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## EDITORIAL

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### **The Eightieth Anniversary Reunion**

Old Boys like to get together. So do Old Girls. It is good to know that former ILO officials are human enough to like it too.

When the number of former colleagues reaches a critical mass, an association comes into being and this permits more formal meetings. So it was with the ILO. When World War I led to a sudden increase in former officials in 1940, a critical mass was attained and the *Amicale des anciens du BIT* was established. When the number of former officials of the whole UN system reached its critical mass in 1955, the Association of Former International Civil Servants (AAFI/AFICS) was established, evolving naturally from the Amicale of the ILO. When former ILO officials reached another critical mass in 1976, the first Reception for Former Officials was held. The *ILO Friends Newsletter* was launched in 1986. At much the same time, the ILO Section of Former Officials came into being. The 70th Anniversary Reunion was held in 1989; the 75th Anniversary Reunion in 1994.

Now we've had a third in 1999 and a very pleasant affair it was too. There is a special report on it elsewhere.

The organization of the Reunion was due to the ad hoc efforts of a group of individuals: Manuel Carrillo, Michael O'Callaghan, Jack Martin, Ibrahim A. Ibrahim, and to the institutional support of Renata Chevrolet, Staff Counsellor, and her assistant, Colette Jenson, and Mario Tavelli, Secretary of the Section of Former Officials of the Staff Union. Several others helped: Myriam Newmann-Staal, Gilbert Fiammingo and, indeed, for her sins, my wife Clare. Alexandre Djokitch specially extended the annual Exhibition of the International Arts Circle so that our visitors could see it.

Should there be another commemoration five years hence? How should it be organized and by whom? We circulated a special NL to everyone at the lunch and asked for their views. A summary of these is published elsewhere in this Newsletter.

### **60th Anniversary of the Association of Former International Civil Servants (AAFI/AFICS)**

Next year will be the millennium when all our computers will go bananas and a new world of peace and harmony will be born. It will also be the 60th Anniversary of the founding of the *Amicale des anciens du BIT*, and indeed of the whole movement of former international officials. AAFI/AFICS, the 20 AFICSs that now exist in the world, and the Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants (FAFICS) all grew from that beginning. *Large streams from little fountains flow/Tall oaks from little acorns grow.*

Moreover, while the ILO itself marked its 80th anniversary last year, the year 2000 will mark the 80th anniversary of the installation of the ILO and the League in Geneva.

And it is significant that both the FAFICS Council and the UN Joint Staff Pension Board will meet in Geneva next year.

Even for those sated with anniversaries, the convergence of all these factors must prove irresistible. All six associations of former international officials in Geneva as well as FAFICS are joining together to organize events worthy of the occasion. For the moment, just note that there will be a **Lunch in the ILO on Tuesday, 4 July 2000** which I hope many of you will attend. You are all welcome. The date is chosen because the FAFICS Council will end on 3 July and the Pension Board will begin on 5 July; we hope that members of both will attend.

As ILO officials – present and former – you have special reasons to attend. It was the ILO's *Amicale* that started it all. The lunch will be held in the ILO and we hope that our Director-General will attend as the guest of honour.

AAFI/AFICS will also produce a Special Bulletin in October next year. Its theme is that of the Anniversary itself: **Evolving an International Community**. This is meant to cover the evolution of the international civil service, of the associations of former international officials, of the relations between Geneva and the international organizations, and of the international community. If any of you have any recollections or views or information, or ideas relevant to this broad theme, do please send them to The Editor, AAFI/AFICS, Bur: C.542-1, Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10.

### **Carl-Heinz Harder**

“Call me Heinz, like the ketchup”, he said when I first met him in 1976. I didn’t know then that this would be the beginning of a working relationship and close friendship that would only end with his untimely death in May of this year.

I was a newcomer to the Personnel Department when I met him; he was a veteran. How does someone recruited as a translator become a thoroughly competent, knowledgeable personnel officer in just a few years? The ILO is full of examples of people recruited for highly specialized work turning out to be chiefs, experts and specialists in quite different disciplines; Heinz was a good example.

From the time that personal computers appeared on the scene, he was hooked. I used to have a manual Royal typewriter and was happy to have this cast-off from the Pool. He shuddered every time he saw it: “At least get an electric machine,” he said. Finally, I went out and bought one with a memory. I called him to come and admire it. “What’s the use of that?” he said scornfully. “You should get a computer.”

“But you told me to get this,” I protested.

“That was six months ago,” he said. “It’s old-fashioned stuff now”.

Often, perhaps too often, when you retire, you drift away from old comrades, however close. With Heinz I was lucky; we drifted even closer together. Just after we both retired, he helped me with the Newsletter (originally Pensioners NL, then Friends NL), especially the French language items. He was persuaded — I pride myself on saying by me — to join the AAFI/AFICS Committee. He hauled the quill-pen establishment into the computer age and found himself stuck with transferring all our operations to the computer and dealing with the frequent crises which naturally arose. He was AAFI/AFICS’ computer man.

Like me, he was so closely attached to the ILO that it was unthinkable that he could in any way distance himself from it. One of his fervent wishes was that the ILO Section of Former Officials — and indeed the other four Organization-based associations of former officials — should come even closer to AAFI/AFICS, so that ILO officials could profit more easily from contacts at both the ILO level and at that of the entire international civil service. He was immensely pleased that we are definitely moving in that direction.

### **The faster we go the longer it takes**

Talking of the computer age, have you noticed that while everything is getting faster and faster, it actually takes longer and longer to get the same things done?

Planes fly faster, so they take less time to get you from A to B. But the Qs are longer at both A and B. There are more check-in desks but less of them seem to be open; the officials take longer to focus on you and your tickets; the plane has to wait longer before it can take off, and the trip into town from the airport — like the trip to the airport — takes longer and the airport has moved out to more distant parts. Did you read that item about more than 30 planes marooned on the Detroit runway for up to nine hours on the opening days of January 1999? Well, that was for an unforeseen snowstorm, an act of God. Acts of Men would never have left passengers sitting there, wondering if “they were testing new forms of torture” as one of them said, but have done something in less than nine hours. Even if it was only to serve plastic food or canned music.

And of course the luggage is more likely to get lost because there’s more of it. No wonder everyone except you brings all their bags and baggages onto the plane and monopolizes the overhead luggage compartments, leaving no space for your modest bag and raincoat — or your legs. **The faster we go the longer it takes.** Another slogan for our times.

### **Lord Marchwood and I**

“Thieves have stolen most of Lord Marchwood’s \$40,000 wine and champagne collection that he had built up over 40 years ... Lord Marchwood had 300 bottles in his collection”, said a recent news item. His Lordship and I have much in common; we are, indeed, brothers under the skin. I am thinking of writing to Lord M to inform him of this kinship but I hesitate because I don’t know how I should address him. Lord Marchwood sounds far too formal for brothers under the skin. Marchwood? Marchie? Woody?

How, you will wonder, have we become brothers? I will tell you. We have both suffered the same misfortune, at the same time. I read this news item just at the time when my own cellar was burgled and my collection of malt whiskies that I had built up over years was stolen — all four bottles.

I had assiduously collected these valuables from duty free shops in airports all over the world, so that though they all looked alike, they were in fact an international collection.

Now, my cellar was full of junk also collected over the years, the sort of things about which you say regularly, “One day I’m going to clear away all that useless dust-collecting broken down useless junk.” My visitors could have taken away all of that and I would have paid them for their work, perhaps even given them a bottle of malt whisky. When I mentioned this to the police who came to stare at the useless lock and chain that guarded my treasures, they said proudly, “Our burglars are a discriminating lot, they know what’s what. They only took the good bottles.”

So, Marchie, I know what you’re going through. Aren’t times terrible?

#### **Forthcoming events**

The December reception for retirees will be held on **Thursday, 16 December 1999 at 5 p.m.**

Next year’s receptions are planned for **25 May and 14 December 2000.**

And the special lunch to mark the 60th Anniversary of our first move towards evolving an international community of former international civil servants will be held on **Tuesday, 4 July 2000.**

The next issue of the Newsletter is due in May 2000; send in your news, views and articles in good time.

The Season’s greetings to all of you and your families.

15 October 1999.

Aamir Ali.

### **Heady times for the ILO**

Many of our readers may be aware that a very special guest at this year's session of the International Labour Conference was none other than Bill Clinton, who came accompanied not only by First Lady, Hilary Clinton and daughter Chelsea but also by Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, Secretary of Labour (sorry, Labor), Herman, National Economic Advisor, Gene Sperling, National Security Advisor Sandy, Berger and many other dignitaries, to tell the ILO that "*there is no organization that has worked harder to bring people together around fundamental human aspirations, and no organization whose mission is more vital for today and tomorrow ... the ILO has waged a struggle of rising prosperity and widening freedom, from the shipyards of Poland to the diamond mines of South Africa ... In a world too often divided, this Organization has been a powerful force for unity, justice, equality and shared prosperity.*" And he called upon the ILO to assume greater responsibility in meeting the challenges of the global economy. "*It is clear that when nations face financial crisis, they need the commitment and expertise not only of the international financial institutions; they need the ILO as well ... Those nations with strong social safety nets are better able to weather the storms*". He paid tribute to the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work adopted by the Conference last year (see Francis Maupain's article in Issue No. 25 of the *Friends Newsletter*) as a "*blueprint for the global economy that honours our values*"; he announced that he was including in his budget a sum of \$25 million "*to help create a new arm of the ILO to work with developing countries to put in place basic labour standards*"; he welcomed the new Convention on child labour adopted by this year's session of the Conference, and pledged to send it to the United States Senate for ratification; and he called for action to address "*root causes, the tangled pathology of poverty and hopelessness that leads to abusive child labour*", paying tribute to the work of the ILO's International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) and announcing that "*our administration has increased our support for IPEC by tenfold*".

Some old-timers like myself with long memories have to pinch themselves hard to realize that we are not dreaming this. It only seems a short time ago (in fact it was over 20 years ago) that the United States withdrew from the ILO because of an alleged "*appallingly selective approach to human rights*" (I am quoting from memory); it seems an even shorter time ago (in fact it was 12 years ago) that the United States did everything it could to prevent the ILO from holding a High-Level Meeting on Employment and Structural Adjustment on the grounds that it had no business dealing with macroeconomic issues which should be left to the big boys in the IMF and the World Bank. There seem to have been few years since 1970 when the United States has not plunged the ILO into a major financial crisis by withholding all or part of its assessed contribution to the Organization (or just by threatening to do so) in order to express its displeasure with something or other. We never thought that we would live to see the day when a President of the United States would come to the International Labour Conference in Geneva to speak in such laudatory terms of the ILO's human rights record, to emphasize the need for the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO to work more closely with the ILO, and to *actually offer it some more money*. What has the ILO done to regain Uncle Sam's favour and become his favourite nephew after being treated for years as the outcast of the family?

Another special guest at the Conference this June was Dr. Amartya Sen, last year's winner of the Nobel Prize for Economics, who has long been associated with the ILO, particularly during the early years of the World Employment Programme. In this issue Sunil Guha tells us about the contribution that Dr. Sen made to the ILO at that time, and we reproduce some extracts from his speech to the Conference. Also in this issue Bert Zoetewij reports approvingly on the innovations and reforms being introduced by the new management of the ILO.

All of which suggests that it must be quite exciting to be an ILO official these days.

### **What about the wrinklies?**

What, you may ask, is a wrinkly? That is what I wondered when, as we were driving along the French motorway the other day, my wife Jean (who is several centuries younger than me) suddenly announced: "You can tell the summer is over: the road is full of wrinklies". But the road surface seemed to be as smooth as a baby's bottom, and I said as much to my better half. She proceeded to enlighten me that the term *wrinkly* did not refer to the condition of the road (as everyone knows, road conditions are always perfect in France), but to the age and the appearance of the drivers. Since the summer was over, she explained, anyone of working age would be doing something socially useful, leaving the roads to the fossilized relics of a bygone age who had retired from working life and were wandering aimlessly around the countryside. They were the wrinklies.

- So, what do we ILO wrinklies think of all these goings-on in the ILO? Do we:
- (a) feel proud to have belonged to an Organization that is now attracting so much high-level attention and playing such a prominent role in the world community?
  - (b) feel resentful that the young upstarts who are now working the ILO are basking in all that glory? Surely, it can only be because they are reaping the benefits of all the hard work that we put in during our times? Or:
  - (c) feel completely indifferent, just shrug our shoulders and say that what goes on in the ILO no longer concerns us — as long, that is, as we continue to receive our pensions and our benefits from the SHIF?

Which of these categories do you think you belong to? I suspect that few will admit to being in category (c). Indeed, as Aamir reports elsewhere in this Bulletin, the presence of so many former colleagues at the 80th Anniversary Reunion last May, and the numerous messages from those who could not come, demonstrate that the ties between the ILO and its wrinklies, and among the wrinklies themselves, continue to be as strong as ever.

#### **Merci les francophones!**

J'espère que nos lecteurs francophones seront aussi ravis que moi en constatant une très nette augmentation du nombre de contributions reçues en français pour ce numéro du Bulletin. Cela m'évite cette fois de vous accabler de remarques sarcastiques pour stimuler ou provoquer des contributions en français. Je me limiterai donc à vous remercier tous de votre fidélité, de votre patience et de votre tolérance à mon égard et à souhaiter à tous nos lecteurs, francophones ou pas, une bonne fin d'année, une excellente fin de siècle et une superbe fin de millénaire.

Jack Martin.

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## EIGHTIETH ANNIVERSARY REUNION

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At first we waited for someone else to take the initiative in organizing something for the 80th anniversary; then we concluded, on the basis of very limited response to inquiries in the NL that there wasn't too much enthusiasm for any special function; then, under indignant pressure, we concluded that we had better do something.

In the event, the EAR turned out to be an extraordinary pleasant, though muted, affair. In truth, the famed *esprit de corps* of the ILO is still alive and well.

There was the traditional reception on Thursday, 27 May, the lunch on 28 May and a boat trip (on and off but finally on) on the 30th. The lunch was the highlight of the gathering; about 130 people attended of whom some 50 were from outside Geneva. The boat trip finally took place due to the single-minded devotion of Michael O'Callaghan and those who participated enjoyed it fully.

The Director-General, Juan Somavia, came to the reception and addressed us and met several of those present. Mario Tavelli also spoke on this occasion to introduce the Section of Former Officials to the DG. Francis Blanchard came to the lunch and addressed us; Ed Dowding, New Zealand, spoke on behalf of all those who came from abroad.

