a year. Such progress means that, at mid-decade, approx. 2.5 million fewer children each year die from malnutrition and disease, and that at least three quarters of a million fewer children each year will be disabled, blinded, crippled or mentally retarded.

But iodine deficiency disorders are still, in 1995, the world's biggest cause of preventable mental retardation. And although 90% of the developing world's children started school, many dropped out in the first few years. As a result, there are now an estimated 130 million children aged 6 to

11 who are not in school. Two thirds of them are girls.

In Asia, the region's economic success has come at the expense of increasing child abuse and exploitation. "We are still seeing the cruel companions of poverty, such as the economic, social and sexual exploitation of children", said Daniel J. Brooks, UNICEF Regional Director for East Asia and the Pacific, at the launching of UNICEF's State of the World's Children report, which says that more than half a million of Asia's 500 million children work in sweatshops, brothels or on the streets.

The world's largest and fastest-growing youth population includes 100,000 child prostitutes in Thailand, more than 200,000 street children in China, and 75,000 working children in Malaysia, says the report, which says that the increased disparity between rich and poor also has led to malnutrition, illiteracy and sexual discrimination.

Children are being abducted and exploited by neighbouring East Asian countries, as well as being sent to other regions such as Europe and the Middle East, says Vicit Muntarghorn, director of Asianet, a network set up with support from UNICEF and aimed at fostering a regional alliance on child rights. Brooks says that active governmental support will be needed to achieve UNICEF's year 2000 goal of protection of children in especially difficult circumstances, such as street children and child sex workers. - *Jeanne Vickers, based upon reports in UNICEF's Child Health News and Review*



STATEMENT TO THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

15 March - 4 April 1995, New York

Preparing for the Fourth World Conference on Women in September in China, the Commission on the Status of Women worked on the draft Platform of Action which will be discussed and adopted in Beijing. Peace issues do not have a very prominent role in this paper even though women and peace groups lobbied hard for adequate recognition. The NGO Peace Caucus met regularly during the Commission and presented to it a statement. Following are excerpts from the Statement:

During the year of its 50th anniversary the United Nations should reaffirm its commitment to enforcing the "right of all people to peace" (UN resolution 1984). Without peace - not only the absence of war but also the demilitarization of all aspects of society - it is impossible to overcome poverty, violence against women, discrimination and inequality. Militarism has meant the diversion of resources away from programs that improve the quality of life, a healthy environment, reduction of social injustices and economic inequity.

General and complete disarmament is necessary. Arsenals of weapons constitute the most serious threat to peace. The development, production and deployment of conventional, nuclear, chemical and biological weapons must end. The arms trade not only encourages conflicts and threatens peace, but also takes resources away from socially equitable and ecologically sound development, social justice and peace. Decreasing military spending by a minimum of 5% of each country's military budget for each of the next five years will release the funding necessary to meet human needs and the specific needs of women and children.

There can be no peace without justice; justice defined as sustainable people-centred development, which ensures an equitable distribution of resources to meet people's basic needs and guarantees full and equal participation in decision making.

Women, who fully endorse the values expressed in numerous UN documents such as the Forward-looking Strategies, especially refugee and displaced women, must participate in equal numbers as men in all stages of peace processes and negotiations. From preventive diplomacy, nonviolent peace-making and peace-keeping, post-conflict peace-building to factfinding missions, women's skills and experience as mediators in different spheres of societies would make a qualitative difference in the effectiveness of these activities. Governments should draw on the wide experience of non-governmental women's peace organizations.

All delegations of governments as well as international and regional inter-governmental institutions should include at least 30% women by 1996, 40%

by 1998 and 50% women by the year 2000. Several countries are still under colonial rule and women demand total decolonization and their full participation in this process. Governments should draw from the guidelines in the declaration on the participation of women promoting international peace and cooperation (General Assembly resolution 37/63, annex) proclaimed 3 December 1982.

