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EDITORIAL

A new broom?

You must all be aware by now that this Newsletter has a new Editor-in-Chief. And, of course, it is a well-known fact that a new chief, whether it be of a laundry, an airline, a crime syndicate, a government, an international organization or ... a Newsletter, has an irresistible urge, immediately upon his or her appointment, to change everything from top to bottom, just to make sure that everyone knows that there is a new boss who is so much more dynamic and up-to-date than the old one. So as soon as you saw this issue of the Friends Newsletter, you must have said to yourselves: "Here we go again. A new broom is sweeping clean!". For the first thing that you must have seen on receiving this issue is that our Newsletter has a new look, with a new Header on the front page. "Wow!", you must have said to yourselves, "this new Editor really means business!"

If that was your reaction, dear Reader, I've got news for you. The new Header on the front page was going to happen anyhow, and it is just a coincidence that the change is being made when a new Editor is taking over. I hope, incidentally that you all like the new look of the front page of the Newsletter; you will be interested to know that it is the work of Christian Olsen and Françoise Jaffre of the ILO's Graphic Design/Desk Top Publishing Unit. Christian is the son of our friend and colleague Ole Olsen. Incidentally, Françoise and Christian were also of great help in designing and printing the menus at the Anniversary lunch which is described in greater detail below, and also the labels for the CDs which were distributed at the lunch.

Beyond the new Header, nothing much has changed in this Newsletter, and no changes are planned. How could it be otherwise, when the previous Editor-in-Chief, who is now the Honorary Editor-in-Chief, who was the creator of this Newsletter, and who has for time immemorial been running it single-handedly – albeit with a little advice and assistance from Fiona and myself in recent years – is still very much part of the editorial team?

Some of our readers may remember that among the most memorable writings of our distinguished Honorary Editor-in-Chief was an article that he wrote in 1999 entitled *A Primer for Executive Heads* in which he gave some very sound advice to newly-appointed Executive Heads, including the following stern warnings:

Don't come determined to sweep everything away
Listen and find out why things are as they are
Every organization has its own culture
Carry your staff with you or you will get nowhere very fast
Make haste slowly
Don't believe everything you hear¹

The Editor of the Friends Newsletter is not, of course, quite of the same stature as the Executive Head of an international organization, but you can well imagine that the new Editor feels that he has to tread very carefully when the author of these dire warnings is watching his every move like a hawk. That is one reason why the present editor does not feel inclined to behave as a new broom.

¹ This admirable article was published in the AAFI/AFICS Bulletin in March 1999, and is reproduced in a compendium of Aamir's articles published by AAFI/AFICS in 2005 under the title "Of Cabbages and Kings".

Another reason is that the readers of this Newsletter clearly don't want him to. See, for example, the following sample of tributes to Aamir on relinquishing his position as editor of the Friends Newsletter.

So you're giving up the *Newsletter* after nearly a quarter of a century. At the risk of repeating myself, I can only salute you on this achievement. When you first mooted the idea I thought it could never possibly work. Now how deprived we should feel without it.

You have contributed significantly to our lives in retirement by your very enthusiasm and all the hard work which you devoted to the 46 issues. Our actors have never melted into thin air and you have kept the vision alive. You deserve our thanks!

27 April 2009

Peter Castle

Ainsi, vous quittez la Rédaction du *Bulletin des Anciens...* mais sans nous lâcher, selon la solution préconisée par Jack Martin.

Quoi qu'il en soit, permettez-moi de me joindre à tous ceux qui vous diront leur admiration et leurs remerciements les plus chaleureux pour ce que vous avez fait.

Je ne peux me rendre à la rencontre du 29 mai à laquelle je souhaite plein succès.

6 mai 2009

Jacques Balanche

I have received the last issue of the NL and naturally I am sorry for your stepping down as Editor-in-Chief. But if I read correctly between the lines you will continue to be present as some kind of an adviser. Naturally you cannot give up altogether. You have done a splendid job over all these years, for which we all are grateful, and you cannot "abandon" your "child" altogether!

24 May 2009

François Agostini

As requested in the Newsletter, I am writing to you at your home address to express my regret that you have decided to resign as the Editor of the *Friends Newsletter*.

We all owe you a great debt for creating and keeping alive this very unique publication that has provided so much pleasure and knowledge to its readers. I have personally benefited by the opportunity to write for the Newsletter, which has caused me to learn a lot about what it takes to do this properly. Moreover you have shown a surprising tolerance of opinions which I think you disagree with. This, and your graceful mastery of the English language, are the hallmarks of a great editor.

24 June 2009

William Bruce Tate

So the Friends Newsletter will continue to be what it always has been, and what you want it to carry on being: a forum in which former officials of the ILO can remain in touch with each other, and with the ILO. It will carry on the traditions established by Aamir. It will continue to depend on contributions from its readers; it will rely on them to

send in articles or reminiscences or news about themselves and their families or tid-bits of information, however frivolous, or serious, their contributions may be. A change of Editor does not mean a different Newsletter.

Oh, but I almost forgot. There is one innovation. Each issue of the Newsletter from this one onwards will contain a new chapter – entitled **To Talk of Many Things**. I wonder if you can guess who took the initiative to propose this innovation, and who will be writing this new Chapter?

* * * * *

It only remains for me to wish all our readers and their families a very Merry Year-End Festive Season and a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year!

November 2009

Jack Martin

RECEPTIONS FOR FORMER OFFICIALS

The dates for the Receptions for Former Officials are:

2009

Thursday, 10 December 2009

2010

Thursday, 27 May 2010

Thursday, 16 December 2010

TO TALK OF MANY THINGS

*The time has come, the Walrus said
To talk of many things;
Of shoes and ships and sealing wax,
Of cabbages and kings*

Anniversaries

I have sometimes – in fact quite often – been accused of being a bit – in fact more than just a bit – loony about anniversaries. Well, judging from the enthusiasm with which the 90th anniversary of our own ILO has just been celebrated, I am not the only one.

Every year brings its crops of anniversaries: 2009 was no exception. Besides our own anniversary, it also marked the 90th anniversary of the International Civil Service; the 90th anniversary of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies; the 150th of the Battle of Solferino which spawned the Red Cross; the 150th of Omar Khayam's *Rubaiyat*; the 200th of Charles Darwin as also of Abraham Lincoln as also of the Brera Gallery in Milan; the 100th of Pro Natura, the foremost Nature Society of Switzerland; the 500th of Jean Calvin who left his indelible mark on the Republic of Geneva; the 400th of Galileo's proof about falling bodies; the 40th of Man's first steps on the Moon; the 100th of Wilfred Jenks; the 400th of the publication of Shakespeare's Sonnets with its intriguing dedication that has mystified scholars for four centuries.

Perhaps I am a sort of collector of anniversaries, just as some people collect stamps, or old weighing scales, or Toby jugs (by the way, what is a Toby jug anyway?). At one time, the ILO had a Chief Statistician who collected owls; owls in any shape, form or colour: pictures, statues, paperweights, photographs, books, stuffed, unstuffed, whatever. He married an expert on women's work and unkind colleagues said he was merely adding to his collection.

So in our collection of anniversaries, we celebrated the ILO's 90th anniversary. Why? Some two or three hundred officials – former and serving – must have found some answer to that. The short one is: it's good fun. To meet friends and acquaintances is always fun; to meet them over a good meal is even better fun. But for an institution, be it a school, or college, or university, or regiment, or organization there is more to it than food and drink.

It instigates – it inspires – you to look before and after; it creates a feeling of kinship not only with each other, but with the institution whose anniversary has brought you together. That feeling is sometimes intangible but it is there. Sometimes very strongly felt. It provides a starting point for new ventures and fresh projects; it forces you to assess the past. All in all, it's quite useful to have anniversaries, don't you think?

The celebration of this hotch-potch collection of anniversaries in 2009 revealed some strange bed fellows: can there be any relationship between Darwin and the International Civil Service? Of course not, but yet...

International civil servants: a new species?

Would Darwin have identified the international civil servant as a new species? What characteristics would he have pointed out as indicating this?

We tend to think we have reached some sort of summit and discovered all the species – animal, fish, and vegetable – that live on our planet. Not so. We keep discovering new

species and we can be assured that there are yet species waiting to be discovered. Scientists discover new species at the rate of about 50 a day; in 2006 alone some 17,000 new plants and animals were discovered. In the last ten years or so, in Borneo alone, some 50 new species have been discovered. The crater of the extinct volcano Mount Bosavi in Papua New Guinea yielded a treasure trove of new species – not all of them were as attractive as the new antelope *antelope saola*, discovered in the Mekong Valley in 1992, or the new monkey, *Titi du Prince Bernhard* found in the Amazon (Prince Bernhard had been the President of the WWF) in 2002.

Lest we are overwhelmed by all these discoveries, we should remind ourselves that Papua New Guinea alone lost a quarter of its forests in the 30 years preceding 2002 and we continue to lose species at about 10,000 times the natural rate.

So, back to the international civil servants. In the millennium year 2000, the Association of Former International Civil Servants (AAFI-AFICS) published a report: *What Happens to the Second Generation?* It endeavoured to define the community of international officials in the following manner.

We live, generally, outside our own country. We are separated from our extended family and the society we were born into. We often work in a language that is not our own and is different from the language used in our own country. Our social life is with people from different countries, languages, societies, cultures, habits. We often end up marrying someone of a different nationality and culture; sometimes a marriage that would have lasted happily ever after in the home country, founders in alien climes. We may move about during our career and live in different countries. When we retire, we have to make a conscious choice of where to settle.

And we might add to this list: *We often feel more at home with our colleagues than with our compatriots.*

Yes, we are all this but aren't we something more as well? We have been moulded to a way of thinking, we see the problems of an increasingly interdependent world in a different manner, our viewpoint is no longer that of a particular nationality or tribe, we march to the beat of a different drum.

Should we consider ourselves as rootless, cut off from the roots that nurtured us? Or should we consider ourselves as people who have accepted the planet as our homeland and discover that we are at home everywhere?

In the fullness of time, we may learn to look at the Earth as Neil Armstrong must have done forty years ago when he stepped on the Moon and took his giant step for mankind. We would see the oceans and the seas, the lakes and the rivers, the mountains and the glaciers, the deserts and the forests – but we would not see the frontiers and the boundaries that divide nations and peoples.

A career as an international civil servant would seem an ideal way to see global problems in a global context; the concept of an 'International Community' would become a living reality.