### Regrets and messages

Many of those who couldn't come, wrote to explain why and sent messages of good wishes. Mme. Léon Jouhaux, embodying the early history of the ILO, wrote a special letter regretting her inability to come and sending her greetings. It is quoted in full in the Names and News section. You will join me in sending our warm thanks and best wishes to her.

Obrad Ivetic, Belgrade, wrote: *Vu la situation malheureuse actuelle dans mon pays, je suis désolé de ne pas pouvoir participer à la célébration ... Je vous souhaite à tous de passer d'agréables moments ensemble ... en espérant que l'année prochaine j'aurai l'occasion de me joindre à vous ...*

Celia Ryan (Pamphilon) was going to Spain, as was M. Rossier; Enrico de Gennaro was going to Sweden while Frank Hutchful and his wife would be away on holiday. Robert Bell had a previous commitment with the Royal Lifeboat Institution. Mrs. M.J. Blackwood was going on a cruise. Mieczyslaw and Elzbieta Kabaj would unfortunately be away in Helsinki to participate in a meeting of experts on social protection organized by the EU (but they were able to attend the reception), Janine Heer from the depths of France, Hanafi phoning from Cairo and Don and Helen Snyder from Lenox, Massachusetts, deeply regretted their inability to come and sent warm greetings. Jean and Marie-Odile de Givry came for the reception but were unable to participate in the lunch; they conveyed their greetings to everyone. Liliane Lagnado phoned a special message of greetings.

Health problems posed obstacles to several. Eileen Kirkland, England, couldn't come in view of her age but wished us a very pleasant and successful celebration. Barbara and Arne Bjorsvik, also England, found that *they had got 10 years older than last time and now have difficulty in moving about. At almost 89 years of age I am restricted by a broken knee. ... Apart from that I am reasonably well — and am still taking care of around 60 members of the Norwegian Seamen's War Veterans Society, London Branch, arranging a lunch every two months and issuing a newsletter ...* (he seems eminently qualified to take over the task of organizing our reunions).

Andras Makadi, Budapest, wrote that unfortunately because of *the unstable state of health* he could not come. Joe Sweeney, Canada: *Much to my disappointment, I shall not be able to attend. Unfortunately, my wife ... has been seriously ill ... it will be several months before she recovers.* Basil and Olive Loveridge, England, had planned to come but he wrote: *I have had to cancel my visit ... Olive had a fall ... it shook her badly ... I can't leave her now.* Antoinette and Bernard Beguin had regretfully to cry off at the last minute but sent greetings. Dorothea Boam, England, felt that though she had a good quiet life, she regretted that she didn't manage to get far these days.

Bill (surname illegible) from Liphook(?), Hants, regretted they couldn't come — his wife would also have liked to be there to meet old friends. They sent their fondest regards to Ed Dowding, and their best wishes to all.

Rex Jenkins in Australia had prepared himself for the reunion fully intending to come. *Assiduously, I had prepared myself for another European sojourn and above all the 80th Anniversary Reunion. ... Victor and Joyce Ratnavale had been discussing the Reunion over the telephone all through 1997 and up to their departure for the US in '98. ... I had an ill-fated premonition that Victor and Joyce might have been on that Swissair flight when I heard it had gone down ... then about 36 hours later Eileen Hull telephoned me to give the totally unexpected sad news. ... It upset me for weeks ... and I felt mortified that V and J would not be there at the Reunion. ... Perhaps in a year or two I may be able to partake in one of your bi-yearly get togethers. ... My sincere best wishes for a memorable and happy reunion.*

Joe Young, Wilmington, Delaware, one of the instigators of the reunion, wrote: *I was one who expressed interest in attending any affair arranged to celebrate the 80th Anniversary. ... My first reaction was to immediately order an airline ticket, but after sleeping on the matter, I finally decided that it is not prudent at this time for me to consider a trip to Geneva. ... I expect to celebrate my 79th birthday on 25 May 1999. Please convey my good wishes to those who attend and my apology for not attending.*

### **Arrangements for the future**

At the Lunch, we distributed a 2nd Supplement to *Newsletter* No. 25; this sought your views on whether there should be any further Reunions and if so how they should be organized.

We had about a dozen written replies and several verbal messages. Here's a summary and some extracts.

#### **1. Comments on the 80th Anniversary Reunion**

On the whole, everyone enjoyed the gathering but there were some helpful comments.

*This year's reunion has proved that a reunion every five years is a must. You could see it on the faces of everyone ... Salah Ayoub. It's so lovely to get together with dear, old, friends and chat about good times past. Rosnah Marland. ... how much I enjoyed the reunion. Daphne Galley. A very enjoyable Reunion. F.J. Pidgeon. ... the very successful and enjoyable celebrations. Ray Dutoit. Such a wonderful success. Ed Dowding. I enjoyed the reception far more than five years ago because there were fewer people present and it was easier to chat to people. ... The lunch was agreeable, all the more so because it was informal and one could choose one's companions. The "on and off" boat trip was blessed with perfect weather ... a particularly enjoyable event for someone ... who no longer lives in Geneva. Irene Chamberlain.*

*The celebrations were a success. One can always do better ... for an event of certain importance such as the 80th Anniversary Reunion, seminars and exposés on current priorities of ILO programmes, e.g. certain forms of child labour or social dimensions of free trade and on "old favourites" such as technical cooperation or the World Employment Programme could be examined or reviewed with forward and backward looks. Bread and butter questions such as pensions and health insurance might also have their place. Kailas Doctor.*

Jimmy Dey had an interesting point of view and an interesting story to tell. *Contrary to what may be generally supposed an ILO anniversary is not only a rendezvous with old colleagues but also an opportunity to make new acquaintances — often through the most extraordinary coincidences. At the 75th anniversary I met Margaret Blackwood for the first time and discovered that we both knew a man who had spent six years with me in primary school in South Africa.*

*To explain the coincidences of the 80th anniversary, I need to go back about 20 years. At that time, when I was retired, Milan Kubr asked me to update MAN DEV's best-selling publication **How to Read a Balance Sheet**. I refused because I had been out of practice for many years and did not know enough about current practice. I told Milan he needed a university professor in accounting with a knowledge of programme learning.*

*For the lunch at the ILO I arrived a little late and found no empty seat near someone I knew. So I sat next to a complete stranger. No sooner had we begun to talk than I realized*



*that here was the man who had updated **How to Read a Balance Sheet**, and he, Dr. Derek Boland, fitted exactly the profile I'd given Milan.*

## **2. Should we have another reunion for the 85th anniversary in 2004?**

The answer is a definite Yes.

*A must. Salah Ayoub. **Please do have another.** Rosnah Marland. *To have one every five years is a lovely idea.* Daphne Galley. *Agree fully that a reunion every five years is a good thing.* Kailas Doctor. ... *certainly organize the 85th.* Jimmy Dey. *The timing of these reunions, every five years, may make any comments by someone of my age presumptuous! But still, it seems that a five-year interval is about right.* F.J. Pidgeon. *Personally I feel that these reunions should continue every five years.* Ray Dutoit.*

*I firmly believe that a reunion every five years is good not only for former officials but also for the ILO as it indicates to the Organization that former officials still see the ILO as a force for good in the world. It does seem, however, to have close family feelings of earlier days and it did appear to me that the representation from retirees from the 1970s and 1980s was greater than the later period.* Ed Dowding.

## **3. How should they be organized?**

The answer: by the same informal group as hitherto; it should consider itself mandated.

*Yes, the informal group should continue, please, as long as possible; but perhaps they should train some successors.* Vera Davies. *The informal group has done a superb job of organizing the event to date and subject to a group being available again I recommend a continuation of the system.* Ed Dowding. *As the informal group made such a good job of it this time, perhaps they would consider continuing? Certainly they can consider having a mandate from me.* Ray Dutoit. *The present organization seems to work well. It must put a considerable burden on the organizing group but this is a minor penalty for living in such a pleasant place!* F.J. Pidgeon. *I would be happy for the informal group to continue and it certainly has my mandate.* Irene Chamberlain. ... *the informal group should certainly organize the 85th anniversary. If it will help they can consider that they have a mandate from me to organize the celebration and, if need be, to co-opt whomsoever they please ... there's no knowing what exigencies may arise during the next five years.* Jimmy Dey.

*Present arrangement seems fine to me. The informal group has stood the test of time and it already has a built-in mechanism to take care of hazards of mortality and retirement.* Kailas Doctor. *Ideally, it should be an informal group ... and I would suggest that this year's group should continue with this task. It can always co-opt persons who would like to volunteer.* Salah Ayoub.

## **4. Ideas for the next reunion**

The present format found general support, but there were some helpful (though sometimes contradictory) suggestions made.

*The three events which have been organized for the past reunions seem to be an excellent format. The only suggestion I would like to make is an increase of time available for meeting with our colleagues. The cocktail party time passed all too soon and people I intended to meet had run out of time. At lunch there was little time for general chit-chat before sitting at the table.* Ed Dowding. *The format this year, a reception on Thursday following by a luncheon on Friday, was preferable to the reception followed by a formal dinner on the following day. An ex-colleague, still at work, complained that the date of the reunion, immediately before the Conference, made it difficult for us to meet during the weekend and "Why could you not have come a week earlier?"* F.J. Pidgeon.

*A reception and either lunch or dinner, depending on majority view (I prefer dinner), seems to meet the needs of the occasion. If enough colleagues want a boat trip, that should be laid on, but I won't participate. At the 75th I enjoyed the bridge tournament, but that appeals to too few to warrant the extra effort.* Jimmy Dey. *The semi-annual reception and a lunch or dinner should always be the basis of the 85th reunion. Despite the great efforts made by Rear Admiral O'Callaghan, I am not sure whether the boat trip will attract too many people so as to charter a boat. Those still living in Geneva usually are reluctant and those coming from far away prefer to shop or meet friends privately. But why not organize bridge, chess and tennis*

*tournaments? Of course such a reunion must be planned for and organized well in advance.* Salah Ayoub.

*For the 85th (since the number 85 does not strike a special chord!) the agenda may perhaps be less elaborate. ... Planning may perhaps begin not immediately but in the year 2002, two years ahead of the event.* Kailas Doctor.

#### **5. Should the Newsletter go to all former officials?**

There was some surprise that all former officials did not receive the NL. Nearly everyone thought that it should go to them all.

*I was surprised to learn that the NL does not go to all former officials. I was disappointed not to meet at the reception or the luncheon some ex-colleagues who are living in Geneva. Perhaps they were unaware of the event?* F.J. Pidgeon. *I feel that the NL should go to **all** former officials.* Ray Dutoit. *It would be a very good idea to send the NL to all former officials but this would be a costly exercise. Perhaps with the first issue a slip could be included with a request to return it if the NL is not wanted.* Ed Dowding. *I didn't realize that the NL was not sent to all former officials and I certainly think it should.* Irene Chamberlain. *As a dependant, let me say how much I appreciate the NL, it gives so much pleasure.* Daphne Galley. *As far as the NL is concerned, I insist that it should go to all former officials.* Salah Ayoub.

*As to who should receive the NL, there seems to be no point in sending it to those who do not want it. When the NL was revived after its brief suspension some former officials did not wish to receive it. So why send it to them?* Jimmy Dey. *Those on your mailing list were given an opportunity to say "yes". Is this not enough?* Kailas Doctor.

[At present the NL does **not** go to all former officials. Jimmy Dey is right: when it was revived, there was a form sent to everyone asking them to fill it in and return it if they wished to continue receiving the NL. Ever since, we have continued to get complaints from people who were taken off the mailing list and cannot remember ever having received a form (a typical international civil servant syndrome, you will say). The replies quoted above show that the effort with the form was soon forgotten. Perhaps it would be better to ask people to indicate specifically if they do not wish to receive it.]

#### **Conclusions**

Assuming that the small minority (we few, we happy few) that has replied is representative of the vast silent majority, the conclusions to be drawn from this exercise are:

There should be a reunion every five years: so the next one should be in 2004. It should be organized by an informal group, basically the one that has organized past reunions. This group should consider itself fully mandated for this purpose. Some of its members will be too long in the tooth for the next round, so new volunteers are welcome.

The format of the reunion should be much the same as hitherto but the programme should be reviewed in the light of the comments made and any fresh suggestions put forward.

The NL should go to all former officials (except those who specifically do not want it); in any case, at least the present distribution should be reviewed.

1 September 1999.

Aamir Ali.

#### **Stop press**

[Two letters that arrived too late to be taken into account in our review are reproduced below.]

The 80th anniversary year of the International Labour Organization was a great event in its history.

Former officials and staff of the Office also provided several arrangements for the occasion. One of them was the 80th Anniversary Reunion of former ILO officials in which my wife and I were lucky enough to take part. Almost 250 colleagues from different countries, who had devoted many years of their lives to the Organization, came for this

occasion. The friendly atmosphere in which we met and talked touched us deeply. I was pleased to meet colleagues from Austria, the Philippines, Japan, Germany, England, France, Switzerland and the USA. Many of us met at the reception for the first time with the new Director-General, Mr. Juan Somavia. We were pleased to hear that in his address to us he underlined in particular the importance of the preservation of connections between the Office and its former officials. Very good recollections remain of the speech at lunch of the ILO ex-Director-General Mr. Blanchard.

The anniversary gathering of the former ILO officials, as all previous ones, took place successfully. Sometimes I ask myself to whom we are obliged for the success of our gatherings? Tradition. Yes of course, it survives, namely in the ILO among international organizations. However, attaching great importance to the tradition, it is necessary to admit the particular merits of the *Friends Newsletter* and its untiring Editor and great organizer, Mr. Aamir Ali. An important role in that noble affair is also played by the Section of Former Officials of the ILO, the Staff Union and its bulletin. They assist to preserve good traditions and connections between the Office and its former officials in their mutual interests.

I take this opportunity to express to them my appreciations and good wishes.

14 October 1999.

Pavel Astapenko.

Yes, the five-yearly reunions of former ILO officials should certainly be continued! I attended the 70th and 80th Anniversary Reunions and both were highly enjoyable and enriching.

During the 70th anniversary celebrations we benefited from informative talks by highly competent serving officials on such matters as pensions, Health Fund, the finances of the ILO, etc. There were no such talks at the 80th Anniversary, and I strongly feel that they should be renewed. Such talks are useful for the up-to-date information they convey to former officials who may have lost touch with developments, as well as for the opportunity they provide for questions and answers to specific questions and for the making of suggestions for improvements.

