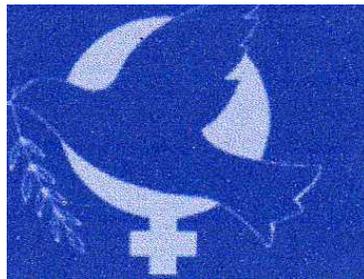


Women's International League for Peace and Freedom



Delegation Report

Havana, Cuba

November 20 – 25, 2006



Edited by Susan M. Smith, Ph.D.

Photographs throughout the report
were taken by delegation members.

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

Cuban Research Delegation Report
January 2007

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A Message from the International President

It was an honor for me as International President of WILPF to lead this delegation of women, each participant highly qualified and uniquely dedicated to peace and social justice. It was my first journey to the island; some in the delegation had visited many times.

The most significant outcome of our journey is the affirmation of our support for the aspirations of the people of Cuba through our strengthened relationship with the Federación de Mujeres Cubanas (FMC). We are sisters in our commitment to social justice; in assuring the equal participation of women in all segments of society; in our respect for democratic processes which involve all the people; in our goal of the right to education and health care for all without discrimination or exclusion; and in our respect for nature, for sustainability, and above all for peace and non-violence.

Our particular words of gratitude go to the FMC leadership who so graciously assisted us with the facilitation of logistics and meetings, making this experience possible: Yolanda Ferrer Gómez, FMC Secretary General; Alicia González Gutiérrez, FMC Funcionaria de la Esfera de Relaciones Exteriores; and Rita Pereira, our guide and interpreter who has participated in our 1992 Congress in Bolivia and other WILPF events.

We thank our Canadian travel consultant and guide, Judy Gallant, who was ever resourceful, adaptable, and energetic in making the arrangements for our program; to Lisa Valanti, unmatched in her passion for an end to the United States embargo of Cuba and for respect for the sovereignty and social justice aspirations of the Cuban people, for her unwavering determination and leadership; to Bruna Nota along with her friends and WILPF members of the Toronto, Ontario region; and to WILPF-Germany for its financial assistance making this report possible.

Early in this venture we aspired to invite all interested people to an International Women's Peace Conference in Havana. We have delayed this possible congress for another time. The delegation, by its small size and focused program, enabled us to experience Cuba in a way not possible at a large conference. We chose the November dates for this delegation, partly because of seasonal preferences, but even more because it coincided with the launch of the 16th Annual Sixteen Days of Activism to End Violence Against Women (November 25 – December 10).

Our deep appreciation and thanks to Dr. Susan Smith for consolidating our individual reports, analysis, and experience into a coherent and readable manuscript! Susan not only reports our experiences, but challenges us to ask questions, propose new cooperative ventures, and to be always fully engaged socially, politically, and ecologically.

iSí Se Puede!

Regina Bircham, *International WILPF President*

Editor's Note

I am honored to have been able to collect and edit the reports from the dynamic and diverse women of this research delegation. It has been a daunting task in that the information came from many parts of the world in various formats. I am so thankful for e-mail! My goals as editor have been to combine all the sections of the report into a coherent whole with the same basic style, organize the material in a way that is easy to understand, present it so that those who know little of Cuba can understand it, and provide additional resources so that a curious reader has the means to get further information.

Whenever statistics are presented, we selected ten countries for comparison: Cuba, the four countries represented by this delegation (Australia, Canada, Japan, and the United States, all developed countries), Bolivia (since the next triennial meeting of WILPF will take place there in July 2007), and several other Latin American/Caribbean countries (El Salvador, Haiti, Nicaragua and Peru, all developing). The selection of these last four was based, in part, upon the availability of information.

I hope that you, the reader, learns as much from this report as we delegates did during our week-long research trip.

Susan M. Smith, Ph.D.
January 2007



This photograph pictures the Research Delegates and several representatives of the Federación de Mujeres Cubanas: (front row) Himali Wettasinghe, Joanne Whitney, Lisa Valanti, Regina Bircherm, Yolanda Ferrer Gómez, Donna Neff, Rita Pereira; (back row) Shirley Muhammad, Joan Drake, Sandy Waters, Judy Gallant, Luci Murphy, Hannah Hadikin, Susan Smith, Bernice Fischer, Joan Bishop, and Carol Cross. (Kozue Akibayashi and Alicia González Gutiérrez are not pictured.)

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Some delegates in front of the “hotelito”
(guest house of the FMC) where we stayed.

I Introduction to WILPF and this Delegation

Since 1915 the Women's International League of Peace and Freedom (WILPF) has had a long tradition of working for peace and freedom. Members support the equality of all people in a world free of sexism, racism, classism, and homophobia; the guarantee of fundamental human rights including the right to sustainable development; an end to all forms of violence – rape, battering, exploitation, intervention and war; the transfer of world resources from military to human needs, leading to economic justice within and among nations; and world disarmament with peaceful resolution of international conflicts via the United Nations.¹

WILPF, the oldest women's international peace organization, aims *to bring together women of different political views and philosophies who are united in their determination to study, make known and help abolish the causes and the legitimization of war. ... Believing that under systems of exploitation these aims and principles cannot be attained and lasting peace and freedom cannot exist, WILPF makes it its duty to further by non-violent means the social transformation that enables the inauguration of systems under which social and political equality and economic equity for all can be attained, without discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion, or any other grounds whatsoever.*²

In order to achieve these goals the members throughout WILPF's nearly 100 years of history have not let national boundaries be an obstacle. Immediately after its founding congress in The Hague during World War I, delegations of four women were sent to the belligerent and neutral nations to meet with the national political leaders to press for negotiation and an end to the hostilities. Other examples of WILPF delegations include the following:

- 1926 -- Mission to Haiti to investigate the effects of the occupation by the U.S. Marines;
- 1927 – Mission to Indochina and China to establish and strengthen links with women;
- 1958 – Mission to the Middle East to investigate conditions;
- 1970 – InterAmerican Women's Conference in Bogotá, Colombia;
- 1971 – Delegation to Vietnam: Women from North and South Vietnam signed the Women's Peace Treaty while International WILPF President Kay Camp and Madame Ngo Bataan traveled through Vietnam together to help promote healing and an end to the Vietnam War;

¹ For further information about WILPF see their website, <http://www.wilpf.int.ch/>.

² WILPF Constitution, <http://www.wilpf.int.ch>, (January 20, 2007).

- 1973 – Mission to Chile to investigate human rights violations;
- 1974 – Delegation to Northern Ireland to investigate the situation and help promote a peaceful solution;
- 1992 – Delegation of the U.S. WILPF Section to Cuba to investigate the effects of the U.S. embargo on women and children on the island; the Women’s Peace and Justice Treaty of the Americas was signed at the WILPF Congress in Bolivia; and
- 1995 – A Peace Train with more than 240 members traveling from Helsinki to Beijing for the U.N. Conference on Women.³

This 2006 delegation was the first delegation to Cuba commissioned by the WILPF International. The purpose was research and fact-finding to inform the program work of WILPF on social, economic, political, and cultural aspects of women’s lives and the contributions they are making toward peace, dignity, and ecological sustainability.

Members of the research delegation, ages 20+ to 89 years, included professionals from various walks of life: education, music and the arts, biology, public health, entrepreneurship, advocacy for peace and justice, from the countries of Australia, Canada, Japan, and the United States. (Further information about the delegates can be found in Appendix A.)

The timing of this visit to Cuba was chosen to coincide with the launch on November 25 of the Sixteenth Annual Global 16 Days of Action to End Violence Against Women originating from the first Women's Global Leadership Institute.⁴

The agenda and program focus of this delegation was originally determined by an international planning committee from WILPF which met in Toronto on several occasions, and informed by the special interests and expertise of the individual selected as delegates by an application process from Geneva. The FMC graciously assisted WILPF to meet its research objectives by providing logistical support and opportunities to go places and meet people not possible to tourists to Cuba. WILPF was able to build a stronger understanding and bond with the people of Cuba through the instrumentation of the FMC. Our accommodations were in a hotelito, a guest house in an old mansion operated by the FMC, with shared facilities and meals according to modest Cuban present-day standards. We were in a central location and could easily walk to many sites.

The delegation’s program included:

- a meeting with the Secretary General of the FMC and other officials at FMC headquarters on Avenida Paseo;
- a conference with the Cuban Movement for Peace and Sovereignty;
- a discussion at a Guidance House for Women and Family;

³ The U.S. WILPF Section Website, <http://www.wilpf.org>, (January 20, 2007).

⁴ For more information see <http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/16days/about.html>.

- a presentation at the Finlay Institute's Department for Research, Development and Production of Vaccines;
- a visit to the Latin America Medical School;
- a tour of an Agro-Organic Urban Garden (claimed to be largest in Havana although we saw many large urban gardens!);
- a visit to the William Solar Pediatrics Hospital;
- a visit to a maternity home in Old Havana, the Leonor Perez Maternity Home;
- a special presentation by, and visit with, "La Colmenita," a project through which young people learn and perform music, theater, and dance;
- a meeting with family members of the Cuban 5;
- a conference with parliamentarians on women's role in Cuban political society;
- a visit to school for children with special needs called Special School of Solidarity with Panama;
- a tour of the Museum of the National Literacy Campaign or the Museum of the Revolution (some delegates went to each place);
- a meeting with women in Matanzas; and
- a farewell gathering at Casa de Amistad (Friendship House) with guest Yolanda Ferrer, Secretary General of the FMC

The trip to Cuba was, though brief, an exciting and fruitful one. The opportunities enabled us as delegates to meet and communicate with Cuban citizens and to see parts of their daily and professional lives, thus providing us a first-hand education. Another benefit was the interaction among WILPF women who work diligently in their own communities. In the past few years, especially after 9/11, talking about and working for peace has become more difficult, as has being a peace activist and feminist. It is always encouraging and motivating to meet some of the strong women of WILPF, but, now more than ever, the exchange of ideas and sharing of experiences can sustain our spirits and efforts as we go back home to continue our work. We are thankful for the inspiration of our fellow delegates, the organizers, and the many Cubans we met.

This report is a summary of the 2006 WILPF Research Delegation to Cuba. So much of the information about Cuba available in the major media worldwide comes from sources other than Cubans. After this research trip, we have our own experiences to draw on as well. As a result, we would like to share some of what we learned. So that the reader may better understand the context and issues discussed, this document also includes additional research done by the delegates, with references and recommendations for further reading.

II U.S. FOREIGN POLICY ON CUBA

Cuba is the largest island in the Antilles, with a rich and diverse ecosystem, one quarter of the world's nickel, excellent tobacco, and pristine beaches. When considering shipping purposes, the island is geographically the

gateway to Latin America. It is also only ninety miles from Florida on the continental United States.

An analysis of the relationship between the United States and Cuba must take into account a multitude of perspectives. Various viewpoints examine the powerful vs. the powerless; rich vs. poor; developed vs. developing; industrialized vs. agrarian; capitalism vs. communism/socialism; and the relatively new paradigm, North vs. South. The situations can also be seen through the lens of race, gender, class, social mobility, religious beliefs, and political ideologies.

Yet another view is Maria Lopez's idea of the people's perspective that focuses on the grassroots participation of ordinary people as stakeholders in nation building. She says, "Solutions (to socio-economic problems and tasks of nation building from the ground up) are not found in the West and its neoliberal reforms and free market economies; nor is it enough to 'perfect' the state Socialism of the East, to rectify its errors. Only by revamping the cultural and political attitudes of paternalism, verticalism, bureaucratism, and authoritarianism can allow Cuba to successfully address the tremendous challenges it faces at the turn of this century."⁵

A Brief History

In general, the history of U.S.-Cuba relations reflects the cross purposes of the aspirations of the majority of the people of Cuba to be an independent sovereign nation and the goals of the U.S. to capitalize on Cuba's geographical advantage. It is not difficult to understand why the United States historically has considered Cuba's destiny to be linked with its own. By 1783, Cuba had become the chief supplier of sugar to the U.S. As early as 1809, President Thomas Jefferson sought to purchase Cuba from Spain.⁶ Again in 1848, President James K. Polk authorized his ambassador to negotiate for the purchase of the island.⁷ By 1895, U.S. private and commercial interests dominated the island's economy, although it was still a Spanish colony; in the 1880s, 83% of all Cuban exports went to the United States, while only 6% went to Spain.⁸

Spain's surrender of Cuba (along with Puerto Rico, Guam and the entire Philippine archipelago) during the Spanish (Cuban) American War in 1898 marks the beginning of the era in which the United States is the uncontested world imperial power in the Caribbean and Pacific.⁹ 1898 is also the year that sets the U.S. on the path towards permanent militarism to protect its assets.

Because the U.S. Congress did not want to absorb Cuba's national debt of \$400 million, the Teller Amendment kept the United States from directly annexing

⁵ Lopez Vigil, Maria. (1999). *Cuba: Neither Heaven nor Hell*. EPICA, p. xviii.

⁶ Jefferson, Thomas (April 27, 1809). Letter to James Madison. <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/jefferson/149.html>, (January 20, 2007).

⁷ Wikipedia. James K. Polk. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_K._Polk (January 20, 2007).

⁸ Franklin, Jane. *Cuba and the United States*, Ocean Press: Australia, p.7.

⁹ Wikipedia. "The Spanish-American War" http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish-American_War#Aftermath (January 20, 2007).

Cuba in 1898.¹⁰ Rather, it granted Cuba its independence in 1901 under conditions of the Platt Amendment, which stipulated that the U.S. could intervene at any point to protect its interests. In essence, Cuba continued as a colony or satellite of the U.S. At the same time the U.S. established the military base at Guantánamo,¹¹ saying it was crucial for the protection of Cuba and Panama Canal. The base was to exist until both sides could agree to its return. Cubans objected to Guantánamo on grounds of sovereignty, but accepted the U.S. presence on their territory as the only way to avoid outright military occupation. Nevertheless, the U.S. found cause for military intervention in Cuba in 1906, 1912, 1917, 1960 and 1961.¹²

As a U.S. client state, by 1959 individuals and corporations from the United States owned two-thirds of the arable land in Cuba and controlled most of the commerce.¹³ At the same time, political corruption in Cuba was rampant under the dictator General Fulgencio Batista. Fidel Castro led a revolution, which overthrew the dictatorship and declared Cuba for the Cubans, making the island a self-determining, independent, and sovereign nation; both women and men played decisive roles in the triumph of the revolution.

In order to address the profound economic inequities, the new government undertook fundamental resource allocation and nationalized all foreign held companies, along with fifty percent of the land, including all farms over 400 hectares, 380 firms, 36 sugar mills, and all of the banks.¹⁴ In response to Castro's nationalization and expropriation of U.S.-owned land holdings, the U.S. government prohibited all exports to Cuba.

After the Bay of Pigs Invasion in April 1961, followed by the Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962, as well as a Cuban-Soviet rapprochement, President Kennedy imposed travel restrictions, and Cuban assets in the U.S. were frozen. President Jimmy Carter briefly lifted travel restrictions during his administration from 1977-1980, but President Reagan reinstated the lapsed travel restrictions in 1982. In 1992, the U.S. reinforced the embargo (described in Cuba as the Blockade due to its extra-territorial reach) with the Torricelli Law in 1992, and the Helms-Burton Act of 1996.¹⁵ The Torricelli Bill, also known as the Cuban Democracy Bill, tightens the U.S. embargo by prohibiting transactions between U.S. foreign subsidiaries and Cuba and prohibits ships from docking in U.S. ports for six months if they have visited Cuba. The Helms-Burton Act, or the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, codified all previous legislation on Cuba, making Congress the only body that can amend the Cuba policy, and punishing foreign companies and individuals that do business in Cuba by preventing them

¹⁰ Teller and Pratt Amendments, <http://www.loc.gov/rr/hispanic/1898/teller.html> (January 20, 2007).

¹¹ Sierra, J. A. "Text of the Pratt Agreement," <http://www.historyofcuba.com/history/platt.htm> (January 20, 2007).

¹² U.S. Interventions in Latin America <http://www.zompist.com/latam.html> (January 20, 2007).

¹³ Lonely Planet. (2004) *Cuba*, 3rd Ed. Footscray, Victoria, Australia.

¹⁴ Franklin, Jane. (1996) *Cuba and the United States: A Chronological History*. Ocean Press, Australia.