Nuclear weapons and nuclear energy production remain a deadly threat to people and the environment. All nations must permanently stop nuclear testing, ban production of nuclear weapons, production of, and international trade in, fissile materials including plutonium and enriched uranium. The full and safe dismantling of nuclear energy production facilities and weapons must be carefully monitored. Governments must fulfil their pledge for total nuclear disarmament as stated in Article 6 of the Non-proliferation Treaty. In addition, governments must ban the production, sale and use of land mines and ensure immediate safe removal of existing mines.

We welcome the report by the expert group meeting on "Gender and the Agenda for Peace," organized by the Division for the Advancement of Women, December 1994. It is based on the holistic understanding of security from a women's perspective and puts forward alternatives to force and military action. We urge the Commission to include in the platform of action the recommendations made in this report and to draw on the rich experience in peace and security issues of women's peace organizations.



DEADLY SEEDS OF WAR

Improving Legal Restrictions on Landmines

by Mary Wareham, MA Candidate, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, Political Science Department

More than 800 civilians are killed every month by landmines and thousands more are maimed by these indiscriminate weapons. For this reason the first Review Conference of the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) will be held between 25 September - 13 October 1995 in Vienna Austria. In January 1995, a fourth meeting of Governmental Experts was held in Geneva to continue preparation of work to strengthen the provisions of Protocol II pertaining to the use of landmines.

Substantial progress was made in some key areas. There is now consensus that the Convention's scope be widened to apply to certain types of non-international armed conflicts where the greatest use and abuse of mines takes place. If this is achieved, it will set a precedent in disarmament treaties. Another positive outcome of the meeting was near-agreement to ban non-detectable anti-personnel mines (APMs) which pose great dangers for mine clearers using electromagnetic mine detectors. Remotely delivered mines (dispersed from the air) will have to be fitted with a self-destructing device which explodes the mine after a certain time period. Provisions for the protection of United Nations personnel have been broadened to include other humanitarian workers in the field.

A total ban prohibiting the development, use, transfer, manufacturing and stockpiling of APMs is still in the distance. Belgium, Cambodia, Colombia, Estonia, Ireland, Mexico and Sweden are now supporting this call along with the UN's Department of Humanitarian Affairs, UNICEF, UNHCR, the UN Secretary-General and the International Committee of the Red Cross. In the last four years national movements calling for a total ban have been launched in at least ten countries and are led by an international Steering Committee of non-governmental organisations.

Despite these calls, the majority of the 43 States party to the Convention favour two lesser options. The first calls for a total ban on APMs which do not have a self-destruct mechanism and a back-up safety device such as a passive self-deactivating mechanism (in case the self-destruct device fails). A weaker proposal supports the use of the self-destruct mechanism but allows for many exceptions to this rule. Non-self-destruct APMs (so-called "dumb mines") may be used as long as they are effectively marked, mapped, fenced and monitored—yet a further loophole to these requirements allows for no protective measures if there has been "forcible loss of control of the area as a result of enemy military action."

Other problematic areas which the Review conference must tackle include the question of transfers: a proposal regulating transfers of certain mines has attracted wide but not universal support due to views that the Conven-

tion is a humanitarian law treaty regulating use and not a disarmament treaty which could deal with wider issues. Verification and compliance measures are also a contentious area but are essential if the revised Convention is to be effectively implemented.

Due to the decision-making process of the meetings which operated on consensus, the lowest-common denominator was often accepted and participation by expert NGOs to present the humanitarian side of this issue was blocked by one State. Furthermore, only 31 women were present out of a total of 220 participants. As a result, military, legal and arms control arguments prevailed but a few States supporting NGO participation allowed NGOs to join their Delegations.

The next eight months will be characterized by intensive lobbying by the ban campaign and hopefully increased interest in and accession to the Convention by non-state parties, especially the most mine-affected countries. A proposal requesting that the periodicity between Review Conferences be reviewed and lowered from 10 years to 5 years will help address the ongoing problems caused by mines in some 60 countries around the world. If the proliferation of mines were stopped in 1996, it would cost approximately US \$33 billion and take over a millennium to rid the world of the mines already in the ground.¹ The only effective solution is a total ban.

¹Assistance in mine clearance: Report of the Secretary-General, A/49/150 (provisional agenda), 9 September 1994, p. 20.