Re-introducing a species

Reading all the time about the extinction of species is depressing. So here is a cheering story about re-introducing and saving a species: the large blue butterfly (*Maculinea arion*). The decline of this species began in the 1950s, and by 1980 it was extinct in England. After intensive studies by the Oxford University and the Centre for Ecology, it was discovered that this butterfly depended on the red ant which it tricked into rearing young caterpillars. These ants began to disappear when farmers stopped grazing their

livestock and a virus destroyed the population of wild rabbits. Grasses grew too long and this caused the temperature of the soil to drop a few degrees, enough to make it unliveable for red ants. (What a tangle of interdependent species!)

For the re-introduction, a few suitable habitats were prepared and butterflies were imported from Sweden. *Et voila*, there are now more large blue butterflies in England than ever.

That's good news about the large blue butterfly; one wishes there was some good news about the large blue whale (*Sibaldus muculus*) as well. A hundred years ago there were hundreds of thousands of whales; today they are on the brink of extinction.

'What have butterflies and whales, however large and however blue, got to do with anniversaries or the international civil service? you will ask. Well, to tell you the truth, I have no idea.

The concretization of our habitat

But it needs no ghost come from the grave to tell us that the increasing concretization (I do think it is impertinent of my computer to turn my *s's* into *zeds* without asking my permission; it's a horrible word anyway) of our planet will end in choking our living space and who is then going to re-introduce the human species?

Of Switzerland's 41,285 km² of land surface, 31% is already built upon: houses, apartments, high rises, shopping centres, hotels, sporting facilities, roads, airports, offices, and other constructions deemed essential for our standard of life. Twenty four per cent is devoted to agriculture and less than 6% is left for Nature to provide us with space for leisure and for the greenery which allows the Earth (and us) to breathe.

The speed at which open spaces are being gobbled up and sacrificed to buildings of one sort or another is vertiginous: one square metre every second (yes, every SECOND) or the area of some ten football fields every day (yes, every DAY). Wow! (Yes, WOW!)

Do you want some more frightening figures? The Brazilian Amazon loses the equivalent of five football stadia (is that the right word?) every MINUTE; while in a year the world as a whole loses the equivalent of the little country of Austria.

True to my new resolve, I'll let you have some good news as well; in six years some 25.3 million hectares were brought under protection, mainly due to the Amazon Region Protected Areas Programme. Today about 12% of the world's forests are protected. Of course this doesn't always mean that they are really protected but they **are** protected. (There does seem to be something wrong with that sentence but I'm sure you will understand. It's like Macbeth saying: *And nothing is, but what is not.*)

Well, that seems a happy note on which to end this little survey.

And a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year!

15 October 2009

Aamir Ali

90TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION OF FORMER OFFICIALS (28-30 May 2009)

Another Anniversary Reunion – the fifth since Aamir first instituted the practice of five-yearly reunions for retired officials in 1989 – has come and gone, and to judge by the numerous reactions and comments received (see extracts from some of these below), was judged by just about everyone to have been a great success. On behalf of the whole team which organized the reunion, I would like to express our gratitude to all who have taken the trouble to write to give us their reactions; your very generous words of appreciation and encouragement were greatly appreciated.

What made this Reunion such a memorable event?

First and foremost, of course, the sheer numbers. Well over 200 people attended the reception on the evening of 28 May (we lost count). As for the lunch on 29 May, the number of people who attempted to book for lunch exceeded the capacity of the restaurant (268), so that a waiting list had to be established. Most of those on the waiting list were finally able to participate in the lunch as some who had registered dropped out.¹ And many participants had come from distant countries in order to be there – in descending order of distance covered we noticed participants from Philippines, United States, Ethiopia, Norway, Portugal, Spain, UK, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Italy and France, but we have no doubt overlooked colleagues from even more exotic places who were present. Particularly noteworthy was the presence of a group of colleagues from the Turin Centre.

What also made the event so memorable was the fact that the Director-General, Juan Somavia, and the two surviving former Directors-General, Francis Blanchard and Michel Hansenne, participated in the lunch as Guests of Honour and made speeches. Jane Jenks was also a Guest of Honour, and the presence of other widows – such as Joan Hislaire, Angela Lemoine and Alice Proust – reminded us poignantly of former colleagues who have passed away.

But, of course, the real highlight of the lunch was the speech by Aamir, who in spite of the handicap from which he is still suffering as a result of his unfortunate accident, enchanted us with his wit, wisdom and clarity of thought. Aamir constantly reminds us of the bonds that unite us as former ILO officials, and as the instigator of the tradition of these anniversary reunions has done more than anyone else to strengthen these bonds.

Less spectacular, less amusing no doubt, but no less important was the information meeting that took place before the lunch on 30 May about our health insurance and our pensions. Cliff Kunstler, the Secretary of the Staff Health Insurance Fund (SHIF) and Alan Blyth, Director of the Geneva Office of the UN Joint Staff Pension Fund (UNJSPF) gave us reassuring news about the state of both funds in spite of the financial crisis, and

¹ There were, however, 11 “no-shows” – i.e. people who had registered for lunch but who failed to turn up, without having informed us that they were unable to, or were not going to, come, in spite of repeated announcements that cancellations for the lunch would be accepted up to 48 hours in advance, after which the full cost of the lunch would be charged. This prevented some people on the waiting list from coming to the lunch. It also gave the organizers some financial headaches, as the Restaurant billed us for the numbers registered up to 48 hours in advance (i.e. a full house). Many of the no-shows were subsequently persuaded to pay the cost of the lunch that they did not attend (some paid up immediately), and in the end we have a small cash balance to carry over to the next Anniversary reunion.

both of them subjected themselves with great aplomb and good will to questioning from the floor.

But of course, the main innovation in this Anniversary Reunion, and indeed one of its main highlights which made it so memorable, was the visit to the old building, about which Fiona has written in the next Chapter.



Photo courtesy Joe Wynn

Angela Butler, Juan Somavia, Jane Jenks, Francis Blanchard, Aamir Ali,
Michel Hansenne after the 90th anniversary lunch on 29 May

However, as many of our readers have pointed out, none of this would have been possible without the work of a few devoted people. Aamir was Chairman, and I Deputy Chairman, of an Advisory Group for the organization of the Reunion, consisting of representatives of the Office and the Section of Former Officials of the Staff Union, as well as a handful of individuals who did all the work. These individuals deserve a very special word of thanks and praise: Manuel Carrillo and Barbara Lochon who conducted negotiations with the restaurant, and very skilfully handled the protocol side of things in which they are so expert – particularly the seating arrangements which are a particular headache to common mortals like myself, but which they handle calmly and efficiently; Salah Ayoub who actually volunteered to assist in the organization of the Reunion, and among other things took on the thankless task of seating arrangements for groups of people who wished to be together at the same table; Sandra Alameddine who showed much expertise and integrity in the management of the finances; Joe Wynn, who took all the photos (a CD of these photos is being compiled and will hopefully be on sale at the December reception for retired officials); and last but by no means least Fiona who dealt with all the registrations for the lunch and the reception, the organization of the visit to the old building and with the countless problems that arose in the organization of all these events.

One member of this team deserves a special word of appreciation: Manuel Carrillo. Manuel has been responsible for the organization of the dinners and lunches at all five Anniversary Reunions, and was working on the organization of this 90th Anniversary lunch for at least a year before the event. The distribution to all participants of a CD containing a recording of some works of Chopin played by a young girl of Chinese extraction, Melodie Zhao, as a souvenir of the Anniversary Reunion was one of Manuel's

initiatives which made the Reunion so successful. By a very sad twist of fate, Manuel's wife Christiane died just three weeks before the Reunion, but in spite of his great loss he continued very courageously to deal with the organization of the lunch, and participants will remember the short but moving speech that he made at the lunch to present the CD. Un abrazo, Manuel: on continue de penser à toi avec beaucoup d'émotion et d'admiration!

15 October 2009

Jack Martin



Photo courtesy Liz Sommaro

An overall view of the ILO restaurant, 29 May 2009

A sample of reactions received:

Jane Jenks

Congratulations on a most successful reunion of ILO friends! It truly was a wonderful occasion and I was very happy to be present.

Your speech was very moving and impressive, your sense of humour as sparkling as ever. It was truly a great pleasure to see you.

31 May 2009

Angela Lemoine

I just want to say how much I enjoyed the luncheon on Friday and appreciate all the organization and work it entailed. A big "thank you" to you and to your collaborators, you must all be pleased with such a successful and enjoyable result.

The 90th anniversary was a happy event, not untinged with sadness for the loss of those we knew and admired over the years – Felice, Claude, Nicolas, Jef, Francis and of course Jacques. Like yourself, they were devoted to the noble cause of the ILO and made a large contribution to its success. They were all very much in our thoughts on that day, and I was proud to be the representative of one of them.

31 May 2009

Aurora Giannone (Turin)

Au nom de tous mes collègues, je vous remercie vivement pour l'accueil très amical et l'excellente organisation. Ce fut là une bonne occasion de serrer les liens entre Turin et Genève et j'espère que cela va continuer.

30 May 2009

Ute Schaefer

I so very much enjoyed the retirees' celebrations of the 90th anniversary of our Organization. Above all, the speeches at the anniversary lunch and the visit to the old ILO building (I started there in October 1971) will stay in my memory.

My warmest congratulations to you and to the organizing committee. It must have been an arduous task. And a big thank-you again for having counted me in for all three events.

1 June 2009

Nivie van Ginneken

Wouter and I would like to thank you and all the others for the great organization for the ILO celebrations on both Thursday and Friday. Well done! You all did a wonderful job and everyone I know thoroughly enjoyed both days. I understand that Saturday morning was also most interesting, but unfortunately we were too late to join the visit. Everything was well organized and ran most smoothly – at least it seemed like that to all the guests. However, I presume there were the usual behind the scenes last minute problems, but none of us were aware of them! Please convey our thanks to all the others involved.

1 June 2009

Elly Lorency

C'est grâce à votre aide que le repas des anciens pour le 90^e anniversaire du BIT à été un succès et en particulier pour les anciens de l'AISS qui ont tous apprécié d'être réunis dans de superbes conditions. Je tiens à vous remercier, ainsi que l'équipe qui vous a assistée, du travail investi pour l'organisation de cet événement. Un grand merci.

1 juin 2009

Dharam Ghai

I take this opportunity to thank you and your colleagues for the excellent lunch you organized for the 90th anniversary of ILO. Aamir's speech was great.

Clearly you all have not only formidable literary skills but have well preserved your impressive managerial and administrative skills.

4 June 2009

Pieter Duiker

Un peu fatigué (mais sans doute moins que vous...), je suis de retour dans le jardin de la France. C'est un autre monde que celui de Genève. Tout le long de mon chemin, j'ai pu réfléchir aux multiples contradictions de ces rencontres internationales. A mi-chemin entre Genève et Tours, notre fils travaille dans une grande usine, fabriquant de l'acier et de l'inox en particulier. Il m'a aidé à redescendre sur terre en rappelant les conditions économiques réelles.