¹⁵ NOW, <http://www.pbs.org/now/politics/cubatimeline.html>, (January 20, 2007).

from doing business or getting visas into the U.S. In addition, it grants U.S. citizens the right to sue foreign investors profiting from expropriated U.S. assets. This law was signed into law by President William Clinton on March 12, 1996.

The Cuban Assets Control Regulations, effective June 2004, make it illegal for U.S. nationals to spend money or receive gifts in Cuba without a U.S. Office of Foreign Assets Control issued license.¹⁶

In his book, *Empire's Workshop*, Gregg Grandin writes of another approach to examining U.S./Cuban Foreign Policy. According to Grandin, following the withdrawal from Vietnam under President Reagan, the neo-conservatives and the Christian Right joined to demand an all-out anti-Communist crusade in Latin America. The U.S. State Department and congressional oversight were frequently by-passed to permit a semi-private, clandestine foreign policy to operate. Grandin claims that Ronald Reagan indulged his more fanatical supporters, mainly in Central America, where they learned to "maneuver around their more cautious colleagues in the State Department and used covert operations and 'instill a culture of loyalty and secrecy'."¹⁷

The second Bush administration reversed the Clinton administration's policy of using nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and other people-to-people exchanges to pressure for change in Cuba and severed all ties with Cuba. President Bush also instituted a policy of Regime Change by creating the Commission for the Assistance to a Free Cuba. This body released reports in 2004 and 2006.¹⁸ The reports call for the appointment of a Transition Coordinator and the commitment of millions of dollars to overthrow the current Cuban government. The 2006 report includes a classified annex of covert activities to be employed as a part of the mission.¹⁹ In addition, Bush has redefined existing statutes to further restrict academic exchanges, people-to-people cultural exchanges, scientific exchanges, and to limit travel for people with family members in both the U.S. and Cuba. Under current regulations, individuals with immediate family in Cuba (parents, spouse, child, siblings) can visit once every three years if they apply for a specific license (with no humanitarian exception) for a period not to exceed fourteen days.²⁰ No other immigrant population in the U.S. has such legal restraints against their efforts for family stability and reunification. At the same time, no other immigrant population in the U.S. has

¹⁶ Also see George W. Bush's proclamation, "Expanding the Scope of the National Emergency and Invocation of Emergency Authority Relating to the Regulation of the Anchorage and Movement of Vessels Into Cuban Territorial Waters" February 26, 2004. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/02/20040226-11.html>, (January 20, 2007).

¹⁷ Grandin, Gregg Quoted from a review of his book, *Empire's Workshop: Latin America and the Rise of the New Imperialism*. Metropolitan, in *The Nation*, November 27, 2006.

¹⁸ Commission for Assistance to Free Cuba Reports. May 6, 2004 and July 10, 2006. <http://www.caafc.gov/rpt/>, (January 20, 2007).

¹⁹ Wilkinson, Steve and Natasha Hickman. (August 2, 2006). "Bush's 'Secret' Plan for Cuba," http://www.cuba-solidarity.org/cubasi_article.asp?ArticleID=65, (January 20, 2007).

²⁰ U.S. Department of State Fact Sheet, (July 22, 2004) "Summary of New Rules on Travel and Exports to Cuba," <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/rls/fs/34617.htm>, (January 20, 2007).

the privileges granted to Cubans under the Cuban Adjustment Act that President Lyndon Johnson signed into law in 1966.²¹ The Cubans who migrated to Miami at the time of the revolution have had a great impact on the course of U.S. foreign policy related to Cuba.

This overview of U.S. foreign policy gives insight to the Cuban claims of “600 attempts on the lives of their leaders, numerous acts of sabotage, aircraft explosions, bombings on Cuban nationals in the U.S., the Blockade, the ‘Bush Plan’ (\$80 Million for the transition of Cuban government), the Cuban 5 and other acts of U.S aggression.”²²

It is important to return to the issue of the U.S. military base at Guantánamo Bay since it has become an international issue. Not only do some people contest the right of the U.S. military to occupy Cuban land, but the base has also become a point of international contention because the U.S. is now using it to hold prisoners indefinitely without due process, violating principles of law that would protect the same people if they were held on U.S. soil, and going against the articles of the Geneva Conventions.²³ It seems ironic that the U.S., which classifies Cuba as a nation that sponsors terrorism, at the same time chooses to incarcerate on Cuban territory those who it has labeled the most dangerous terrorists in the world.

Effects of the Blockade on Cuba

When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1989, the Cuban economy went into a downward spin. Cubans call this the Special Period. 85% of Cuba’s foreign trade was lost the country had lost its major trading partner; the blockade made it very difficult to find new trade partners, but the people rallied together, determined to defend the system, the government, and the work of establishing social justice for all people.

As a result, Cuba has developed limited trading relations with the rest of the world, which remain restricted by the regulations of the Helms-Burton Act. Cubans have instituted a semi-barter system of trade. For example, Cuba exports its doctors in exchange for Venezuelan oil. In addition, they have opened up tourism as a source of income, developed a homegrown organic farming program to supplement food supplies, and instituted the Energy Revolution for a sustainable energy program.

²¹ See: U.S. Department of State. (March 16, 2000). “Fact Sheet: Cuban Adjustment Act.” http://www.state.gov/www/regions/wha/cuba/cuba_adjustment_act.html, (January 21, 2007).and U.S. Immigrations and Naturalization Services. “Cuban Natives or Citizens Seeking Lawful Permanent Resident Status” <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.5af9bb95919f35e66f614176543f6d1a/?vgnnextoid=83e86138f898d010VgnVCM10000048f3d6a1RCRD&vgnnextchannel=828807b03d92b010VgnVCM10000045f3d6a1RCRD> (January 21, 2007).

²² From a briefing by Cuban women leaders in the Province of Matanzas, members of the International Affairs Department of the Cuban Communist Party, leaders in International Relations, Religion, Arts, Agriculture, Culture, November 25, 2006. See also article: Sweig, Julia E., “Fidel’s Final Victory,” *Foreign Affairs* U.S. publication, Jan/Feb, 2007.

²³ Amnesty International, “Guantánamo Bay - a Human Rights Scandal” <http://web.amnesty.org/pages/guantanamobay-background-eng> (January 20, 2007).

According to Noam Chomsky, the embargo was put in place by the U.S. government to prevent Castro's socialist programs from succeeding and serving as a model for other Latin American countries.²⁴ That purpose has, obviously, not been met. World opinion is also running against the embargo. In each of the past fifteen years, the General Assembly of the U.N. has taken a vote for a resolution condemning the embargo. The last vote was 183 to 4; the opposing votes were cast by the United States, Israel, Palau, and the Marshall Islands.

Two Currencies

The economy in Cuba is based on two currencies: the national peso and the CUC, also known as the convertible peso. Basically, all tourists and international visitors must change their home currencies into CUC. These pesos are used in hotels, restaurants, and many stores. Cubans are paid in national pesos, which they use to buy much of what they need. But, why do these two currencies exist side by side?

As mentioned earlier, for many years after the triumph of the revolution, Cuba received significant financial aid from the Soviet Union. Consequently, with the fall of the socialist countries in 1989, Cuba faced extreme economic difficulties. In the early 1990s, it entered into what is called the Special Period. Shortages were common, and new strategies were essential to address the needs of the people and to develop new sources of revenue. Since that time, international tourism has become the major source of income for the country. Many joint ventures with hotels, restaurants, and other international companies have begun to create resorts. Still, the price that visitors pay is much more than Cubans can afford since their salaries are still very low. As a result, prices were set in U.S. dollars, not only to be more comparable with similar world markets, but also to bring hard currency into the country. So, for about 10 years (1994-2006), visitors used U.S. dollars as their principal currency, while Cubans continued to spend national pesos.

Early in 2006, in part because the U.S. government has been putting pressure on Canadian and other international banks that have accepted U.S. dollars from Cuba, the CUC was introduced. Now all currencies must be exchanged for these convertible pesos, sometimes still called dollars. Further, those who wish to exchange U.S. dollars pay a 10% surcharge.

Today, the distinctions between the two currencies still exist, although some lines have blurred. International visitors use CUCs and frequent different hotels and restaurants than Cubans who cannot afford the CUC rates. On the other hand, in Havana a number of restaurants have recently been renovated and reopened for those who have national pesos. The Cuban government continues to subsidize items of the basic food basket such as rice, beans, meat, and bread. People pay for these rationed items; most people agree that the allotted amounts of these foods are not enough to last the whole month. People

²⁴ Chomsky, Noam. (1999). *Latin America: From Colonization to Globalization*. Ocean Press: NY, pp. 70 - 75.

may purchase more on the open market, but prices are significantly higher. In addition, some items, such as cooking oil, soap, and toilet paper, may only be purchased with convertible pesos. Cubans may exchange their national pesos for convertible ones at the rate of 24 national pesos for 1 CUC. Therefore, most Cubans can afford little that is sold in CUCs.

The two-currency system is a direct result of the U.S. embargo against Cuba. It has created new class differences based on those who have access to international visitors and/or remittances from family members who live abroad and, therefore, access to CUCs, and those who do not. Some brain drain has also occurred, since some highly educated teachers or other professionals who speak English have left their professions to become tour guides and taxi drivers in order to acquire CUCs.

Several of the women with whom we spoke acknowledged the need for two currencies at this time, but looked forward to the day when the country can be reunited, using just one currency again.

The Cuban 5

Since 1998, Gerardo Hernandez, Ramon Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando Gonzalez, and Rene Gonzalez have been imprisoned in the United States on spying and conspiracy charges. The Cuban 5, as they are called, were in the U.S. to infiltrate the Cuban-American terrorist organizations based in Miami to monitor their actions. One of these groups, according to Ricardo Alarcon, President of the Cuban National Assembly, was a member of the Orlando Bosch group.²⁵ (Mr. Bosch has been described by the U.S. Justice Department as a terrorist.) According to Alarcon, the Cuban 5 infiltrated these organizations to protect the national sovereignty of their homeland Cuba and to safeguard the U.S. population from terrorist actions within the U.S. The Cuban government shared the information the Five had gathered with U.S. officials who arrested the men.

The trial against the Cuba 5 was held in Miami. They were found guilty of espionage and threatening national security. Despite an international movement of support and a U.N. Human Rights Commission Resolution concluding that the Cuban 5's incarceration was arbitrary, the issue has been almost completely ignored by the U.S. media.

To compound the injuries inflicted on these men, the Cuban 5 have been victims of multiple human rights violations. Especially hurtful has been the systematic denial of visitation from their relatives, a basic right of all prisoners. In addition, each of the five prisoners is incarcerated in one of five different states in the U.S. The WILPF delegation met with some of the members of the families of the Cuban 5



²⁵ Alarcon, Ricardo, President of the Cuban National Assembly. From the transcript of an interview with Amy Goodman's *Democracy Now* broadcast, September 21, 2005.

on Thursday, November 23, 2006. They spent two hours explaining the current situation and answering questions.

Suggested Actions

In order to live cooperatively in this global village and in order to regain the mutual respect of other societies, U.S. Foreign Policy must adopt basic, fundamental good-neighbor principles. U.S. policies and actions must give due respect to international law and avoid postures that most countries in the world perceive as imperialistic and overly focused on war. We must, therefore:

- Demand that Congress end the embargo;
- Encourage all countries to cooperate as world members in the family of nations in the U.N.;
- Request that the U.S. government allow family visits for the Cuban 5 in accordance with existing laws; and
- Join the international efforts to expose the unjust trial and inhumane imprisonment of the Cuban Five. For up-to-date information and to locate a committee near you, visit the website: www.freethefive.org. For US residents of California, we highly recommend working with humanitarian lawyers of San Francisco, Karen Parker²⁶ and Ann Fagan Ginger²⁷ of the Meiklejohn Civil Liberties Institute, Berkeley, California.

III TWO SIDES OF U.S./CUBA RELATIONS

For 48 years since the Triumph of the Cuban Revolution in 1959, the United States has refused open diplomatic and trade relations with Cuba. It has, in addition, imposed ever-increasing onerous burdens, including an embargo, sabotage and propaganda activities, and other actions threatening the daily life and the well-being of the Cuban people and their national prosperity. For more information about the history and effects of the U.S. embargo against Cuba, see "Forty Years of Hostility," a report of the TransAfrica Forum Cuba Delegation of 1999 and the other sources listed in the bibliography.

Further, the United States has restricted the ability of its own citizens to trade with and travel freely to Cuba. This restricts business opportunities for U.S. business, family visitation of Cuban American families with their relatives in Cuba, and the freedom of U.S. citizens to travel, for business or pleasure, to Cuba.

Members of this delegation from the U.S. were restricted to visits for research projects that fit within the narrow legal structures imposed by the U.S.

²⁶ Parker, Karen, J.D., (2006). Member of the Association of Humanitarian Lawyers, Parker testifies regularly at the U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva and its Subcommission of the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. See <http://www.humanlaw.org/KarenParker2.html>.

²⁷ Fagan Ginger, Ann, with the Meiklejohn Civil Liberties Institute, Box 673 Berkeley, Ca 94701. She is also a member of WILPF.

Department of State and the U.S. Department of the Treasury. Even within these limits, they were further restricted since the use of the U.S. currency in Cuba is prohibited. So, as U.S. citizens they could not 1) purchase souvenirs or any other goods or services; 2) travel for pleasure and recreation; 3) engage in educational programs or cultural events; or 4) conduct business transactions or operations with the Cuban government or any other entities within its territorial boundaries.



Despite the fact that the U.S. is not to have any relations with the Republic of Cuba, it maintains a military base on the island at Guantánamo Bay. This is the only base worldwide that exists on foreign soil without the permission of either the government or the people. In addition, the base has been used for military operations and as a prison. The United Nations High Commission for Human Rights has notified the U.S. that it has broken certain international laws and conventions in its operations in regard to these prisoners held on Cuban soil. (See Appendix C to read a resolution on this matter.)

IV SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainable living is defined as a style of life that is capable of being continued with minimal long-term effect on the environment. Scientists, governments, politicians, and everyday people are discussing the international problems of global warming, limited resources, and the viability of current lifestyles, especially those of first-world countries. While many talk about the issues, Cubans have begun to put many sustainable projects in place. The World Wildlife Fund recognized Cuba achievements saying, “Opportunities for success in conservation and sustainable use are probably higher in Cuba than anywhere else in the western hemisphere. This is because Cuba has accepted sustainable development as an official government policy with the goal of seeking solutions to its needs in both the short and long terms.”²⁸ We saw evidence of these endeavors at a tourist resort in Matanzas (a coastal city about 2 ½ hours from Havana), in urban gardens, and in the 2006 Year of Energy Revolution.

Sustainable Resorts

Resorts are built to compete with the best in the world, but the Cuban government has also set strict regulations that foster sustainability. For example, golf courses require a significant amount of water and care, using up limited resources; therefore, only one course was built in Matanzas instead of several.

²⁸Agnew, Elizabeth. (April 19, 1999). “The Other Revolution.” World Wildlife Fund Website. http://www.panda.org/news_facts/newsroom/features/index.cfm?uNewsID=1944, (January 21, 2007).

Urban Gardens

Urban gardens began in response to the food crisis of the Special Period. Also, they began without access to pesticides and fertilizers because of the expense and lack of availability. Nevertheless, organic urban gardens now exist throughout Havana, and most growers would not use fertilizers even if they were readily available for affordable prices. The fresh vegetables and fruits are now valued, in part, because they are organic. In addition, these gardens have increased Cuban's awareness of the need to eat more fruits and vegetables as a part of a healthy diet.²⁹

Although some communities in the U.S. and Canada have community gardens, urban gardens in Havana are different in that they employ full-time workers, some of whom have studied agriculture. The workers often live in the area near the garden in which they work. Some food goes to the governmentally subsidized food program; whatever is left is sold to local residents.

The Year of the Energy Revolution

Castro announced that 2006 is the year of the Year of the Energy Revolution. Efforts are being made to inform the general population about ways that they can conserve electricity, including such ideas as turning off radios, televisions, and appliances that are not in use and encouraging people to exchange their old refrigerators for newer energy-efficient models. Free rice cookers, pressure cookers, and energy efficient light bulbs have been distributed to every household.