THE UN GETS MINE CLEARANCE FUNDS

A Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance has been officially opened for contributions which will support UN activities relating to landmines, including clearance, surveys, training and mine-awareness education. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) is responsible for overall management and implementation of the Fund. More than 110 million landmines are scattered in 64 countries, and more than 800 people are killed by them every month. The UN Secretary-General has said that landmines "may be one of the most widespread, lethal and long-lasting forms of pollution we have yet encountered, and we are currently losing the battle to protect innocent civilians from their effects."

UN involvement in mine-clearance assistance has grown from operations in one country in 1988 to 12 such operations in the last quarter of 1994. The estimated cost of clearing landmines already in place is at least \$33 billion. Last year the international community allocated approximately \$70 million to clear roughly 100,000 landmines. Those figures do not take into account the cost of treating victims who survive landmine blasts. The lifetime cost of treating each surviving landmine victim is estimated at \$3,000. To these costs must be added the toll on countries where the presence of landmines prevents economic and social recovery. - *Jeanne Vickers, WILPF Member, Geneva*

UNICEF Statistics

- ▷ There is 1 landmine for every 20 children around the world.
- ▷ Africa has the highest concentration of landmines, but Afghanistan is the most heavily mined country in the world, with 10-15 million units
- ▷ Angola is second, with 9 million mines in place and more being laid every day
- ▷ One in every 230 Cambodians is an amputee due to landmines which continue to claim about 300 victims a month.

During the past decade:

- ▷ More than 1.5 million children have been killed
- ▷ Over 4 million have been permanently disabled
- ▷ Some 1 million have been orphaned or separated from their parents
- ▷ Around 12 million children have been left homeless, and an estimated 10 million are victims of psychological trauma
- ▷ Countless numbers of women and girls have been raped.

GANDHI PEACE AWARD

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom is proud to announce that its President, Edith Ballantyne, is to receive the 1995 Gandhi Peace Award in recognition of her work with WILPF and other organizations in furthering the advancement of peace and justice in the world. In announcing the award on behalf of the Board of Directors of Promoting Enduring Peace, Inc., Executive Director Howard Frazier recognized that "the great work that (Edith) has done for justice for all peoples, for peace based on economic and social justice, has reflected the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi."

Edith is the second WILPF president to have received the Gandhi Peace Award (the first was Kay Camp, who received it in 1983) and finds herself in excellent company. Other distinguished recipients of the Award have included Dr. Helen Caldicott, Cesar Chavez, Ramsey Clark, Marion Wright Edelman, Daniel Ellsberg, Martin Ennals, Randall Forsberg, George McGovern, Linus Pauling, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Secretary-General U Thant.

The award consists of a bronze medallion with the profile of Mahatma Gandhi on one side with the statement:

*Love Ever Suffers
Never Revenges Itself
while on the other side is:
Promoting Enduring Peace
Gandhi Peace Award
Edith Ballantyne
1995*

The ceremony will take place on October 6 in New Haven, Connecticut, at which Edith will make a statement and receive the medal and a Gandhi Peace Award citation. Further information may be obtained from *Promoting Enduring Peace, P.O. Box 5103, Woodmont, CT 06460.*



THE MAYAS IN GUATEMALA ARE STILL BEING HARASSED !

In January two members of the Danish Section of WILPF were "Peaceguards" (Witnesses for Peace) in Guatemala.

In 1982 the Mayas of the Ixcán region of Guatemala, near the Mexican border, were victims of a terrible series of massacres. Men were tortured and killed by government forces, women and girls were raped, pregnant women were cut up, and babies were killed in front of their bleeding and dying mothers. The US Government, which had then supported the regime in Guatemala, interfered. But since the massacres, the Mayas of Ixcán have become refugees in Mexico and in the rainforests in north Guatemala.

In 1992, with the help of the United Nations, a UN Commission, the CCPP (Comisiones Permanentes de Representantes de los Refugiados Guatemaltecos en México), was established to support the Mayas returning from Mexico and a peace agreement between the indigenous people and the government was arranged.