Tout cela pour vous dire que j'étais encore une fois fort impressionné par votre accueil au BIT. Un grand merci à toutes celles et ceux qui ont organisé la grande fête pour le 90ème anniversaire. J'ai beaucoup apprécié les rencontres avec les collègues. Il y avait quelques fois même de l'émotion et de la vraie chaleur humaine. Toutefois, j'ai remarqué qu'il s'agissait surtout des anciens du Siège : pour le 100ème anniversaire il faut essayer de faire venir plus de gens du terrain y compris de la coopération technique.

8 juin 2009

Antonio Andrés

*Le passeur d'eau, les mains aux rames,
à contre flot depuis longtemps
luttait, un roseau vert entre les dents*

C'est ce beau poème de E. Verhaeren qui m'est venu à l'esprit, me rappelant que les tourbillons de la vie nous entraînent chacun d'entre nous à leur guise dans ces frêles embarcations que sont nos existences. Et qu'aucune d'elles n'est semblable à un paisible canotage sur des eaux dormantes; elles portent toutes les vies, les traces, dans les corps et dans les âmes, des combats menés contre les bourrasques et le plus souvent contre les tempêtes.

C'est à cela que je pensais au milieu des anciens collègues venus nombreux célébrer le 90^e anniversaire de l'OIT. Je fus rassuré de constater que la belle longévité de "notre" Organisation n'a pas émoussé sa combativité dans la défense et la promotion de la justice sociale. Notre Directeur Général a la carrure solide et sait mener le bateau contre vents et marées en "gardant le roseau vert entre les dents".

Ce fut pour moi aussi un plaisir de rencontrer, lors de cette fête, tant de visages amis ou familiers. Pour tous, les années ont passé laissant dans nos corps les traces de leur passage. Mais les têtes exprimaient la joie des retrouvailles. L'évocation de souvenirs communs, des rires, de bons mots égayèrent les rencontres et ranimèrent peut-être aussi les corps.

D'autres anciens DG et hauts fonctionnaires eurent à coeur de célébrer, par leur présence et pour certains par leurs paroles, ce 90^e anniversaire. Personne au BIT n'a oublié ce grand capitaine que fut F. Blanchard, car nul autre autant que lui dut ramer avec autant de force, lors des événements bien restés dans les mémoires, pour maintenir le navire à flot. Comme il le fait toujours quand il se retrouve parmi les anciens, il tint à nous adresser quelques paroles malgré ses forces déclinantes. Ce fut un moment émouvant pour beaucoup d'entre nous.

J'ajoute que la visite, le lendemain de la fête, de l'ancien bâtiment du BIT (quelle idée magnifique !) fut pour moi un grand plaisir et une grande surprise. Surprise parce que malgré mes quelques années de travail dans cet imposant bâtiment, je n'avais jamais fait grand cas de mon cadre d'activité à l'intérieur de ces murs. Je n'avais donc pas vu – ou vu d'une façon distraite – les peintures, sculptures et autres œuvres d'art qui ornaient et "dignifiaient" ce lieu de travail. La visite guidée, si sagement menée par F. Rolian, me

permet de découvrir les petites et grandes merveilles qui se cachent dans “notre ancienne maison” Quel grand moment ! Merci aux organisateurs pour cette initiative.... Et à propos : ne pourrait-il, notre B.d.A., nous offrir un article, si possible illustré, sur ces oeuvres afin de les faire découvrir aux nouveaux fonctionnaires et de les faire redécouvrir aux seniors ?

Oui, on est tous des passeurs d'eau naviguant souvent sur des eaux tumultueuses. Mais peu ont trouvé autant d'écueils que ceux qui se battent, personnellement ou à travers des associations, pour la justice sociale. Mon ami et collègue M .Tavelli, que tous les anciens ont connu, fut de ceux-là. Son décès a été une grande perte pour notre Syndicat des Anciens.

29 août 2009

[En ce qui concerne la possibilité d'un article du B.d.A. au sujet des œuvres d'art récemment redécouvertes dans l'ancien immeuble du BIT, je vous renvoie à la belle brochure éditée par l'OMC, avec des photos magnifiques en couleur, à l'adresse suivante http://www.wto.org/french/res_f/booksp_f/wto_building08_f.pdf. Elle existe dans les trois langues officielles. FR]

* * * * *

Other messages of thanks were received from Hans Hammar, George Kanawaty, Paul Chappuis, Chantal Nussbaumer, Donate Dobbernack, Anne Trebilcock, Jayasankar Krishnamurty, Karin Schramm, Barbara Clarke, Liz Sommaro, Karl Ebel, Irene Chamberlain, Brigitte Hofler, M.N. Unni Nayar and Carola Weissenfels.

VISIT TO THE WTO BUILDING

by *Fiona Rolian*

The third and last event of the 90th anniversary celebrations was a visit to the old ILO building on Saturday, 30 May. Over 100 retired officials signed up for this tour and two groups of 60 had to be formed. It was a warm sunny day and a visit full of fond memories for many. Our most grateful thanks go to Edmundo Murray of WTO for having made this all possible. His willingness and enthusiasm know no bounds!

Below are some of the comments received from participants:



Photo courtesy Liz Sommaro

The first group admires the panelling in the old Library, as well as the Czechoslovak chandeliers and Léon Perrin ceiling, 30 May 2009

Lyn Sheeran

Many, many thanks to you and all the organizers of the wonderful visit to the WTO building. It is evident that much tenacity has been needed to track down some of these art works. What memories it brought back – the only thing missing was Janine behind the bar! It certainly is a treasure trove of art in many forms (as well as quality workmanship) and I was so pleased to see things that, shame on me, I had never really noticed 37 years ago! What a loss to the ILO that many of these art works could not be incorporated into the new building but perhaps I am looking at this with a little more nostalgia than then (when I was so pleased to leave an office on the first floor, almost above the front entrance, which was hot, noisy and polluted in summer and freezing in winter). It's great though to have the superb booklet of art works in the building and I'm sure that all participants today feel the same way as I do after having taken this trip down memory lane.

30 May 2009

Liz Sommaro

What a fabulous morning. I was so very pleased to have visited the old ILO HQ. There were so many things I never saw when I was working there, like the Library (no need for juniors to go there...) and the Chairperson's office which was/is fabulous with so many beautiful carvings.

31 May 2009

Donate Dobbernack

I would like to thank you all from the bottom of my heart for the wonderful visit of the old ILO building and the presentation you made. I also convey the most warm thanks from Mr. Kabelka, my former colleague and chief.

As for me, the old ILO building visit was just great to be able to revive old memories from my childhood when my mother and/or I sometimes fetched my father at the Office at the end of the day. He was, as you know, an ILO official from 1952 until 1964 when he retired at age 62 and unfortunately died in 1963, not even a full year after his retirement. (Nothing to do with the ILO: when I was a student at the Geneva University, we had a *journée de solidarité* in autumn and I chose to clean the Geneva parks of the autumn leaves; my work area was between Perle du Lac and ILO; heavy work I can tell you, with my father coming along to encourage me and my friends, and of course also teasing us about not being absolutely perfect – you can always miss a leaf, can't you?!).

Of course nowadays I miss the smell of the wax which the cleaners used at the time to clean the desks and other wood furniture; also the smell of the WTO Library is no longer the same, but smells do last apparently, since I remember when I first came to the Archives at Morillons, the old smell of ILO paper and documents was still there (interesting actually, are there particular smells for each international organization?).

31 May 3009



Photo courtesy Edmundo Murray, WTO

The second group in the interior courtyard, 30 May 2009

Jack Martin

The visit to the old building was a huge success, well structured and well organized. For me, and I believe all who took part in it, it was a wonderful trip down memory lane – in some ways a highlight of the whole reunion.

31 May 2009

Irene Chamberlain

It was really great to see so many old friends at the Reception and Lunch and I was tremendously relieved to find that my French came back without any problems, as I never have occasion to speak it now. But I think the highlight was the visit to the old building. I found myself a bit moist-eyed when I stepped into the front door – I probably wasn't the only one. I moved up to the new building in 1975, as did most people, and haven't set foot in the old one since – but it seemed only yesterday that I was there. And you had organized a wonderful tour. Obviously, I had known some of the information but by no means all and it was tremendously interesting.

4 June 2009

[See also Irene's Letter to the Editor on page 41 about the 50th anniversary celebrations.]

Pieter Duiker

J'ai trouvé la visite de l'ancien bâtiment du BIT très réussie. Toutes mes félicitations à la petite équipe pour avoir récupéré ces œuvres d'art et ces souvenirs. J'espère qu'au futur les dirigeants du BIT prendront mieux soin des bijoux qui leurs sont confiés. En sortant du bâtiment de l'OMC, je pensais aux artistes et aux travailleurs ayant créés ces œuvres. Avec honte je me disais que même moi j'avais quelques fois reçu des cadeaux dont j'ignorais la valeur. Je pensais notamment à la collection de musique ancienne offerte par un Kazakh dans une autre vie. Juste à ce moment là j'ai rencontré Jim Windell (participant au deuxième groupe pour la visite de l'OMC) et qui connaît bien l'Asie centrale. Spontanément, je lui ai demandé de m'aider à valoriser ce cadeau lors de ma prochaine visite – dans cinq ans – et si je le retrouve parmi les cartons des multiples déménagements. Enfin, il ne s'agit que de simples vinyles de 78 tours. Mais je me sens comme ceux qui ont laissé des trésors au bord du lac...

8 juin 2009

REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST

Dr. Guido Pardo (1874-1922): first ILO staff member to die in service

[The one place in the old ILO building that we did not manage to visit was the “Pardo plaque” above the 1st floor drinking fountain. It was included in our original plans for the tour but was finally dropped – too much walking for some of our more senior colleagues.]

However, in this 90th anniversary year of the international civil service, Guido Pardo deserves a special mention as the first ILO official – and no doubt the first international civil servant – to die in service while on mission to Russia. Born in Malta, with a PhD in Law, Pardo was a member of the Italian delegation to the Paris Peace Conference and Deputy Secretary-General of the International Secretariat at the 1919 Washington Conference. Multilingual, he was recruited in London in February 1920 and was appointed Chief of the Russian Section a few months later.

The Newsletter is grateful to Mary Bagazinski, a summer intern in the ILO Archives, for the detailed account below of the background to the Nansen Russian Relief Mission. FR.]