I would urge whoever organizes the 85th Anniversary Reunion to secure the enthusiastic and creative support of the responsible serving officials concerned, especially the Chief of Personnel, with a view to ensuring the success of the talks and subsequent exchanges.

Who should organize future reunions? A group, preferably informal, of people as competent and enthusiastic as yourself and Jack Martin, with the *full* support of the Chief of Personnel, the Staff Union and its Section of Former Officials, should again be formed for future celebrations. I think such a group will be essential if the great successes you have achieved so far are to be maintained.

At the 80th anniversary it was wonderful to meet and talk with a vast number of former colleagues and friends during the well-organized cocktail. The new Director-General gave us a heartwarming welcome and an interesting, forward-looking speech. This feature should continue. The lunch was equally successful; we organized a "Finance" table, and all enjoyed a lively exchange of views on numerous aspects of our current lives. In fact we hardly discussed finance at all!

Mr. Francis Blanchard gave us an entertaining discourse on the past, present and future of the ILO. An idea occurs to me that might be interesting to pursue; what about trying to get well-meaning members of the Governing Body, one from each of the three groups, to give short addresses at future lunches? Only an idea, but who knows, it might be worthwhile testing it?

All the very best for the year 2000!

19 October 1999.

John Strawson.

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## AMARTYA SEN

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The award of the 1998 Nobel Prize in Economics to Amartya Sen has a special significance for the ILO, since Dr. Sen made an important contribution to the development of the World Employment Programme in its early years. In the following article Sunil Guha recalls the pioneering work that Amartya Sen did for the ILO at that time. This is followed by some excerpts from the address that Dr. Sen made at this year's session of the International Labour Conference. Perhaps these two articles will prompt others, particularly former (or even present?) WEPsters, to provide their views, recollections or comments on the work of Amartya Sen, or on the early years of the WEP, or on anything ...?

JPM

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### **Dr. Amartya Sen and the ILO**

by *Sunil Guha*

Those of us who served the International Labour Organization and its World Employment Programme Department in the 1970s and 1980s have very special reasons for jubilation and pride at Amartya's well-deserved honour. Dr. Sen has been called by another Nobel Laureate in Economics, Professor Robert Solow, "the conscience of the economics profession" for introducing an ethical dimension into debate on economic theory and development and his relentless crusade towards a more equitable and just society. It was but natural that the ILO should be drawn towards Dr. Sen's work; and Dr. Sen attracted towards the ILO and its mission. The launching of the World Employment Programme in 1970 as the ILO's main contribution to the International Development Strategy for the second United Nations Development Decade was the real starting point of Sen's regular contact with the ILO; and he soon became WEP's honoured guest, eminent collaborator, friend, philosopher and guide.

The ILO owes a great deal of gratitude to Sen for sparing some time from his gruelling work schedule for writing two most outstanding monographs/books on the subjects of "Employment technology and development" and "Poverty and famine — An essay on entitlement and deprivation" and for being on the Advisory Panel of the "International Labour Review", the ILO's prestigious journal now in its 77th year of publication.

Dr. Sen was given the honour of writing the first monograph of the "Employment and technology" component of WEP research entitled "Employment, technology and development" in 1973, supported by a research grant from the Swedish Government. The book was later published in 1975 on behalf of the ILO by Oxford University Press, Ely House, London. Our colleague, Dr. Ajit Bhalla, who headed this branch was singularly lucky for this head start because Sen's name carried both prestige and respect and each of his works were eagerly awaited.

This monograph was an analytical piece of work with emphasis not so much on development of new intermediate techniques but more on putting to use existing knowledge through an adequate institutional and incentives structure and pricing policies regarding factor inputs and products. The purpose clearly was to provide a conceptual framework and guidelines for further work in the field.

A number of other policy implications emanating from Dr. Sen's study had an important bearing on the World Employment Programme as a whole. Firstly, the distinction he made between the various aspects of employment problems was illuminating not only for pure analysis but also for identifying the magnitude of the problem and formulating policies tailored specifically to its different aspects and dimensions. The message was that in most less developed countries one-dimensional measurement of unemployment was likely to be a misleading and inadequate basis for employment policy.

Secondly, the policy implications of employment expansion through the instrument of appropriate technical choices, he argued, can be examined most realistically only with reference to the relevant modes of production.

Thirdly, poor project planning and design, administrative rigidities, inadequate analysis of the nature of the employment problem and lack of criteria for the selection of projects have often resulted in public employment schemes failing to meet their objective of helping the “working poor” below the poverty line. Some knowledge of the size and distribution of different income groups below the poverty line is necessary, Sen argued, if the public employment schemes’ purpose of catching the really poor is not to be thwarted.

Fourthly, another issue of employment policy brought out by Dr. Sen in this monograph is that of prices as signals for decision-making and the advisability of using shadow prices as tools for decision-making.

In the appendices to this monograph, Sen examined a number of India’s anti-poverty programmes and commented on their strengths and weaknesses.

Sen’s next book for the ILO entitled “Poverty and famines — An essay on entitlement and deprivation” was prepared for the World Employment Programme’s “Income distribution and employment” component headed then by the late Felix Paukert. In writing this book, Dr. Sen drew upon his earlier writings published between 1973-81 in various journals in India and abroad; and it was published in 1981 on behalf of the ILO WEP by Oxford University Press.

The main focus of this book was on the causation of starvation in general and of famines in particular. Dr. Sen argued, on the basis of case studies of the great Bengal famine of 1943, the Ethiopian famines of 1973 and 1974, the Bangladesh famine of 1974 and the famines in the Sahel countries of Africa in the 1970s, that the traditional analysis of famines focusing on food supply was fundamentally defective — theoretically unsound, empirically inept and dangerously misleading for policy. He concluded that “there are social and economic factors at work that limit the economic opportunities of certain groups to cause starvation”.

In this book Dr. Sen also discussed the complex and multidimensional nature of poverty and deprivation and presented a most useful framework for analysing and synthesizing the elements of poverty. In this “the appropriate focus variables” are the capabilities to be adequately nourished, to be comfortably clothed, to avoid escapable morbidity and preventable mortality, and so on. Initially, the improvement of primary incomes will entail upgrading endowments in the hands of the poor and improving the exchange entitlements which ailed real income from the bundle of endowments at their disposal. While incomes can provide command over commodities, the conversion of commodities into capabilities will require socially provided consumption of education, health, water supply, sanitation, and so on. The value of Sen’s framework lies in drawing attention to each of the links and their mutual relationship in the chain of poverty alleviation: endowments — exchange entitlements — real incomes — command over commodities, capabilities and social consumption.

The other two components of the World Employment Programme which drew inspiration from Sen’s works on appropriate technology, deprivation and entitlement were “Rural employment policies and basic needs” and the “Emergency employment schemes”. The first components then led by Dharam Ghai did further work on the promotional, preventive and protective measures integral to a comprehensive anti-poverty approach. The second component, which Emile Costa and later myself led, had both a research and operational component, researched into the reasons for entitlement failures in rural communities and assisted close to 40 governments in the LDCs in Asia, Africa and Latin America in launching soundly designed pilot emergency projects. We followed in the Emergency Employment Programme a 3-M approach of downstream project activities (micro level), mid-stream training and capacity development (meso level), and upstream policy advice (macro level). Based on a demand-driven approach and comprising a package of community infrastructural works directly relevant to food production and environment regeneration, the programme also helped to strengthen grass-root democracy and participatory process — issues very dear to Sen’s heart.

I have personally three other reasons to be proud of Dr. Sen’s outstanding achievements: we both happened to be Bengali and alma mater of the Economics

Department of Calcutta Presidency College. And quick in the heel of the Nobel Prize the Indian Government decorated him with its highest award — “Bharat Ratna”.

23 March 1999.

**Dr. Amartya Sen's address to the  
International Labour Conference,  
June 1999**

[It would of course be quite preposterous to attempt to summarize the stimulating and closely reasoned address which Amartya Sen gave to the Conference in June. It really must be read in its entirety. For those interested the full text can be found in *Provisional Record* No. 21 of the 87th Session of the Conference, Geneva, 1999. Here are just a few excerpts to whet your appetite.]

The process of economic globalization is seen as a terrorizing prospect by many precariously placed individuals and communities. And yet it can be made efficacious and rewarding if we take an adequately broad approach to the conditions that govern our lives and work. There is a need for ... changes that can transform a dreaded anticipation into a constructive reality.

The ILO ... has to respond to the terrible fact ... that the world is full of overworked and unemployed people.

Given the massive levels of unemployment ..., it is right that policy attention be focused on expanding jobs and working opportunities. And yet the conditions of work are also important. ... The need for trade-offs is often exaggerated and is typically based on very rudimentary reasoning.

It is natural to suggest that one way of reducing the burden of dependency related to ageing is to raise the retirement age, or at least give people in good health the option to go on working. In resisting this proposal, it is frequently argued that if this were done, then the aged would replace the younger workers and there would be more unemployment among the young. ... Surely the trade-off with youthful unemployment is a real *non sequitur*. The absolute size of the working population does not, in itself, cause more unemployment. ... The combination of the gut reaction to the effect that the source of the problem of an ageing population is that the old cannot work with the gut reaction that the young must lose jobs if the older people did work is to provide a hopeless impasse. ... I am afraid that quite a lot of thinking on labour economics is really governed by presumption of conflicts which have not been thoroughly examined.

It can be shown that protection against vulnerability and contingency ... is, to a great extent, conditional on the working of democratic participation. ... Famines do not occur in democracies. ... This is because famines are, in fact, extremely easy to prevent if the government tries to prevent them and a government in a multi-party democracy with elections and a free media has strong political incentives to undertake famine prevention. This would indicate that political freedom ... helps to safeguard economic freedom ... and the freedom to survive.

The problems of some of the East and South-East Asian economies bring out ... the penalty of undemocratic governance. ... The development of the financial crisis in some of these economies has been closely linked with the lack of transparency in business. ... The opportunity that would have been provided by democratic processes to challenge the hold of selected families or groups in several of these countries could have made a very big difference. ... Once the financial crisis led to a general economic recession, the protective power of democracy ... was very badly missed. ... The vulnerable in Indonesia may not have missed democracy acutely when things went up and up, but that very lacuna kept their voices muffled and ineffective as the unequally shared crisis developed. The protective role of democracy is strongly missed when it is most needed.

The increasingly globalized world economy calls for a similarly global approach to basic ethics and political and social procedures. ... The need for invoking such a global response has never been stronger than it is now. The economically globalizing world, with all its opportunities as well as its problems and difficulties, calls for a similarly globalized understanding of the priority of decent work and of its manifold demands on economic,

political and social arrangements. To recognize this pervasive need is itself a very fine beginning.

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### Wilfred Jenks

by Tony Dawson

When Chef de Cabinet Peter Straus quit the ILO to run Manhattan's TV, David Morse took Bob Cox from Jenks' entourage to replace Peter. To be Bobless was a heavy loss for anyone; it even rendered the polymathic Wilfred Jenks a trifle nostalgic. *Faute de mieux*, Jenks called upon me to draft the ILO's Eighth Annual Report to the UN, and allayed my timidity by remarking that the seventh report — Bob's last job for him — was a fine document that would not be equalled. Between spells of lengthy and pedestrian toil, I would return to his office with the text of each chapter as soon as it was written. The few moments taken by Helen Giddy to hand Jenks a chapter, tell him it was from me, walk back to her office and tell me I should wait were apparently sufficient for Jenks to do like Oscar Wilde: literally a page-turner who could read each page as he turned it. For he would call me in immediately, swiftly make his comments and bounce me back to my desk for the rewriting. After flicking through my redraft of the final chapter, he concluded: "Well, we can send it to the printers, and make further improvements in the proofs — after I've seen how it strikes me in print."

After dinner in his apartment prior to my departure for the NY Liaison Office, Jenks gave me a masterly sketch of his strategy for ILO relations with the United Nations, and murmured that I might try to influence the UK delegation among others in the right direction for the ILO. Still living in hope, in NY, he honoured me with an introduction to his old friend Selwyn Lloyd, the British Foreign Minister.

In the mid-1970s, when Morse retired and Jenks succeeded him, I departed Geneva to join the World Food Programme. I was deeply saddened by the news of Jenks' fatal heart attack, only a few miles from me in Rome. First and foremost, he had made the world a better place for millions of people, ranging from workers to lawyers. Secondly, he did not share the distrust of economists within the ILO. He had always been kind, helpful and encouraging to me. He once remarked that there are two kinds of British, one exportable and the other not. I was glad that he considered me exportable. I stayed away from Britain even in retirement — away from my lost mother's bitter memories as a victim of the British class structure. That snobbery may once have appalled Jenks too. He opposed my transfer to the Liaison with WFP post, which would give me a promotion within the ILO. That back-handed compliment (his memo implied that he wanted me to remain exclusively of service to the ILO) illustrated his conviction that the amount of service one could give to the ILO was far more important than the amount of money one could make out of the ILO. Later, when I went on secondment to Rome with a further promotion, within WFP, I was grateful to Jenks for the extremely generous letter of recommendation which he then sent to me. The ILO (in the person of Mr. Jain) was equally kind to me, a prodigal son returned — temporarily appointing me D.1 for an assignment in Pakistan during 1986.

Not long before Jenks passed away, I was surprised by the considerable length of a personal letter written from the Office that I received from a friend who had reached D.2 level. He lacked a university degree, due to the Depression, but was the author of an ILO best-seller. His letter stated that he was not at all busy because he, and indeed some of his peers, found that Jenks did not need or seek much of their advice or assistance. Jenks already knew more than them about almost anything, and could well exceed their work capacity. That was no news; long before, Maurice Stack had shared with me his astonishment at Jenks' capacity to grasp in a flash every aspect and angle of the matter when the most important Convention on social security was going through the Conference. Nor did I suspect that Jenks' ILO workload brought on his heart attack. I had seen the quantity of books he bought each time he came to New York; eventually he had to keep books behind books upon his deep but groaning shelves at home. His whole lifestyle placed a strain on him that eventually exceeded his miraculous strength and motivation.