The Mayas' problems, however, are far from being solved. The CCPP can only support the refugees coming back from Mexico (approx. 45,000), and not those remaining in Guatemala (approx. 1 million). As for the refugees (approx. 60,000) who are already back home, they face having to rebuild houses and begin farming under conditions compounded by poverty and lack of land. (Some of their land had been given away by the government to other poor people from the south of Guatemala - a problem the Government also seems to have no interest in solving.)

Although under the peace agreement the army is not allowed in the villages, the soldiers are not far away and often pass through the small villages para-

lysing the people with fear. The UN has built informal observer stations (large tent or house equipped with solar energy, radio and one person). But this is not sufficient and the Mayas risk being attacked again.

While the Guatemalan Government is "democratically" elected, 80% of the Mayas are illiterate and consequently do not take part in the elections. It is the generals who indirectly govern along with the rich farmers and industrialists who keep the labour force underpaid and under control. The man who was President at the time of the 1982 massacres, a former general, is up for election in 1996 as the top candidate for the conservatives, and will probably be re-elected if nothing is done.

The Mayas need help. They have no right to education, no right to medical care and other social rights. Different organizations such as CONAVIGUA, the widows' organization, are trying to improve the situation but not without great personal risk. The leader of CONAVIGUA, Rosalina Tuyuc, has been threatened and others from other organizations have been tortured and killed.

Rosalina and others are asking for help in informing people and governments about their situation; requesting that more Peaceguards be sent and that their members be invited to meetings outside Guatemala. They need help to get an education and in achieving their rights as human beings. The WILPF Danish Section supports CONAVIGUA. It has brought money, and hopes to pay for a teacher's salary. - *Hanne Norup Carlsen, Danish Section*

photo left, Rosalina Tuyuc, Head of CONAVIGUA, with her son in Guatemala.





USA

I am very happy to have joined your ranks on April 1st as the U.S. Section coordinator and executive director. What an honour to be with you during this historic year! And what a responsibility we have to hold our governments responsible for implementing the Forward-looking Strategies adopted in Nairobi and all of the accords from Rio, Copenhagen, Cairo, and Vienna.

We will be joining in the 80th Anniversary festivities in Helsinki and riding the WILPF Peace Train crossing borders and building bridges with sisters all across Eastern Europe, Russia and China. When we return to the US we are planning to take elements of the WILPF Peace Train across the United States. Maybe we will have a peace bus or a caravan of some kind. But our intent is to involve US WILPF members and community and activists in demanding compliance by our own US Government and training our own citizens in *how to impact the United Nations*.

Our theme of the year is *Weaving Peace for Human Needs*. In the USA, WILPF is the only organization that makes the connection between issues of violence, racism, militarism and violations of human rights. We have our work cut out for us in this country, which is a major purveyor of all of the above.

Happy Birthday to all of our sisters around the world. We want to work together with you in the most collegial way. Best wishes to all of us as we push forward our peace and freedom agenda the next five years and into the next century. - *Marilyn Clement, WILPF US Section*



ISRAEL

A little more than four months ago, from 29 to 30 December, Women in Black and women's movements held an international conference in Jerusalem on "Women, War and Peace: Visions and Strategies." WILPF Israel actively helped organize and participated in the Conference.

More than 300 women, among them Jewish and Palestinian Israelis, Palestinians from the Occupied Territories, and women from 17 other countries, took part. The peace process was at the centre of the debate, led by prominent Palestinian and Israeli women, including WILPF members, in particular Maya Zahavit, Aliyah Strauss and Edna Yam.

Tamar Goyansky, a Jewish member of the Knesset, and Hanan Ashrawi, head of the Palestinian Civil Rights Centre, were the keynote speakers at the festive opening. When Hanan was introduced as being "in the corridors of power" of the Palestinian Authority, she replied, "Yes, that is the women's problem, we are in the corridor when we should be inside the rooms of power!"

In workshops, plenary sessions, and in the "corridors," women discussed strategies for ending violence and for creating conditions for durable peace in the region. Women in Black honoured women's groups which had been devoted to the cause of peace

including a group of Palestinian women, and groups from Italy, Bosnia, Serbia and Croatia.

The participants not only debated; they took to the streets to protest the confiscation of Palestinian land near el Kadar, where Israeli settlers were planning to build a new settlement on the hill overlooking the village.