Guido Pardo at his desk, ca. 1921

« Moscou, 8 janvier 1922

Monsieur le Directeur,

Nous partons ce soir pour le Volga où nous resterons environ trois semaines. Nous visiterons Saratoff, Samara, Buzuluk et peut-être quelque autre centre de la région frappée par la famine. Avant de partir, je désire vous rendre compte en quelques lignes de mon travail ici... »

Addressed to Albert Thomas just over a month before Dr. Guido Pardo's death, the subsequent text of this letter merely skims the surface of the role he had played for the ILO from 1920 to 1922. At Thomas' request, Pardo agreed to take part in Dr. Fridtjof Nansen's International Committee for Russian Relief; he thus left for Russia in November 1921. In A.M. Allen's words:¹ "(He) was one of those rare persons, a Russian scholar. (...) No one who knew him thought him suitable for the job (his was not a medical degree)... He never came back..."

Dr. Pardo's involvement with the ILO began officially in London on 8 February 1920, when he joined the Russian section. Just a month before, the Governing Body had decided to send a Commission of Inquiry to Russia to shed light on the new Bolshevik-led government and the conditions of the working classes. Drawing on the expertise of the Russian Section and sources from several countries, a report entitled, "Labour Conditions in Soviet Russia" compiled most information published at that time about Soviet labour issues, a rather detailed bibliography of books, pamphlets, articles, and periodicals all concerning Bolshevik politics, and most importantly, it raised questions central to the mission of the proposed Commission of Inquiry.

In May 1920, just two months after the report was finished, Dr. Pardo, now Head of the Russian Section, was sent on mission to Copenhagen. Since the Commission of Inquiry had been approved by the Governing Body, the ILO needed permission from the Soviet Government to allow the proposed mission to enter the country. Instead of making a public and formal request, Albert Thomas sent Pardo to discuss the matter with Maxim Litvinov, a Soviet Government diplomat. Pardo's repeated attempts proved unfruitful. He assured Litvinov several times that the mission would produce an unbiased report exclusively on labour conditions in Russia, authored by a non-political body separate from the League of Nations. He also pointed out that, given the Soviet Government was asking for international political recognition at the time, such a commission would greatly reinforce their commercial and political reputation in the eyes of the European community. Despite his efforts, however, Litvinov refused.

Pardo's assessment was thus: "Personally, Litvinov professed to be hostile to the mission, as he said [that the] Soviet Government refused to have anything to do with 'the employers'. He also seemed to nourish a special animosity against our Organization, though, for what reasons he never explained. He also said that the mission was useless because 'the workers of (...) several countries were sending their own missions to Russia', and as to the employers, (the) Soviet Government had no interest to show them what was being done in Russia 'as they could never be convinced'."

Pardo's files show that he remained constant in his search for Bolshevik information despite the Soviet decision, and continued to undertake several missions for the ILO. Given his background, it does not come as a surprise to learn that in November 1921, he left for Russia to work for the Nansen Mission.

The picture of the Volga region in early 1922 was not a pretty one. Experiencing the aftermath of two civil wars, World War I, a horrible drought, and a rupture in the agricultural system, this southwest region of Russia represented only one-eighth of the population that was consequently struck with a devastating famine. Aid poured in from numerous countries and international organizations such as the Red Cross and the Save the Children Union. However, it was still arriving much too slowly and in insufficient quantities to save even the majority. According to the January report submitted by Pardo

¹ *Sophy Sanger, a pioneer in internationalism*, Alice Maud Allen, Glasgow, 1958, p. 205.

and his colleagues, 70% of the population of the famine area was condemned to death if more aid was not sent immediately.

Pardo was accompanied by three others in Moscow (and later, to the Volga region): John Gorvin, the representative of Nansen (and head of their mission), Mr. Gorten, an assistant, and Gustav Hilger, a representative of the German Red Cross. Pardo explains in a letter to Albert Thomas that his role was mainly to act as liaison between the Soviet Authorities and to gather corresponding information. He also hoped that it would allow him to study the Bolshevik political system in greater detail.

At that time, “*la nouvelle politique économique*” was the phrase on everybody’s mind. Pardo believed that the Russians were not about to officially renounce their doctrine, but with regards to substance, all sorts of compromises were ready to be made. As well as meeting certain Russian personalities, Pardo was able to obtain a substantial amount of publications on economic and labour issues, as well as data on professional trade unions.

He had also explained in his letters that foreigners were far more susceptible to the typhus epidemic that was sweeping through the regions devastated by famine. Since their arrival, several members related to the Mission had become sick, and five Europeans had died. Dr. Farrar, a doctor sent by the League of Nations, and a woman sent by the International Save the Children Union were among the deceased. Thus, despite all of the precautions taken, a telegram to the ILO dated 6 February announced that Pardo had fallen ill due to typhus. In his last letter to Albert Thomas, Pardo knew the odds were not in his favour: « *J’ai attrapé le typhus et j’ai bien peur que je ne l’échapperai pas. A mon âge ... 90% des cas sont mortels.* »

He also explained that before going to the hospital, he appointed a friend to send all of the publications he had acquired during the mission to the Office. Painfully regretting not having the time to secure life insurance for his wife and son, he trusted the Office to take care of their financial needs. After a last goodbye to Thomas and his collaborators, Pardo specifically requested generosity in the name of his family: « *C’est surtout pour le bureau que je suis allé.* »

Four months later, his Swedish-born widow, Dagmar Pardo, also died rather suddenly due to complications from surgery, leaving their eight year-old son, Arvid Pardo,² completely parentless, and a ward of the League of Nations.

Guido Pardo was remembered fondly in the eyes of the ILO staff. He was known for “his spirit of initiative, the (accuracy) of his knowledge, his indefatigable energy and passion for the truth.” His work had been of inestimable value to the Office, and his intellectual gifts and sympathetic personality had won the esteem and affection of his colleagues and also of the members of the Nansen Mission. A memorial plaque constructed in his honour and placed in the ILO (now the WTO building) reads:

In Memory of Guido Pardo
Italian Member of the Staff of the International Labour Office
Died of Typhus Fever while on Service in Russia
1874-1922

7 July 2009

Mary Bagazinski
(Summer Intern, ILO Archives)

² After brilliant studies in Italy, Arvid Pardo, who spoke seven languages like his father, went on to become an assistant to Dag Hammarskjöld and the first representative of Malta to the UN. He played an instrumental role in the creation of the 1958 Law of the Sea Conference.

The ILO's "Second" Nobel Peace Prize

by Jaci Eisenberg (ILO Archives)

While many of the readers of this *Newsletter* know that the ILO was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1969 on the occasion of its 50th anniversary, it also has another Nobel Prize in its possession – that of Léon Jouhaux (Nobel Peace Prize, 1951). Jouhaux, born in Paris on 1 July 1879, had a long career as a trade unionist – which helped him both found and remain in contact with the ILO.

In 1919, Léon Jouhaux was a French delegate at the Paris Peace Conference, which produced the Treaty of Versailles (Part XIII of this document comprises the original Constitution of the ILO) – thus he was part of the founding of the ILO. The same year he was also elected the first Vice-President of the International Federation of Trade Unions. From 1919-1947 he held the position of Secretary-General of the *Confédération Générale du Travail* (CGT), which had the distinction of being the largest French trade union of the era. Internal schisms in the CGT (between the Communists and the Socialists) led him to founding, in 1947, the CGT-FO (*Force ouvrière*) – a splinter trade union advocating workers' freedom of association (particularly freedom from government supervision of worker associations).¹ His founding of the *Force ouvrière* led to his being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize on 10 December 1951. Jouhaux used the prize monies awarded by the Nobel Committee to contribute to a retirement fund for trade union leaders and to found *Démocratie combattante*, a monthly publication designed to share the contributions of the ILO and other international organisations in the fight for peace.

Jouhaux was a prolific actor in the League of Nations and later United Nations system. From 1925-1928, he was the French delegate to the League of Nations charged with arms control issues. From 1946-1951 he was French delegate to the United Nations, focused on the universal recognition of the human right of freedom of association. Specifically within the ILO he was the French Worker Delegate to the Governing Body from 1919-1954 and the French Worker Delegate to the International Labour Conference from 1919-1952 (the 1st-35th Sessions). Jouhaux retained these positions despite the fact that he was a political detainee in France (Cahors, then Evaux-les-Bains) and Germany (Buchenwald, then the Chateau d'Iter, in the Tyrol) from 1942-1945. Jouhaux's wife later became heavily involved in the ILO – Augustine Jouhaux was Director of the ILO Paris Office from 1949-1971.

Léon Jouhaux died in Paris on 28 April 1954. At the First Sitting of the 178th Session of the Governing Body (Geneva, 3-6 March 1970), his Nobel Peace Prize (as well as the accompanying diploma) was deposited with the Archives of the International Labour Office by his wife Augustine at the same time as the ILO's own Nobel Peace Prize. The Governing Body record captured Augustine's motivation in depositing her husband's Nobel Prize with the ILO: "She had been moved to do so, she explained, by the fact that the ILO's goals were the very ones to which Léon Jouhaux had devoted a lifetime's effort; indeed he himself had felt that the Prize awarded to him honoured at the same time the workers of the world and the ILO, which he had helped to create."

¹ The same year he became the President of the French National Economic Council, an organization dedicated to integrating economic forces within France. Jouhaux held this position until 1954.

The ceremony culminated with the unveiling of a permanent display of both the medals and the diplomas in the Governing Body room of the Rue de Lausanne ILO building. Today these medals are housed in the current ILO Archives.



Léon Jouhaux (right) enjoys a relaxed moment with his wife, Augustine Jouhaux, and French Government delegate and ILC President, Justin Godart, at a rodeo and BBQ organized in Salinas, California, on the occasion of the 31st Session of the ILC (San Francisco), 20 June 1948.

21 July 2009

WILFRED JENKS

On Tuesday, 14 July 2009, a small family ceremony took place to mark the occasion of the reburial of C. Wilfred Jenks in the Cimetière des Rois in Plainpalais, Geneva. Mrs. Jane Jenks and her two sons, Craig and Bruce, were present, as well as her eldest grandson, Andrew, and a few family friends. Director-General Somavía attended on behalf of the ILO and former Mayor and Administrative Counsellor of the City of Geneva, Manuel Tornare, represented the Geneva authorities. The United Kingdom was represented by its Ambassador, Peter Gooderham.

Thanks to Andrew Jenks' cinematic skill – he is making this his career – the *Newsletter* has been able to obtain a video recording of the event which the Jenks family has kindly given us permission to reproduce. Below is an edited version of the speeches made on this very moving occasion.

*Speeches made at the Jenks Memorial Ceremony,
Cimetière des Rois, Plainpalais, Geneva,
Tuesday, 14 July 2009, 11.30 a.m.*

Craig Jenks

We are delighted you are all here on this occasion, both solemn and joyful, of the reburial of our father, husband, grandfather, and one-time colleague, C. Wilfred Jenks, here at the Cimetière des Rois. This year would have been his 100th birthday. We welcome you and thank you for coming.