## Un oiseau rare

par *Antonio Andrés*

Il y a quelques courtes années (les années sont toujours trop courtes, surtout les dernières), à l'occasion du départ à la retraite d'un collègue qui m'était proche (très, son bureau était collé au mien et on se voyait toute la journée), j'ai voulu lui rendre hommage en lui dédiant quelques rimes que je prétendais humoristiques sur cette chose, mortellement toxique dans la durée, qui nous courbe, nous dessèche et nous rend acides; je veux parler du temps, du temps qui passe. Il faut dire que le temps qui passe — ouragan qu'on ne voit pas venir mais qui emporte toute chose — était une véritable obsession pour mon collègue et ami; et cela probablement depuis son plus jeune âge. Si bien que chaque jour, et parfois plusieurs fois dans la journée, il me demandait si je me rendais compte que j'étais un jour plus vieux que la veille; et c'est tout juste s'il ne me faisait pas remarquer à midi que j'étais plus vieux qu'à dix heures. Si je partais en vacances et que je lui racontais à mon retour les découvertes que j'avais faites, il ne manquait pas de me dire que tout cela était très bien mais que j'étais revenu trois (ou quatre) semaines plus âgé et que ce temps jamais ne reviendrait. Je le savais bien, moi; mais lui semblait porter le poids de mes jours à moi autant que celui des siens à lui.

Hélas! Les ans lui avaient donné prématurément, tout comme à moi, quelques cheveux gris qui auréolaient la sérénité de son visage de patricien. Plus tard, à mesure que ses beaux cheveux devenaient plus gris d'abord et plus blancs ensuite, et que son volume corporel augmentait sans faire de manières, sa sagesse, alliée à son poids, ralentissait ses élans, émoussait ses envies. C'était le début de la philosophie, celle qui précède la retraite. Alors, un jour, ayant peut-être jugé que son capillaire était suffisamment blanc et ses collègues de plus en plus ploucs, il décida de prendre sa retraite sans attendre la cloche de la fin.

Et il nous quitta sans états d'âme. Comme il était pacifique, sans méchanceté, d'humeur toujours égale, on était — j'avais été — «condamné» à vivre près de lui en bonne harmonie. Cela fut facile et agréable.

J'ai apprécié son calme, sa patience, son incapacité — chose plutôt rare — à faire un «coup tordu». Un compagnon dont je regrettais le départ. C'est pour cela que j'écrivis un poème à son intention; pour fêter son départ dans les rires que sa lecture ne manquerait, croyais-je, de susciter. Ouais; il ne se sentit le moins du monde intéressé ni simplement curieux du contenu. Il fit un geste de refus lorsque je lui tendis le papier et me dit qu'il viendrait me voir. Bien entendu, il ne revint jamais et jamais ne prit connaissance des lignes maladroites que je lui dédiais.

Aujourd'hui, peu nombreux seront les collègues qui sauront identifier mon cher ami disparu (pas si disparu que ça car il habite la France voisine et se porte, paraît-il, comme un charme). Je me permets donc de porter à la connaissance du lecteur cette aimable (?) plaisanterie, sûr que je suis de ne pas mettre à mal sa réputation. Quoi qu'il en soit, il est indubitable qu'il s'en ficherait plus qu'éperdument ... Et qui sait? Le hasard peut-être fera tomber ces lignes sous ses yeux. Si cela se produisait, en sourirait-il?

Rara avis in terris. Oiseau rare sur la terre.

Dédié à B...

Alerte jeune homme arrivé un matin,  
lorsqu'on fait de sa vie encore un festin  
et qu'au Bureau les jolis minois et les blondes déesses  
te faisaient croire, ô candide, à mille promesses,  
ce temps béni où rien le jeune ne tracasse,  
songeais-tu peut-être déjà au temps qui passe?  
Sûrement pas, car trop jeune pour cela; cependant,  
c'est sûr que tu rêvais déjà de facile argent,  
et si tu attendais chaque année l'augmentation  
tu te moquais encore de l'âge et de la pension.  
Mais, depuis, l'ami amer tu as bu la tasse  
et c'est bien la faute du temps qui passe.  
On sait que l'ambition ne fut pas ton dada  
et que, dès lors, tu l'as eu dans le baba;  
aussi, au Bureau, ta vie fut bien paisible

car il s'agissait d'y faire le moins possible.  
 «Conseil, Conférence ..., bof, moi rien ne me harasse,  
 rien ne m'émeut sauf le temps qui passe».  
 Te souviens-tu du collègue pleuré, M. ...ein,  
 celui qui, par devoir ou ennui, devint M. Nein?  
 «Allô, M. B., content? Ca va ce travail?»  
 «Ca va, vous savez, pour moi ce n'est qu'un bail»  
 «Rien à me dire? Voulez-vous que je repasse?»  
 «Bof, ce qui m'importe à moi c'est le temps qui passe».  
 Never first, never last, telle fut ta devise,  
 et jamais non plus mouiller ta chemise.  
 On ne savait pas si tu étais présent ou absent,  
 on ne savait pas ce que cachait ton air indolent;  
 quoi que tu dis, quoi que tu fis, ce fut l'impasse  
 car tu étais en retard, ô combien, sur le temps qui passe.  
 Tant d'années ont défilé sans bruit,  
 tant de jours gais, tant de tristes nuits,  
 tant de voix entendues se sont effacées,  
 tant des visages chéris ou détestés sont oubliés,  
 tant et tant ... je sais, cela te dépasse;  
 pas autant cependant que le temps qui passe.  
 Quand le soleil à l'aube repousse la lune,  
 il n'y a pas de dispute, pas de rancune;  
 quand la lune repousse le soleil,  
 il n'y a pas de haine, pas d'orgueil;  
 il n'y a qu'un jour comme les autres qui trépasse,  
 il n'y a que le temps calme et vorace qui passe.  
 Le temps c'est rien, un oiseau qui vole,  
 un souvenir qui s'arrête et qui s'envole,  
 c'est, sur une plage, d'une vague l'écume;  
 c'est un peu de joie, un peu d'amertume;  
 c'est un garçon qu'une fille embrasse;  
 c'est ... c'est quoi au juste le temps qui passe?  
 Vois-tu comme c'est long le temps de demain?  
 Comme il est long à venir le fleuri printemps?  
 Mais, aïe, qu'il est court le temps d'hier;  
 il est déjà oublié le froid de l'hiver;  
 et rien ne sert de se voiler la face,  
 de feindre d'ignorer le temps qui passe.  
 Nous sommes parfois tombés dans la tentation,  
 fréquente, hélas, de ternir des doux la réputation,  
 car jamais en colère, toujours sourire au visage,  
 tu donnais la vision d'un homme calme et sage.  
 Alors, quand soudain tu prenais ton air rêveuse,  
 on savait que tu songeais au temps qui passe.  
 As-tu encore la passion de la vie?  
 De la découverte le goût et l'envie?  
 De l'amour sens-tu encore les frissons?  
 Ou bien ne penses-tu qu'à la pension?  
 Eh ben, mon vieux, grand bien te fasse  
 ta folle idée du temps qui passe.  
 Va en paix, tu as accompli ta mission,  
 et en touchant chaque mois la pension  
 pense à tes collègues au Bureau, restés fidèles,  
 même s'ils travaillaient, tu le disais, comme des «brèles».  
 Et que ni l'ennui ni la maladie ne te terrassent.  
 Contemple serein, si tu le peux, le temps qui passe.  
 C'est les meilleurs qui s'en vont, dit-on;

ceux dont on n'a pas vu la transpiration,  
les ceux qu'au travail n'ont pas perdu leur souffle,  
pour lesquels il n'y a que l'horaire qui soit resté souple.  
A toi la retraite, mon ami B..., fini la paperasse.  
Il a quand même du bon le temps qui passe.  
Va de l'avant, ne regarde pas en arrière,  
saute les obstacles, contourne les barrières  
devant une retraite longue et harmonieuse,  
et de l'amour encore et une santé radieuse,  
après une vie de labeur où tu fus cadennassé  
qui se conjugue désormais au temps passé.

Voilà. Vous avez lu en entier? Bravo! Faites une pause et sortez prendre un café.  
Il faut savoir se donner un peu de bon temps.

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## Lafrance

by Angela Butler

I cannot say that when the *Friends Newsletter* comes into my letterbox I immediately drop anything else I may be doing at that moment and settle down for a good read. But within the next week or so I have certainly read it from cover to cover, returning sometimes to particular articles or letters from or about people I specially remember. Probably the section "Remembrance of Things Past" gets my attention first. They always make me recall yet other "things past", all too often trivial events which have never found a home in the archives and can be of little general interest, and yet ...

In the December 1998 issue you paid tribute to Robert and Sonia Lafrance. Sonia was indeed a personality in her own right, and Robert, too, was one of the ILO's personalities, if a little less flamboyant. My first vivid memory of him was during the Philadelphia Conference. I was attached to the typing pool, a slow and incompetent typist, but after a while Paddy Stacey found a use for me: I could proofread those interminable stencils of the *Provisional Record* in both English and French and therefore no longer felt entirely useless. It was at that Conference that I saw in operation the ILO's extraordinary *esprit de corps*, with chiefs of division pitching in, late in the night, helping to assemble documents, and always taking a direct and kindly interest in how the work was going. Robert Lafrance went one better. Somewhere in the precincts of Temple University he discovered an all-night stand and turned up at the pool laden with brown paper bags of food to sustain our flagging spirits: coffee, sandwiches, hamburgers, donuts. No wonder I remember him.

But an even more memorable occasion occurred three years later. In the spring of 1947 a large contingent of the Montreal staff came to Geneva (a number of divisions and their staffs had already been transferred to Geneva, although no decision had yet been taken to transfer the whole office back "home"). I was among them, eager to see and do everything that was within reach. However, tourism had not yet come back to Europe, and very, very few of us had cars. Robert and Sonia decided that we should be shown some of their beautiful France that was at our door but for most of us out of reach.

I see I have slipped from "I" into "we", and in fact the invitation was extended to three of us. I was sharing an apartment with two other Canadians: Odette Brosseau and Ray Graham. I wonder whether they remember our whirlwind introduction to France as vividly as I do.

We turned up punctually at the Lafrance's apartment one Sunday morning at 9 a.m. (We worked a five-and-a-half day week in those days.) Madame was not ready. She breezed in and said we should have "un petit verre de champagne pour nous mettre dans l'ambiance de la belle France" while she finished getting ready. I don't know what the other two did, but I remember I managed to leave my glass, half drunk, on the grand piano before we left. The car was a big one for we were six in it, the sixth being (I think) Maurice Lafrance. Our first stop was, logically, le point de la Caille. Some of us walked across the rickety bridge, but Sonia went to the café by the bridge for "un petit verre de blanc". Odette politely accompanied her.

Robert drove on. The next stop was the monastery of La Grande Chartreuse. Here it was Robert and Maurice who left us to visit the monastery. Women were not allowed.

Inevitably we (the women) ended up at a café on the main square. While we waited for the men to rejoin us Sonia ordered some more white wine! When we set off again Robert was in a hurry for he had ordered lunch at a restaurant he knew in Grenoble and feared we might be too late. All was well, however, and we sat down to one of those remarkable and memorable Sunday lunches that last for three hours, for which France is justly famous. I do not remember what was on the menu. Dish followed dish, and with each course there was another wine which simply had to be tasted. At the end I quite welcomed the bitter, bitter black coffee, which had a settling effect! The drive back was uneventful. It had been a long, long day, but memorable.

When did this happen? In late April or in May, for spring had not really come yet. There were primroses along the roadside, but only the bushes were tinged with green, not the trees. The monastery was wreathed with wispy clouds, romantic but not warm.

15 August 1999.

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## Tout est relatif

par *Jacques Balanche*

[M. Balanche nous envoie un «petit souvenir cocasse» de Saigon où il était en service en 1975. Il s'agit de deux extraits du *Courrier d'Extrême-Orient* du 24.2.75, dont le premier est un article de la première page:

A Saigon  
VAGUE DE FROID  
pendant quelques jours

SAIGON (VP) La baisse soudaine de la température enregistrée depuis deux jours à Saigon est due à la vague de froid qui a passé par la Chine continentale. La direction de la météorologie a fait savoir que cette vague de froid durera encore quelques jours.

A la page 11 de ce même numéro du journal, le bulletin météorologique annonce que la température maximale à Saigon a été de 32,7 degrés et la température minimale de 21,6 degrés.]

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## One year later

by *Myron Ratnavale*

[In September last year, we mourned the tragedy of flight SR111 and the death of Joyce and Victor Ratnavale.

A year later, their son Myron wrote his reflections on that accident and the sad loss that he and his two sisters suffered. With his permission, we reproduce his article here.]

I decided to write these lines in view of numerous demands from the press and with the purpose of trying to shed some light on what the last year had represented from a personal perspective and what I have shared with families.

I hope it brings something ...

The morning of the disaster was learning about it through the eyes of CNN on television after receiving a phone call from a relative in the USA at 5 a.m. Geneva time. Your body starts progressively shutting down in a protection mechanism and in the space of a few hours you are starting to be a total stranger to your environment. You do not understand. *Swissair does not crash*, plane crashes only happen to others, survivors exist. This didn't really happen. Denial.

The morning of 3 September was to prove us all wrong. The days following the accident were a blur of events in your brain trying to fathom and understand the incomprehensible. Submit pictures. Describe any identifying clothes, marks or items that could help identify the victim. A few days later go and give your blood at the hospital for DNA. Police ask you politely if they can look for fingerprints at the house. The whole town is in a state of shock. The reality of it all just gets grimmer and each fact that you learn and have to cope with just hits you as hard as that first morning.

Days turn into weeks and you still try to make sense of it all. The black boxes will tell us. No they won't, they're silent for six minutes. What happened for six minutes? None of us really wants to think about it in concrete terms. You spend your time trying to sort out all the open ends of the person(s) who have now deceased. Comforting siblings, children, fiancés, spouses, etc., talking, talking and sleeping from exhaustion.

So what can we do? Hold “memorial services”. No bodies, no formal identification, no idea of what happened. Day by day you wait for that call from the RCMP saying they have identified the person(s) you had on the flight. For some it came in several weeks, about three months later as in our case, the last ones just before Christmas. The only comfort was a common feeling that the Canadians were doing everything possible in very very hard circumstances. Information about what was happening was entirely circumstantial. Contacts were one-to-one and the Internet a daily source of information to learn more what was happening daily on that side of the Atlantic.

