

BRANCH LETTER

November 1962

Dear Leader:

*Crisis  
in  
Cuba*

The week just ended has been one of intense activity here as you may well imagine. In fact as we sensed the hardening of the Administration's attitude toward Cuba, it began earlier as the enclosed letters and messages to the President, Vice-President and others indicate. (It has proved to be too expensive to enclose copies of them all!)

Most of you know that we sent 112 telegrams to each Branch Chairman calling for action the Monday before the President spoke. We also took part in relaying confidential news that came in from Washington to other peace organizations. We joined in emergency consultative meetings of leaders in Philadelphia called by Women's Strike for Peace on Tuesday and in New York, called by SANE on Wednesday. I personally and many others walked in the picket line of protest in Philadelphia on Thursday at which Norman Thomas was the speaker. Many members went to Washington to join the demonstration there on Saturday and others were concerned with the New York plans for Sunday. All over the country activity sprang up overnight like mushrooms! Practically all of the National organizations issued statements opposing unilateral action on Cuba. So did a flock of letters to the editors. The two columns by Drew Pearson and Walter Lippmann have been widely quoted.

Emily Simon as acting International Chairman called on our International Representative at the UN, Adelaide Baker, to see the UN delegates of the countries where we have national sections and urge them to use their "good offices" with both the U.S. and USSR to accept mediation. She also communicated directly with each national section telling them of the U.S. Section statement and what we were trying to do at the UN and urging them to put pressure on their own foreign offices to work vigorously to prevent war.

*National  
Board*

It was fortunate that our National Board was meeting here through this past weekend. They voted to send a card to every member because although branch leaders were calling in from places as far away as California and Minnesota, the rank and file membership especially in unorganized territory, they felt, needed help from us. With shocking speed war hysteria and intolerance were mounting, newspaper editors and educators who should certainly have known better were declaiming that American missile bases pointed at Russia were quite different from Russian missile bases pointed at us, that for Great Britain, France and Israel to take direct military action ignoring the UN when the Suez Canal was seized by Turkey, which the U.S. had vigorously denounced, was not the same thing as our taking direct military action ignoring the UN now. Civil defense plans and demands for shelters and compulsory military training were being quickly resurrected. The U.S. became in fact "A Nation of Sheep".

The Board voted to send letters to each of the Soviet women who had attended our Bryn Mawr Conference last year, telling them what we were doing to influence our government to accept mediation and urging them to do the same with theirs. We were grateful for a cable from our Swedish Section expressing sympathy.

We wrote a letter to U Thant so he would know that his efforts had the support of many Americans and one to Drew Pearson - continued -

and Walter Lippmann expressing appreciation for their courage in dissenting from the popular clamor for conformity. One of our Board Members telephoned the head of a business which sponsors a news program heavily anti-Castro, asking him to use at least their commercial time in it for peace and they did - supporting the UN!

*"Loaded" NewsCasts*

One of the greatest deterrents to peace-making is the use of color words in every report concerning communist countries instead of straight factual reporting. Much of this is deliberate (Remember the epithet "yellow-bellies" always attached to Japanese during the war?) Watch your newscasters on radio and television and insist to them or their sponsors that you want news reports, not emotion. Support the good ones - Taylor Grant who spoke at our Annual Meeting luncheon, May 5, in Atlantic City was given an award by several liberal and peace organizations, has just been promoted to a program-making job in WCAU (CBS). Many universities have broadcasting stations that welcome WIL news. Ed Randall, originator of Friendly World Broadcasting, one of the projects under JAPA, reports that 56 stations in Alabama now are using their tapes weekly.

The Atlanta Branch, involved, as all our members in the deep South must be, in the tense struggle for integration, nevertheless put out some excellent material calling for action in the Cuban crisis.

*New Opposition To peaceful settlements*

The reactionary-militarist group in this country have moved almost as quickly as the peace forces. In today's paper (October 31) William F. Buckley, editor of the National Review, announces formation of a new organization under Colonel Eddie Rickenbacker called the "Committee for the Monroe Doctrine" to oppose President Kennedy's agreement that there would be no invasion of Cuba if missile bases were removed. It is sending out 15,000 telegrams in an effort to get Congressional candidates pledged to reverse this. So you see how very very important are our letters and questionnaires to Congressmen to hold in line even the good ones.

*Position on candidates*

On request of our Germantown (Pa.) Branch the Board again took up the question of changing our policy of not supporting particular candidates. Several instances were cited in which good candidates had "somersaulted" under pressure of the Cuban crisis. Even those personally involved with peace candidates, such as Betty Weideman and Ruth Freeman, advised against changing our stand as did Annalee Stewart and others who have to work in Washington. Our present policy was reaffirmed but members are urged to work individually or through other organizations for the election of peace candidates and to try to persuade other candidates to take better stands, regardless of party.

*Individual vs delegate*

Members are cautioned to be discreet in attending conferences, national or international, always making it clear that they are there as individuals unless they have been specifically appointed (See material on Relations with Other Organizations in this Packet.)

*"Same" birthday #3 L history*

The Board sent congratulations to SANE for its Fifth Anniversary dinner honoring Steve Allen, the radio and television star, for his forthright position on atomic tests and for disarmament.