The re-burial in this quite special place, and also this event, required substantial work and process. We wish to express our gratitude to the Conseil administratif de la Ville de Genève for all that they have done.

I would like now to share with you some brief reflections on and reminiscences of our late father.

C. Wilfred Jenks believed that strife and conflict can, and should, be resolved by reason. He was convinced that good solutions transcend nationality, religious creed, social class or any other limit. He was an optimist. His core beliefs were, to some extent, implicit – flowing from deep down.

He joined the ILO straight from Cambridge University, and progressed over a dedicated career, including wartime exile in Montreal, to Director-General in 1970. The Jenks archives at the ILO fully document his career.

He had a parallel, interlinked activity as a public international jurist and author, referred to on the tombstone, and best encapsulated in the title of one of his books: *The Common Law of Mankind*.

He was born in 1909. As a youngster, he was acutely aware of the devastation of the First World War. And lost his own father to an accident at sea.

It is not entirely inappropriate that we are here on the 500th anniversary of Calvin's birth. Our father had Scottish Presbyterian roots and promised his mother never to consume any alcoholic beverage, and kept this promise his whole life – much to the consternation

of officials in the old Soviet Union when he visited that area! His was a religion of conscience. However he loved Christmas carols and Christmas trees.

Before starting any of his innumerable trips, he would order books about that country, including works by that country's best-known, non-fiction and also fiction writers: one explanation, by the way, for the clutter of books at the apartment at 3 Rue de Contamines. When he came back from these trips, he often had unusual memorabilia, such as an Uzbek tribal uniform. From all these many countries, guests were invited to the house – some quite exotic to us youngsters. Mother's hostess role in this was just one of the many ways that she supported father.

He wrote poetry. He spoke fluent French and Spanish as well as English. He was equally at home in Geneva, London and New York. He liked country walks by the Arve river, here.

Juan Somavía, Directeur général du BIT

Tout d'abord un grand merci à vous Madame Jenks et à la famille, pour avoir souhaité associer le Bureau international du Travail à cette cérémonie émouvante. C'est un honneur personnel.

Wilfred Jenks, dont je suis le troisième successeur à la tête du BIT, aurait eu 100 ans cette année. Sa contribution à l'OIT, Organisation qu'il a servi pendant plus de 42 ans et à laquelle il a littéralement dédié sa vie, est immense.

Du début des années 30 jusqu'à son décès brutal en 1973 alors qu'il se trouvait justement à la tête du BIT, Wilfred Jenks a marqué de son empreinte toutes les grandes étapes de cette Organisation:

- Le rassemblement du corps normatif de l'OIT sous la forme d'un véritable « Code international du travail », et la mise sur pied des mécanismes de supervision des normes internationales du travail qui sont encore aujourd'hui le cœur du métier de l'OIT;
- Les premières missions de coopération technique;
- La survie de l'OIT pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale et son retour à Genève; je tiens à remarquer son retour à Genève ce qui est important dans le contexte de la cérémonie d'aujourd'hui ;
- Le rattachement de l'Organisation au Système des Nations unies;
- Le processus de décolonisation et la marche de l'OIT vers l'universalisme; enfin
- la difficile période de la Guerre froide.

Madame Jenks, nous sommes honorés d'avoir reçu en donation la bibliothèque et les documents personnels de Wilfred Jenks qui justement reflètent et témoignent de sa vie et de sa carrière exemplaire au BIT.

Que dire de plus qui n'ait pas déjà été dit par tellement de gens qui ont connu Wilfred Jenks? Et c'est peut-être ça qu'il faut dire. L'avis de ses collègues, ses amis, ses partenaires était consensuel: Wilfred Jenks était un être humain extraordinaire aux multiples talents :

- Une autorité morale et l'une des voies au monde les plus respectées en matière de normes internationales du travail et de droits de l'homme ;
- Un fonctionnaire qui a contribué de manière décisive, par son exemple et sur le plan conceptuel et normatif, à la construction d'une véritable fonction publique internationale, et je sais qu'il y tenait énormément ;

-
- Un internationaliste de haut vol dont l'esprit visionnaire l'a conduit à s'intéresser avant les autres à des sujets jusque-là inexplorés.

Tous ceux qui l'ont approché ont été marqués par son intelligence protéiforme, son érudition et sa curiosité d'esprit sans fin. Il savait pourtant rester d'un abord très facile et très humain.

La passion qui l'animait, au service de la justice sociale et de l'humanité, le guidait aussi dans son comportement quotidien. Et donc le BIT est très sensible à l'hommage que la Ville de Genève rend aujourd'hui à Wilfred Jenks. Je voudrais à cet égard remercier chaleureusement les représentants des autorités genevoises qui se trouvent parmi nous.

Wilfred Jenks rejoint au Cimetière des Rois un grand nombre de personnalités éminentes, ayant contribué sous une forme ou sous une autre au rayonnement de Genève. Ce n'était que justice car peu de personnes auront autant contribué que lui à « la Genève internationale ».

Manuel Tornare, Conseiller administratif de la Ville de Genève

C'est à l'unanimité que le gouvernement de la Ville de Genève a décidé, sur proposition des uns et des autres ici réunis, de transférer la tombe de Wilfred Jenks au Cimetière des Rois.

C'est un lieu magique, même si c'est un cimetière. C'est un très beau parc apprécié des Genevoises et des Genevois et de toutes celles et tous ceux qui passent par Genève. Ce fut un hôpital et un cimetière de pestiférés avant de devenir notre Panthéon local. Les glorieux et illustres hommes et femmes – il y en a quelques-unes maintenant qui sont enterrées ici, malheureusement trop peu – ces hommes et ces femmes illustres ont souvent été durant leur vie méconnus, peu reconnus, et souvent pestiférés. C'est le cas de certains d'entre eux qui sont enterrés aux alentours et qui ont beaucoup été décriés de leur vivant puis adulés et adorés après leur mort.

C'est un Panthéon genevois qui regroupe un certain nombre de personnalités ; le plus illustre, bien évidemment, est celui dont nous fêtons le 500^e anniversaire de la naissance, Jean Calvin, qui a été celui qui a fait notre République, une République aujourd'hui indépendante dont nous sommes fiers. Celui qui a aussi été le précurseur des services publics – ils existaient sous un autre nom à l'époque –, que ce soit le Collège de Genève dont nous fêtons le 450^e anniversaire de la création, ou l'Académie devenue l'Université, dont nous fêtons aussi le 450^e anniversaire. Calvin a encore été l'ancêtre d'une institution à laquelle nous tenons beaucoup : l'Hospice général qui a aidé tous les réfugiés huguenots qui venaient de France, du nord d'Italie, de Hollande, d'Espagne ; Michel Servet fut un des leurs. Les Espagnols huguenots se réfugièrent ici, certains arrivèrent avec une fortune, d'autres étaient vraiment très pauvres, il fallait les aider. Et Calvin fut vraiment un visionnaire – ce qui va être sans cesse rappelé lors de nombreux colloques – Calvin fut vraiment un grand homme politique.

Au Cimetière des Rois, Wilfred Jenks sera entouré d'autres personnalités. Pour les citer : j'ai fait transférer il y quelques années le tombeau d'un homme pour qui j'ai beaucoup d'estime, un vieux Genevois, Jean-Jacques de Seillon, qui fut un des premiers à parler de l'abolition universelle de la peine de mort. Badinter rappelle souvent la figure de Jean-Jacques de Seillon. C'est aussi Jean-Jacques de Seillon qui a préconisé la Société des Nations au 19^{ème} siècle, bien avant sa création par l'excellent Président des Etats-Unis – il y en a eu quelques-uns dans le passé aux Etats-Unis ! Le Président Wilson, après le Congrès de la Paix en 1919, a décidé de créer la Société des Nations et de choisir non pas Londres mais Genève pour y établir le siège d'une Société qui a malheureusement eu un destin qui n'a pas toujours été reconnu.

On trouve aussi dans ce cimetière des écrivains : Jorge Luis Borges. Vous savez que l'Argentine, enfin certains populistes en Argentine, aimeraient récupérer le tombeau de Borges. Je crois que la famille s'y opposera heureusement.

Il y a encore bien évidemment le regretté – vous l'avez bien connu – Sergio Vieira de Mello qui a été assassiné il y quelques années en Irak.

Et puis aussi, pour la petite histoire, la fille de Dostoïevski qui est morte à un âge précoce à Genève ce qui explique que Dostoïevski a beaucoup haï cette ville de Genève en raison de la perte de sa chère fille.

J'aimerais aussi rappeler une personne que peut-être peu d'entre vous connaissent, mais mon grand-père, qui était professeur d'économie à l'Université, fut son assistant en début de carrière, il s'agit d'Edgar Milhaud. Edgar Milhaud fut un ami de Wilfred Jenks puisqu'il a été le secrétaire particulier de Jean Jaurès. Et en 1914, quand malheureusement Jean Jaurès a été assassiné froidement à Paris, il y a eu une vague d'anti-sémitisme et de lutte contre les pacifistes en France. La famille Milhaud est venue s'établir à Genève par crainte de l'anti-sémitisme et de la lutte contre tous ceux qui étaient pacifistes. Edgar Milhaud fut une grande figure de l'enseignement de l'histoire économique et fut aussi doyen de la Faculté des Sciences économiques de l'Université de Genève. En cela, il a été le prédécesseur de mon grand-père, Claudius Terrier, qui lui-même le fut.

Toutes ces personnalités vont bien entourer Wilfred Jenks. Et quand on pense à Jaurès, quand on pense à Edgar Milhaud, on pense à un autre grand socialiste : Albert Thomas, député du Tarn, qui fut le premier Directeur du Bureau international du Travail et député de la SFIO [Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière], un esprit éclairé, ce que nous ne sommes pas forcément tous dans les partis politiques.

J'aimerais encore vous dire combien – je le dis au nom de l'Exécutif de la Ville de Genève – nous sommes attachés à la Genève internationale. En offrant la possibilité de transférer cette tombe ici au Cimetière des Rois, le Conseil administratif a voulu ainsi marquer sa reconnaissance pour la Genève internationale. J'ai parlé du Président Wilson en 1919 et heureusement, depuis, nous avons accueilli d'autres institutions internationales qui ont leur siège mondial ou européen à Genève. C'est pour nous un grand honneur d'héberger le siège de l'OIT et nous en sommes très reconnaissants.