Most tried to make sense of it talking to professionals. What does this happen to me? This plane didn't just crash, it was pulverized. When can I have a burial? What am I going to bury? The Canadians continue to do a great job comforting and explaining what they know and don't know. Families in France and the USA are attributed “a family contact person” who becomes the contact person for all their questions. In Switzerland this process is seemingly never started. The help desk goes to Zurich. Family members seeking professional help are told by “Careteams” that they only have addresses of institutes near Zurich. The person answering the phone is always different. Staff probably giving it their best shot but neither trained nor experienced in any of this. It all breaks down. Families get fed up and basically give up on that aspect in Switzerland. The echoes I receive from France and the USA are different and more positive. Why two different policies?

A Families Association is created. Attitudes range from: Who are you? What's your aim? Can you help me with X and Y problem? to: “Yes its very helpful – I felt the same thing”. I need to speak to other families. One common thread does come through. If you haven't experienced this sort of thing, no matter how good your intentions, you will never really understand what the bereaved person is going through.

A wonderful person emerges in the process who lives in New York. Hans Ephraimson who lost his daughter in the KAL015 flight shot down by the Russians. He has been helping victims of air crash accidents ever since and must be the most informed and warm person in these trying circumstances. He has all my respect for the help and effort he has brought to the whole process and, despite being in his seventies, is a bundle of energy, coming to family meetings in Geneva, New York and Halifax and so helpful in everything. Putting families of other air crash disasters in touch (and notably the TWA800 families who also offered all their support to the Swissair families in so many ways), the perfect diplomat and gentleman always helping in the interests of the families with no ulterior motive.

Weeks become months. The Hon. Benoît Bouchard comes from Canada to see the families in France and Switzerland in December to explain what the investigation involves and puts a human face on the violence of it all. By Christmas parts of all the persons on the plane have been identified.

Families have to start making sense of it all and the self-protective shield the human body puts up starts coming down. People have to start relating to a daily reality of life after tragedy. It hurts, and the reality is only that much harder. No bodies, no explanations as to why it happened and a continuing strong bonding with the Canadians who are the last link to those last moments of life and who continue to give a human element to it all. Suddenly we are in a world of PTS (post traumatic stress).

Administrative blunders happen. Coffins wrapped in cardboard boxes marked “human remains” get offloaded in the cargo airport at Geneva and handed over to families unceremoniously. Some families receive only a fraction of their loved one(s), sometimes as little as a symbolic piece of the human body. Most of the remains will not be identified and will be buried in a communal burial plot on 1 September 1999.

Despite some massive databases tracking families by Swissair it gets very complicated. Some families receive mail when they don't want it, others don't receive anything. It is all surely very difficult to administer as well. What's a family? Extended family? Wives who lost their first husbands who had since remarried? Fathers who have divorced but lost their first sons? Family quarrels also happen. A reflection of the complexity of our present-day society. One cannot judge but only seek to ease the pain so many different people feel in different ways and expressed through rage, anger and love.

Lawyers also get in on the act. All the clichés come to bear. Registered letters from local lawyers and security offices mandated locally to contact families on behalf of other lawyers or persons “seeking to help ...”. One thing becomes clear. The more reputable lawyer firms do not solicit families and there is no urgency in any of this. This is perceived as a “Big” case. The press distorts the figures and all sorts of sums get publicized. In reality not much has changed behind the scenes – it will probably be long and drawn out like all previous accidents.

In February the press highlights the fact that the compensation offered by Swissair is different in Europe than in the USA. Perhaps badly briefed by their insurers, Swissair realizes the bad press this brings and reverses its decision in a matter of hours after a family meeting makes a point of highlighting it over the weekend. Why does it have to be so public before understanding that you can’t equate one American with two Europeans in purely monetary compensation terms. Swissair is surely at odds with their re-insurers, rightly so, but it is also down to money and big bucks for all the legal entities involved and will be for some time – the longer the better perhaps in their eyes – to the detriment of Swissair, who probably does not want to be saddled with this for years to come.

March 1999 was my first visit to Halifax and in the space of three intensive days this was the time when I had to pick up two coffins, visit Peggy Cove and visit Shearwater where the investigators, and notably Vic Gerden, explain as humanely as possible what they can and show you what is actually left of the aircraft if you wish to see it. Having seen with your own eyes you come to realize the destruction wrought on this aircraft. Apart from the landing gear and the engines, everything is just bits of small shredded metal and cable. All the business class seats are held in two or three boxes of one cubic metre. Water is unyielding and you come to realize the tremendous impact and destruction that must have occurred in the space of a few seconds and how the plane was pulverized as it hit the surface nose first. How long had it been falling? What happened in those last minutes? What were all those poor 229 people thinking and experiencing?

Halifax was also the occasion to meet the divers, the first on the scene. Young lads for whom you also had a lot of admiration. Some touching moments where you come to realize that it is as important for them to see you as it is for you to meet them after what they have seen and touched. You don’t discuss the detail but exchange something very powerful nevertheless. You feel for them and all the others in the Canadian armed forces, volunteer organizations, the local population, medical people ... who all worked so hard to try to rescue, yet were faced with a situation which was already beyond their control in terms of rescuing anyone for them to be able to do anything. They would have given what they could to have been able to do more if they could have. You leave them knowing that this is a certain fact. What do you write in their signatory book that could do them honour?

The last few months before the first year burial and anniversary are now spent receiving personal effects which have been recovered, labelled and returned to you. It’s hard opening up wallets, papers partially smeared by being underwater and trying yet again to comprehend what happened. Privately, the families have also set up their own self-counselling sessions with the help of a local psychiatrist in Geneva. Organized newsletters, informal reunions, shared information and experiences. It is a continual process made up of ups and downs, participation and exhaustion over the weeks.

Now we all have to get ready for the first year memorial service. For me I return to Halifax in order to assist in the final burial of my parents’ remains along with all the other persons who shared that tragic fate a year ago. I was supposed to be on that flight with them and also lost three other friends on that plane. You don’t get over this, you only go on living life in a different perspective. Maybe one day we will know, although I suspect that day is still not soon and the hard facts will be hard to come by. Sometimes when you least expect it, it lunges out at you and reduces you to tears in seconds because of an event, a comment or an experience, particularly when you are not prepared. It happened to me only the other day as I was confronted with the same waiting room in Geneva almost a year to the day that I had last seen it when I took that flight.

I will stop here. My thanks again to all the Canadians and others involved in one way or another with this tragedy and for all their help to the families. My continual thoughts and prayers to all the mothers, fathers, children and friends of those on the SR111 flight which we have all either taken personally or have friends who have taken it

so often. 18 July 1998 was to be my last time. Two years and one day after the TWA800 flight.

Geneva, July 1999.

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### A new ILO management

by Bert Zoetewij

With the dubious distinction of having retired well before the editors and most readers of our august *Newsletter*, I still occasionally visit the ILO, the other day to sit in on the GB programme, etc., committee's discussion and smooth endorsement of the Programme and Budget proposals for 2000-01. Prosaic stuff, you may say. Yet interesting inasmuch as it shows how an organization puts its money where its mouth is. And if it is a good PB — I think this one is outstanding — much else besides. More of this in a moment.

Those who left the Office long ago would find it much changed. In my days, quiet electric typewriters replacing the clattering mechanical ones were a major technological step forward. Now the place is full of electronic devices, particularly PCs, linked to an Intranet, two of them opposite the GB reception desk on R.3 where any visitor can visit the ILO website with all manner of information which, if printed out, might make a weighty book. Try to ring an official not at his desk, and you may be met by an answering machine. Or if there is a secretary, no need to give your telephone number: (s)he sees it on his or her own set. Visibly, geographical distribution of recruitment has been effective. But my overwhelming impression of change was the massive presence of women among delegates, staff, observers and in the interpreters' booths. Appropriately, the GB committee discussed a plan for building a crèche for the use of delegates as well as staff members. Also, with a fine sense of verbal tuning, the private firm whose cars occupy the area in the P3 garage where I always parked mine is called "Systor". (Perhaps less felicitously, at a time when business corporations are shedding perks like executive dining and washrooms, and despite its name, the P1 garage is now reserved for D1s and up.) And then there is the new DG, Mr. Somavia — which takes us back to his PB.

"His" — because remarkably and unusually — it was before taking office, as DG-in-waiting, with the agreement of incumbent Hansenne and the help of a "transition team" comprised of ILO officials, that he prepared a PB all his own. It was supplemented by his first address to the committee and, especially, by his first Report to the Conference which, remarkably again, was entirely devoted to his vision of the ILO's role in the world of today, the objectives it should set itself and the programmes through which it should seek to achieve them. The three statements are in high octane prose: succinct, clear, determined. Each worth reading in their entirety, but I limit myself to management aspects. Unless shown otherwise, quotations are from one or other of the three.

Convinced of the many important contributions the ILO has made to social progress and justice in the past, the DG now means to bring all its activities into a clear *focus* "on achieving results in the medium term" for a compact set of goals. There has been a "tendency to generate a widening range of programmes without a clear set of operational priorities. ... This has diluted the ILO's impact, blurred its image, reduced its efficiency and confused the sense of direction of its staff". This is serious in itself but also, as the new DG stressed repeatedly, because today "the ILO is facing tough competition. ... Other organizations both public and private are offering similar products and services, sometimes with greater visibility and influence". In the first instance, the focus is in the title of the Conference Report: *Decent work*. "The ILO's mission is to improve the situation of human beings in the world of work", not only of "wage workers", but also of the self-employed and home workers.

Sharpen the focus, and instead of "the previous [budget] structure based on 39 major programmes", four "strategic objectives" in moving towards a world of decent work appear. They are: (1) "promote and realize fundamental principals and rights at work, including the International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour; (2) create greater opportunities for women and men to secure decent employment and income; (3) enhance the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all; (4) strengthen tripartism and social dialogue". Sharper focused still, within these objectives there are 16 more specific "operational objectives" and eight "InFocus programmes of high priority, relevance



and visibility". For instance, "promoting the Declaration" (on which Francis Maupain enlightened us in *Newsletter* No. 25); "boosting employment through small enterprise development"; "economic and social security in the twenty-first century".

Happily, in view of the often severe social impact of these agencies' programmes, "I foresee a new level of cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions". Note this means the Fund and the Bank, not WTO of the (late?) "social clause". And encouragingly, the newspaper I often read (*The Daily Nior*) reports on a Bank draft code of "principles of good practice social policy", in language strikingly similar to the ILO's strategic objectives: "enabling all men and women to attain secure and sustainable livelihoods, and decent working conditions ... protection of core labour standards ... elimination of forced labour, harmful child labour and discrimination ... support for freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining" bearing in mind conditions of workers "outside the formal economy".

Three further features mark the "strategic budget". Across all activities "development and gender" will be the guiding criteria. Second, work at headquarters and in the field structure is to be "integrated". "Cyberspace" will enable "the rigid division" between research in both to be "broken down". (But why stop at research? Allowing for different time zones as well as flexible working hours can't video-conferencing and such virtually abolish the separation between here and there altogether?) As to technical cooperation, "it is clear that reforms are needed". Externally funded projects will be undertaken only "where there is a clear relationship to our strategic and operational objectives and we have a strong knowledge base and core funding from the regular budget". And thirdly, "there should be a close linkage between sectoral activities and meetings and the strategic objectives", e.g. the agendas of what we used to call Industrial Committees.

For those interested in the money and mouth picture: of the total resources for technical, regional and support work 37 per cent would go to objective (2); 25 per cent to (3); 22 per cent to (1) and the rest to (4). The total is the same as that of the current biennium: \$481 million.

Implementation will be through technical departments "clustered" under the strategic objectives. It will be guided and overseen by a senior management team chaired by the DG with six "executive directors" — one each for the objectives, one for the regions and technical cooperation, and one for support services (finance, information management, internal administration, but not including personnel and programming and management, which report to the DG). In response to demands from the Governing Body, the PB itself will be made more flexible, so that details of activities and resource allocation can "take place closer to the period of implementation".

As "the focus on achieving results" is the hallmark of strategic budgeting, there will be a new system of monitoring and evaluation, the existing one not having "found general acceptance". It will be based on "targets, clear outputs and measurable performance indicators" and "reach down to the individual staff member". And it will be used for "regular, full, objective and transparent reporting" to the GB and Conference.

All this will call for important reforms in the ways the Office has been run. Apart from the proliferation of units and activities, technical cooperation and the evaluation system, the style of management is to change: "more relaxed and open, less hierarchical" and more teamwork" rather than distance, individualism and bureaucratic power centres" (*sic!*). Thus the DG will gladly receive people's comments on his Intranet website. And *Nior* reports that "his willingness to talk to colleagues over coffee is a break with past stuffy attitudes". Personnel policies "are in need of a vast overhaul". Recruitment "is far too slow, involves far too many people in decision-making, is subject to conflict between recruitment bodies and programme managers and is not sufficiently broad in prospection or rigorous in selection criteria". Gender and geographical distribution must be attended to, but "the first criterion is quality"; no doubt a significant statement, as GB.274/PFA/11 lists 60(!) countries "unrepresented on posts". (Funny notion that; never thought I "represented" the Netherlands. Indeed, in 1950 a stern-faced Henri Reymond, presiding over a "loyalty tea" for new recruits left us feeling as good as stateless.) Staff of the Personnel Department "needs better professional training". Unfortunately, the common

system is a cumbersome restraint. The ILO on its own can do little about it, but “it will be an ILO priority to influence those in control of this system so as to improve it”.

\* \* \*

Some of us will feel a sense of *déjà vu*. In some important ways the new approach seems to be a return to the blueprint operation about which I meditated on an earlier occasion. The four strategic objectives look nearly identical with the four 1965 substantive “major programmes” (which of course also had objectives), later on broken up and added to until there were ten. While the senior management team clearly parallels the old Programme Committee of the DG plus three. Though a group of seven, with one each for the core objectives, looks better balanced and effective. No doubt unwitting (the blueprint can’t even be found in the archives, and the 1965 generation of officials has gone) the parallels are entirely logical. “Wage labour” raises issues of who can and will do what and what happens to those for whom there is no work; hence Dick Lyman’s Human resources development major programme and Strategic Objective No. 2; issues of the terms and conditions on which the work will be done: Alejandro Flores’ Conditions of work and life and Strategic Objective No. 3; and issues of how these conditions are determined: Albert Guigui’s Social institutions development and Strategic Objective No. 4. While analogous issues arise for “non-wage workers”. Of course, by the same logic all international labour standards also fall in one or other of these three groups of issues. So it might seem puzzling that both now and then they should be the object of a separate (indeed the very first) major programme or strategic objective. In one place, “scientific” experts studying, say, optimal patterns of collective bargaining; in another place, juristic experts dealing with the legalisms of the relevant ILO standards. I always thought this separation worked to the advantage of neither one nor the other and was less likely to make for wise policy than an interdisciplinary approach would. However, perhaps the standards have traditionally been so much the ILO’s trademark that it is good brand management to parade them more prominently than anything else. Or the reason may be that while, in Mr. Somavia’s words, “Conventions and Recommendations are a vital source of protection ... all over the world”, most of them “are not well known”.