The struggle to end Israeli occupation in the West Bank and to create an independent Palestinian State alongside Israel and create the conditions for durable peace in the region continues. For us here in WILPF this has to be our primary concern. - *Aliyah Strauss, WILPF Israel*

SRI LANKA

WILPF Sri Lanka played a very active role in the socio-political life of Sri Lanka during the past year. WILPF members in rural areas actively participated in the General Election campaigns to defeat the previous regime which was responsible for large-scale violations of human rights and continuation of the war.

In its efforts to rehabilitate war victims, 2 members of WILPF Sri Lanka, Manel Tiranagama and Carmen Dharmapala visited Eluwankulama, an isolated village in Wilpattu Jungle, in September 1994. This village where Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims live, came under the attack of the Tamil Tigers (LTTE) twice. WILPF met the people and government officials and discussed with them the villagers' needs.

Mrs. Pathma Sivaram, Secretary, WILPF Sri Lanka, organized an orientation workshop on the Implementation of CEDAW in Sri Lanka. This Workshop, sponsored by International Women's Rights Action Watch, Asia Pacific, was held in Colombo on 4 November, 1994 with the participation of representatives from major women's organizations, human rights and lawyers groups, and concerned government departments.

At the Training Workshop on Equality and Rights of Women in the Context of CEDAW held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in December 1994, Mrs. Indra Nilaweera represented WILPF Sri Lanka. There, WILPF actively participated in all public campaigns against development projects detrimental to the interests of the people, harmful to the country and disastrous to the environment such as the Kandalama Tourist Hotel project, built against the people's will.

WILPF Sri Lanka is actively involved in educating rural women on the World Conference on Women in Beijing. It organized one meeting together with Voice of Women in Galle. More than 50 women participated in this meeting. WILPF also participated in another meeting on WCW, held at Nuwara Eliya, organized by the Sinhala Tamil Rural Women's Network.

On 16 February 1995, about 2000 persons went on a peace journey from Colombo to Vavunia by train. Ten women from WILPF Sri Lanka, led by Manel Tiranagama participated in this peace journey. They carried placards and shouted slogans against war. They held a public meeting where thousands of men and women belonging to all races expressed their strong desire for peace. WILPF Sri Lanka participated in the peace journey to Jaffna in April 1995. - *Manel Tiranagama, WILPF Sri Lanka*



On International Women's Day, 8 March 1995, WILPF Sri Lanka.



THE WOMEN AND WORLD DEVELOPMENT SERIES

This series, published by Zed Books in collaboration with the UN/NGO Group on Women and Development, is the culmination of more than a decade of research on world development issues and their impact on women, undertaken by some 90 representatives of United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations working together in a unique and unprecedented partnership with the UN Non-governmental Liaison Service.

The 10 books, invaluable to all those interested in national and international questions of social and economic justice and in the improvement of development programmes and policies, suggest ways in which action can be taken to bring women's concerns more directly and effectively into the development process, and to bring about an improvement in women's status in a rapidly changing world. Each volume is fully illustrated, and contains a resource guide with a separate section giving guidance for education and action as well as for use in workshops and seminars.

Judging from the positive response in both North and South, the Series is proving a valuable resource for women's groups, university and college courses, research and training institutes, government ministries and action-oriented organizations concerned with women and development issues. The

books are listed below, in order of publication, together with the names of the consultants who prepared them.

1. Women and the World Economic Crisis, Jeanne Vickers (1991)
2. Women and Disability, Esther Boylan (1991)
3. Women and Health, Patricia Smyke (1991)
4. Women and the Environment, Annabel Rodda (1991)
5. Women and Literacy, Marcella Ballara (1992)
6. Refugee Women, Susan Forbes Martin (1992)
7. Women and Human Rights, Katarina Tomasevski (1993)
8. Women and the Family, Helen O'Connell (1994)
9. Women and Work, Susan Bullock (1994)
10. Women and Empowerment: Participation and Decision-making, Marilee Karl (1995)

PUTTING GENDER ON THE AGENDA

The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service (UN/NGLS) have just issued an excellent Guide to Participating in UN World Conferences entitled *Putting Gender on the Agenda*. In this new handbook they have pooled their different perspectives and insights with a view to facilitating and strengthening the participation of women's organizations and other NGOs to advance an agenda for gender.