Donc l'accueil de Wilfred Jenks dans ce cimetière est pour nous une marque de reconnaissance. En tant que membres de l'Exécutif, quelles que soient nos options politiques à l'intérieur du gouvernement de la Ville, du Canton et même du Conseil fédéral – puisque vous savez qu'en Suisse la cohabitation et le pluralisme démocratique sont de vieilles traditions –, je crois que, comme chacune et chacun ici en Suisse, nous sommes attachés aux droits syndicaux qui font partie pour nous des droits élémentaires, des droits des personnes.

C'est pour nous une manière de lutter contre la pauvreté, de lutter pour les droits syndicaux, de lutter pour la dignité humaine. On voit, hélas, dans de nombreux pays, par les temps qui courent, que ces droits sont de plus en plus, vous ne direz pas le contraire, bafoués. C'est encore une lutte contre la discrimination. Et je pense que Wilfred Jenks, que nous honorons aujourd'hui, fut un de ces hommes qui a repris le flambeau d'Albert Thomas, tout comme vous reprenez aussi le flambeau, et nous en sommes fiers. Nous sommes persuadés qu'il est très important, non seulement pour Genève, mais pour tous ceux qui passeront par ce cimetière, de se rappeler la mémoire d'une personnalité comme Wilfred Jenks, une personnalité qui fit beaucoup pour faire avancer les droits humains.

Merci en tout cas à vous tous, et je suis, encore une fois, très fier d'être parmi vous aujourd'hui.

Bruce Jenks:

I think that the decision of the City of Geneva for my father's final resting place to be here at the Cimetière des Rois signifies in a certain sense that he has become part of Geneva's heritage. And I think, Mr. Tornare, the way you describe that heritage and the way you refer to this as the Pantheon in Geneva, is very eloquent testimony to that.

If you actually "Google" this cemetery you will discover Mr. Tornare doing an introduction and a virtual tour of the cemetery. I want to quote his opening sentence:

"A l'heure du village mondial, cette visite virtuelle va servir de guide à tous ceux qui veulent mieux connaître ce qui a fait la tradition, cet Esprit de Genève."

In short, at this time of awakening of a global community, visiting this cemetery will introduce you to this spirit of Geneva and I think that the principles of internationalism and of social justice are deeply embedded in the history of the city and in the institutions that have grown here over the last century. Some 90 years ago, as was said, the League of Nations; for the last 90 years, of course, the ILO. This is the city that gave its name to the Geneva Conventions; it's the home of the Red Cross; it's the Headquarters for the Commissioners for Human Rights and for Refugees; it's the home of this long tradition of labour conventions and standards; of global health standards; all of these things.

Actually Craig pointed out this morning something which I had not been aware of, and my mother confirmed it and we then checked it, and indeed my father wrote a pamphlet, a booklet, in 1945. Over about four or five pages, in a not too subtle way, he makes a very strong case for Geneva being the Headquarters of the United Nations. It didn't quite work out that way, but I thought it was interesting to see that.

Surely the awakening of a global community is what my father's work was dedicated to and I think that that's reflected now in the inscription on the tombstone: "Visionary international jurist dedicated to the Common Law of Mankind". And as was mentioned, perhaps his most famous book was *The Common Law of Mankind*. The guiding idea of that book was the concept that international law, as a law that was primarily a law between states, was becoming superseded by an emerging concept of a common law of mankind in its earliest phase. That was the core vision; his work on labour standards, which Mr. Somavía referred to, as well as his intensive interest in the concept of the international civil service, these are fundamental parts of that same vision of an emerging common law of mankind. If the first page of that book refers to the definition of what a common law of mankind means, the last chapter is dedicated to the concept of craftsmanship and the duty of international civil servants to craft this emerging common law and I think it is very appropriate and remains very valid today, the painstaking work of trying to craft these conventions and these norms that sometimes are so complicated to give birth to.

I have had a number of occasions myself personally to experience my father's legacy. Just to share a few of them:

When I went as the head of the UN Office to Brussels, the President of the United Nations Association in Brussels had a reception. I had never met her before, and there were quite a lot of people and she gave a very nice speech and then at the end of her speech there was a long quote and the quote, of course, was from one of my father's books, and she turned to me at the end in front of the large gathering and said "Can you tell me where that quote comes from?" And the answer was "No!". But it was quite moving and I would say half the people afterwards came up to me to talk about my father.

About ten years ago, the then Administrator had a very distinguished Japanese Ambassador who came and who had particular questions and he referred him to me. I was in a somewhat modest office in a somewhat non-descript place in the building. This Ambassador was very distinguished; he was related to the Imperial family in Japan and I could see from the minute he walked into my room that he was very generous, very kind, but all over his body language was “what on earth am I doing in this room”. Somehow during the conversation it came out that I was the son of my father and his body language entirely changed, the entire meeting changed, and it went in a very deep sense from “what am I dealing with this guy for” to “I am here with the son of Wilfred Jenks”, and it was a privilege for him to be there in respect of my father. Sometimes you can tell in body language things that words don’t tell and to me that was very eloquent.

Finally, a little event that happened which Mr. Somavía knows very well because I came to a social event in the ILO and he kindly made some comments when he was chairing an inter-agency meeting there at the beginning of this year. I was very touched when I came into the ILO building and we had to check in and I gave my name and the person – I still don’t know who it was – with a big smile said “Welcome home!”. Well after 36 years that’s not bad.

These are all stories about my father and about the legacy that he left, and it is really important to me that this legacy is shared by my sons, and for that reason I am particularly happy that Andrew is here with us today.

The spirit of Geneva and my father’s vision of a common law of mankind are rejoined, I think, as he finds his final resting place here. And I think this is particularly important for my mother who after all has now lived here some 60 years.

If my father was one of the original crafters of an international civil service and of the concept of an international civil service, he also always remained a UK citizen. We did a little bit of research, and I understand that there are eleven citizens of the United Kingdom buried here from 1816 to 1911 but since 1911, my father now is the first in almost a century so we are indeed very happy that the British Ambassador is here to share this occasion with us.

Finally, let me just say, as Craig also said, I think both of us have this memory of my father as somebody that was close to nature that very much enjoyed his long walks and the mountains. When I came here and looked at this cemetery, it is, as Mr. Tornare says on that virtual screen, an “*îlot paisible dans le cœur de l’agitation urbaine*”. It is an oasis of peace in this city and I really can’t think of a nicer spot than under this young tree that’s growing up here to have his final resting place.

So thank you all very much indeed.

Transcribed from a DVD produced by Andrew Jenks,
17 August 2009

GALLIMAUFRY

Corazon Aquino, icon of democracy and ILO principles

by Gert Gust

Corazon Aquino's recent death is being mourned around the world. After leading the successful "People Power Revolution", she served as President of the Philippines from 1986 to 1992 and made her name as the architect of democratic government and the rule of law. The massive outpouring of respect at the funeral of Tita (Auntie) Cory, as she is affectionately known by her people, is testimony that her legacy is alive with a grateful nation.

During her six years' term she was in many ways closely associated with the ILO and its guiding principles. As head of the Manila ILO office, I was privileged to follow at close range an unfolding political drama of regime change and its impact on social development and industrial relations.

As the figurehead of the Laban (Fight) movement, Cory Aquino was an inspiring leader of mass demonstrations and public protests that galvanized diverse opposition groups of students, business people, workers, clergy, military and unions into a powerful popular anti-Marcos movement. At its peak, the "People Power Revolution" was drawing millions to the main thoroughfare, the EDSA, to form a human shield between advancing loyalist tanks and the camps of rebel soldiers. Locals and foreigners were in the grip of a high political drama. At the time similar non-violent movements were gaining ground in Central and Eastern Europe, that would, in 1989, lead to the destruction of the Berlin Wall, the disintegration of the Soviet empire and the end of the Cold War.

The Philippine version of people power had its unique practical human touch to it. Thus, Cardinal Sin's broadcast appeal to bring food to the rebel soldiers holed up in their camps was met by broad popular support, including that of my family and friends. To our surprise, the guards at the camp gates refused to accept our bags and baskets bulging with tasty cheese sandwiches. They were denying acceptance of our gifts on such plausible grounds that many people had already unloaded plenty of cheese sandwiches; also the Cardinal had, meanwhile, called for a strengthening of rebel staying power through such higher calorie food supplies as chicken, ham and especially meat. How far this "à la carte" diet may have tipped the balance in favour of the revolution is shrouded by the mist of history.

With much of its technical assistance on hold, the UN family was primarily concerned with the safety and security of some 500 international and local staff and their families. With the UN Resident Coordinator out of the country, I was heading a security team of a dozen wardens reporting through squeaking handsets on security in different quarters of Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

The team's nerves were stretched to the limits, especially during the critical last days of the Marcos regime. A stressful situation turned into confusion when a deafening noise from airplanes and gunfire was being attributed to aerial attacks of Marcos loyalists and to hand-to-hand fighting. With the media and international communications off the air, the team was literally groping in the dark, and grappling with decisions on a possible relocation or evacuation of UN staff and their families. To our great relief, the first international call to come through was from Phil Neck in Bangkok, who cheerfully told me that Marcos had fled the country. At that moment it dawned on us that the persistent infernal noise was not at all related to fierce combat but to the airlifting to Hawaii, by the US Air Force, of Marcos and his entourage as well as to uncontrolled salvos of the

exuberant victorious rebel military. Fortunately, all UN staff and facilities had survived the turmoil unharmed. Years later, I fully realized our luck in Manila, when I had to deal, in PERS/EXPERTS, with the compensation claims of surviving family members of local ILO project staff, killed during the Rwandan massacres.

Cooperation with the incoming labour minister, Augusto Sanchez, got off to an uneasy start and lasted during his brief term of office. A fierce leftist activist during the Marcos regime, he had fixed ideas about the ILO as “anti-labour” and being biased in favour of the employers. Adamantly refusing to attend the 1986 ILO Conference, it took a lot of manoeuvring and arm-twisting by ILO constituents for him to grudgingly head the Philippine delegation to Geneva.

Minister Sanchez’ strong advocacy of profit sharing and workers’ participation in management met with strong opposition, especially from the employers; and so did his sympathies for the militant Maoist KMU (First of May Movement) at the expense of the established moderate unions, like TUCP (Trade Union Congress of the Philippines) and the FFW (Federation of Free Workers). As a result the Philippines became the strike capital of Asia. There was also a surge of complaints from local and international unions to the ILO and the Committee of Freedom of Association about real and alleged infringement of trade union rights. The situation improved considerably with subsequent labour ministers Franklin Drilon and Ruben Torres.