In 1965 the annual budget by organizational units was replaced by a biennial one by major programmes: item “Manpower division” of an expenditure budget became the “HRD major programme” of a PB, largely coterminous but decidedly not identical with the department, let alone the branches, most concerned. But clearly, over the years this important principle got lost, for the new PB is again presented as a “move from a ... budget based on organizational units, to one based on ... objectives”. Also, in 1965 David Morse emphasized to the GB the flexibility of his new system even more strongly than Mr. Somavia in 1999.

On the other hand, this time there is to be no Research and Planning Department. Rightly so, I think. Maybe the McKinsey idea was that those concerned with programme planning should also plan research policy. If so, nothing came of it, the unit’s capacity being fully absorbed by the budget work. Research is a skill-intensive, expensive business, hard to manage. Those capable of high-quality work may be tempted to indulge personal intellectual hobbies, hoping to be published (and cited by outside professional peers) and impatient with questions from budget makers. *Decent work* finds that ILO research “has often been fragmented and difficult of access, and its relevance to ILO priorities and to policy-making has not been systematically established”. In order to ensure that the ILO becomes “a knowledge-based Organization”, an “overall research strategy” is now to be developed “in the light of strategic programming”. In this, an important role is to be played by the Institute for Labour Studies, “while preserving its autonomy and flexibility”.

\* \* \*

If then the 1965 operation was ultimately less than effective, will the new one fare any better? *Nior* reports that “seasoned officials” are sceptical and that “observers believe [the new DG’s] emphasis on building consensus on virtually all issues could make it difficult for him to take firm decisions that involve a shake-up of the ILO’s ageing bureaucracy”. I am optimistic; consider these points.

In 1965 the idea that a programming system as designed by McKinsey was a vast improvement over traditional expenditure budgets, was not far short of revolutionary. The ILO was a pioneer, well ahead of the other UN agencies and, for example, the US Government. So to a considerable extent Morse and his collaborators had to feel their way. And to do so in an environment where scepticism and, even among some top officials, some resentment prevailed (not long after the blueprint became operational, Jef Rens suddenly left). No doubt fed by the common, but primitive, belief that no one could know better how to run the shop than we who actually do it. And certainly not some outside business consultants!

Today, it is a matter of course that public agencies should have programme, performance or similar budget procedures. And while, to some extent, Mr. Somavia is also an outsider, he has considerable experience of the workings of the UN system. Indeed, as a newcomer he was free to say clearly, in bold, specific and convincing terms what he thinks was less than well in the Office as he found it. In 1965 we did not have anything like this. Doing so in his Report to the Conference as well as before the GB and the staff, can only have strengthened his hand.

I wish him well, because I think he is right. And you, dear reader, put this *Newsletter* aside for a day or two and turn to *Decent work*. You will be fascinated.

May 1999.

## Séparation

par *Pascal-Nino Biagiotti*

“Un seul être vous manque et tout est dépeuplé.” LAMARTINE

Elle est là, dans mes bras, confiante et douce, presque assoupie, heureuse.

Ses grands yeux dorés à demi clos me surveillent cependant et, si j'écris, je ne cesse de la caresser.

La mignonnette a été rarement aussi belle et séduisante pour moi!

De temps en temps, un mot doux que je lui chuchote la fait frémir de bonheur.

Elle s'allonge complètement contre moi, parfaitement à son aise. Et pourtant ...

Elle ne sait pas, la pauvre (mais peut-être s'en doute-t-elle, ce qui la rend plus fragile et câline que d'habitude?) que demain nous allons nous séparer!

Non, ce ne sera pas pour toujours ... quoique la vie, méchante comme d'habitude, prévoie déjà une telle éventualité, qui serait terrible pour tous les deux.

Nos routes vont diverger pendant dix longs jours.

Pour moi, l'homme (égoïste comme tous ses semblables), ce sera pour aller en ... croisière.

Quant à mon pauvre trésor, à la tragédie de ne pas me voir durant un temps infini (ce qui lui semblera d'abord un lâche abandon puis, à mon retour, une éternité) s'ajoutera la désolation d'une triste pension, dont la promiscuité vulgaire lui fera penser à une prison!

... Et pourtant, tout avait bien commencé, quand je fus la chercher dans la grise ville du Nord, pour nous enfuir ensemble sur la Côte d'Azur!

Cette même Côte enchantée où, en réalité, je réside presque sans interruption depuis plus d'un an et demi, à cause («plutôt 'grâce à'!», dirait-elle, ironique) de ma maladie.

Depuis trois semaines, nous filons le (**presque**) parfait amour.

Le mot entre parenthèses et en caractères gras, c'est elle qui me l'a soufflé — entre deux câlins — car, à son goût, je suis un peu trop «nomade».

Oui, avec ma «bougeotte» et la manie de ne jamais rester une seule demi-journée à la maison, qui est petite mais intime, pour deux amoureux, tout de même!

Il y a la «gym», le tour à vélo, les commissions, les courses, la plage, le cinéma et/ou le restaurant...

«Nous ne sommes vraiment ensemble que la nuit!

Tu sais bien que je n'aime pas sortir, que le soleil me gêne, ainsi que le fracas des voitures et autres monstres à moteur sur deux et quatre roues, qui pétaradent jour et nuit!»

Mais enfin, ces 21 jours étaient tout de même pas mal de gouttes de bonheur, dans une existence qui n'est jamais généreuse!

Je regarde mon Amour avec tendresse; elle s'est endormie dans une position étrange: la petite tête renversée, le corps blotti contre moi, presque en boule, comme pour être protégée des coups bas du destin...

Soudain, un bruit externe la réveille.

Elle me cherche de ces deux lunes pleines qui lui servent d'yeux, puis s'étire avec volupté, enfin repart dans le monde des rêves, le petit ventre en l'air.

J'ai le cœur serré en pensant que dans 24 heures elle sera loin de moi, dans un milieu inconnu, folle de désespoir et de frayeur!

Ma chérie, tu ne t'en doutes pas ni ne le sauras jamais, mais je penserai à toi chaque jour, avec tristesse et nostalgie!

Mon «merveilleux» voyage par mer aura un goût de sel et, crois-moi, les effets de la cobaltothérapie n'auront rien à voir dans cet amer-là!

Le sais-tu ma Minette bien-aimée?

En voyant bouger ta longue queue soyeuse à chacune de mes caresses, à mes mots doux, je sais qu'un jour tu me pardonneras.

Comme toujours...

8.94

## **ILO Special Payments Fund**

by *Colleen McGarry*

The Special Payments Fund is a unique and little-known Fund for assisting ILO pensioners.

This Fund was created by the ILO Governing Body, at its 143rd Session in November 1959, to make periodic ex-gratia payments to retired officials, or their surviving spouses, who suffered from unexpected financial hardship. These grants were not founded in a provision of the ILO Staff Regulations and they did not entail any contractual obligation on the part of the Office.

In establishing the Fund, the Governing Body decided that:

- (a) the Fund would be administered by a Board of Trustees consisting of three members appointed by the Governing Body who were not members of the Governing Body or of the staff;
- (b) the secretariat of the Board would be provided by the Pensions secretariat of the Office;
- (c) the Governing Body and the Conference would determine the amount of annual credit which would be allocated from the regular ILO budget;
- (d) upon the recommendation of the Board, the Terms of Reference of the Fund could be amended by the Governing Body.

The Fund originally assisted beneficiaries of the pre-war ILO Staff Pensions Fund who had relatively low pensions due to interruption of service during the Second World War. This included former officials of the ILO, the League of Nations and the International Court of Justice. The Terms of Reference of the Fund were expanded over the years to include former ILO officials who were beneficiaries of the UNJSPF, provided that they had been employed by the ILO for at least ten years and had not converted part of their pension benefit into a lump sum.

Mr. Aamir Ali, Mr. R.-M. Schibli and Mr. N. Valticos currently serve as Board members. In 1999, the Board awarded a total amount of US\$64,871 to ten beneficiaries whose average age was 79 years. Applications for assistance are evaluated according to strict financial criteria which are set out in the Terms of Reference of the Fund. Requests are handled confidentially and are presented to the Board anonymously. Applications must be accompanied by supporting documentation and should be submitted by 31 January for consideration at the annual meeting of the Board which is held in April each year.

ILO Pensions Secretariat,  
4, route des Morillons,  
1211 Geneva 22,  
Switzerland.

Telephone: (41 22) 799.74.93  
Facsimile: (41 22) 799.85.71

## **Caisse de versements spéciaux pour les anciens fonctionnaires du BIT**

par *Colleen McGarry*

La Caisse de versements spéciaux est un fonds unique et très peu connu dont le but est de venir en aide aux anciens fonctionnaires du BIT.

La Caisse a été créée par le Conseil d'administration du BIT à sa 143<sup>e</sup> session, en novembre 1959, pour assister financièrement des anciens fonctionnaires, ou leurs époux(ses) survivants, qui ont dû faire face à des difficultés imprévues. Le versement de ces allocations n'est pas prévu dans le Statut du personnel du BIT et il n'a aucune obligation contractuelle de la part du BIT.

En créant cette Caisse, le Conseil d'administration a décidé que:

- a) la Caisse serait administrée par un conseil de gestion composé de trois membres nommés par le Conseil d'administration qui ne sont pas membres du Conseil d'administration ni du personnel;
- b) le secrétariat du conseil de gestion serait assuré par le secrétariat des pensions du BIT;
- c) le Conseil d'administration et la Conférence détermineraient le montant annuel qui serait alloué et pris sur le budget régulier du BIT;
- d) sur recommandation du conseil, les termes de référence de la Caisse pourraient être amendés par le Conseil d'administration.

La Caisse, à l'origine, apportait une aide financière aux anciens fonctionnaires ayant été employés par le BIT avant la seconde guerre mondiale, qui bénéficiaient d'une pension relativement faible en raison de l'interruption de service pendant la guerre. Pouvaient être inclus dans les bénéficiaires les anciens fonctionnaires du BIT, de la Ligue des Nations et de la Cour internationale de Justice. Les termes de référence de la Caisse ont été étendus au cours des années afin d'inclure les anciens fonctionnaires du BIT bénéficiaires d'une pension de la CCPPNU, lorsqu'il était prouvé qu'ils avaient été employés par le BIT pendant au moins dix ans, et qu'ils n'avaient pas converti une partie de leur pension en une somme en capital au moment de leur départ.

Les membres du conseil de gestion sont présentement M. Aamir Ali, M. R.-M. Schibli et M. N. Valticos. En 1999, le conseil a décidé d'allouer un montant de 64 871 dollars E.-U. à 10 bénéficiaires, dont la moyenne d'âge est de 79 ans. Les demandes d'aide sont évaluées selon des critères financiers très stricts qui sont stipulés dans les termes de référence de la Caisse. Les demandes nous parviennent confidentiellement et sont présentées au conseil anonymement. Elles doivent être accompagnées de documents justifiant la demande et soumises, avant le 31 janvier, pour approbation par la réunion annuelle du conseil de gestion, qui se tient en avril de chaque année.

Secrétariat des pensions  
4, route des Morillons  
1211 Genève 22, Suisse

téléphone: (41 22) 799 74 93  
facsimile: (41 22) 799 85 71

## **Información sobre el Fondo de Pagos Especiales**

para ex funcionarios de la OIT

El Fondo de Pagos Especiales es un Fondo único y poco conocido, cuya finalidad es prestar ayuda a los jubilados de la OIT.

Este Fondo fue creado por el Consejo de Administración de la OIT en su 143.<sup>a</sup> reunión, en noviembre de 1959, con objeto de efectuar pagos periódicos gratificables a antiguos funcionarios de la OIT o a sus cónyuges, que hayan sufrido reveses financieros imprevistos. La atribución de estos pagos no está basada en ninguna disposición del Estatuto del Personal de la OIT y no implica tampoco ninguna obligación contractual por parte de la Oficina.

Al crearse el Fondo, el Consejo de Administración decidió que:

- a) el Fondo sería administrado por una Junta de Mandatarios integrada por tres miembros designados por el Consejo de Administración que no fuesen miembros de dicho Consejo ni del Personal;
- b) la Secretaría de Pensiones de la Oficina se encargaría también de la Secretaría de la Junta;
- c) el Consejo de Administración y la Conferencia determinarían la cuantía del crédito anual de recursos del presupuesto ordinario de la OIT que se asignaría al Fondo;

*d)* previa recomendación de la Junta, el Consejo de Administración podría enmendar los términos del mandato del Fondo.

El Fondo asistió en un principio a los beneficiarios de la Caja de Pensiones del Personal de la OIT anterior a la guerra, cuyas pensiones eran relativamente bajas debido a la interrupción del servicio durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial. Se encontraban en ese caso antiguos funcionarios de la OIT, de la Sociedad de las Naciones y de la Corte Internacional de Justicia. El mandato del Fondo se amplió a lo largo de los años para incluir a ex funcionarios de la OIT que eran beneficiarios de la CCPPNU, siempre que hubiesen estado al servicio de la OIT durante por lo menos diez años y que no hubiesen permutado parte de su prestación de jubilación por una suma global.

El Sr. Aamir Ali, el Sr. R.-M. Schibli y el Sr. N. Valticos integran actualmente la Junta de Mandatarios. En 1999, la Junta otorgó pagos por un total de 64.871 dólares a diez beneficiarios que tenían en promedio de 79 años de edad. Las solicitudes de asistencia se evalúan de acuerdo con criterios estrictamente financieros establecidos en el mandato del Fondo. Las solicitudes se gestionan de manera confidencial y se presentan a la Junta anónimamente. Las solicitudes deben acompañarse con documentos justificativos y deben entregarse antes del 31 de enero para que sean examinadas en la reunión anual de la Junta que se celebra en abril de cada año.