Future Research Considerations

Cuba has become a world leader in creating projects that lead to a more sustainable lifestyle. Some areas for future research could include:

- management of local urban gardens;
- the effectiveness of the campaign to use energy-efficient appliances and to change people's attitudes about energy consumption;
- in-depth consideration of what makes a tourist resort successful, not only economically, but also in terms of sustainability;
- ways that Cuban strategies for sustainability can be applied to other communities and countries; and
- ways Cuba has institutionalized and promoted education for sustainable living.

²⁹ For information about a teacher from Maine who visited Cuban gardens, see Taber, Peter. (December 31, 2006) "Teacher studies Agriculture in Cuba," www.maineoastnow.com/articles/2006/12/31/waldo_independent/local_news/doc4593e551c6e25516188100.txt, (January 20, 2007).

V CUBA AND THE U.N. MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

During the 55th session of the General Assembly in September 2000, “leaders from every country in the United Nations agreed on a vision for the future – a world with less poverty, hunger and disease, greater survival prospects for mothers and their infants, better educated children, equal opportunities for women, and a healthier environment; a world in which developed and developing countries worked in partnership for the betterment of all. This vision took the shape of eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which are providing countries around the world a framework for development.”³⁰ On a website dedicated to this project, the leaders explain, “The eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)... galvanized unprecedented efforts to meet the needs of the world’s poorest.”³¹

Using the expertise and data from 25 worldwide institutions, the U.N. has collected data related to each goal. It appears that Cuba, a developing country, has already met or surpassed these MDGs far ahead of the target date of 2015. The following section presents the U.N.’s goals³² (in bold), the related targets (in italics and indented), and information about Cuba’s achievements. Occasionally statistics from other countries are also provided for comparison.

Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.

Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 a day.

Cuba’s reduced rents, food rations, as well as free education and health care, make the target of a dollar a day an irrelevant indicator when comparing Cuba to the rest of the developing world. Although specific data related to Cuba’s GDP per capita is not available,³³ none of its citizen’s live in extreme poverty. On the other hand, Cuba currently has a dual economy: Cuban pesos for Cuban laborers and all government employees, including doctors, teachers, and scientists, and convertible pesos (CUCs) for those who have access to foreign currency through remittances, private enterprise, or the tourist industry. Those who receive convertible pesos are able to purchase a wider variety of food stuffs, general merchandise, supplies, and services. In 2006, 1 CUC = 24 Cuban pesos.

Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the number of people who suffer hunger.

Extreme poverty and hunger in Cuba have been eliminated since the 1960 revolution through the universal rationing system. (During the Special Period

³⁰ United Nations (2006). *The Millennium Development Goals Report*. United Nations: New York.

³¹ United Nations. (December 2006). Millennium Goals, <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>, (December 28, 2006).

³² Information for this section comes from the U.N. Development Goals Report 2006, <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mdg/Resources/Static/Products/Progress2006/MDGReport2006.pdf>, (December 28, 2006).

³³ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, http://www.uis.unesco.org/profiles/selectCountry_en.aspx, (November 28, 2006).

from 1990-1995, following the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, however, many Cubans faced hunger.) Currently, every Cuban receives a monthly ration including seven pounds of rice; one pound of beans; one pound of ground beef, fish, and/or chicken, depending on availability; five pounds of sugar; cooking oil; eggs; one slice of bread per day per person; one liter of milk per day for every child under seven; one liter of yogurt per day for children between the ages of 7 and 14; and fortified beverages for seniors. Extra rations are provided for pregnant women. All workers receive a daily lunch. While these quantities do not provide an adequate diet for an entire month, local farmers' markets also provide subsidized produce.

Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education.

Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, girls and boys alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

Universal and free education through university is guaranteed in Article 51 of the Cuban Constitution. 92.2% of all Cuban adults have at least a ninth grade education. 99% of all Cuban children are enrolled in primary or secondary education. Also, over 600,000 students are enrolled in universities. 22.6% of the GNP has been allocated to education and health care in 2007.

Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women.

Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015.

Gender equality is guaranteed in Article 42 of the Cuban Constitution. The Literacy Campaign of 1961 brought literacy to all men and women. Over half of the literacy workers were young women which provided them an important entry point into the revolution. (See a later section of this report about that campaign.) Women have full access to education at all levels.

Goal 4: Reduce child mortality.

Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate.

Cuba provides a family doctor in every neighborhood, with approximately one doctor for every 170 residents.³⁴ All health care services are universal and free of charge. The child mortality rate in Cuba is 9/1,000, the lowest in Latin America. Statistics for other countries provide the basis for comparison: Australia, 6; Bolivia, 75; Canada, 7; El Salvador, 40; Haiti, 125; Japan, 5; Nicaragua, 43; Peru, 42; U.S.A., 9.³⁵

Goal 5: Improve maternal health.

Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio.

³⁴ BBC Business Report (January 17, 2006) <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/4583668.stm>, (January 20, 2007).

³⁵ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, http://www.uis.unesco.org/profiles/selectCountry_en.aspx, (November 28, 2006).

As stated for the last goal, Cuba provides a family doctor for every 170 residents. Maternity hospitals are available for every woman with a high risk or complicated pregnancy. She remains for at least the last month of the pregnancy under careful supervision. All health care services are universal and free of charge. The maternal mortality rate is 13/100,000, the lowest in Latin America. Statistics for other countries are again provided for comparison sake: Australia, 8; Bolivia, 420; Canada, 6; El Salvador, 150; Haiti, 680; Japan, 10; Nicaragua, 230; Peru, 410; U.S.A., 17.³⁶

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases.

Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS.

In 2000, Cuba launched a national HIV/AIDS Strategic Control Plan for the five-year period of 2001-2006. The plan includes contributions from all sectors and ministries in the country. The government has a strong political commitment to control of the pandemic in this island nation. Cuba has the lowest HIV/AIDS rate in the Caribbean, approximately 4,800, which is less than .1% of the population. 80% of the cases are among gay men who are now participating in the strategic plan and in organizing support and consciousness-raising groups.³⁷ Prevention activities are being developed with these at-risk groups, and work is continuing to eliminate the stigma and discrimination associated with this disease. Cuba manufactures its own antiretroviral drugs. 100% of HIV/AIDS patients receive the triple therapies free of charge. Procurement of additional drugs is limited by the U.S. embargo. Education about HIV/AIDS begins with age-appropriate sex education in the elementary schools. Posters and billboards advocating responsibility are seen throughout the country. Frequent educational programs and panel discussions on HIV/AIDS are televised. The universal health care system emphasizes education and prevention.

Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other diseases.

By the age of one, all Cuban children have been immunized against twelve diseases: measles, mumps, rubella, meningitis B and C, polio, tuberculosis, Hib, diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, leptospirosis, and hepatitis B at the maternity hospital, policlinic, family doctor's office, or school. Immunization against typhoid fever is given at age 9.³⁸ The expanding biotechnology industry continues to research and develop vaccines and treatments of national and global diseases. Wide-spread fumigation, as well as the elimination of standing water, is carried out during every dengue fever outbreak.

Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability.

Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources.

³⁶ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, http://www.uis.unesco.org/profiles/selectCountry_en.aspx, (November 28, 2006).

³⁷ U.N.AIDS website, <http://www.unaids.org/en/>, (January 10, 2007).

³⁸ Chart presented to WILPF delegates during a visit to the Finlay Institute.

The Ministry of Science, Technology, and the Environment has established environmental standards and regulations so that all development is carried out according to strict guidelines. Further, 2006 has been designated the Year of the Energy Revolution. Energy-efficient light bulbs, pressure cookers, rice cookers, and refrigerators were distributed to every household. Las Terrazas, developed as an experimental reforestation project in Pinar del Río in 1968, was declared the Reserva Sierra del Rosario, Cuba's first UNESCO-sanctioned Biosphere Reserve in 1985. In addition, contaminated rivers are being reclaimed through organic means, and solar panels are available in rural schools.³⁹



Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.

Waterborne illnesses had all but been eliminated in Cuba after 1960. However, with the lack of chemicals and spare parts for the aging water treatment plants due to the U.S. embargo, the incidence of gastrointestinal illnesses is on the rise.

By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers.

Housing is a major problem in Cuba, where several generations live under one roof. Much of the housing is in great need of repair, but materials are scarce, due, in part, to the U.S. embargo. However, homelessness does not exist in Cuba. Housing brigades regularly construct multiple-family units in impoverished neighborhoods; the future residents provide sweat equity. 110,000 new houses were built in 2006.

Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development.

Develop further an open trading and financial system—nationally and internationally.

U.S. foreign policy prevents free and open trade with Cuba. Several countries in Latin America, Europe, and Asia have negotiated joint ventures, but risk sanctions if agreements are made with U.S. subsidiaries within their borders. Free and open trade is conducted between the members of the Bolivarian Alternative for Latin America: Venezuela, Cuba, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Nicaragua.

Address the special needs of small island developing states.

As an island nation, shipping costs could be dramatically reduced if trade were allowed with Cuba's nearest neighbor, the United States, and with U.S. subsidiaries in Latin America.

³⁹ For more information see Earth Trends at http://earthtrends.wri.org/pdf_library/country_profiles/bio_cou_192.pdf and National Geographic's "Cuba Naturally" at <http://magma.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0311/feature4/index.html?fs=www7.nationalgeographic.com>, (January 20, 2007).

Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt.

Cuba is ineligible to receive loans from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Barter agreements and joint ventures have been made with several countries.

In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth.

In 2002, a program to train young social workers, hairdressers, physiotherapists, and teaching assistants was designed to provide meaningful work for youth. Computer science courses were made available through computer clubs in every municipality. Some of the youth received stipends to return to school.

In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries.

The U.S. embargo prohibits access to medicines produced by U.S. pharmaceutical companies and their subsidiaries. Medical supplies, equipment, and spare parts are also prohibited. Modern biotech labs are producing many medicines and vaccines within Cuba. Obtaining the chemicals to develop and manufacture these drugs is difficult, due to the U.S. embargo. Cuba offers its vaccines to many countries within the developing world.

In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications.

Every school has computers, televisions, and VCRs. Some classes are taught by television. Computers and the Internet are available to universities, hospitals, and libraries. The educated Cuban people are eager to learn and acquire advanced technology equipment and skills. The U.S. embargo prohibits the acquisition of much of this equipment. Working through third countries is difficult and costly. Internet cafes have limited access and are very expensive to use.

In summary, Cuba has met or exceeded all of the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals well before the projected dates of 2015 or 2020. More in depth information about some of these goals can be found in other sections of this report.

VI THE LITERACY CAMPAIGN OF 1961

"To be cultured is the only way to be free." José Martí

More than half a century before the triumph of the revolution in 1959, José Martí (1853-1895), a Cuban poet, intellectual, leader of the Second War of Independence against Spain, and revered national hero, often wrote of the correlation between education and freedom. Illiteracy deepens class differences and perpetuates the status quo. By recognizing the importance of a literate population in the pursuit of a liberated nation, Martí established the foundation for the eventual Great Campaign of 1961. "It is necessary to engage in a campaign

of gentleness and knowledge, and give the peasants a brigade – not yet in existence – of missionary teachers.”⁴⁰

Prior to 1959, access to educational resources and opportunities was largely limited by class. Wealthy Cubans often sent their children to private religious schools in Cuba or abroad, while working class children attended vastly inferior public schools, and 70% of the rural population had no schools at all.⁴¹ As a result, high levels of illiteracy existed in the rural areas. According to the 1953 census, 1,032,849 adults were illiterate out of a total adult population of slightly more than four million. This indicated a national adult illiteracy rate of 23.6%, but when broken down, the figures become more significant: 41.7% in the countryside vs. 11% in the urban areas.⁴²

In addition, many of the intellectual and technical elite left Cuba at the time of the revolution. On September 20, 1960, in a speech before the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York City, Fidel Castro announced, “In the coming year our people intend to fight the great battle of illiteracy, with the ambitious goal of teaching every single inhabitant of the country to read and write in one year, and with that end in mind, organizations of teachers, students and workers, that is, the entire people, are now preparing themselves for an intensive campaign....Cuba will be the first country of the Americas that, after a few months, will be able to say it does not have one illiterate person.” The last part of this quote can now be seen on a mural in the Museum of the National Literacy Campaign (found on the grounds of what used to be a military base).

1961 was declared the Year of Education. Organizers of the literacy project felt that a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:2 to 1:4 was essential to bring the reading and writing skills of these adults to a functional level within nine months.⁴³ To recruit 250,000 teachers to work in the least developed areas of the country for the National Literacy Campaign became the highest educational priority. An appeal was made for volunteers with the motto, “If you can read, teach. If you can’t, learn.”



The first to respond to this appeal were ordinary citizens, men and women, who were determined to teach others how to read and write and to understand the ideals of the revolution. These adult literacy workers (alfabetizadores populares) were trained by professional teachers and worked primarily in impoverished urban neighborhoods.

On April 15, 1961, two days before the invasion of the Bay of Pigs, all secondary schools were closed. Student volunteers (brigadistas) between the

⁴⁰ Keeble, Alexandra. (2001). *In the Spirit of Wandering Teachers*, Ocean Press.

⁴¹ Lorenzetto, Anna and Karel Neys, (1965). "Report on the Method and Means Utilized in Cuba to Eliminate Illiteracy" UNESCO.

⁴² Supko, Ruth (1998). "Perspectives on the Cuban National Literacy Campaign," <http://lasa.international.pitt.edu/LASA98/Supko.pdf>, (January 21, 2007).

⁴³ Kozol, Jonathan. (1978). *Children of the Revolution: A Yankee Teacher in Cuban Schools*. Delacorte Press: New York.

ages of 10 and 19 joined this nationwide effort to eradicate illiteracy. Professional teachers began the first two-week intensive training program in Varadero with 1,000 students. Over the course of the next three months, 105,000 students received this training and were assigned to neighborhoods in the countryside.⁴⁴ Along with two pairs of pants, two shirts, two pairs of socks, a pair of boots, a beret, a blanket, and a hammock, s/he carried the official teachers' manual *Alfabetizamos* (We Alphabetize), the student primer *Venceremos* (We Shall Succeed), and a lantern. This Coleman-type lantern, as well as notebooks and pencils, became the symbols of the campaign. All of this work took place at a time when counterrevolutionary forces (supported by the United States) were at large on the island. In fact, forty-two teachers of the literacy campaign died – nine were killed outright, and thirty-three succumbed to accidents or illness. Nevertheless, literacy spread.⁴⁵



Building a sense of solidarity between the urban and rural populations was an explicit goal of the campaign. The transition was a challenge, but the political will was strong. The peasants lived in isolated areas. Many tried to hide their inability to read. The elderly weren't always eager to learn from these energetic *brigadistas*. Some of the urban youth were unable to identify with rural poverty, crowded huts, and simple food. By sharing the labor of the home and fields during the day, mutual respect and trust developed. Every evening, the lantern was illuminated and the literacy lessons continued. Within a short time, this close contact broke down the racial, economic, and educational barriers that had permeated the society for generations. They learned from each other; they taught each other. A bond was created. A new society had begun.



The primer consisted of fifteen lessons with photographs and block-lettered words. The theme of each lesson was based on current events or issues that were relevant to the adult students (i.e., the Organization of American States, agrarian reform, the revolution, Fidel Castro, cooperatives, racial discrimination, and housing rights). Each lesson consisted of three steps: a conversation about the photo, reading of the text, and practicing exercises by syllable.

By late summer 1961, it became evident that this massive task required additional volunteers.⁴⁶ More professional teachers and adult literacy workers were recruited. Factory workers (*brigadistas obreros*) and members of mass

⁴⁴ Supko, Ruth (1998). "Perspectives on the Cuban National Literacy Campaign," <http://lasa.international.pitt.edu/LASA98/Supko.pdf>, (January 21, 2007).

⁴⁵ Information from the Museum of the National Literacy Campaign, Havana, Cuba.

⁴⁶ Kozol, Jonathan. (1978). *Children of the Revolution: A Yankee Teacher in Cuban Schools*. Delacorte Press: New York.

organizations (i.e., Confederation of Cuban Workers, Association of Small Farmers, Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, and the Federation of Cuban Women) were mobilized in the countryside and the urban areas. Professional teachers volunteered their time in the cities after their normal work and family responsibilities were completed. Factory workers received their full salary while doing literacy work. “The people should teach the people” became the principle of the campaign.