The unquestioned highlight of ILO-Philippine relations was President Aquino’s address at the 75th ILC in 1988 as the first lady Head of State on her first visit to Europe. To bring this about was somewhat of a Sisyphean task: whenever things seemed to fall into place, there was a hitch of sorts. To begin with there was a long waiting list of heads of state wanting to speak at the Conference. Later I was told that an invitation would come forward, subject to informal clearance that the President would accept and be able to come. A catch 22. To get the President’s nod was no easy task either in an atmosphere of “Cory-mania” where ambassadors armed with considerable leverage of aid and investments were competing to arrange a visit to their respective countries. Tripartite lobbying helped to tilt the balance in ILO’s favour.

During his visit in early 1988 to the Philippines to extend the ILO’s invitation in person, Director-General Blanchard and President Aquino hit it off on a strong personal plane. He was extended full diplomatic honours, including welcome street banners, motorcade, aerial tours with the presidential helicopter and, a rare honour for visiting dignitaries: accommodation at the McArthur suite at the Manila hotel. Commending the President for her historic achievements at a function in Malacanang Palace, Mr. Blanchard ended his dinner table speech with a gallant “On vous aime, Madame!”. With her background of advanced studies of French culture and language, Cory Aquino highly appreciated this fine expression of Gallic charm.

At the 1988 ILC, President Aquino spoke with great authority about labour and employment matters: after all, the recently adopted Philippine Constitution had enshrined full employment, equal opportunity, the protection of labour, local and overseas, organized and unorganized. She stressed that the drive for democracy and popular participation were intricately linked to economic development, the abolition of poverty and the improvement of the working and living conditions of the broad masses. She was showered with standing ovations, wherever she went. Back in Manila, her visit received extensive media coverage on screen and in print; on my return, I had to explain to friends and staff why they had been unable to spot me in televised reports showing the President amidst huge crowds of delegates and ILO officialdom. They had to accept my explanation that state visits were the sole prerogative of HQ and that I had followed, in line with established protocol, the presidential visit from the remote visitors’ gallery at the Palais.



Photo donated to ILO Archives by Gloria Clemmitt

Cory Aquino chatting informally with Francis Blanchard,
75th Session of the ILC, Geneva, 14 June 1988

Throughout her administration, President Aquino never wavered in pursuing the commitments made in her speech at the ILC, notwithstanding strong countervailing forces and no less than seven coup attempts. ILO's programmes were encouraged to thrive. To revive the floundering economy, the Aquino government had set high hopes on ILO assistance in mounting a massive public works programme. The dynamic planning minister Solita Monsod already visualized the mobilization of tens of thousands of workers, shouldering shovels, hammers and pickaxes, to build roads and bridges, schools and markets with labour-intensive methods. However ILO's specialists ruled that "Crash programmes crash" and instead offered training for construction engineers in labour-intensive methods as well as public works employment projects for displaced sugar workers in Negros province. The vast resources set aside by the government for the crash employment programme were eventually distributed among local government units for use as they saw fit for infrastructure, schools and the like.

Tangible results were achieved by ILO's wage policy advisory mission, led by Gus Edgren, to put minimum wage fixing on a sound footing through Regional Productivity and Wages Boards (RPWB). The establishment of a National Conciliation and Mediation Board (NCMB), supported by the ILO, was credited with a gradual decline in strikes and the introduction of new forms of workplace cooperation like the Labour Management Councils (LMCs). ILO's first ever operational child labour project was focused on the abolition of the "Smokey Mountain" dumpsite in Manila and the rehabilitation of child scavengers. A later visit to the project by Governing Body Chairman Gerd Muhr helped to reinforce the commitment of the German Government to provide substantial financial support to the International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC).

The Aquino government was willing to resume the process of ratifying ILO Conventions, dormant for ten years under martial law; new transparent democratic practices and processes had to be revived or drawn up from scratch. A start was made with the

ratification of Convention No. 159 on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled persons), flanked by a technical assistance project. Extensive promotional efforts by ILO constituents and the Manila office led to the ratification of Convention No. 144 on Tripartite Cooperation; this provided the policy framework for the national and regional Tripartite Industrial Peace Councils (TIPCs), as well as for tripartite institutions concerned with minimum wage fixing, dispute settlement, social security, technical education and skills development as well as occupational safety and health.

After serving six turbulent years as President, Cory Aquino exchanged politics for “public” retirement as a highly visible and outspoken, internationally respected elder stateswoman. Initiatives are now underway to make her a “National Hero” that would put her on a par with her great countryman, Jose Rizal, whose non-violent agitation a century ago had ushered in the end of colonial rule in the Philippines.

In 1990 I travelled to Berlin to chip a piece off the broken Wall and to visit the small museum located near the former notorious “Checkpoint Charlie” that controlled passage between East and West Berlin. Here, I was very pleased to see that Cory Aquino had been recognized, along with other freedom fighters, as a universal symbol of people power.

8 August 2009

International Society for Better Tomorrows (ISBET): a candid retrospection

by Darshan Khanna, founder of ISBET

ISBET was established back in 1998¹ to harness the collective strengths, energies, experience and expertise of recently retired ILO and other UN officials for a deserving social cause. The chosen subject was the promotion of child education in selected Asian countries through the active participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Within this mission, the objective was to strengthen and empower smaller but viable NGOs active in the field of child education to enable them to improve their level and quantum of participation in the field of child education with emphasis on girls. It was also felt that in particular small national NGOs could make a substantial contribution to child education and related issues in their countries. However, it was noted that this potential was seriously impaired by their lack of technical skills in such areas as project formulation, reporting, accountability, representation, etc., which limited their impact as well as their access to national and international resources.

In formulating the objectives and plan of action of ISBET, certain basic assumptions were made:

- (a) Many recently retired international officials had the desire to ‘return something to the society’ without being overzealous or overambitious, and most of them possessed skills which could be useful for a project of this kind;
- (b) In addition to doing a certain amount of voluntary work, many retired international officials were also able to make a modest financial contribution towards the running costs of ISBET;

¹ An announcement on the establishment of ISBET, and an update on ISBET were respectively published in the *Friends Newsletter* of May 1998 and May 2003.

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- (c) While many international officials tended to retire at their respective duty stations (Geneva in the case of ILO), there were others who do return to their countries of origin. It was thus hoped that a certain number of future members of ISBET could be recruited in major Asian countries who could help in its activities at local level and do the required follow up; and
 - (d) Since most of the national and international funds available for NGO participation in social development are gobbled up by larger NGOs simply because their smaller counterparts do not have the wherewithal to comply with some of the donor requirements, it was expected that this latter category of NGOs would be favourably disposed towards working with ISBET to achieve up-grading of their skills and abilities especially when assistance was offered with little or no cost to them.

Assumptions (a) and (b) proved to be quite realistic in the sense that within two years of establishment, ISBET was able to enrol more than 80 paying members mainly from among retired international officials and a few from among serving international officials.

In regard to assumption (c), it was found that on the one hand the number of international officials retiring in India, Bangladesh and Pakistan, for example, was very small. And on the other, those who did return to their home countries, enthusiasm for voluntary work and participation in a cause like ISBET was either lacking or rather lukewarm. A number of reasons could possibly be attributed to this lack of enthusiasm but that was hardly any solace to ISBET.

As for assumption (d), namely, the reaction and interest of the intended beneficiary NGOs, it turned out to be more complicated than originally assumed. Basically two problems were encountered. One was the difficulty of identifying deserving and credible NGOs from among a huge number of those on the scene, especially in the absence of locally resident members of our own. In this connection, with the universal recognition some 15-20 years ago of the role of NGOs in social and economic development, and availability of national and international funding for their participation in projects, a very large numbers of NGOs, running into thousands in major countries, had sprung up, but not all of them were really credible, efficient and deserving of support. Many of them existed only in name and for an outside body like ISBET in particular it was almost impossible to separate the wheat from the chaff.

Secondly, when some good NGOs were identified through personal contacts at country level, and approached on behalf of ISBET, most of them, in fact practically all of them, seemed to be first interested in knowing what kind of financial inputs would ISBET assistance bring with it before even knowing what type of assistance was on offer. On further investigation and study, it was found that the very basis of the setting up and existence of a large number of NGOs had been the hope to cash in on availability of large amounts of funds from international and to a lesser extent from national sources. To put it bluntly, the potential recipients were only interested in dollars (but not averse to Swiss Francs) and this attitude was found to be widespread. In other words, without looking at your cheque book, so to say, they would not engage with any international player regardless of what it might have to offer. This situation seemed to be so real and all pervasive that ISBET, having already been set up on the assumption that smaller NGOs could be helped and empowered, had to look at other ways of making a contribution to the cause of child education at country level. In other words, assumption (d) above had to be practically discarded as unrealistic.

In spite of the above, ISBET did find a useful role for itself in terms of supporting experimental projects with modest financial inputs and most of them proved to be highly rewarding and successful. Some selected examples are briefly described below.

Establishment of school in a Karachi slum

A basic schooling facility was established in a slum area of Karachi, Pakistan, where none existed before. Supervised by a volunteer National Consultant and a local residents committee, this school educated some 300 children over three years out of which 70 showed such promise that they could be admitted into different English medium schools of Karachi, which is a dream of every middle class family in the country. The one-room schooling facility was also used for women's vocational training and as community centre.

The project cost about 12,000 Swiss Francs which were provided by the 1% Fund. Overhead costs, which were minimal, were covered by ISBET.

Four village schools in Bangladesh through micro-credit

With the help of a small local NGO, a unique scheme of micro credit was set up in four very poor villages of Bangladesh. The special feature of this scheme was the condition that in all four recipient villages which neither had a school nor easy access to any school, a basic school facility would be set up and funded by the money received as return of loans granted to village women. The project was funded entirely by ISBET and one of its members.

Several small projects for nutritional support to small children in India

An original concept called the **Banana Project** was developed by ISBET and implemented in different city slums in India through local NGOs that were engaged in child development and education. Around 100 pre-school children from extremely poor families would be gathered every day at a designated place and fed one or two bananas, eggs or other nutritional items. Alongside, gatherings of mothers were organized at which instruction in health and hygiene, family budgeting, and importance of sending children to school was provided. These projects were funded by ISBET partly through its campaign of 5-centime coin collection.

Series of informal schools under the national "Education for All Campaign" in India

Under the Education for all Campaign, the Government provides numerous NGOs a certain financial assistance for educating children between the age of 6 and 14 years, teach them and within a year to get them admitted at appropriate level in a Government school. Some NGOs however had the ability to help more children than the Government could support within the available budget; ISBET collaborated with one such NGO during the last 5 years and supported up to 200 children every year most of whom were eventually admitted in nearby Government schools and set on the path to pursuing further education.

It should be noted that ISBET also did considerable preparatory work for several other, initially promising projects, but which did not conclude as expected mainly because of what is stated above in respect of assumption (d). A school project in a tribal area of Orissa State in India, and another in Nepal would fall into this category.