Secretaría de pensiones  
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### Le Bulletin et la francophonie

Si je prends la plume aujourd'hui, c'est surtout pour remercier A. Ali d'avoir rendu possible en prodige à répétition, c'est-à-dire la naissance et le maintien en vie du Bulletin des anciens, alors que nous, les «souffrants du poignet» nous acharnons contre lui par notre silence.

Et avec quelle élévation et quelle élégance dirige-t-il le journal! Ses éditos sont toujours un délice à savourer! Mes remerciements vont aussi à J. Martin, très digne cocapitaine, codirecteur, coéquipier, etc. Il nous a fait bien rire dans le NF du mois de mai avec son spirituel «... a modern Director-General», modèle d'humour et de finesse.

Depuis mes premières lectures du Bulletin des anciens, desquels je fais partie depuis bientôt cinq ans, je vous entends appeler les francophones à faire plus entendre leur voix dans NOTRE journal. Remarquez que je dis «plus» et pas «mieux», car faire mieux serait bien difficile vu la qualité — et l'intérêt — des contributions anglophones.

Vous avez mille fois raison, car il est clair que si vous proposez (si bien d'ailleurs) le support, c'est à nous d'en assurer le contenu. Mais peut-être sommes-nous les «francoparlants» et assimilés — dont je suis — atteints de la douce paresse méridionale, appelée dans les cinq continents le «dolce farniente», auquel il est agréable de succomber lorsqu'on est «actif», mais qui s'avère nocif à haute dose quand on est «passif», entendez retraité, et qu'on a le temps, croit-on, de prendre son temps. Ou bien est-ce la pratique inmaîtrisable de la langue française qui paralyse les crayons? Ou encore le syndrome de la foulure du poignet dont parlent aussi bien A. Ali que L.H. Mas? Quoi qu'il en soit, prenez vos crayons citoyens! Faites entendre bien haut vos voix. Vous ferez plaisir au red en chef ... pardon, aux deux red en chef, car le premier est tout aussi chef que le second et le second l'est tout autant que le premier. Je ne sais pas si vous me suivez, mais eux ont bien compris. Et si vous souhaitez faire partie de l'équipe, vous n'avez qu'à le leur dire. Ils seraient enchantés de vous accueillir, à ce qu'il paraît... Mais où en étais-je? Ah oui; je vous demandais d'écrire, ne serait-ce que pour vous rappeler aux bons souvenirs des collègues qui vous ont connu, et sûrement estimé, et leur dire que vous êtes toujours là et que vous restez, comme nous tous, attaché à leur amitié et à l'idéal que nous avons défendu ensemble à l'OIT: celui d'un monde meilleur pour tous... Oui, hélas, l'état du monde est mauvais. Les collègues qui nous ont succédé dans notre Organisation devront agir plus fermement que jamais, peut-être selon des formes nouvelles, pour que les objectifs de l'OIT soient acceptés et appliqués partout. Croyons à cet idéal. Entre-temps, parlons-nous, rencontrons-nous, donnons notre parole et nos souvenirs à notre journal.

Et, à propos de relations entre les anciens, je réitère ici ma proposition faite aux ex-collègues désirant jouer aux échecs, au ping-pong ou encore au billard français de me contacter. Alors, si vous êtes intéressé, téléphonez-moi au numéro 794.38.08, à Genève. Lors de mon premier appel, personne, nobody, nadie ne s'était manifesté.

Grand-Lancy, Genève, 15 juin 1999.

Antonio Andrés.

[Merci, cher ami, pour vos éloges — bien mérités pour ce qui concerne Aamir Ali, beaucoup moins en ce qui me concerne. Comment les francophones peuvent-ils rester insensibles à l'appel que vous leur lancez avec une telle élégance et un tel enthousiasme?

Je me permets d'attirer l'attention de ces mêmes lecteurs francophones sur l'article, et surtout le poème, avec lesquels Antonio Andrés a contribué à ce numéro du Bulletin sous le titre «Un oiseau rare». Encore des contributions de qualité comme cela et je n'écrirai plus jamais un mot sarcastique à l'égard des francophones. C'est promis! JPM]

## Pour un Bulletin plus stimulant

Je viens de recevoir le numéro de mai du Bulletin, et vous en remercie.

Pardonnez ma franchise, mais j'ai trouvé «notre» publication un tantinet morne... A part les éditoriaux, cela va de soi — ils sont variés par leur nature car ils doivent traiter de plusieurs arguments.

Je sais bien que le «Bulletin» n'est point une revue littéraire, mais ... ne pourrait-on le rendre un peu plus stimulant? Celui de l'année passée m'a semblé plus intéressant.

Avec tout mon respect pour le savant auteur du texte sur les «archives» (cinq pages), cet article m'aurait davantage passionné eut-il été ... moins long.

Quant à la vieille — et toujours actuelle, hélas! — question des rares contributions en **langue française**, à part l'intéressante lettre de M. Mas, c'est plutôt le vide...

Encore heureux que le sympathique Jack (si je puis me permettre) se dévoue pour remplir cette lacune!

Je me souviens de vous avoir envoyé, jadis, quelques textes. Ils sont sans doute fort modestes, mais en cas de «vides» à remplir quelque peu, cela pourrait aider. Il me semble avoir remarqué des «blancs» pages 5, 17, 24 et 27.

Je vous annexe d'autres récits — c'est volontairement qu'un seul est en vers — à l'argument varié: la poésie, le réconfort de l'écriture en prose, la santé (cela nous concerne tous, surtout dès l'âge de la retraite!). Puis la tristesse, les animaux domestiques, source, ces derniers, de compagnie et de grande consolation pour les âmes solitaires. Et encore deux «articles» qui se veulent culturels, relatifs à l'écriture.

Pourquoi insister sur ce dernier merveilleux moyen de s'extérioriser, surtout chez les «anciens», qui semblent s'ennuyer et sont parfois moroses? Parce que, «*Pour l'écrivain, le malheur de vivre se transmue en joie d'écrire*» (Serge DUBROVSKI). Je parle en connaissance de cause...

Pardonnez-moi si je peux vous paraître envahissant, mais c'est pour collaborer à rendre le Bulletin plus intéressant. Je ne suis point de ceux qui se plaignent et ne font pas le moindre effort...

Nice, 26 mai 1999.

Pascal-Nino Biagiotti.

[Encore des textes en français. Je suis comblé! Merci, M. Biagiotti (ou Pascal-Nino, si je peux me permettre!). J'ai choisi pour publication dans ce numéro un de vos textes intitulé «Séparation» — voir sous Gallimaufry ci-dessus. J'ose espérer que cela contribuera à rendre le Bulletin plus stimulant pour vous et pour d'autres lecteurs. Car Pascal-Nino a raison — si certains de nos lecteurs trouvent notre Bulletin «un tantinet morne», le seul moyen d'y remédier c'est d'écrire vous-mêmes des articles, des récits, des poèmes passionnants! JPM]

## SIPAR et le Cambodge

Ayant eu la chance de connaître le Cambodge avant la guerre, en 1970, j'ai toujours conservé un grand attachement pour ce pays et surtout pour ses habitants.

Parmi les nombreux souvenirs, celui de voir le long des routes, au petit matin, tous ces enfants, jupe ou short bleu marine et chemisette blanche, allant à l'école.

Maintenant, après vingt ans de guerre, on revoit ces enfants le long des routes pour rejoindre l'école la plus proche, souvent à plusieurs kilomètres.

Pour aider à la reconstruction du Cambodge, je participe aux activités du SIPAR (Soutien à l'initiative privée pour l'aide à la reconstruction des pays du Sud-Est asiatique), association travaillant depuis seize ans auprès des populations de cette région et plus particulièrement avec le Cambodge.

Après l'accueil des réfugiés en France, l'enseignement du français dans les camps proches de la frontière cambodgienne, le SIPAR développe un programme d'aide à l'éducation primaire par le biais d'un programme de bibliothèques pour enfants et de formation des instituteurs à l'enseignement du français.

Le Cambodge compte 11,5 millions d'habitants dont plus de 5 millions d'enfants en âge scolaire.



La plupart des enfants suivent la classe sans support écrit; faute de moyens, les enfants restent à l'écart de la communication écrite.

Les bibliothèques du SIPAR ne sont pas des bibliothèques classiques de prêt mais des créations originales que traduit imparfaitement le terme de bibliothèque. En effet, dans le contexte cambodgien, elles sont pour l'enfant le seul espace de liberté où il peut découvrir le livre et le plaisir de lire, un lieu où il crée, joue, rêve, s'exprime et où il peut développer avec les adultes un type de relations entièrement différent de celui dicté par les habitudes et la tradition.

Une bibliothèque est une ruche où chaque enfant doit trouver des livres variés, dans sa propre langue, que nulle part ailleurs il n'a la possibilité d'avoir à sa disposition en si grand nombre et que là seulement il a le droit de choisir, toucher, feuilleter en pleine liberté.

Le ministère de l'Éducation du Cambodge, avec lequel le SIPAR a signé une convention, est profondément convaincu de l'utilité de ce programme qu'il souhaite voir étendu à tout le pays. Il est cofinancé par l'Union européenne, le ministère français des Affaires étrangères et divers sponsors et donateurs.

Ainsi, dernièrement, le Fonds 1% pour le développement des Nations Unies a accordé un don de 9 500 francs suisses pour la création d'une nouvelle bibliothèque qui, à la demande du Fonds, porte le nom de M. Pierce GERETY, haut fonctionnaire du HCR, décédé tragiquement dans l'accident de Swissair en septembre dernier. Elle a été inaugurée le 1<sup>er</sup> avril 1999.

Actuellement, 23 bibliothèques ont été créées dans des écoles primaires de province atteignant plus de 20 000 enfants; le programme pour les trois années à venir est de 30 bibliothèques, soit dix par an.

Depuis 1996, un programme de formation d'instituteurs à l'enseignement du français a été lancé. Déjà plus d'une centaine d'instituteurs cambodgiens ont commencé des cours de français dans leurs classes pour environ 4 000 écoliers.

Le SIPAR est une association sans but lucratif entièrement animée par des bénévoles, dont la devise est: «Pour un an, sème du grain; pour dix ans, plante des arbres, pour 100 ans, instruis son peuple.»

(SIPAR, 16 rue Champ-Lagarde, 78000 VERSAILLES, France)

St. Gervais-les-Bains, 10 mai 1999.

Philippe Belhomme.

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## Remembering David Hobden

David and I met many years ago when a happy coincidence made us share with Bernard Spy the responsibility of producing the three language editions of the *International Labour Review*. That happened almost fifty years ago and it cemented our friendship, and that of our three families, ever since. From the very beginning we enjoyed a happy comradeship at work, never marred by any real disagreement, and we always found time to talk about whatever topic struck our fancy, and to laugh heartily whenever we could. In spite of our different backgrounds, we always found a meeting ground. I am only sorry that our working team broke up much too soon, owing to assignments that took me away from what was a most pleasant collaboration, month after month, bringing out a journal which the three of us considered the most worthwhile publication of the ILO.

Pretty soon David was the only member of the trio left and in no time he took the helm of the *Review* and continued to steer it until his retirement many years after. For those who do not know or who cannot remember, I wish to say that David gave generously to the *Review* all the qualities of a really competent and fearless chief editor. What he contributed, in my view, was a combination of attitudes, skills and knowledge that one rarely finds so amply represented in a single international civil servant. Not only did he possess a most remarkable intellect, but he had also the curiosity, sensitivity and vast interests necessary to give whatever article he was examining for possible publication, or analysing in terms of relevance, comprehensiveness, soundness of argumentation, factual accuracy and elegance of expression, the chance of becoming a really good piece of writing and scholarship.

It is no secret that many colleagues in technical units admired him for the way in which he helped them to really say what they wanted, in the clearest terms, without belabouring facts or argument and without stretching the acceptable limits of length of an article (which necessarily had to be shorter than a monograph or a full study). And there must be many who can still remember the statistical and other factual errors that he was able to detect and correct simply because he gave his undivided attention to the task of fully understanding the subject which a manuscript developed, as well as the intentions and sometimes the innuendoes, the ellipsis and the somersaults in the thinking of the writer.

What David touched became eminently readable, crisp and concise. Not only did he write extremely well but he also had fully in mind the needs of various categories of readers of the *Review*. Even granting that the nature of his periodical did not allow comparison with a really good literary journal or with, let us say, the brilliance of a piece by Galbraith or Hobsbawn, no-one in his right mind could have ever said that any issue of the *Review* produced under David's stewardship could deserve that famous criticism addressed by *The Economist* to other ILO publications, when one of its writers wrote in the 1950s that they were "the epitome of monumental boredom". David attached too much value to topicality, quality, persuasiveness and clarity, so the *Review* escaped from the approbium, and the whole group working with him, especially Tim Lines, Christiane Privat, Jacqueline Belin and Jack Chadsey, shared his concern.

Since the days of Miss Palme-Dutt and Ainsworth Johnstone, a small group of editors had strived to make ILO studies and reports more readable and their presentation more attractive. Little by little, the combined efforts of authors, editors, translators, revisers, typists, proofreaders and other printing staff resulted in much better publications of all kinds, including those that were needed for discussion at ILO meetings rather than for the benefit of specialists or a general readership. As the research programme grew, the publications programme became more diversified and coordination between both programmes proved to be more complex, mainly on account of competition for the use of scarce resources and the effects of two financial crises. New initiatives were launched to strengthen and increase sales and marketing efforts and soon came the time when the yearly revenue yielded by our merchandising activity handsomely rewarded this collective effort, spearheaded by Ivan Elsmark, and when some ILO manuscripts began to be issued by commercial publishers rather than by the ILO itself.

During this process, editors and revisers, together with all the other categories of staff involved in the publishing effort, were able to gain more recognition than hitherto. Many technical units engaged in research and report-writing readily accepted the advantages derived from close collaboration with the editorial staff, although at times they complained about what they considered excessive zeal in ensuring compliance with publications policy.