Three tests were administered throughout the process. The first was to determine if the student was illiterate or semi-literate (that is, could read, but not write). The second was to monitor progress. Finally the third was to confirm that literacy was achieved. As a final requirement, the students had to write a personal letter to Fidel Castro. This letter chronicled the success of the literacy workers and the campaign. Over 700,000 of these letters are currently archived in the Museum of the National Literacy Campaign in Marianao, one of Havana’s fifteen municipalities.



As the last member of a household passed the final test and completed the hand-written letter to Fidel, a small red flag with “Territorio Libre de Analfabetismo” (Territory Free of Illiteracy) was hung above the doorway. When the last adult in the community became literate, the town or neighborhood received a large flag. On November 5, 1961, Melena del Sur in Havana Province became the first village to achieve that honor.

On December 22, 1961, Fidel Castro declared that Cuba was a “Territory Free of Illiteracy” at a mass rally on the Plaza de la Revolución. In a related parade, literacy brigades carried huge pencils (instead of the traditional guns). Throngs of people celebrated. The Literacy Army of 268,468 volunteers had helped 707,212 adults become literate, reducing the literacy rate from 23.6% to 3.9% in less than nine months.⁴⁷ December 22 is now celebrated annually throughout the country as Teachers’ Day. It has become a special day to recognize regional academic achievements and for parents to bring food and small gifts to “show appreciation to the person who spends most of the day with your child,” as one father stated.



In the following years, post-literacy adult education programs were created. By 1975, over 300,000 men and women were enrolled in courses in “The Battle for Sixth Grade.”⁴⁸ The goal was to establish ninth-grade competence as a uniform minimal skill throughout the nation. According to the

⁴⁷ Kozol, Jonathan. (1978). *Children of the Revolution: A Yankee Teacher in Cuban Schools*. Delacorte Press: New York.

⁴⁸ Kozol, Jonathan. (1978). *Children of the Revolution: A Yankee Teacher in Cuban Schools*. Delacorte Press: New York.

author Jonathan Kozol, "In 1976 over three million three hundred thousand Cubans – workers, farmers, adults, kids – were enrolled in formal education at some level: one out of three in a population of nine million five hundred thousand people. No other government in the Latin world comes even close."⁴⁹

In 2006, UNESCO ranked Cuba's literacy rate as first in the hemisphere. Education up to the ninth grade is now compulsory, and 92.2% of all Cubans have at least a ninth-grade education.

Universal and free education is guaranteed in Article 51 of the Cuban Constitution.⁵⁰ Former military barracks have been converted into educational facilities. The largest base, the former Cuartel Columbia in Marianao, has been renamed Ciudad Libertad (Liberty City). Its facilities include day care centers, university classrooms, a school for the blind, a school for autistic children, and the Museo Nacional de la Campaña de Alfabetización



(Museum of the National Literacy Campaign), which was founded in 1964. A former naval base outside Havana became the Escuela Latinoamericana de Ciencias Médicas (Latin American Medical School) in 1998, providing free medical education for over 10,000 students from impoverished communities in 28 developing countries and from poor communities in the United States. Cuban literacy teachers and advisors, conceived as "missionary teachers" by Martí over 100 years ago, have volunteered to establish the literacy program of *Yo, Si Puedo* (Yes, I Can) in nineteen countries, most recently in Venezuela, Bolivia,⁵¹ Ecuador, and (for the first time in English) in Grenada.⁵² The manuals are tailored to the unique culture and history of each country. A testimony to Cuba's contributions to world literacy is the fact that the country was awarded the UNESCO King Sejong Literacy Prize in 2006 for its international teaching method, "¡Yo Si Puedo!"⁵³

Prior to 1959, no nation had placed the education of its most vulnerable citizens, the rural and the poor, as its highest priority. As a result of the Great Campaign of 1961, nearly the entire population of Cuba is literate. Its educated people are among its greatest resources and Cubans are sharing their skills throughout the developing world. The Literacy Campaign recognized the importance of each individual to the society as a whole. It brought together the urban and rural, the comfortable and the poor, the young and the old, to teach

⁴⁹ Kozol, Jonathan. (1978). *Children of the Revolution: A Yankee Teacher in Cuban Schools*. Delacorte Press: New York.

⁵⁰ Cuban Constitution, http://www.cubanet.org/ref/dis/const_92_e.htm, (January 20, 2007).

⁵¹ "Thousands in Bolivia Learning to Read" Prensa Latina, Havana (2006). <http://www.plenglish.com>, (January 20, 2007).

⁵² "Cuban Literacy Campaign in English for the Caribbean" Juventud Rebelde (2006). www.juventudrebelde.co.cu/international/2006-12-29/cuban-literacy-campaign-in-english-for-the-caribbean/, (January 20, 2007).

⁵³ United Nations Educational Scientific and cultural Organization (UNESCO) media services, http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=33384&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html, (January 20, 2007).

and to learn from each other. It provides a model for any society that commits itself to achieving the maximum potential of every citizen.

The peasants discovered the word.
 The students discovered the poor.
 Together they discovered their homeland.
 A senior educator

A bust of José Martí stands in every schoolyard.

Issues for Further Study

- How successful have the Literacy Campaigns been in other countries?
- What obstacles have these countries encountered, and how have they worked to overcome them? What factors led to their success?
- Could any of these ideas be used in countries like the United States and Canada to address the major problem of poor academic progress, especially in inner city neighborhoods?

VII EDUCATION IN CUBA

Since the time of the revolution, education has been a priority for the Cuban government and people. There have been three revolutions in education. As explained in the last section, the First Educational Revolution, also known as the Literacy Campaign, began in January 1961. The goal of the Second Educational Revolution, begun in 1972, was to train sufficient teachers so that all Cubans could study to the ninth-grade level and beyond. Then, in 2002, the Cuban government launched the Third Educational Revolution to reduce class size and better address all students' needs.

Comparative Educational Statistics

The results of Cuba's focus on education are dramatic. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics⁵⁴ provides data about education-related issues. The first chart presents the regional averages for adult and youth literacy.

	North America/ Western Europe	Latin America/ Caribbean
Adult Literacy Rate		
Male	98.4	91.0
Female	97.2	89.5
Youth Literacy Rate		
Male	99.5	96.2
Female	99.6	97.0
Percent of Primary Children in School		
Male	96	96
Female	94	94

⁵⁴ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, http://www.uis.unesco.org/profiles/selectCountry_en.aspx, (November 28, 2006).

The next chart presents more detailed information. For comparison's sake, the following table summarizes data from Cuba as well as from the countries represented in this delegation: Australia, Canada, Japan, U.S.A.; and five countries from the Caribbean, Central and South America: Bolivia, El Salvador, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Peru. All information refers to 2004 unless otherwise noted.

Comparative Educational Statistics⁵⁵

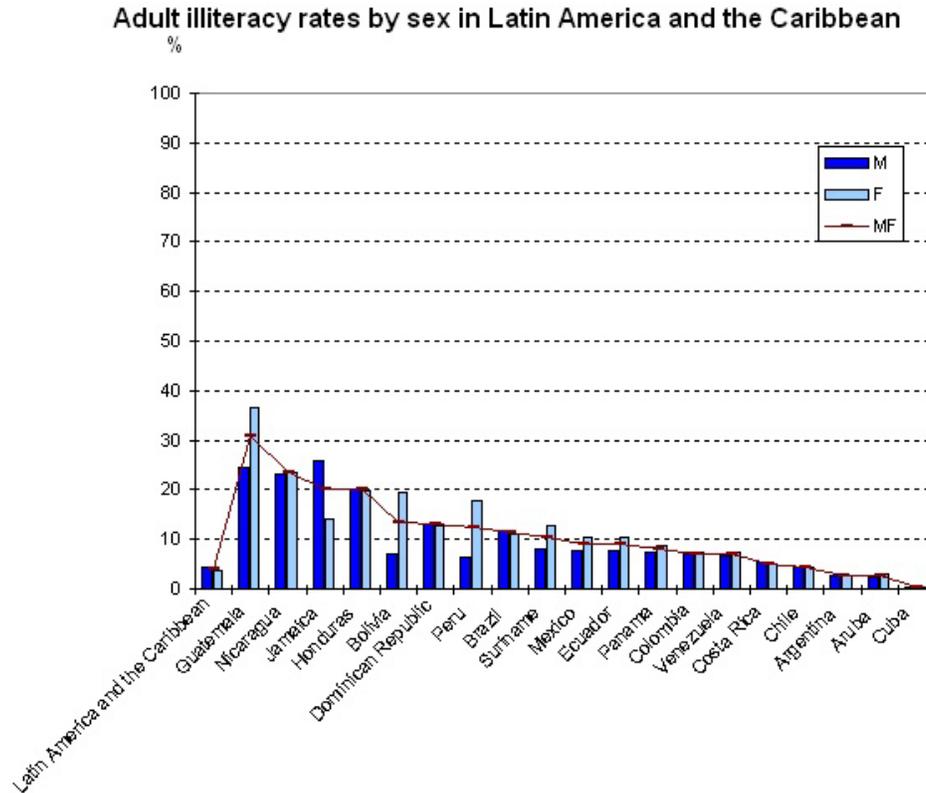
	Pupil/Teacher Ratio (Primary)	Public Expenditure on Education		% of Primary Children in School		GDP Per Capita (US\$)
		As % of GDP	As % of Total Governmental Expenditures	Boys	Girls	
Australia	18	4.8	13.3	96	96	29,632
Bolivia	24	6.4	18.1	86.7	97.3	2,587
Canada	17	5.2	12.5	*	*	30,677
Cuba	10	9.0	19.4	97	95	*
El Salvador	*	2.8	20.0	85.0	(1990) 92.7	4,781
Haiti	*	*	*	85.0	(1990) 92.7	1,742
Japan	19	3.7	10.5	100	100	27,967
Nicaragua	35	3.1	15.0	76.7	86.2	3,262
Perú	22	3.0	17.1	87.1	96.8	5,260
U.S.A.	15	5.9	17.1	*	*	37,562

* Data are not available for these categories.

Despite the fact that Cuba is often considered a third-world country based on economic indicators, it is evident that Cubans match or exceed first-world expectations in the areas of education. Further, according to current UNESCO

⁵⁵ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, http://www.uis.unesco.org/profiles/selectCountry_en.aspx, (November 28, 2006).

statistics⁵⁶ Cuba's literacy rates for 2004 are significantly better than other Latin American and Caribbean countries, for both men and women, as seen in the preceding table and the following chart.



Cubans have also been instrumental in assisting other countries improve their literacy rates using the “Sí, Yo Puedo” (Yes, We Can) model program campaign. (See the preceding section of this report for more information.)

Basic facts about Cuban education

Through dialogue with a few Cuban teachers and during a visit to the Escuela Especial con Solidaridad con Panamá (which serves students with physical disabilities often resulting in the need to use wheel chairs), we learned many basic facts.

- Cuban schools work closely with community and family.
- Education is free from primary grades through university study.
- Children are obliged to go to school to the 9th grade (15 years old), but are strongly encouraged to continue beyond that level.

⁵⁶ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, http://www.uis.unesco.org/ev.php?URL_ID=4928&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201&reload=1043161154, (November 28, 2006)

- Primary school classes have 20 or fewer students. In secondary schools, class size is limited to 15. (If there is a class of 30 due to space limitations, there are two teachers).
- Every school has a computer lab. Students regularly use educational software to facilitate and encourage their learning.
- Each classroom has a television and VCR.
- In rural areas, solar panels are used to power the televisions where there is no electricity in the area.



- The school provides textbooks, which are reused in subsequent years.
 - All students wear uniforms. Families pay for these; the price is kept affordable.
 - Parents also buy pencils, notebooks, and related school supplies.
- The government has created and broadcasts educational programs (for all grade levels) that are used in classrooms. Adults can watch these programs from home. Other programs are developed to promote adult literacy and continuing education.
 - In rural areas there are 90 or more schools with only one student. Each one has a teacher, who is sometimes also one of the parents.
 - After 9th grade, students go either to technical programs or pre-university studies. From sixth through ninth grades, they are ranked according to their class work and effort. The schools develop a list of the number of openings in various areas of study. During the ninth year, students and parents are invited to a meeting to discuss the possibilities. Students then list their preferences. The top students' preferences, generally for one of the pre-university specialties, are considered first. Educators make the final decision about which students will be selected for the openings, although they use the input from the students and families.
 - The teachers begin a diagnosis of each of the students from the moment they enter the primary school. It takes into account their capacity to learn, conduct, and any learning difficulties. Students who have problems, whether behavior or disabilities (learning, etc.), are sent to special schools. As soon as possible, especially when the problem is behavioral (for example a very aggressive child), the students are reintegrated in their own school. It is the teachers' responsibility to assure that the problem has been addressed and that the return to the school happens with no stigma for the child and no disruption for the class as a whole. Even when students attend a special school, efforts are made to include them with their peers so that they do not become isolated.

- A child who is absent needs a note from the doctor. The teacher also visits sick children.
- Families are actively involved in their children's education. Parents help to clean, paint, and repair school buildings just before the school year begins. During school vacations, parents take turns caring for youngsters at a pool, a park, or on outings. Parents are regularly given information so that they can help their children prepare for exams. If children experience difficulties in learning, teachers provide suggestions to parents that they can use to help students study at home. When a student has discipline problems, teachers work with parents to address the issue.
- For drop outs, the government offers options, including university courses, and, at times, remuneration to encourage attendance.
- When a child has family problems (such as alcoholism, etc.), instead of removing the child from the family, educators try to attract the family to the school in order to address the problem. If the problem persists or the parents resist efforts to involve them at school, educators can go to the workplace to get the parents involved. Confidentiality is maintained since the boss will call them into the office and address the issue privately.
- In addition, teachers can use talks and educational debates on videos that touch specific family problems. They also organize meetings with parents every month or two and may include sketches that address issues.
- Cuban law prohibits physical punishment, both in and out of school.
- Teachers contact parents frequently with both praise and concerns.
- Good students can each receive an award called "Beso de la patria" (Kiss of the Fatherland), which is also sent to the community and to the workplace of the parents.
- Each month students meet to evaluate their own behavior and that of their classmates. They encourage each other using factors such as attendance, punctuality, learning, effort, hygiene, and relationships with other children.
- Cuban teachers are always teaching the values of solidarity and comradeship.

Differentiating Instruction to Meet Individual Needs

In all countries, students learn at differing rates for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to, natural ability, home environment, and socioeconomic status. Many teachers in the United States, including an educator who was a part of this delegation, have been using the work of Dr. Ruby Payne⁵⁷ to consider the role of class in student learning. She argues that

⁵⁷ Payne, Ruby K, Ph.D. (1996) *Framework for Understanding Poverty*, 3rd Ed. Highland, Texas: aha! Process, Inc. www.ahaprocess.com.

no matter what race or cultural background students of generational poverty (defined as two or more generations living below the poverty line) often experience difficulties in school because these institutions are based on middle class values. Further, she presents hidden rules that help people survive and excel within their poor, middle class, or wealthy environments. If these hidden rules are taught to students from generational poverty, especially if the schools are respectful of the rules youth need to survive outside of the school walls, they are more likely to succeed.

Given Cuba's socialist orientation and the efforts of the government and people to eliminate racial and class differences, and the fact that poverty is still a major problem (especially with the U.S. government's ever increasing attempts to strengthen the embargo established 48 years ago), we wondered if the hidden rules and problems related to generational poverty that Payne identifies exist in Cuba. With the input of two Cubans, we delegates considered this issue. We learned the following:

- Although Cubans are working toward the idea of a classless society, classes still exist.
- Class issues are blurred. Even if people have money, consumer goods and even food are not always available for them to purchase.
- Time is viewed differently by different classes. This issue, however, is complicated by the severe lack of transportation; it is often difficult to get to work or appointments on time because of the lengthy waits and irregular schedule of transportation that stem from an insufficient number of buses.
- Some people are marginalized, and they tend to become depressed and pessimistic.
- Some jobs, such as street sweepers, are undesirable. As a result, workers in these positions often earn more.
- Students' level of self-control varies, as Payne observed in her work.
- Children's values are reflective of their home life.
- Class issues are becoming more pronounced since the Special Period; those who have contact with tourists, are self-employed, or receive remittances from families abroad have much greater access to CUCs and, therefore, greater access to consumer goods and foods (beyond the basic food basket).

