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International Women's Tribune Centre, Inc.

PERSONNEL:

MILDRED E. PERSINGER

Mildred Emory Persinger serves in a full-time volunteer capacity as chairperson of the IWY Tribune Project and as liaison with the United Nations and other governmental and non-governmental agencies involved in women and developmental activities. Ms. Persinger's international work during the past 30 years in promoting the causes of social justice, disarmament, human rights, and the elimination of racism have earned her deep respect within the United States, the United Nations, and abroad. Extensive experience as a non-governmental organization representative at UN meetings and conferences have given her an intimate working knowledge of other NGOs and of the UN system, and friendly relations with UN and Mission personnel, enabling her to be in touch with appropriate UN individuals at the UN in New York and Geneva on matters of common concern when necessary. Her experience in working and reporting on various UN functions, activities and resolutions is behind the capsulated UN reports which appear in the IWY Tribune Project Newsletter every two months.

As chairperson of the 1975 IWY Tribune in Mexico City, Ms. Persinger increased her world-wide links with women leaders and women's organizations, established through the World YWCA, an organization at work in more than 80 countries. Her awareness of and sensitivity towards the diversity of needs and aspirations of the more than 6000 women who participated in the Tribune, has been a factor in the continuing response and enthusiasm of these women towards the Tribune Project's present effort to facilitate a supportive, transnational network responsive to the needs of individuals and groups engaged in women and development projects. These relationships were recognized in President Carter's designation of Ms. Persinger to the continuing United States National Commission for International Women's Year, and her subsequent appointment chair of the Commission's International Committee. This committee promotes the integration of the international dimension of issues before the 56 state and territorial women's meetings and the 1977 National Women's Conference sponsored by the National Commission.

Ms. Persinger brings to the IWY Tribune Project considerable insight into the complexity of issues in the international arena developed through her activities during the past thirty years. Beginning her volunteer career at the age of 24, Ms. Persinger helped organize a programme to resettle emigres from Europe in their own fields and assisted in the creation of a coalition of national organizations to campaign against racial discrimination in the military and in industry. In 1952, she became a member of National Board of the YWCA of the USA (one of the youngest members to be elected). During her 20 years with that group, she chaired two outstanding committees--the National Committee on Public Policy, and the Peace



with Justice Task Force. Ms. Persinger now serves as NGO observer at the UN for the National YWCA of the USA, and is part of the World YWCA team covering ECOSOC. She is presently a member of the YWCA World Council and has attended and assumed leadership responsibilities in its quadrennial World Council meetings in Ghana (1971) and Canada (1975) as well as participated in such European NGO meetings as the 1972 Conference on Disarmament, the NGO Conference on Environment, and the 1974 Conference on Apartheid and Colonialism in Africa.

Involvement with the United Nations is likewise apparent in Ms. Persinger's work in her own country. As a member of the National Board of the United Nations Association of the USA, among other activities, she was twice elected to chair the major affiliate, "The Conference of UN Representatives" of the 140 national organizations associated with the UNA. This has involved developing major committees to watchdog and recommend USA/UN policy, testifying at Congressional hearings and stimulating citizen action in behalf of the United Nations and its member agencies. From this experience came such assignments as representation of the World Federation of UN Associations at the 1974 World Population Conference at Bucharest, and playing a central role in the successful NGO campaign to expand the World Population Plan of Action to reflect the relationship between opportunities for women and the rate of population growth. Currently she is a member of the Conference of UN Representatives Committee and chairs its committee on Economic and Social Affairs.

In 1970-1971 Ms. Persinger was appointed to the President's Commission on the United Nations (the Lodge Commission, in observation of the UN's 25th anniversary, to study and make recommendations on the work of the UN). She served on hearing panels, wrote sections of the Commission's report and persuaded the Commission to give attention to the issue of USA participation in the UN and to USA government structures, procedures and resources which support or limit that participation.

As a member of the Executive Committee of the non-governmental Commission to Study the Organization of Peace, Ms. Persinger has shared in general policy direction and involvement in Commission studies. The Commission is a scholarly group of which about five percent are women. Her most recent effort here has been in relation to the study, "International Protection of Women's Rights." She is also a member of the Grants Committee, Institute for World Order, a Director of the Public Affairs Committee, a Director of International Social Service, American Branch and of the Overseas Education Fund of the League of Women Voters.

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