The handbook is intended to assist NGOs to make informed choices as to whether to participate in UN world conferences; to determine what level of participation is most appropriate, national, regional or international; to understand the requirements and procedures - both written and unwritten - for access to and participation of NGOs in world conferences; and to undertake advance planning to improve NGO input into such conferences.

Putting Gender on the Agenda contains a wealth of useful and important information, including advice on effective follow-up to participation in world conferences, and tips in raising awareness concerning the issues under discussion. It will be of great value to all NGOs, especially in relation to the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women, to take place in Beijing in September 1995.

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All books and reports are available at
WILPF International,
1 rue de Varembe,
1211 Geneva 20,
Switzerland.

Backgrounders, Fact Sheets, Essays

Price CHF2.-

- Women and Militarism, 1994.
- Controlling the Arms Trade, 1993.
- Migrant Workers and Human Rights, 1993.
- The Helsinki Process, 1992.
- GATT, 1992.
- Indigenous Peoples, Human Rights and the UN, 1992.

Other Booklets and Publications

Prices include postage

- Justice Denied! Human Rights and the International Financial Institutions, 1994. Price CHF20.-
- War and Rape, 1993. Price CHF8.-



Dear Readers,

This is your page. Send us your thoughts so we may know what's on your mind and maybe get to learn and know more about one another. We will try to publish all your letters and answer them at least on a personal basis. Given the space we have, however, this will not be possible all at once. You will have to be patient and keep a lookout for future editions!

TOO MUCH OR TOO LITTLE ?

International Peace Update seems to consider that WILPF members do not read much, so it supplies them with information. The idea is to be applauded, however, all the information is more or less known to those who read. I was surprised that the section on books brings reviews of books published some years ago, except for the updated "Making Women Matter." I was pleased to learn that the second edition is out, as I consider this book most valuable for WILPF members. Also I think that more of UN News is very good, as our members don't know much about the UN WILPF has a tendency to deal with all the most difficult problems of our world of today, so the result is: cutting oneself very thin! One cannot be an expert in all problems ! I always feel that one must accept a limit, and deal with fewer problems but in more depth. - Halina Malinowski, British Section

CUBA

I returned from Cuba in April, my second "Freedom to Travel" challenge to the US ban on travel to this small island. Nine months had elapsed since my first challenge. The positive changes in the economy in a short time reflected the unquenchable spirit and zeal in which the Cubans proceeded to overcome what they call, "The Special Period." The crisis began in 1989. Their trading partners, the Soviet Bloc, had collapsed; Cuba had no dollars to buy oil, medicine or food from the industrialized nations. Still trying to cope with this drastic economic blow, they were further crippled in 1991 by the Toricelli bill, which intensified the US blockade against the island.

The global markets were forcing Cuba to restructure its economy. In order to preserve the socialist programs - the right to eat, to feel well, to be educated, three strategies were put in place:

1. To vigorously pursue new trading partners. Latin America now imports 30%. Other customers include Canada, major countries in Western Europe, Vietnam and China.
2. To open Cuba to foreign investors. One of the largest industries is tourism where to date 185 contracts have been negotiated. Cuba retains 51 % control over the joint ventures.
3. To ease domestic restrictions. Open markets and artisan stalls now flourish throughout Cuba.

Even though people struggle daily with lack of transportation, monotonous limited diets, minimal consumer items, Cubans believe these temporary hardships ensure the continuation of free education, free medical care and social security. They also believe that they will survive in spite of the US blockade. -Ruth Hunter, Santa Cruz, U.S.

STATES WITHOUT ARMIES

Did you know that of the almost 200 States of the world, about 23 - or more than one in nine - have no army? They are in:

Africa: Mauritius

Americas: Costa Rica, Dominica, Haiti, Panama, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Asia: Maldives

Europe: Andorra, Iceland, Holy See, Liechtenstein, Monaco

Pacific: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Western Samoa.