In summary, the characteristics of the hidden rules exist in Cuba, as in the countries Payne has studied. Given this observation, we then discussed ways that the problem is addressed. Since families, schools, and communities are much more closely linked in Cuban society, they approach the situation differently. As mentioned earlier, teachers begin notebooks for all students as they enter the educational system. This process provides a much wider and deeper role for the educators. Each quarter, they add student strengths and

weaknesses to the notebooks. In addition, they meet with their colleagues to discuss and plan for work with classes and individual students. Teachers also interact with parents early and often to be proactive about troublesome situations. Further, they lead monthly meetings among students of each classroom. During this time, students evaluate themselves based on school values (that are generally shared by families and communities). They assist each other in recognizing and planning steps to meet these shared values.

Schools establish rules so that class differences are less visible. In order to ensure that children from families who cannot afford day care are prepared as they enter school, pre-school opportunities are provided free of charge several times a week. Students are not permitted to bring soda and junk food in their lunches since only those with more money can afford to buy them. (In addition, the lack of nutritional value of these snacks was considered in this decision.) The government provides students lunch, and often healthy snacks, at school so that all receive a nutritious meal, no matter what the economic level. All students wear the identical uniforms so that clothing does not indicate class. While some students may have more worn or dirtier clothing, teachers address these concerns in the meetings mentioned earlier. Educators meet with parents and community members to educate them on various issues, including limiting the visual signals of class. Also, many informal educational opportunities are provided.

Shared values are also visible in other community organizations. For example, we attended a practice session for La Colmenita and talked with the director. This organization provides after-school dramatic and musical opportunities for students. It began in one neighborhood with the director's children and their friends, but has grown so that there are now many groups throughout Havana and in other municipalities and provinces of Cuba. La Colmenita takes shows to towns throughout Cuba and to international venues. Nevertheless, the children do not view themselves as stars. The director told us: if the youngsters go back to their schools or communities with an attitude that they are better than others just because they have had these opportunities, then La Colmenita has not only failed them, but done them great harm.



The government provides many opportunities for all people. Vocational workshops exist to help people set goals and work to meet them. Special attention is given to the people with the greatest needs. An important goal is to find the root causes of their difficulties so that more substantial and long-lasting change results from the efforts.

Conclusions and Recommendations

All countries seek to educate (at least some of) their people. Most educational systems recognize the value of home-school partnerships to achieve

that goal. The close connections in Cuba between families, schools, and communities can be seen in all aspects of educational life. Cuba's strong emphasis on education has resulted in much effort and money being directed to literacy, and the results are remarkable.

Further research on Cuba's educational system could be beneficial to women and children in other countries. In particular, such research could consider:

- specific strategies educators use to help all students succeed academically and behaviorally;
- ways parents and families are encouraged to participate in the educational process;
- strategies that enable schools to reach out to all community members to facilitate life-long learning; and
- education in rural areas.

VIII ESCUELA LATINOAMERICANA DE CIENCIAS MÉDICAS (LATIN AMERICAN MEDICAL SCHOOL)

Basic Facts

The idea of the Latin American Medical School (LAMS) was conceived in 1998 in the aftermath of the destruction wrought by Hurricanes Mitch and George. Cuban doctors who flew to Central America to minister to the medical needs of the hurricane victims found that medical care had never been available to the majority of the population. Within months, Cuba had converted a naval academy into a medical school in order to begin training young people from the devastated areas so that they could return home and care for their own people. The school now consists of 80 classrooms, 37 laboratories, five amphitheatres, dormitories, and an infirmary, all housed in a total of 28 buildings on a beautiful campus near a picture-perfect beach.



The project had started by February 1999. 1,929 students began that first year, representing 18 different countries and 27 different ethnic groups. The school has grown in the almost eight years since its conception to over 10,000 students from 25 countries, including 91 students from the United States. LAMS scholarships include all books, tuition, lab fees, room and board, uniforms, and



even a small monthly stipend. The program lasts six years. Currently, 1,800 doctors from 47 countries have been trained in Cuba. Many other students have received scholarships to study in their own country.⁵⁸

All students stay at the Latin American Medical School for the first two years of study. What that means is that the school consists purely of students from foreign countries; the only Cubans there are the teachers, maintenance workers, and administrators. After two years, the students go to one of the other 21 medical schools on the island for further training. The training is designed to be hands-on from the first experiences and is geared to conditions often found in the Third World, i.e., little reliance on sophisticated equipment or technology.⁵⁹

Participation of Students from the United States

The participation of the U.S. students came out of a conversation President Fidel Castro had with a handful of visiting members of the Congressional Black Caucus in June 2000. When President Castro mentioned that many people in Central and South America had no access to health care, he was made aware of the fact that many poor people in the U.S. also had no such access. In September 2000, in front of an overflow audience in New York City's Riverside Church, Castro's response was to announce that Cuba was prepared to offer scholarships to poor U.S. students so that they, too, would be able to minister to their people after they became doctors.

Thus, young people from the United States are offered an opportunity to study medicine, free of charge, so that they can return home, unburdened by debt, to serve their people. Many of these students find that they need an extra year or so to pass all the courses since everything is taught in Spanish. If they arrive without speaking Spanish, or not speaking it fluently enough, there is a three-month, intensive Spanish language course that they must take before medical classes begin. U.S. youngsters are not the only ones in the Spanish course; Haitian students and students from most of the African countries need to learn Spanish, as well.

The first U.S. students began in April 2001. That means, with the exception of one young doctor who had several years of training in a U.S. medical school, the first of these graduates will return home in June 2007. When they get back, they will need to complete a residency in the U.S. They are expected to be considered highly desirable candidates for residency programs for several reasons: 1) they have been trained in Cuba, which is renowned in the medical world for its health care programs and medical research advances,

⁵⁸ BBC Business Report (January 17, 2006) <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/4583668.stm>, (January 20, 2007).

⁵⁹ The U.S. students with whom one of the WILPF delegate spoke are unanimous in their enthusiasm for this approach. The thinking is that under poor conditions, or in emergency situations, they will feel more prepared to perform well. Learning how to work with a machine is easier than learning how to diagnose a life-threatening illness or carry out an emergency operation in less than ideal circumstances.

2) they have been trained to get the best outcomes with the fewest resources, and 3) they are fluent in Spanish, as well as English.

A common question for students who are weighing acceptance to LAMS is, "Will I be able to get a license and practice medicine in the U.S.?" The answer is yes since all candidates for medical practice here in the U.S. need to pass the three steps of the United States Medical Licensing Exams (USMLEs), plus a clinical assessment. In addition, all states require some sort of a state test. Anyone who can pass those tests can practice medicine in the U.S.; it doesn't matter in which country the candidate studied.

Another common question is, "Is it legal for me to study in Cuba?" Again, the answer is yes. Because of special arrangements first made with Colin Powell and later with Condoleezza Rice, with a great deal of pressure from the Congressional Black Caucus, the program is being allowed to continue.

Conclusions and Recommendations

WILPF members now have a task before them: to get the word out about this amazing, generous, unprecedented offer of the Cuban government to people who live in eligible countries where WILPF has sections, including the United States, to train students to become capable, caring doctors who can help heal bodies, the health care system, and perhaps even souls. To that end, several tools are available:

- two excellent DVDs:
 - Como Angeles* (Like Angels), a documentary in English, made in Cuba, following several Central American graduates of the LAMS as they go back to work in their home communities;
 - Montañas de Luz* (Mountains of Light), another Cuban-made documentary about Cuban doctors in several African countries doing international healing; and
- a PowerPoint presentation with information about the LAMS created by Carol Cross that she can send out upon request.

In addition to WILPF's efforts, synagogues, churches, schools, or other community groups are encouraged to

- let young people know about this opportunity to become a doctor;
- help find programs with openings for foreign resident students; and
- support the doctors who are return to their countries. There are expenses incurred in looking for residencies since the application process itself costs money, and flying to the various interviews can be an expensive process for someone who hasn't been earning money for several years. And, there are the miscellaneous expenses involved with resettling after having been out of country for six or more years.

Together, many organizations can give young people the help they need to assure their success in the advanced education and in the process of becoming certified as doctors when they complete their studies in Cuba.

IX MEDICAL CARE IN CUBA

One of the delegates reported the following observation. As a tourist, one's first experience with medical care in Cuba may happen upon leaving the airport when greeted, as I was, with, "Lady, are you feeling okay today?" I looked around to see a gentleman in a white doctor's coat with a sign that read "MEDIC" around his neck. He was seated on a chair from which he could see everyone exiting from the Jose Martí International Airport. I assured him that I was fine, just tired. He smiled and waved me on. I felt reassured that I was in a country that seemed to care about my health and those of others.

Universal Comprehensive Medical Care for All

Cuba's medical care compares favorably with first-world countries; in fact, at times, it surpasses their care. Medical care in Cuba is free from the cradle to the grave, meaning patients do not pay for doctor's visits, hospital stays, or necessary tests. They do pay for required medicines; however, if a patient cannot afford the medicine, other arrangements are made through the social workers in the community. Generally, doctors are located in each neighborhood; the doctor to patient ratio is about 1:170. (For comparison, the ratio in the U.S. is 1:188.)⁶⁰ In fact, Cuba has had the lowest doctor/patient ratio in the world.⁶¹

Even the medical care systems of highly-developed countries (such as Sweden, Canada and Japan) require citizens and families to pay a premium based on their yearly income; none of these government's plans cover as much as Cuba's does. In fact, many of these countries are increasingly off-loading services and costs onto private insurance plans or onto the individual; for instance, a Canadian adult currently pays, on average, 30% of the total medical costs.⁶²

As can be seen on the following comparative chart,⁶³ life-expectancy rates in Cuba are comparable to those of the developed countries and better than those of the Latin American countries. In fact, in most health care categories researched, Cuba's statistics more closely resemble those of first-world countries and are significantly better than those of developing countries despite the fact

⁶⁰ BBC Business Report (January 17, 2006) <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/4583668.stm>, (January 20, 2007).

⁶¹ Feinsilver, Julie, (1993). *Healing the Masses*, Berkley: University of California Press

⁶² Vancouver Sun, December 6, 2006. http://www.canada.com/vancouver_sun/, (January 20, 2007).

⁶³ For comparison's sake, the following table summarizes data from Cuba as well as from the countries represented in this delegation: Australia, Canada, Japan, U.S.A.; and five countries from the Caribbean, Central and South America: Bolivia, El Salvador, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Peru.

that it is in many ways still a developing country. Moreover, Cubans reach out to assist others. The Latin American Medical School (LAMS) trains doctors from other Latin American countries and the U.S. (See the section of this report about LAMS.) In addition, Cuba regularly sends its own doctors to practice in impoverished, often war-torn countries, such as Haiti. And, Cuba has sent 25,000 doctors on humanitarian missions to 68 countries, such as to Pakistan following the 2005 earthquakes.⁶⁴

Comparison of Core Health Indicators⁶⁵

			Life Expectancy at Birth (Years)				Public Expenditure on Health Care (2003)			
	Number of doctors/1,000 people	Number of hospital beds / 10,000	Male	Female	Annual Population Growth Rate	Infant Mortality Rate (0/00)	As % of GDP	Governmental Expenditures As % of Total	Per Capita (Int'l \$)	Gross Nat'l Income Per Capita (Int'l \$)
Australia	2.47+	34	78	83	1.1	5	9.5	13.9	39.9	26,900
Bolivia	1.22+	10	67	74	1.9	53	6.7	11.9	176	960
Canada	2.14~	36	78	83	0.9	5	6.1	16.7	2,989	28,390
Cuba	5.19-	49	75	80	0.3	6	7.3	11.2	251	#
El Salvador	1.24	7	68	74	1.8	24	8.1	22.0	378	2,350
Haiti	.25*	8	53	56	1.3	74	7.5	23.0	84	390
Japan	1.98-	129+	79	86	0.2	3	7.9	16.8	2,244	37,180
Nicaragua	.37~	9	67	71	1.8	30	7.7	11.7	208	790
Peru	1.17*	11	69	73	1.5	24	4.4	10.7	233	2,360
U.S.A.	2.56	33	75	80	0.9	6	15.2	18.5	5,711	41,400

* Data from 1998; + Data from 2001; - Data from 2002; ~ Data from 2003; # Data are not available

⁶⁴ BBC Business Report (January 17, 2006) <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/4583668.stm>, (January 20, 2007).

⁶⁵ World Health Organization. Core Health Indicators http://www3.who.int/whosis/core/core_select.cfm, (January 21, 2007).

Because of the excellence of the Cuban medical system, medical tourism is increasing in Cuba. Patients from many countries, often in Latin America, come to Cuba to receive operations or other medical attention. As a result, the country earns much-needed hard currency. Further, a lobby by big medical insurers in the United States is seeking to lessen embargo restrictions to permit access to cheaper medical procedures performed in Cuba. Although these moves could prove beneficial for the Cuban economy, we hope Cuba also maintains the high quality care for its own citizens.

Two Hospital Visits

The high quality of medical care is seen in the two hospitals we visited. First, the delegation went to the William Solar Pediatric Hospital in Havana, which has a total of 287 beds. Every province has one or more similar children's hospitals (depending on the population density of the province). Havana has eight children's hospitals. Each children's hospital treats young people from 0-19 years of age and is able to treat complex pathology cases. All of these hospitals have a policy whereby mothers, fathers, and grandparents can be with the child at any time during the hospital stay; this prevents children with long hospital stays from feeling alienated from the family.

Despite the advances, shortages abound. The labs are staffed with pharmacological students from the Latin American Medical School (LAMS) because many certified pharmacologists and biotechnologists work at any of the eight large government medical laboratories scattered throughout the country. These laboratories concentrate on the development and testing of new vaccines and pharmaceutical drugs. The high quality of the drugs produced has actually resulted in some trade with the U.S., in spite of the continuing embargo. This trade helps to ease, to some extent, Cuba's existing shortage of other essential medicines. Largely because of the U.S. embargo, there is also a shortage of state-of-the-art imaging equipment and an even worse shortage of technicians able to operate this equipment. Several major obstacles still exist in filling these needs. First is the problem of finding countries that have the needed machines that can legally trade with Cuba since the regulations of the U.S. embargo specifically state that machines manufactured by U.S. subsidiaries, in whatever country, are not allowed to go to Cuba. Second, the same restrictions apply to parts for those machines. And, third, can Cuban hospitals afford the prices of the machines they need, especially considering shipping costs? In another area, the three female pediatricians who spoke to U.S. reported that their filing system is antiquated and done mostly by hand; they do not yet have a computerized filing system that would enable a doctor seeing a patient for the first time to access the patient's history, including reports on any imaging previously performed.



The doctors who spoke to us said that there is a need for on-going cooperative medical exchanges

between Cuba and other supportive countries, each with something to offer the other. They don't see themselves as in need of acts of charity. Indeed, they are proud of their own accomplishments. According to a BBC Business report, "Successful clinical trials in several countries have already established Cuba as a world leader in cancer research and treatment."⁶⁶ The trials referred to were carried out in Germany and the United States and required Washington to make an exception to its trade embargo.

We also visited the Leonor Pérez Maternity Home, situated in the middle of the picturesque neighborhood of Old Havana, which has been designated as a World Heritage Site by the U.N. Similar maternity hospitals exist in every sizeable community on the island. These homes address all facets of care for pregnant women. The patients are those with high-risk pregnancies, multiple births, placenta previa, Type 2 diabetes, a history of miscarriages and/or premature births, and very young first-time mothers. When the mothers' due dates approach, they are moved to a large general hospital for the delivery and subsequent postpartum care. The maternity homes also have an outpatient department to which patient can be referred by their family physicians. Once referred, they can access classes on diet, infant care, prenatal coaching, and family planning. On the other hand, any woman who becomes pregnant in Cuba can have her pregnancy terminated during the first three months if she so chooses. She would also get counseling before and after the procedure.



In this hospital, we heard of shortages of basic supplies, such as toilet paper, tissues, sanitary napkins, vitamins, and mineral supplements. Many of these deficiencies are attributed to the U.S. embargo and resulting economic difficulties in the country. Although sufficient food is a problem countrywide, resulting in a rationing system for the basic food basket items, it does not seem to be a problem in the maternity homes, where the standard rations are augmented for pregnant women. To increase the existing supplies it does have, the Leonor Pérez Maternity home welcomes donations of maternity clothes and layettes, especially for the young first-time mothers.

Both hospitals we visited showed evidence of medical care comparable or surpassing first-world countries. At the same time, the embargo has contributed to shortages of much-needed equipment and supplies.