Need I say how much the ILO and I owe to David Hobden for his initiative and support in the 1970s as we struggled to improve editorial and related practices and adapt the organization and methods of the Editorial and Translation Branch to new needs and requirements? He could have claimed that the *Review* occupied him fully, as it certainly did, but he gave me unstinting help through all the stages of the reorganization we lived and put through together, jointly with Amacker, Plavec, Kirkman, Brede, Pauly, Elsmark and many other colleagues. He was always ready to lend a hand, always willing to spend time trying to keep our course and making me remember the need not to see the wood for the trees, even when on top of his normal duties he was saddled with the enormous task of putting into shape a new edition of the *Encyclopedia of Occupational Health and Safety* in close consultation with Luigi Parmeggiani.

David was as modest and unassuming as he was introvert. He preferred the seclusion of his office and was rarely seen wandering about. Colleagues, friends and "clients" went to him. A semblance of coolness, dryness, reserve and aloofness never concealed his capacity for courteous, sympathetic understanding of whoever he was talking to, even if he had to deal with a tiresome and uncongenial person or one whose pedantry, superciliousness or overbearance inspired him little confidence or respect. He rarely lost his temper, and I never saw him losing his self-control, although there are many witnesses to the fact that he had to put up with people who certainly did not hide their ignorance, their arrogance or their fatuousness and who were no match for the reasonableness,

integrity, kindness and open-mindedness that were characteristically his. Away from the Office, he was a totally different person: a delightful conversationalist and convivial, a good debater, an excellent cook and a perfect host – all of them qualities which Vera Hobden had to the same extent.

When David retired, the ILO lost a most valuable member of the staff. To my knowledge, he no longer contributed his skills to the type of work he mastered so well. But only a few years ago he used them all to produce his own desktop edition of his father's poems, superbly presented with all the love and care that he always showed towards his family.

Now he is gone forever, but he will stay in my memory as my brother-in-arms and as a great friend.

3 October 1999.

Roberto Payró.

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## Archives

Congratulations on Mr. Elsmark's excellent article "Discovering the ILO archives" published in No. 26 of the *Newsletter*; which I enjoyed thoroughly.

I noted that the central registry filing system "appears to have been modelled on the arrangements then in force in the Ministry of Labour in London". In this connection it may be interesting to point out that the system of archives of the League of Nations (of which the ILO was a component before the war) was an adaptation of the classification system of the British Foreign Office.

For the readers who, for comparison purposes, may be interested, a comprehensive description of the League's filing system is to be found in Appendix III (pages 451-463) of Egon F. Ranshoffen-Wertheimer's work "The international secretariat: A great experiment in international administration", Washington, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 700 Jackson Place, N.W. and Kraus Reprint Co., New York, 1972. This book can certainly be consulted at the UN Library and perhaps at the ILO Library. Appendix III on the filing system was prepared by Ms. Catherine Pastuhova, "a former official of the secretariat".

Santiago, 30 May 1999.

François Agostini.

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## NAMES AND NEWS

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GULATI, Jaswant, 166 Linden Lane, Princeton, N.J. 08540-3837, USA. Tel: (609) 921 9139; Fax: (609) 737 7407.

[Change of address]

I am writing to you after ages. We relocated in the USA at the above address though we will maintain a base (secondary) home in India, in a suburb of New Delhi; it will give us relief from the ever-increasing pollution in New Delhi, now the world's fourth polluted city!

28 July 1999.

JAIN, S.K., D-414, Defence Colony, New Delhi 110 024, India. Tel: 462 2884.

I owe you an explanation, if not an apology, for the complete silence I have maintained ever since I retired. Let me tell you briefly what I have been doing. Unlike some of our colleagues who decided for various reasons to stay on in Geneva, I opted to return to India. Having retired in December 1987, I was back in India in the following month of March.

Getting used to the conditions in India was not easy: the heat and the dust, the unreliability of public utilities — electricity, water, etc. I discovered too that I had very few friends in Delhi: the prolonged absence from India had taken its toll. However this was compensated by the presence of a rather large extended family!

As my return became known, I started to be solicited to attend lectures, seminars and the like. I would be asked to inaugurate them and to chair discussion groups. I found out that there were in Delhi several associations in labour-related fields with an active programme of lectures, seminars and discussions. There is an Industrial Relations Association, a Labour Law Association, a Social Security Association. The membership of these associations includes academics, retired bureaucrats, trade union leaders and employers' representatives. Soon I was invited to join the executive committees of these associations. I was particularly attracted towards them as they provided me with an opportunity to learn about the facts and the real issues in these fields in India. While serving in the ILO, even as Regional Director for Asia, my knowledge of the ground realities was quite limited. Of course I had to do a certain amount of "homework" and lots of listening. ILO standards and the manner and extent of their application are a recurrent theme.

Another exciting activity for me relates to workers in the rural and informal sectors, including forestry, tribal areas, fisheries, small mines, etc. You may remember Kanti Mehta who served as the Indian Worker member of the Governing Body for many years. He has always been interested in problems of these categories of workers and has felt that trade unions alone cannot tackle them. They need the support of social activists and NGOs. Kanti Mehta and I had discussed this question in Geneva and I had approved RBTC funds to enable him to convene a series of "consultations" between interested trade unions and rural activists in an effort to build bridges between the two. Francis Blanchard also got interested and in fact attended one such consultation. Naval Tata did too. The Delhi Office Directors Sankarnarayanan and Sunil Guha also got involved.

The ground work having been laid, Kanti Mehta founded a "Rural Workers' Trust" with substantial resources drawn from trade union and employer circles in order to continue the work without financial support from the ILO. Sankarnarayanan became the Secretary of the Trust after his retirement from the ILO. I too became actively involved in this work. After a series of meetings in different parts of the country a "National Convention" was convened which adopted a "Charter of Demands". It focuses on such issues as the right to employment, social security, health care, old-age protection, minimum wages, right to natural resources for tribal and forestry dwellers, etc. Follow-up activities for the implementation of the Charter are continuing especially at the state levels. I am fairly active in the review of such activities.

There is another world into which I have strayed. This is the world of retired senior Indian ambassadors. Apparently I qualified as a senior UN system official to join this group and accepted their invitation to become a member of the "Indian Diplomats Association". Indeed for a couple of years I functioned as its Secretary. The Association's activities include periodic lunch/tea meetings at which a distinguished foreign or Indian personality speaks about India's relations with different countries and other foreign policy issues. It arranges an annual "Indira Gandhi Memorial Lecture" by a distinguished personality. We have had lectures by Maurice Strong, President Narayanan and the nuclear scientist Abou Kalam. Altogether a very interesting experience for me.

Finally, I am involved with an international NGO based in Delhi called the World Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (WASME). It organizes periodic global and regional conferences and seminars on financial and technical problems of this sector. I am Chairman of a "Committee of Senior Advisers" and have attended conferences in Beijing, Istanbul, Athens and other places.

I visit the local ILO office and try to catch up with happenings in Geneva. Of course your bulletins are welcome reading.

10 May 1999.

[Although I have been able to meet Jain only a couple of times since he retired, we have remained very close in spirit — as indeed we did during our time in the Office. This is hardly surprising for, in a manner of speaking, we are twins. We were recruited by the same competition.

It was in 1946 that the ILO decided to recruit two young Indians and asked the Union Public Service Commission to invite applications, conduct interviews and submit a panel of five names. How I came to apply, why I was unable to join when finally invited to do so, how things worked out in the fullness of time, are all matters for another story. (A story that I would love to tell if anyone is willing to listen.) Suffice it to say for the present that Jain and I must have been interviewed in Delhi on the same occasion, and finally learned months later through the press that we had been appointed.

Jain went directly to Geneva; I stayed on in India with the team sent out to prepare the first Asian regional conference. Jain return to Delhi to serve on the secretariat of this and that is where we first met: October 1947.

No, Jain, you may go off to Delhi or anywhere else to retire, you may maintain a complete silence or whatever, but you cannot escape the fact that your life is inextricably intertwined with mine.]

JOUHAUX, Léon (M<sup>me</sup>), 1, rue des Tybilles, 92190 Meudon Bellevue, France. Tél. (01) 46 23 27 00.

Cher collègue

C'est une ancienne, très ancienne collègue, puisqu'elle deviendra centenaire en septembre prochain, qui vous remercie de votre envoi des dispositions prises afin de fêter, il y aura bientôt 80 ans, la création de l'Association des anciens du BIT.

Je regrette infiniment de ne pas pouvoir être des vôtres pendant cette rencontre amicale. Mon grand âge et ma santé ne me permettent pas de me déplacer. Mais je serai des vôtres en pensées car je me tiens toujours au courant de vos activités qui m'intéressent toujours.

A vous, cher ami Ali, mon cordial souvenir et mes encouragements à ceux qui ont la chance de collaborer encore à la belle œuvre de notre Bureau.

Pour moi, les années passées en tant que directrice du bureau en France du BIT, ce sont les années de travail les plus précieuses de ma vie.

Bonne fête, chers anciens collègues, et mes cordiales pensées à tous!

21 avril 1999.

LANGEN, Hans and Erika, Basteistrasse 44, D-53173 Bonn.

We found your invitation for the 80th anniversary celebrations on return from a trip to the United States. Our eldest son is living in Berkeley with his wife and a delightful little daughter. We enjoyed visiting them and a cousin in San Diego, as well as a round trip

with a rental car through Arizona and New Mexico. In parenthesis — what's the matter with our children's generation? We have three over 30 and among them they have managed to produce one only grandchild. And that seems to follow a widespread pattern.

Now we are happy in Bonn. We live in a splendid apartment overlooking the Rhine and the seven mountains. We have refound old friends and made new ones — mainly over the bridge. We are both actively engaged in several benevolent associations and multi-cultural clubs, and — to top it up — there are still consultancy assignments for two or three months each year, the last was in Romania, the next will be in Kyrgyzstan. Each assignment is like an adrenalin shot into the old veins. Most concern project assessment and evaluation. My thanks to Gerry Schwab for his sound and solid training in distinguishing objectives, goals, inputs and prerequisites.

20 April 1999.

MARLAND, Rosnah, 36G Cramond Vale, Edinburgh EH4 6RB, Scotland. Tel: (0131) 312 8455.

I do love reading the *Newsletter* and keep promising myself to send a contribution, i.e. such as the time the ILO Regional Office for Africa was housed (rent free!) in my Morris Mini Minor, complete with country files, my typewriter and the Regional Director, the late, much missed godfather of my daughter, Jean Reynaud ...! Happy days in Addis Ababa, 1964.

My daughter, Jo, and I will be attending the reception on 27 May, all being well, and look forward very much to seeing all our old friends and colleagues — I could almost say "family members" because that is what I felt on my return to the ILO in 1979 after Edgar's death. It was like being welcomed into a large family's loving embrace and it helped me *so* much. God bless them all.

24 March 1999.

RYAN, Celia, 56 Whitebeam Road, Clonskea, Dublin 14, Ireland. Tel: 2694 992.

Thank you for the invitation to attend the ILO's 80th anniversary celebrations. We are not able to come but when I saw the date I was almost tempted because it will be a personal anniversary. I started work in the ILO on 30 May 1949. After 50 years I still remember that morning — the overwhelming smell of floor polish and learning that I was henceforth "No. 75".

In an effort to catch up with the twentieth century before we go into the twenty-first century I am taking a computer course. We don't have a computer and now, nearly at the end of the course, I have decided that for the time being I don't want one. My very young teacher was horrified to hear this and said that in a few years' time we will all *have* to use e-mail. I suppose she means it will be compulsory! I am fairly sure that I am the oldest in the class and also the oldest in a weekly aqua-fit session. However, at the local bridge clubs there are players well into their eighties, which is encouraging.

22 March 1999.

YOUNG, Leonard J. (Joe), Sr., 302 West 14th Street, Wilmington, DE 19801-1117, USA.

I wish to comment on my experiences with ILO counterparts while serving in the field. In 1964 I carried out a joint mission to Ethiopia with an expert from UNESCO. In 1972-75 I served in Kenya. From 1977 to 1980 I was Chief of Project in Suriname, South America. On each of these missions I worked closely with one national counterpart and from the day I departed their country, I have had regular communications and contacts with those three special counterparts. They have become lifelong friends and each has visited my home in the United States or in Switzerland. I am acquainted with the children of these counterparts and also their wives. Two of the three counterparts have computers so we frequently communicate via e-mail. Just imagine, these contacts and communications have been going on now for 22, 27 and 35 years. Each of the persons that I worked with were government officials but each left the government and have been very successful in other endeavours. My Ethiopian counterpart became a regional director of the ILO and is now retired from the ILO. My Kenyan counterpart operates an electrical contracting

company in Kenya and has had four of his children complete universities in the United States in the past six years. My Suriname counterpart had to leave his country following the government overthrow in 1980 and he is now a high official in the postal administration in the Netherlands. I wish I could take credit for them achieving success. I wonder how many ILO field staff can recite similar stories?

I also wish to comment on the ILO making available access to its Intranet for retired officials. I just got plugged into the webinfo Intranet this week and have been thrilled with all the interesting information that is available. I will now have to revise my out-of-date information that I have about the ILO and other specialized agencies that I cover in the course that I teach at the University of Delaware's Academy of Lifelong Learning. When I was serving in the field during the 1960s and 1970s we had to communicate by telegram. Now it is possible to communicate with field staff anywhere in the world by e-mail in split seconds. I imagine that ILO has considerably reduced its postage expenses.

12 June 1999.

[Joe Young has also sent a book entitled "Things remembered", a collection of short stories that he has written about things that he has experienced and people that he has known at different stages of his life, including a whole chapter on his experiences with the ILO (and within that chapter an account of the Petit-Sacconnex fire of 16 November 1966).]

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## CEUX QUI NOUS ONT QUITTÉS

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C'est avec tristesse que nous devons signaler le décès de:

ARAOZ, Manuel	1 octobre 1999
BERGENSTROM, Gullmar	29 septembre 1999
BERNARD, R.J.	16 février 1999
BLANC, Paul	17 juillet 1999
BRATT, Tord	17 juin 1999
BRAY, Frank	9 juillet 1999
BUTTOLPH, Derek	23 juin 1999
CONNOLLY, Jim	septembre 1999
HARDER, Carl-Heinz	30 mai 1999
HOBDEN, David	30 septembre 1999
HYDE, Louis G.V.	6 avril 1999
JACCARD, Madeleine	8 mars 1999
KARKI, Jamuna	14 octobre 1998
KNOWLES, William	21 décembre 1998
NICOLAS, Marthe-Henriette	24 mars 1999
N'DIAYE, Guirandou S.	12 novembre 1998
WHITFIELD, Edward J.	5 septembre 1998

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