You will be interested to hear that a Harvard College student telephoned from Cambridge to say that for his graduation thesis he wished to write up the history of the WILPF of which his grandmother, Mrs. Gerard Swope, had been a very early member. - continued -

Branch Letter - continued

*Some new branches*

My Massachusetts trip was a particularly interesting one. They now have a new WILPF group in Springfield and the beginnings of another centering in Canton and prospects for a third in Amherst. The State Board has set up a committee to study reorganization plans and expects to focus more on membership growth and extension work into new areas which have been stirred up by their wonderful peace candidate Stuart Hughes, grandson of Chief Justice Hughes. (Massachusetts is certainly a state where relatives of famous men are politically in the foreground!)

*Regional Conference November 17*

The National Membership and Extension Committee with its new Co-Chairman Betty Bartram, is planning a regional conference in New York on November 17 from 12:30 to 5 PM at the Friends House, 218 E. 18th Street. Everyone is invited. They plan to concentrate on the problems of metropolitan areas. Nan Hanson is working to develop units in the territory around Metropolitan New York.

*Slides needed Speakers wanted*

The Committee urges branches to send slides showing Branch activities to Mrs. Ann Rhoads, 11 Bentwood Lane, Levittown, Pa. She is working up a set of slides for use of Branches in membership work showing our varied activities.

The Publicity Committee wants the names of people they can call upon for speaking over radio, television or at public meetings or in conferences with the press.

*UN Seminars*

Every branch should become familiar with the excellent material which Nancy Reeves has prepared called "Operation Living Room" which helps members through role-playing, answering questions, meeting attacks on WILPF, etc., to be more effective representatives - Who knows, this may turn some of your good members into national speakers. (\$1 from Los Angeles Office, WILPF, 4356 1/2 Melrose Aven Los Angeles 21)

*Dates?*

October 10-12 our Committee for World Development and World Disarmament held a Seminar in New York for their Associates which I found to be very stimulating and worth attending. Our annual WIL Seminar on the UN under the Chairmanship of Bertha McNeill which opened on Sunday evening shortly after the close of the Board Meeting has produced enthusiastic reports.

About 50 Board members came from places as widely separated as Georgia, Massachusetts, California and Minnesota. The UN Seminar is planned to make it easy for them to attend both but the question has been raised as to whether the general membership would prefer an earlier date. Please send in the opinion of your members.

*African representative*

One of the highlights of the Board Meeting was the presence of Mrs. Priscilla Abwao of Kenya who had been invited to our Triennial Congress last July. She was much interested in how we worked. She is a member of the parliament of Kenya and expressed a desire to have the international WILPF help the women of Africa get together by regions.

*Nominating Committee*

The new Nominating Committee Chairman, Phyllis Sanders reports they hope soon to announce the name of a new Chairman for the Action Projects Committee, but she needs help in finding a referent for the Middle East. Please send her suggestions.

Becoming  
an  
American

Branch Letter continued - 4 -  
At the request of one of our branches I enclose copy of an official letter in re WILPF membership and naturalization requirements.

Visit  
to  
Poland

The formal invitation from the women of Poland for WILPF to select a group of seven distinguished American women to visit them for two weeks in April or May as their guests, has been received. They asked for Dorothy Hutchinson, Elise Boulding and Charlotte Hankin specifically, so the Board selected from the names suggested by the Executive Committee, Flemmie Kittrell, Marjorie Matson, Emily Simon and Annalee Stewart. Their going is, of course, dependent upon their acceptance and our ability to raise necessary funds for travel back and forth.

Russian  
contacts

Dorothy Hutchinson has been invited by the editor of the magazine Soviet Woman, Marie Ovasyannikova, who visited the U.S. last spring and was a guest in my home. (She had entertained me in Russia in the spring of 1961.)

Visitors  
from  
abroad

At the request of a former member of the State Department, WIL extended an invitation to Mrs. Mira von Kuhlmann of Munich to visit the U.S. She was described as "a very important woman in the peace movement who had opposed German imperialism and also Hitler and an enemy of German rearmament since the war." Annalee Stewart and Charlotte Hankin took charge of her in Washington, but her visit was very brief. Marie Lous-Mohr of Norway, our former International Chairman, is still in New York following developments at the UN.

Sad  
news

We have heard the tragic news of the sudden death of Clara Lee's husband, Roy, whom many of you met at Asilomar. She is carrying on her work courageously as President of our Denver Branch. (Address her as: Mrs. Clara Lee, 6162 Tennyson St., Arvada, Colorado.)

Annual  
Meeting

Ruth Freeman has been appointed chairman of our Annual Meeting program, June 23 - 28 in Estes Park, Colorado. She asks each branch to send in its ideas as to (1) what should be the content of the Annual Meeting program; (2) the program procedures it prefers. She will be guided by your replies.

Half  
century  
mark

It was also brought up at Board meeting that by the next meeting, February 8 - 10, we should have some plans presented for the celebration of our Fiftieth Anniversary in 1965. (assuming the world is still going on!) I was asked to solicit your thinking on this. Don't groan! It is none too early because it requires at least two years planning for anything worthwhile.

Michael Scott (blurred)

As I read the letters exchanged between President Kennedy and Premier Khrushchev, I realize how sensibly they can discuss world problems and the responsibilities of both when actually faced with the alternative of a world war. If only their militarists and ours would leave them alone!

& we will  
God willing  
Michael Scott (blurred)

Many times during these anxious days, while all mankind has been balancing precariously between war and peace -and world war III seemed to be just around the corner -I have thought of the song of the last war "When The Lights Come On Again All Over The World". No one in this new young generation has any idea what it is like to live in a world without lights, without much food or gasoline or heat or, in many places, even homes to live in, let alone the separation and death of families and friends - of the constant deep and unsatisfied hunger for just normal living that follows one everywhere. We must keep them burning!