Directions for Study and Future Initiatives

Further research and actions to promote peace and freedom will benefit not only women and children, but also men, not only in Cuba, but around the world. Therefore, we recommend:

⁶⁶ BBC Business Report, (December 2006). www.news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/4583668.stm, (December 28, 2007).

- keeping up the pressure on U.S. to end the trade embargo;
- promoting continued and extended cooperative medical exchanges among Cuba and other interested countries;
- encouraging people traveling to Cuba to identify humanitarian aid organizations working with the Cuban Ministry of Health to see if they could carry time sensitive or essential medicines or other requested aid to appropriate designations in Cuba. ; and
- encouraging more students to attend the Latin American Medical School in the nations where the program is operating, and encouraging all nations to support the Cuban medical doctors wherever they are practicing. WILPF sections could, for instance, organize donations to support clinics where Cuban doctors are working, such as in Haiti or Africa.

X. WHO ARE THE CUBAN WOMEN?

Women in Cuba have equal constitutional rights with men in economic, political, cultural, and social fields, as well as in the family. According to Article 44 of the Cuban Constitution⁶⁷, the state guarantees women the same opportunities and possibilities as men in order to achieve full participation in the development of the country. Women make up 46% of the labor force.⁶⁸ They currently hold 36% of the parliamentary seats in the Cuban National Assembly. The following chart provides a comparison with other countries.⁶⁹

Women In Parliamentary Seats, Data from 2006	
Argentina	35.0%
Brazil	8.6%
Canada	21.0%
Colombia	12.1%
Cuba	36.0%
Haiti	3.6%
Honduras	23.4%
Mexico	25.8%
United States	15.2%
Source: U.N. Statistics Division, Millennium Indicators	

⁶⁷ Cuban Constitution, http://www.cubanet.org/ref/dis/const_92_e.htm, (January 20, 2007).

⁶⁸ Information from Conference on the Role of Cuban Women, part of WILPF's program, November 24, 2006.

⁶⁹ UN Statistics Division, Millennium Indicators, <http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/SeriesDetail.aspx?srid=557&crd=>, (January 20, 2007).

Within the legal system, 62% of lawyers, 49% of judges, and 47% of Supreme Court judges are women. In addition, about 20% of officers in the Cuban armed forces are women.⁷⁰ Women, therefore, play active roles in all aspects of Cuban society.

We learned an interesting fact on this trip: when women become incarcerated, they are paid union wages and practice their trade in prison. For instance, a beautician is paid her regular salary as she continues to work while incarcerated. If she has a family, she is permitted to send part of her wages home to her household. Further, she has the opportunity to set aside savings so that she will have money upon her release from incarceration.

The Federation of Cuban Women⁷¹

After the Cuban Revolution of 1959, the Federation of Cuban Women (Federación de Mujeres Cubanas, FMC) was created and is now recognized by the Cuban government as the national mechanism for the advancement of women in Cuba. The FMC was established as a voluntary non-governmental organization and is self-financing through membership dues. It has an advisory role in all Cuban affairs relating to women and seeks to guarantee the rights



defined by the constitution. Its fundamental objective is to achieve full equality of possibilities and opportunities among women and men. The organization has over 3.8 million members who constitute 85% of all women over age 14. There is also a Women's Training Center and a Women's Publishing House at the national level.

Objectives

The FCM generally adheres to the Cuban government's objectives to defend the Cuban Revolution that has made, and makes, women's achievements possible.

- Fight for the full incorporation, participation, and promotion of women in the economic, political, social, and cultural life in Cuba, based on equal rights and opportunities.
- Strengthen ideological and political work and form ethical and moral values in children and families in school and society.
- Intensify the development of non-sexist education at all levels of society.

⁷⁰ Women in Cuba. www.cuba-solidarity.org.uk, (December 27, 2006).

⁷¹ Information from this section comes from a meeting at the Federation of Cuban Women's office, November 21, 2006 and the website, Federation of Cuban women, <http://www.cubaeducationtours.ca/itineraries/201FMC.html>, (December 27, 2006).

- Spread both gender perspectives in all spheres of Cuban society as a means for analysis and planning economic and social projects.
- Carry out a strategy for the promotion of women to management levels, including decision-making positions.
- Direct the National Commission for preventing violence to women.
- Carry out social research with the aim of diagnosing and finding solutions for the problems of women, in conjunction with appropriate institutions.
- Establish and maintain links with women's organizations from all over the world.
- Actively participate in international organizations and bodies devoted to women's issues.

These photographs, as well as those throughout the report, show the faces of Cuban Women.



Constitutional Changes

Cuba has implemented a number of constitutional changes aimed to specifically guarantee rights of women.

These guarantees are found in:⁷²

- Article 32, which states that women and men enjoy the same economic, political, cultural, social, and family rights;
- Article 41, which states that all citizens have equal rights and are subject to equal duties;
- Article 42, which states that sex discrimination, among other forms of discrimination, is forbidden by law;
- Article 43, which states that all citizens have equal access to all provisions made in Cuban society relating to education, work and career advancement, housing, transport, and public areas.
- Article 44, which stipulates women's right to equality in the home, work, and health care, and as well as in their entitlement to state benefits.

In addition, numerous laws support the rights of women. These include the following:⁷³

- Maternity Leave (1974)
- Code on Childhood and Youth (1975)
- Family Code (1975), which established the official goal of equal participation in the home
- Law for the Protection and Hygiene in the Workplace (1977)
- National Action Plan for the Implementation of IV UN Conference on Women (1977)
- Law on Social Security (1979)
- Code on Childhood and Youth (1984)
- Labor Code (1985), which ensured equal rights and opportunities for women in all fields of work, guaranteeing them equal salary for equal work.
- Law #62 on Penal Code (1987). Article 295 of this law makes any form of discrimination, as well as the violation of the right of equality, a crime.

Action Plan

We call on the local WILPF branches in the U.S., and in international sections, as well as Local Organizing Committees for the Millions More

⁷² Women in Cuba. www.cuba-solidarity.org.uk, (December 27, 2006).

⁷³ Wikipedia. "Women in Cuba" http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women_in_Cuba, (December 12, 2006)

Movement⁷⁴ in the U.S., to participate and support future Pastors for Peace Caravans.⁷⁵

We further encourage women (and men) in all countries to investigate the work Cubans have done in promoting and guaranteeing women their rights. Their constitution, legal system, and local and national organizations provide valuable models for worldwide efforts to ensure gender equality, as reflected in the U.N.'s Millennium Development Goals. (See the section earlier in this report.)

XI. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: AN OVERVIEW

Often referred to as the “well known secret” and sometimes categorized as a private matter by law enforcement agencies across the world, be it in China, U.S., Australia, India, Europe, Asia or Cuba, women and children know and fear its existence. It may be known as Intimate Partner Violence, Family Violence or more frequently as Domestic Violence but at present it is also known as the greatest threat to a woman’s health and well being. In 2004 in the world’s first study in Australia by Victorian Health, domestic violence has been identified as the most significant cause of “ill health and premature deaths” in women under 45 years of age, greater than any other health risk factor including smoking and cancer.⁷⁶

Definitions and Examples

Even though the forms of violence and definitions might differ across countries, this definition of domestic violence is commonly accepted:

an abuse of power perpetrated mainly (but not only) by men against women both in relationship and after separation. It occurs when one partner attempts physically or psychologically to dominate and control the other.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ The Millions More Movement was organized in commemoration of the historic Million Man March on Washington DC. during which African American men demonstrated a willingness to recognize their shortcomings and accept responsibility to change their behavior in order to improve the communities in which they live. For more information see <http://www.millionsmoremovement.com/about.htm>.

⁷⁵ For more information about this organization and its caravans, see <http://www.pastorsforpeace.org/>.

⁷⁶ Webster, K. (2004). *The Health Cost of Violence: Measuring the Burden of Disease Caused by Intimate Partner Violence a Summary of Findings*. Melbourne: Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, p. 8.

⁷⁷ Laing, L. (2000). Progress, Trends and Challenges in Australian Responses to Domestic Violence. In *Issues Paper* (Vol. 1). Sydney: Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearing House, UNSW, p. 1.

Further, according to domestic violence literature, this abuse of power may occur in the following forms:⁷⁸

- **physical abuse** - including direct assaults on the body, use of weapons, driving dangerously, destruction of property, abuse of pets in front of family members, assault of children, locking the victim out of the house, and sleep deprivation;
- **sexual abuse** - any form of forced sex or sexual degradation, such as sexual activity without consent, causing pain during sex, assaulting genitals, coercive sex without protection against pregnancy or sexually transmitted disease, making the victim perform sexual acts unwillingly, criticizing, or using sexually degrading insults;
- **emotional abuse** - blaming the victim for all problems in the relationship, constantly comparing the victim with others to undermine self-esteem and self-worth, sporadic sulking, withdrawing all interest and engagement (e.g. weeks of silence);
- **verbal abuse** - continual 'put downs' and humiliation, either privately or publicly, with attacks following clear themes that focus on intelligence, sexuality, body image, and capacity as a parent and spouse;
- **social abuse** - systematic isolation from family and friends through techniques such as ongoing rudeness to family and friends, moving to locations where the victim knows nobody, and forbidding or physically preventing the victim from going out and meeting people;
- **economic abuse** - complete control of all monies, no access to bank accounts, providing only an inadequate allowance, using any wages earned by the victim for household expenses; and
- **spiritual abuse** - denying access to ceremonies, land or family, preventing religious observance, forcing victims to do things against their beliefs, denigration of cultural background, or using religious teachings or cultural tradition as a reason for violence.

Lack of knowledge regarding forms of violence, as well as the private domain in which it occurs, may prevent the knowledge of the true nature and extent of domestic violence in any country. Further, some of the major barriers to the elimination of domestic violence seem to stem from the myths that surround such violence. These myths may include notions that domestic violence is a private matter and not a criminal matter; religious and cultural authorities condone violence; women are hit because they deserve punishment; it is the husbands' duty to correct the wife through beating, etc. Other major barriers are the women's shame and fear that feed the secrecy surrounding violence.

⁷⁸ Definitions from OFW. *What is Domestic Violence: Examples of Domestic Violence* http://www.ofw.facs.gov.au/womens_safety_agenda/domestic_violence_help/examples.html, p. 1, (December 12, 2006).

Using this basic information, WILPF's research delegation investigated domestic violence in Cuba.

XII DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: THE CUBAN APPROACH

To understand Cuban perceptions regarding domestic violence, two factors are important. The first is that, even before the Revolution, Cuban culture did not look favorably on men who beat women. Secondly, Cuban's aversion to violence is strongly influenced by people's memories of the violence, torture, and killings under Fulgencio Batista. Even after considering these two factors, domestic violence does exist in Cuba, but according to the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC), it is more psychological than physical. Even where physical violence does occur, in contrast to other Latin American countries, Cuban women are more economically independent and better educated, and so are in a better position to understand the alternatives and take advantage of them.

Work on prevention and attention to violence in Cuba takes place in the context of the 1959 Revolution. From the start, the FMC has promoted Cuban women's roles, not just as beneficiaries, but also as participants in the revolutionary process.

Since 1959, there have been profound socio-economic changes in the situation of Cuban women. These include their incorporation in work and social life, increased levels of education and women's entry into previously non-traditional areas, such as science and technology, and significant advances in political participation. All of these have had an impact on the roles of men and women in the family and society, particularly regarding child rearing, the structure of authority, and the distribution of domestic responsibilities.

If there are problems in families, the society and community have tools to deal with them. In all 169 municipalities, there is a center where women can go to raise the issue or make a complaint. The FMC is obliged to respond and assist the women in this process. Other organizations, such as the CDRs (Committees in Defense of the Revolution), also work on the issue to make sure that children are in school and that the women receive social assistance.

In the 1990s, after the collapse of the U.S.S.R., daily life became much more difficult and complex for Cuban women and families. Facing this challenge, the work of the FMC at the community level became much more important in helping women and families deal with the enormous new stresses they confronted.

In addition, during the 1990s, much attention was focused internationally on the issue of domestic violence. The U.N. Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna in 1993, formally recognized violence against women as a human rights violation and called upon governments and the United Nations to work toward its elimination.

In 1994, the FMC developed a plan for prevention and attention to domestic violence with an integrated focus at the community level. Casas de Orientación a la Mujer y a la Familia (Guidance Houses for Women and Families) were created and provided a new space to raise awareness about the role of women and men within the family and society and to assist them in solving problems on a practical level. In order to facilitate early intervention, which the Cuban government identifies as the most appropriate strategy in preventing domestic violence, the FMC now operates 175 Counseling Centers for Women and Families together with 185 Attention to the Population Centers. Deviant behaviors such as drug addiction and domestic violence may be reported there. The Counseling Centers provide families with pre- and post-marriage counseling, information on health and sexuality, communication skills, and vocational training.



An Integrated Approach

In 1997, at the proposal of Vilma Espin, head of the FMC, the National Group for Prevention and Attention to Domestic Violence was created. This group's mission is to design and implement a plan of action to contribute to the prevention and resolution of these problems. It takes an integrated approach, incorporating diverse organizations and institutions in order to formulate proposals to those organizations with related responsibilities. Work takes place in the following areas:

- Education: Professionals work to help teachers, the media, social workers, etc. deal with the issue with sensitivity;
- Attention to victims: Guidance Houses have been created. These are not shelters, but centers that provide guidance, training, and group activities. Professional volunteers (lawyers, psychologists, etc.) work with the FMC. Attention is given to women *and* men.
- Research: The FMC and university researchers are collaborating to deepen understanding of the causes, characteristics, and manifestations of domestic violence in Cuba.
- Legislation: The FMC examines where new laws or amendments to existing laws may be needed to deal with domestic violence more effectively. (It should be noted that the FMC has been involved in developing the laws dealing with the family and the workplace, as well as the criminal code.)
- Media and Publicity: The focus is not on specific cases, but on preparing journalists to deal with the topic, for example, on ways to use TV and radio serials to raise awareness.

The FMC believes that the most important goal is to achieve change and to avoid repetition of the consequences of domestic violence. The strategy is to treat domestic violence as part of everyday life, rather than to have a single campaign. However, publicity is intensified on November 25, the date selected by the international campaign: No More Violence Against Women. The following quote from Nelson Mandela⁷⁹ summarizes the view of the WILPF delegation and the Cuban women with whom we spoke:

Safety and security don't just happen: they are the result of collective consensus and public investment. We owe our children – the most vulnerable citizens in any society – a life free from violence and fear. In order to ensure this, we must become tireless in our efforts not only to attain peace, justice and prosperity for countries but also for communities and members of the same family. We must address the roots of violence. Only then will we transform the past century's legacy from a crushing burden into a cautionary lesson.

Recommendations:

Further research on Cuba's approach could be beneficial to women in other countries. In particular such research could look at:

- legal protections for women who are victims of domestic violence;
- the use of the media to raise awareness regarding domestic violence;
- the approach used to sensitize professionals to this issue; and
- the role played by the Casas de Orientation at the grassroots level.

XIII PEACE THROUGH MILITARIZATION OR DEMILITARIZATION?

Many in the world argue that, in order to be safe, countries must prepare for war. Increasingly bigger and better bombs and weapons are needed, as are ever-increasing numbers of soldiers and military bases. This militarization is a daily process in which the idea that the military is necessary permeates all of life. It can be seen everywhere: the call for more troops to fight in Iraq; U.N. Peacekeeping Troops in numerous countries (6 in Africa, 1 in the Americas, 2 in Asia, 3 in Europe, and 3 in the Middle East);⁸⁰ countries like North Korea testing nuclear weapons; and many local groups arming for their own protection.

To illustrate an example of the global situation, our Japanese delegate explained what is happening in her country where the government is one of the closest and most loyal allies of the United States. She reports that this

⁷⁹ Quoted in Webster, K. (2004). *The Health cost of Violence: Measuring the Burden of Disease Caused by Intimate Partner Violence a Summary of Findings*. Melbourne: Victorian Health Promotion Foundation.