For the purposes of this list, countries are counted as States if they are internationally recognized and have a large degree of responsibility for their own foreign affairs. -Edward Dornmen, Geneva

HAPPY MAYDAY AND HAPPY 80TH BIRTHDAY!

I hope you all had a big party on the 28th ! This time next year I hope to be able to celebrate a rejuvenated Toronto WILPF Section. *International Peace Update* looks great — the article from the Chilean Section on 'Socialism' is of great interest, and we would like to have the full text (in English) so that we can discuss it further and share it with other women. Thank you also for the glowing ad on my essay (Women and Militarism) — it looks so brilliant that I might want to buy a few myself! I hope the Beijing (and Helsinki) preparations are coming along fine, and look forward to seeing some of you in Beijing. -Colleen Burke (Canada) former WILPF Human Rights Intern



LETTER TO THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

The recent decision by the Chinese NGO Organizing Committee to relocate Forum '95 to a Beijing suburb more than 50 km from the intergovernmental conference site, caused consternation and provoked protests by women around the world. Local and national organizations are called upon to write to their governments to request the Chinese Government to accommodate NGO Forum '95 in a suitable location. International NGOs are appealing to the UN Secretary-General to use his good offices to persuade the Chinese Government to provide NGO Forum '95 with appropriate facilities in an appropriate location. WILPF's International President and Secretary General sent the following letter to Mr Boutros Boutros-Ghali:

"On behalf of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, we wish to express to you our deepest concern over the proposed relocation of NGO Forum '95 to the outskirts of Beijing, at a distance of more than 50 kilometres from the site of the Fourth World Conference on Women.

WILPF has taken an active part in the preparations for both the World Conference and NGO Forum '95. We have participated in the regional and international preparatory processes. We are working with many others locally and nationally, as well as internationally, to raise awareness and ensure success in achieving the goals of the Conference.

To continue these efforts effectively, representation in both the Forum and the Conference is necessary. Those who will be designated to fulfill these tasks will be seriously handicapped by having to spend hours every day to travel from one site to the other. Although the overlap between the two events is only a few days, participants must take accommodation near one or the other location. Whichever of the two they choose, they will have to travel a long distance to the other.

Furthermore, the site offered in Huairou is unsuitable for the NGO Forum. The buildings offered are scattered over a distance of some 6 kilometres! This defeats the very purpose of the Forum which is, among others, for women the world over to be together, exchange information, learn from one another, build new networks and strengthen existing ones, develop strategies for the further advancement of women and the implementation of the decisions of the Fourth World Conference.

The two events in Beijing are important to women everywhere. They are important to those who will be in Beijing to participate in them, and to those who will wait at home for their outcome. The United Nations must not allow that they be disappointed.

We also wish to once again convey to you our concern about the danger that certain non-governmental organizations will be refused accreditation to the UN Conference for political and other reasons, and their representatives Chinese entry visas to attend the NGO Forum. These include Tibetan and Taiwanese organizations as well as lesbian organizations and those whose accreditation was chal-

World
Conference
on Women
logo for
Beijing



lenged by the Holy See and Armenia at the recent session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

We firmly believe that United Nations-sponsored events and those organized by NGOs parallel to them with UN support must be open to all wishing to contribute to a better understanding of issues and to the furtherance of agreed goals. As a peace organizations of long standing, we believe that this is an essential condition for promoting world peace.

We appeal to you, Mr. Secretary-General, to use your good offices to ensure that all interested and concerned women wishing to participate in the NGO Forum, and all non-governmental organizations wishing to contribute to the Fourth World Conference, be ensured full participation in both events.

We further appeal to you to use your good offices to secure a site for the NGO Forum that meets the minimum requirements established by the Facilitating Committee of NGO Forum '95, namely, that it be close to the meeting place of the Fourth World Conference, that it have one hall for daily plenary sessions holding at least 10,000 persons, that it be a contiguous area for Forum activities and be accessible to participants with disabilities.

Finally, we request you to intervene on behalf of NGOs in favour of enlarging the lobbying facility in the Beijing Recreation Centre, now offered to NGOs accredited to the Conference, and making it accessible to all interested NGOs, whether or not they are accredited."