⁸⁰ United Nations Peacekeeping, <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/> (January 20, 2007).

association has led to an accelerated militarization in various areas in Japan. The two governments have agreed on a much closer military tie with increasing joint operations, even though the Japanese Constitution established in 1946 renounces war as a means to solve international conflicts and decrees that the country will not have armed forces.⁸¹ The current Japanese military, euphemistically called Self-Defense Forces has, over the decades, grown to be one of the strongest military forces in the world,⁸² although the general public in Japan is not aware of this fact. Misinformation and actions in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have fueled the general sentiment in Japan that the country must have either a stronger military or U.S. military protection. There are approximately 90 U.S. military facilities, including major military bases throughout mainland Japan and Okinawa, with an area total of 3,130,000 square meters; 75% of these are in Okinawa.⁸³ However, the majority of the population does not know that basic human rights and the well-being of the people in communities that host U.S. military bases have been undermined.⁸⁴ The Japanese government continues to work closely with the U.S., resulting in increasing numbers of troops and problems; the Japanese people accept the suffering of people in Okinawa.

Cuba, too, hosts a U.S. military base although it was established without the consent of the Cuban government or its people. (See Section II U.S. Foreign Policy on Cuba and the Subsection "A Brief History" of this report.) The discussion we had with Cubans indicated that they are not happy about the base at Guantánamo Bay, especially given recent controversy about torture and violation of the Geneva Conventions. Members of the organization Cuban Movement for Peace and Sovereignty told us that neither the government nor the Cuban people support the base for various reasons. They do not have good relations with the U.S. government; do not agree with the current uses of the base; and fear that an attack on the island might be initiated from the base. On the other hand, numerous people also made it clear that they want the issue of the base handled through diplomatic channels; they want no protests or incidents near the base by Cubans or by protesters from the U.S. In addition, Cuban philosophy since the triumph of the revolution has been to set higher priorities for humanitarian concerns than military ones.

Demilitarization is a process that can be promoted through economic development, education, and disarmament. Some activists and organizations, such as the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and some of the Cubans with whom we delegates spoke, argue that the process can reverse militarization. "In 1960, after the triumph of the revolution, all barracks in Cuba

⁸¹ Japanese Constitution, <http://www.solon.org/Constitutions/Japan/English/english-Constitution.html> (January 21, 2007).

⁸² Global Security.org. "Japanese Self-Defense Force" <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/japan/jda.htm> (January 21, 2007).

⁸³ "U.S. Military Bases in Japan: An Overview." http://www.jca.apc.org/wsf_support/2004doc/WSFJapUSBaseRepoFinalAll.html#U.S. Military Presence (January 21, 2007).

⁸⁴ Johnson, Chalmers. (January 19, 2004). "The Arithmetic of America's Military Bases Abroad: What Does It All Add Up to?" <http://hnn.us/articles/3097.html>

were converted into schools."⁸⁵ We saw some examples of that process. The Museum for the National Literacy Campaign and various schools are located on what used to be a major military base. The Latin American Medical School now occupies what used to be a naval base.⁸⁶ These are instances of conversion, in which military, or military-related, areas are transformed into something else, shifting the local economy's dependence from the armed forces to a civilian basis. Even more important, though, is the conversion of people's consciousness. To be successful, demilitarization requires individuals to feel safe without armed forces; another basis for security must be developed.

Recommendations:

There is an urgent need in present international politics to shift ideas from war to peace. We encourage organizations, governments, and individuals to consider these steps:

- become informed about issues in their communities and countries, as well as worldwide;
- seek diplomatic solutions with other groups or governments directly or through third-party organizations such as the United Nations;
- work for global disarmament and the reduction in the number of military bases;⁸⁷
- encourage the conversion of military bases to educational or other uses;
- become involved with global and local peace movements; and
- establish a policy of economic conversion: transferring resources from military to civilian purposes - health care, education, and/or housing for all.

XIV REFLECTIONS ON GENERALIZABILITY

Some of our delegation's informal discussions addressed the usefulness of the Cuban model for various areas of study in answering the same difficult problems facing countries around the world. We recognize, however, that no two situations are exactly alike. As a result, we present questions and issues for consideration. No doubt others also must be considered, especially concerns that are specific to a given area or situation.

- What system of government exists? Cuba's socialism closely links communities, families, schools, government, and all major aspects of

⁸⁵ Lonely Planet. (2004). *Cuba*, 3rd Ed. Footscray, Victoria, Australia, p. 363.

⁸⁶ Paulo Freire quoted in Jonathan Kozol in his book *Children of the Revolution: A Yankee Teacher in Cuban Schools* reports that Fidel Castro asked in 1959: "Why apparently ignoring all traditional considerations of a military character, far from constructing fortresses, do we transform them into schools?.....Because since January 1, the triumph of the revolution, each school has become a fortress of the revolution."

⁸⁷ See Appendix C for a related resolution.

people's lives. A more consistent system of values is evident than exists in most other countries. How does the government of the specific country affect the issues being studied?

- Who has the primary responsibility for teaching values? Are there dominant values that most people in the culture share? Obviously, the values affect ways families and individuals choose to spend their time and money, but they are also clearly visible in the choices the government makes. In Cuba, because education and health care are highly-valued and well-developed, they receive necessary government funding and attention. Countries need to consider who holds this responsibility to help identify steps that can be taken to strengthen or modify them.
- How does the interplay between the individual and the community affect the given situation? Societies generally try to meet the needs of both groups, but prioritize (consciously or not) their relationships. In Cuba, the community and the society take precedence over the individual. That means that students in ninth grade have some choice about their future studies, but that choices are limited by the availability of spaces in the upcoming class which is, in turn, set by the needs of the community and/or the availability of resources. As another example, the government has set a high priority on eliminating racism, gender discrimination, and class differences. Laws and policies in these areas consider overall advancement instead of an emphasis on individuals maximizing their potential independently. What is the situation in the country being considered? Given this information, what aspects of this report could become goals to address problems in other places?
- How diverse is the population? In most countries, various cultural/ethnic groups have come together. That is also true in Cuba, where people have indigenous, European, and African roots. Further study in this area would be useful to see if policies that Cubans have enacted to encourage its diverse populations to work together could be applied in other countries.
- How does the size of the country and its population affect policy decisions? Cuba is a small country and, despite its diverse peoples, has a relatively small population. What would be needed to apply its ideas and policies in larger countries?

XV CONCLUSIONS

"...WILPF makes it its duty to further by non-violent means the social transformation that enables the inauguration of systems under which social and political equality and economic equity for all can be attained..."⁸⁸

Although each member of this delegation could give her own personal "conclusions" and "lessons learned," what are the outcomes for WILPF globally?

⁸⁸ WILPF Constitution, <http://www.wilpf.int.ch>, January 20, 2007.

We delegates traveled under the theme: “voices for peace, ecology, dignity, and life.” In our work as part of global and local social movements for a “better world,” the necessary sustainable world, and through our work inspired by the Charter of the United Nations, we seek to learn from, and build alliances with, the numerous voices of those who: resist war, oppose the economics of exclusion, will not tolerate racial and ethnic discrimination, strive to live peaceably with nature as well as human beings, and offer alternatives, experimenting with new ways of approaching age-old problems.

Cuba is a dynamic society, a laboratory for trying to think differently about the human experience. We found the people we met self-critical, not claiming to be perfect. Some complained of aspects of their lives and society. We also found people, even the complainers, determined and resolute about not losing the dramatic and remarkable gains they have made, within less than 50 years, in health care, education, and social justice. Cubans are exporting literacy and health care, theater, and music. They are attempting to preserve ecosystems under the great duress of also providing for human needs in a context of the U.S. embargo. A specific example is the reluctant decision to build partnerships with companies in the tourism industry. While they welcome and need the hard currency and economic growth this industry represents, they fear the divisions that are growing within the society because of the two-currency system. They also recognize that sustainability and revolutionary values are much harder to maintain as tourism grows.

Throughout this report, the participants suggest potential actions and steps that can be taken. Our messages for WILPF as an organization, and for people as individuals include becoming educated and, more importantly, to take any actions in the following areas.

- The wars and embargoes on the necessities of life (food, medicine, housing, transport, etc.) are not our wars and embargoes. As a result, we have strengthened our relationship with the women of Cuba through the FMC, a nongovernmental organization that includes more than 80% of the women of Cuba over 14 years of age and urge others to learn more about the FMC and the people of Cuba.
- We demand an end to the U.S. embargo and respect for the sovereignty of Cuba. See the resolution in Appendix C.
- We oppose foreign military bases and encourage participation in the international meetings in Quito, Ecuador on the abolition of foreign military bases. The first of a series of on-going meetings will be in March 2007.⁸⁹
- We propose that work continue for the release of the Cuban 5 and, in the meantime, that the normal legal right of family visitation without harassment and restrictions be granted.

⁸⁹Focus on Global South. October 23, 2006. International Conference to Abolish Foreign Military Bases. <http://www.focusweb.org/save-the-date-international-conference-to-abolish-foreign-military-bases.html>, (January 27, 2007).

- We encourage organizations to disseminate information about the Latin American Medical School, supporting candidates and students as they apply, study, and, later, complete their medical education, especially as they apply for certification in their home countries.
- We believe that a presentation of the experience of the Cuba delegation should be part of WILPF's Congress in Bolivia in July 2007 and be an element of WILPF's overall future programmatic work.
- We urge that the WILPF Congress 2007 draft and accept a proposal for a November 2007 delegation to Cuba with the theme of education (including literacy, arts and culture, sustainability, and medical studies).

One of the goals of this research delegation and report is to provide information that diverse people can consider as they grapple with issues in their home areas. In Cuba, we saw many positive actions that work toward WILPF's aims and objectives. We believe that the wealth of information provided in this report, along with the questions to guide reflection of the last section, meets this goal. We encourage WILPF members and others to consider and discuss our findings; and engage in further study, perhaps using some of the references listed in the Recommended Reading section. We further encourage everyone to take some step, no matter how small, that will contribute to the world's peace, dignity, and ecological sustainability.



¡Sí, Se Puede!

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Some WILPF delegates and FMC members

APPENDICES

A Delegate Profiles

Kozue Akibayashi, Ph.D., is the Vice President of WILPF-Japan and has served on the International WILPF Executive Committee. Akibayashi has her Ph.D. from Columbia University, New York, and is a faculty member in the Department of International Relations at Ritsumeikan University in Kyoto, Japan. Her area of expertise is peace education with a focus on research from a gender perspective. She has conducted action research on women's peace and human rights movement in Okinawa, Japan regarding the U.S. military presence and has been active in advocacy for demilitarization internationally with women from Okinawa, Korea, Philippines, Puerto Rico and other places where the U.S. military is stationed.

Regina Birchem, Ph.D. is the International President of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) elected in 2004 at the International WILPF Congress in Goteburg, Sweden. Birchem joined WILPF in the 1980's and has served in many capacities, as U.S.A.-WILPF board member and as International Vice President. She helped organize the WILPF 4-week 1995 Peace Train journey from Helsinki to the Beijing U.N. Conference on Women, served as liaison with WILPF in Africa involving a number of field visits and U.N. meetings, led a delegation to China in 1998 on "Women and the Environment", coordinated WILPF delegations to major global U.N. conferences of the 1990's (the Earth Summit in Rio, 1992; the World Social Summit, Copenhagen, 1995; Beijing Conference on Women, 1995; Habitat II in Istanbul, Turkey; and the 1992 Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development), and participated in World Social Forums in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in 2003 and 2005.

By profession, Dr. Birchem is a cell biologist; she was named to the Florence Marie Scott Chair at Seton Hill University and has many publications in plant micro-propagation and tissue culture, cell structure and function, and the environment. She is a consultant on inquiry-based science curriculum and works locally with colleagues developing new prize-winning hybrids of perennials popular in Europe and the USA.

Joan Remple Bishop has been a peace and social justice activist for 45 years. While in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, she did action-oriented research on women who are victims of domestic violence, was a spokesperson for Amnesty International, and coordinated the Tools for Peace campaign for Nicaragua. Since moving to Ottawa, Ontario, she worked for 16 years for the Canadian Human Rights Commission, investigating and mediating complaints, and working with employers in the private and public sectors to implement hiring practices that achieve equity for women, Aboriginal people, persons with disabilities and racial minorities in Canada. She is a WILPF member as well as an active member of the Coalition in Ottawa for Refugees, working with church groups to sponsor refugees and to advocate for their just treatment in Canada. She is a long-term

member of the local solidarity group, Ottawa-Cuba Connections. Joan has a master's degree in political economy from McGill University.

Carol Cross has lived in either San Carlos or Redwood City, CA all of her adult life. She has been an activist for social justice for many years, beginning with playing a key role in a local school board's establishment of a forward-looking bilingual policy, as well working in the early desegregation efforts of the High School District in her area. She taught nursery school, first grade, or kindergarten for 25 years while raising three children.

More recently, Cross has served on the Social Action Committee of her Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in RWC, is a member of the local board of WILPF; since the early years of the Bush regime, and has served on the Mid-Peninsula Board of the ACLU.

Her primary focus remains Cuba, stemming from her first visit in 1992 as a tourist. Since that time, she has gone back a total of 21 more times. She is a National Board member of the U.S.-Cuba Sister Cities Association and is a regular and faithful participant in the annual Pastors for Peace caravan to Cuba in defiance of the illegal and immoral blockade of that island. She is especially active in promoting the opportunity offered to U.S. students to study medicine in Cuba, and has made several PowerPoint presentations on the subject of Cuban health care and the Latin American School of Medicine.

Joan W. Drake has a Master's degree in Public Health. She was active in the Civil Rights Movement, 1962-1970 and member of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE); serving on CORE's 16-member National Action Council, representing the Southeastern U.S. She has been a member of WILPF since 1985, originally joining in Chapel Hill-Durham, NC, Branch; she served on national board of the U.S. Section 1986 – 1993 as Program Chair; designed and initiated WILPF's Anti-Racism Program; and participated in the U.S.A. Section of WILPF's first delegation to Cuba 1987. In addition, she participated in the U.N. High Commission on Human Rights Global Conversation on Racism at United Nations Headquarters, Geneva, Switzerland, 1991; along with Kay Camp represented WILPF in Baghdad, Iraq, January 1991 as a member of the 7-member Women's Global Peace Initiative, led by Margarita Papandreou and hosted by the Women's Federation of Iraq in an effort to seek paths to peace and the prevention of the war against Iraq; active member in the Washington, DC, area since 1986.

Drake was invited to serve on Congressman Dennis Kucinich's 20-member working group that drafted the language of his bill calling for establishing a U.S. Department of Peace - 1999-2000. She has been a member of the IAUP/UN Commission on Disarmament Education, Conflict Resolution and Peace since 1999. Since 2001 she has been a member of the board of Partners for Peace.

Bernice Fischer was born in 1917 in Newark, New Jersey of immigrant parents. Educated during the Depression years, she then commuted to New York University from Newark for a BS and MS in Education.

She had taught in the public, private schools and colleges in both New Jersey and California until retirement in 1979. Along the way, she joined the League of Women Voters, UNA/U.S.A., and WILPF, to educate herself and to become an active participant in the world in which she lived.

In addition to being a WILPF member, her active participation has included the Nuclear Freeze Campaign in the 1970s; organizing a Sister City Inc. linkage with the Komi Republic City of Syktyvkar, U.S.S.R. in 1989; forming a Nuclear Disarmament/Non Proliferation Coalition in the Peninsula Bay Area in the 1990s; and co-authoring a research paper on "Lockheed Martin, The Truth Beyond the Hype."

Judith Gallant, originally from Montreal, Quebec, Canada, is a science graduate of McGill University, Macdonald Campus who majored in Animal Science. After 15 years of working in her field, she went back to McGill to get her teaching certificate, taught for a while before purchasing a seasonal fishing resort in Seeley's Bay, just north of Kingston, Ontario, where she lives today. It was the experience of having winters free that made her love of travelling expand to becoming a travel consultant. At the same time, she befriended people in Kingston who were members of the Canada Cuba Friendship Association, and thus began her quest for Justice for Cuba. She sold the fishing lodge after 12 seasons and began working with a travel provider producing Canadian tours for Elderhostel, then became an independent agent specializing first in Cuba educational tours.

Gallant was a founding member of the Kingston-Cienfuegos Sister City Association and was conference coordinator of the first Trilateral Sister City Conference held in June 2006. She became a member of WILPF and learned about the important work that members do and is now a proud member who would like to see Canadian membership increase.

Hannah Hadikin, MA is a WILPF member who has served on the board of Canadian Voice of Women for Peace (VOW), North American Representative to the International Peace Bureau (IPB) of Geneva, Human Rights Coordinator for the Regional United Nations Association, Canada. She has also worked on development projects related to women's health care, training, and employment in Pakistan and the South Pacific.

Hadikin is a founding member of a nonprofit micro-lending society in a rural area of British Columbia. She was recently one of the co-conveners with the Women's Working Group to the World Peace Forum 2006 in Vancouver, BC. She has served on executive boards of several women's feminist organizations in Canada; written a regular column for a bilingual English-Russian peace journal; been a delegate to the Beijing Women's Conference, World Social Forum, Caracas, Venezuela, and the Commission on the Status of Women at the U.N. in NYC. She has been residing in Caracas since the fall of 2006.

Shirley Muhammad is a recent graduate of the Coro Pittsburgh Women in Leadership Program Class VIII. She has an active community life and is the founder and executive director of Your Sister's Project, Inc. a non-profit, 501c 3,

tax-exempt, human services organization that empowers women and women with children. She is a member of the local branch of WILPF. Muhammad graduated from Duquesne University in 1982 with a degree in Sociology and Journalism. Her career goals are to become full-time in her non-profit organization, to expand Your Professional Tax Services, a company that she started on her own, and to complete and publish her book. Her special interest lies in African holistic health and is soon to become a certified Homeopathic Health Consultant. Ms. Muhammad traveled to Egypt and Ghana with the Nation of Islam Saviours' Day Convention. Her first trip to Cuba was in July 2006 with Pastors for Peace.

Luci Murphy is a native of D.C., where she is a vocalist who often leads group singing, but “sun-lights” as a medical interpreter of Spanish and English. She has a long history of community activism, especially working with children at risk. She has visited Lebanon to observe Palestinian Refugee Camps, China just before the normalization of relations with the U.S., Brazil for a grass-roots organizing conference, and Cuba to oppose U.S. travel restrictions.

A past president of the D.C. League of Women Voters, she has also served on the Steering Committees of the People’s Music Network, “Health Care Now!,” and Washington Inner-city Self Help. Currently, she is a WILPF member, convener of the Gray Panthers of Metro D.C., an associate producer of Sophie’s Parlor Women’s Radio Collective at WPFW, the Pacifica Station in D.C., and contact person for the Community Coalition for Peace and Justice.

Luci has been performing since her childhood in the 1950s. To reach the members of the diverse human family, she sings in ten languages: English, Spanish, French, Creole, Portuguese, Zulu, Arabic, Hebrew, Cherokee, and ki-Swahili. She draws on the folkloric traditions and musical idioms of all these cultures, as well as her own roots in spirituals, blues and jazz.

Donna Neff became a pacifist during the war on Vietnam. She taught art in both public and private schools and founded a summer arts camp for children ages 9-14. She was active in Beyond War during the 1980s. Since 1987 she has led and participated in numerous fact-finding delegations to Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Haiti, Cuba, and Venezuela. She was president of her local League of Women Voters for several years and was an international election observer in El Salvador in 1994. She currently speaks to student, religious, civic, and political groups about U.S. foreign policy in Cuba and Venezuela. She organizes delegations to Latin America with Witness for Peace and collects medical supplies in the Boston area for Pastors for Peace caravans. She is a member of her local WILPF chapter.

Susan M. Smith, Ph.D. is Curriculum Coach in a Spanish magnet elementary school that is part of the Pittsburgh Public Schools. She has been a teacher for more than 25 years in the Pittsburgh area and served as a volunteer with the Peace Corps in the Central African Republic. She holds a Master’s degree in International Multicultural Studies and a Ph.D. in Foreign Language Education. She has had numerous opportunities to study and travel in North America,

Europe, Latin America, and Africa, including participation in Fulbright-Hays Study Tours to Ghana, Nicaragua, and Brazil. She is also a frequent volunteer with various local and international organizations, including WILPF. In 2002, she participated in the U.S.-Cuban Conference for Teachers and Administrators in Havana and Matanzas, Cuba.

Lisa Valanti considers herself a global citizen born in the United States. She first went to Cuba in 1971 because it topped the list of countries that the U.S. government forbade its residents to visit. For almost four decades she has continued to champion the struggle for the fundamental human right of freedom to travel for U.S. residents.

As she has challenged the travel ban over the past 36 years, Valanti acquired an informed appreciation of Cuban culture and the complex contextual and historical dynamics of the U.S. blockade of Cuba, which has earned her a reputation as a respected authority and Cuba consultant. She has focused her work for the past 15 years on informing the U.S. public about U.S.-Cuba policy, with a goal of restoring diplomatic relations. She is an internationally renowned speaker, traveling extensively throughout the U.S., Canada, Mexico, and Europe. As a leader in people-to-people citizen diplomacy efforts she has led innumerable delegations to Cuba.

Valanti is a former union organizer, community organizer, freelance writer, domestic violence counselor, EMT, hospice volunteer, music agent. She is the co-founder of the Pittsburgh WILPF branch and one of several co-founders of the U.S. Section WILPF's Cuba Campaign (now Cuba Issues Committee). She is also founder of the Pittsburgh-Matanzas Sister City Partnership and the Pittsburgh-CUBA Coalition. She is the National President of the U.S.-Cuba Sister Cities Association, a non-profit organization, board member of the Thomas Merton Center, and member of the National Network on Cuba. She has worked with Global Exchange, the Freedom to Travel Campaign, and Pastors for Peace on every travel challenge to Cuba, including two fasts to release humanitarian aid to Cuba.

Sandy Waters, a member of WILPF/DC, is a graduate film student at Howard University working on the completion of her thesis documentary film about Cuba and U.S. foreign policy. She graduated Cum Laude from the University of the District of Columbia, where she received her B.A. in Mass Media Arts in 1999. She is a freelance photographer and videographer specializing in documentaries, commercials, music videos, portraits, and special events.

Sandy, an Afro-Cuban American, chose her thesis film four years ago, when she went to Cuba with her family as her parents celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary, renewing their vows in the same church where they were married in her mother's hometown of Holguín. After the U.S. blockade on Cuba and its travel restrictions were severely tightened in 2004 by the Bush administration, when Sandy wanted to return to Cuba with her family in 2006, she discovered that she was no longer considered family under the redefinition of the term by the Commission for the Assistance to a Free Cuba. Her mother, who is Cuban, can go once every three years, and her father, who is African American,

can accompany her.

Sandy is producing a video of the WILPF research delegation to complement this report. She is also working on a memorial documentary entitled, "Nestor Hernández: The Black Pearl of Photographers," a close friend and photographer who was also Cuban American.

Himali Wettasinghe was born in 1971 in Colombo, Sri Lanka and migrated to Australia in 1994. She completed a Bachelor of Commerce in 1996 at Macquarie University and also completed a Master's degree in International Social Development at University of New South Wales in 2003. She is currently reading for a Ph.D. (Doctor of Philosophy) in Domestic Violence at University of Sydney. Her research interest is Domestic Violence and women's meaning-making process of violence in relation to culture and religion.

Wettasinghe has been a member of WILPF New South Wales in the Australian section since 2004. During this time, she has held the position of treasurer, as well as compiler and editor of the WILPF NSW Newsletter. Her dream is to empower women to find their voice, working towards eradicating violence against women and children as well as overall violence from the world. She is particularly interested in working with patriarchal institutions, such as religious and cultural bodies to work towards eliminating domestic violence.

Joanne Whitney is President of the Canadian Section of WILPF. She is a retired College Instructor who taught Canadian Studies and Advanced Writing Skills to Professional Immigrants. Her involvement with professional immigrants alerted her to the injustices in certification and subsequent employment that her students experienced. For ten years, she was President of the Educational Branch of the Vancouver Multicultural Society and specialized in developing suitable curriculum for ethnic minorities, as well as lobbying for fairer employment standards for professional immigrants.



Some WILPF delegates and women at a community center

B WILPF International Peace Delegation Itinerary

Havana, Cuba

November 20-26, 2006

Sunday, November 19

Peace Plane Leaves Toronto with North American Continent Delegation

Monday, November 20

Arrival of Peace Plane from Toronto at Jose Marti Airport
Welcome by International WILPF Logistics' Coordinator, Judy Gallant.
Transfer to Hotelito. Welcome by Rita Pereira, our translator and guide.
Participants from other gateways arrive at varied schedules.

2:00 pm Orientation for all international participants.
Historical Context: City Walking Tour/Habana Vieja
Visit Quitrín (FMC Sponsored Vocational Training 'Couturier' House)

6:00 pm Dinner at Hotel

- Overview of Delegation Goals/Report for Bolivian Congress 2007
- Introduction/history of WILPF and welcome of delegation participants by Regina Birchem, International President,
- Who We Are: Each delegate briefly describes her specific expertise/interests

Tuesday, November 21

9:00am Meeting at Federation of Cuban Women Headquarters (Federación de Mujeres Cubanas (FMC):
Introduction to the FMC/Empowering Women & Girls in Civic Society/Prenatal & Maternal Health Care, Reproductive Rights, Education & Literacy, Equal Opportunity.

- Yolanda Ferrer Gómez, Secretary General, FMC; former expert on CEDAW Committee; member of the Parliament and Member of the Central Committee of the Party.
- Alicia González Gutiérrez, Funcionaria de la Esfera de Relaciones Exteriores
- Mayda Alvarez, Director of Women's Studies for the FMC
- Sonia Beretruide, National Secretary Responsible for Community Work under Education, Health and Social Welfare

11:00am Meeting at Cuban Movement for Peace and Peoples' Sovereignty (Movimiento Cubano por la Paz y la Soberanía de los Pueblos – MOVPAZ)

- Arturo Espinosa, President (unable to attend)
- Manuel E. Yepe Menéndez, Secretary
- Lic. Boris Castillo Barroso, Miembro del Secretariado
- Orlando Fundaro, newly elected President of the World Peace Council

1:00pm Walk to lunch at Casa de Amistad - The Friendship House

2:30pm Walk to the local neighborhood FMC sponsored Guidance House for Women and Family (Casa de Orientación a la Mujer y a la Familia) - A community family council center. We included here an exchange with Cuban women about the impact of the U.S. blockade on women and delivery of social service programs.

- Aurora Rodriguez Mora, Secretary General, FMC Municipio Plaza
- Miriam Amanza
- Haydie Falcon Garcia

- Anuncion Ritoles Ramos
- Maite Jopez Pena

4:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Presentation/ discussion lead by Himali Indunil Wettasinghe, WILPF-Australia: "A Woman's Honour: Domestic Violence, Culture of Identity and Dignity"

6:00 pm Dinner

7:00 pm Discussion with Cuban teachers about their system of public education.

Wednesday, November 22

9:00 am Depart Hotel for Finlay Institute, Center for Research, Development and Production of Vaccines - A medical research center run by women. Theme: Women's Role in Cuban Research, Science, and Medicine/Medical Progress in spite of the U.S. Blockade

- Esther Maria Fajardo, Vaccine Advisor and International Affairs Officer
- Dr. Campa, Director of laboratory; member of Polit Bureau (could not be present due to unexpected call to a meeting)

11:00 am Visit the Latin America Medical School (Escuela Latino Americana de Medicina - ELAM), Meeting and reception with the Public Relations Director

1:00 pm Lunch at Palenque Restaurant

2:30 pm Visit and tour of an Agro Organic Urban Garden - Theme of Sustainable Agriculture

4:00 – 6:00 pm Individual Research, Report Writing, and Reflection Time

6:00 pm Dinner

7:00 pm Discussion about Public Health Care System and the Latin American Medical School

Thursday, November 23

8:30 am Historical Tour of UNESCO World Heritage Sites - Old Havana, Fort, Cathedral, etc.

1:00 pm Transfer to restaurant Kasalta

2:30 pm Visit to the William Solar Hospital for Children (Chronic & Terminally ill)

- Dr. Elena Porea Alfonso, Pediatrics, Director Médica
- Dr. Mercedes Milián Jo, Virologaò, Vicedirectora Media Diagnostico
- Msc. Maritza Podera Gonzáles, Psicóloga Master en Educación Especial, Vicedirectora Servicios Ambulatorios
- Dr. Rodriquez, Director and Surgeon

4:00 pm Visit to a neighborhood maternity home (At risk pregnancy)

6:00 pm Dinner

7:00 pm Evening activity: Las Colmenitas – Grupo de Teatro Infantil

- Carlos Alberto Cremata, Director "La Colmenita" (Youth Center)
- Dr. Michelle Frank- pediatrician

9:00 - 11:00 pm Meeting with relatives of the CUBA Five

- Laura Fernandez (Fernando's niece)
- Olga Sulaneeva (Rene's wife)
- Elizabeth Palmeiro (Roman's wife)



- Mirta Rodriguez (Antonio's mother)

Friday, November 24

- 9:30 am Conference on the role of Cuban women in the international community
- Adelina Allen Hilton, North American Desk
 - Kenin Serrano, International Desk, Member of Foreign Affairs Committee of National People's Assembly, Parliament
- 11:00 am Transfer to visit to the Escuela Especial con Solidaridad con Panamá (a special educational school for severely handicapped children)
- Esther Lao Octoa, Principal
- 1:30 pm Rio Cristal for Lunch
- 3:00 - 6:00 pm Museum Visits:
- Literacy and Education as Human Rights: Site visit to the Museum of Literacy/Museum of the Revolution/ Education – Women's Role/Literacy Campaign.
 - Museum of the Revolution to learn about Cuban history under the Batista regime—historical reasons that became the foundation leading to the revolution.
- 7:00 pm Delegation member discussion of the trip and the progress on the research topics for the report.

Saturday, November 25

- 8:00 am Everyday life outside the capital – provincial day trip to Matanzas (Matanzas is "sister province" with Pennsylvania, U.S.A.)
- Women in Leadership in Municipal and Provincial Life
Meeting with women in the province of Matanzas, who serve in many capacities in municipal and provincial government -- International Relations, Religion, Arts, Agriculture, Culture, etc.
- Juana Ortiz Ricardo, Directora de Relaciones Internacionales Asamblea Provincial Poder Popular Matanzas
 - FMC representatives: Marielena, Maria Teresa, Florita
- Lunch Varadero - Casa de Chef (Vocational Chef's Training School & Public Restaurant)
Visit to local artist collective and craft shops, bus tour of international tourist site.
- Evening Farewell Dinner – Casa de Amistad
- Yolanda Ferrer, Secretary General, FMC and other distinguished guests.

Sunday, November 26

- 10:00 am Transfer to Jose Marti Airport.

C Resolution Calling For the U.S.A. to Withdraw From and Cease Its Violations of Cuban Territory⁹⁰

As members of WILPF, we believe that the U.S. embargo against Cuba must end. Further, the following resolution calls upon the U.S. government to change its policy, removing the military base at Guantánamo.

We propose that the following resolution presented to the Humans Rights Council meeting in Geneva in the fall of 2006 be discussed and reaffirmed at the WILPF 29th Triennial Congress in Bolivia in July 2007.

The Resolution

Whereas the United States of America is maintaining a military presence within the sovereign territory of the Republic of Cuba; and

Whereas the United States of America has conducted military operations on the territory it occupies, and

Whereas United States of America has incarcerated citizens of several nations and perpetrated human rights violations in its actions toward them during their confinement⁹¹; and

Whereas the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights has notified the U.S.A. that it has broken certain international laws and conventions in its operations in regard to these prisoners held on Cuban soil⁹²,

Therefore, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom calls upon the U.S. to relinquish its hold on Cuban territory; to withdraw from that territory; and to cease and desist from the human rights violations it is now practicing within the Cuban sovereign territory⁹³.

⁹⁰ A resolution on this topic was passed in 1980 but it was not solely on the military base. Resolutions and Statements adopted by WILPF's international Congresses and Executive Committee since 1915 can be found at <http://www.wilpf.int.ch>.

⁹¹ Amnesty International, (December 28, 2006) *Guantánamo Bay, A Human Rights Scandal*, <http://web.amnesty.org/pages/guantanamobay-index-eng>

⁹² United Nations Press Release, February 16, 2006, <http://www.unhchr.ch/hurricane/hurricane.nsf/0/52E94FB9CBC7DA10C1257117003517B3?opendocument>. (December 28, 2006).

⁹³ WILPF Human Rights Council, Second Session, September 18 – October 6, 2006, Geneva <http://www.wilpf.int.ch/humanrights/2006/HumanRightsCouncil06/wilpf%20reports/wilpf%20full%20report%20-%20special%20rapporteurs.html#Guantanamo>.