In the meantime, time has inevitably taken its toll as far as ISBET membership is concerned. In 2009, after 11 years of existence, we are left with some 20 life-members (who are naturally not expected to pay any further annual contributions) and only

10 ordinary members whose annual contributions amount to 1'000 Swiss Francs. We also have some funds in the Bank. Secondly, the members who are still around are on average 10 years' older than when they joined and consequently not at the same level of energy and perhaps enthusiasm as before.

We are deliberating on the best possible type of activity, or activities, that may still be possible to carry on, e.g. establishment of a modest scholarship scheme. I believe that for all our members and certainly for myself creation and running of ISBET has been a highly rewarding experience. The fact that not many ventures set up by retirees last so long is also a matter of satisfaction. ISBET is still not quite yet at the end of the road, especially since it never had an over-ambitious agenda to start with but whenever it happens that ISBET has to be wound up, the biggest regret will be that even an organization with such an elegant name, could not possibly last forever.

But such is the power of the laws of inevitability applicable to all us mortals and to all our institutions.

22 September 2009

ILO Reunion of 'Veteran' Temps

by Lynne Crocker, Betty Lothian and Irene Renshaw

Over a leisurely lunch by the canals of Birmingham in Autumn 2007, the idea first germinated of having an ILO Reunion of 'veteran' Temps. The three of us, Betty Lothian, Irene Renshaw (née Pearson) and Lynne Crocker (née Griffin) had all worked full-time for the ILO for extended periods but had gone on to become Temps in the ILO Pool, providing secretarial support to the ILO June Conference and other meetings every year. Our fellow colleagues were scattered across the globe and over lunch we were musing over 'whatever happened to so and so'. What we all had in common through those years was our commitment to the ILO and, above all, to making sure all the documentation was ready for the next morning's session, even if this meant working through the night, which we regularly did, going home exhausted by taxi at the crack of dawn! Over the years a sense of camaraderie had evolved between us.

This is the point at which we thought it would be fun to organize a get-together. Little did we realize what a mammoth task we were about to embark upon!

By December 2008 a tom-tom system spontaneously sparked into life (e-mail helped!). Across the world from Ireland to Australia to the US, previous colleagues right back to the 1960s were hearing of our Reunion and getting in touch. The response was quite overwhelming and soon we had a mailing list of more than 80 names.

Next we had to decide where and when. We had another meeting and after a lot of discussion, hair pulling, chest pounding and liquid refreshment we came up with, surprise, surprise, the environs of Geneva! Then commenced the daunting task of choosing a venue, compiling letters, drawing up maps, sorting out bus timetables, hotels, menus and last, but not least, sorting out the financial side. All this information had to be assembled and sent out to all participants. It was like organizing a mini ILO Conference! We had various massive hiccups along the way such as the chosen restaurant renegeing on the booking shortly before the event, but undaunted, and with the help of good friends in Geneva, Ferney and Divonne, we finally came up with the restaurant L'Imprévu in Ferney Voltaire.

On the day itself, Sunday 14 June 2009, the sun shone, a good omen indeed. The 40 participants gathered on the terrace at the restaurant. Some of us hadn't seen one another

for 30 years or so. It was wonderful to see people greeting each other after this time lapse and picking up exactly where they had left off. The ambiance was very relaxed and cordial. The food was good. Everyone truly seemed to be enjoying themselves and talking animatedly to one another. There was much laughter, clinking of glasses, chatter and whoops of joy. We had a few short speeches. We toasted absent friends, including some who wanted to be there but couldn't for various reasons. We also toasted Mary Finnegan, who had to withdraw shortly before the event because of an accident; and Betty Lothian, one of our organizers, who was taken ill suddenly. Happily both are now recovering well.

We would like to express our thanks to those local residents who spearheaded a search at short notice for another restaurant: Lynda Pond, Torkel Alfthan, Margaret Giorgi, Hazel Cecconi, Sandie Maksud-Twigger; and especially, Margaret Kearns who finalized all the details for L'Imprévu. Thanks also to Geoff Renshaw and Geoff Crocker for taking the excellent photographs and the video.

This was truly a memorable day that fully rewarded all of our efforts and there were requests that this Reunion should be the first of many!



Photo courtesy Geoff Renshaw

Reunion of 'veteran' ILO Temps, Ferney Voltaire, 14 June 2009

List of Reunion Participants: Christine Alfthan (Brown); Jane Allen (Wilcock); Brenda Appleyard; Pauline Bryett; Hazel Cecconi; Deirdre Chapelle (Giles); Ann Cooney; Lynne Crocker (Griffin); Pat Crowley-Dolan; Lin Dore; Maureen Dunphy; Irene Edkins; Sue Fewings; Nadine Fry; Margaret Giorgi; Pauline Glaser; Wendy Gray; Mary Hamouda; Maureen Hegglin; Anne Hodson (McGinley); Joy Jaco (Shearer); Helen Junker; Margaret Kearns; Vicky Mason; Judith Melrose (Boardman); Janet Mitchell (Booth); Ann Moore; Judy Mullins (Carter); Lynda Pond; Nancy Porter; Carmel Power; Irene Renshaw (Pearson); Pam Richardson; Cathleen Roche; Janet Savage (Justice); Diane Thompson-Smith (McGillivray); Ainsley Tripolitano; Janet Weingarten (Harvey).

14 October 2009

BOOK NOTES

Gerry Rodgers, Eddy Lee, Lee Swepston, Jasmien van Daele: **The ILO and the Quest for Social Justice**, Geneva, ILO, 2009

ILO: **Edward Phelan and the ILO; the Life and Views of an International Social Actor**, Geneva, ILO, 2009

The publication of these two books by the Office, as part of the ILO's Century Project and of the celebration of the 90th Anniversary of the ILO, was already announced in the last issue of this Newsletter. But now that I have read both books myself, I cannot resist the temptation of encouraging our readers to beg, borrow or steal (or better still, to buy) both of them, because in very different ways they both make real contributions to a better understanding of the ILO, its origins and its history.

The authors of **The ILO and the Quest for Social Justice** are all former ILO officials (and three of them were still serving in the Office when the book was being written). You might therefore expect the book to be full of self-congratulation for the remarkable contributions that each of them made to the Organization during their years of service, or at least of the prejudices that each of them harbours towards certain aspects of the ILO's work. But this is not the case.¹

The book does not aim to be a complete, objective and definitive history of the ILO. As the Director-General, Juan Somavia, says in his Foreword: "This book is the creation of its authors. It was never intended to be the definitive history, but rather to tell a story. It is a story with which you may agree or disagree, and there are opinions here as well as facts." And the authors themselves recognize in their Preface that "we have highlighted some periods and parts of the world and neglected others, discussed some topics and passed others by. This is a personal selection, rather than a comprehensive account ...". Despite these disclaimers, I found the book to contain a very informative and balanced account of the evolution of ILO action in a wide range of subjects. It is not of course fully comprehensive – I thought, for instance, that the ILO's activities relating to multinational corporations deserved more than the few passing references that are devoted to them – but it seemed to me that all the major themes in the ILO's work over the years are covered, and well covered. An impressive amount of research has clearly gone into this volume – all the more impressive when one considers the short period of time for its preparation.

Where opinions are expressed, they are backed up by a careful and balanced assessment of the facts. For instance, a chapter on social protection gives a remarkably clear, concise and well written description of the evolution of ILO action in this field over the years, concluding with the remark that: "Its long-standing institutional preference for social insurance, tripartite-based and focusing on workers in formal employment, explains why the ILO was not always able to successfully promote "social protection for all", although it has been successful in promoting social protection for some". The chapter on quality of work contains a very interesting review of the development of ILO policies and thinking on wage policy and minimum wages since the early years, but regrets that the World Employment Programme, and the basic needs strategy adopted by the World Employment Conference in 1976, paid little attention to minimum wage-fixing (or at best "damned minimum wages with faint praise"): "In essence, two agendas were developed in parallel, ... dealt with in two different ILO programmes, and there was little connection between them." The Chapter on employment and poverty reduction comments favourably on the ILO's work on employment in the 1920s and 1930s, as well

¹ The fourth author, Jasmien van Daele, is a young historian from the University of Ghent, where she completed her PhD on the origins and early history of the ILO; she worked with the ILO for a short period on leaving university, and made a remarkable contribution to this book.

as on the vast body of knowledge on employment issues generated by the World Employment Programme in the 1970s; but it regrets the decline in the technical capacity of the Office on matters of economic and employment policy, and its consequent loss of influence, in the 1990s. “The WEP had put the ILO “ahead of the curve”, whereas now it was lagging seriously behind”. The final chapter concludes that in order to face the challenges of the future, “the ILO will have to reach out beyond its traditional constituents and engage with a wider set of powerful new actors on the world stage ... [including] global enterprises, regional bodies, international groupings of parliamentarians and public authorities, and the increasingly global organization of specific interests beyond those already within its walls”.

Remarks such as these will certainly not gain universal, unanimous support, but in my view they make this book infinitely more interesting and valuable – and bring much greater credit to the ILO – than would a dry history book carefully drafted (in the best tradition of ILO documents) in such a way as to offend nobody. It is beyond doubt among the best – arguably the very best – book ever written on the ILO.



Photo courtesy Gerry Rodgers

The *Quest* authors, left to right: Gerry Rodgers, Lee Swepston, Jasmien van Daele, Frances Papazafropoulos (Editor), Eddy Lee, 21 July 2008

Edward Phelan and the ILO brought the shadowy figure of Edward Phelan to life for me. When I joined the Office in 1960, David Morse had already been Director-General for 12 years, and nobody could tell me much about his predecessor, Edward Phelan. I was told that he had kept the ILO in existence throughout the war in Montreal, had played a major role in the drafting and adoption of the Declaration of Philadelphia, had written the famous book *Yes and Albert Thomas*, and since his retirement was living an almost hermit-like existence in a villa by the lake near Genthod. But beyond that, I learned little about the man. By all accounts he had been a very solitary and retiring person even when he had been Director, and few ILO officials had had any contact with him.

So when this book appeared, I picked it up to read it more out of a sense of duty than for pleasure, but I was agreeably surprised. An Introduction by Wilfred Jenks, written in the late 1960s, and a biographical essay by Emmet O’Connor of the University of Ulster both paint remarkable portraits of the man who, more than anyone else, but in his discreet way, played a determining role in the creation of the ILO and in the shaping of

its tripartite structure, ensured the survival of the ILO during the war years, and carved out a role for the ILO in the post-war years. The book consists mainly of extensive extracts from Phelan's hitherto unpublished memoirs, and these make fascinating reading – particularly his detailed accounts of the negotiations leading to the creation of the ILO, and of his relations with Albert Thomas, with whom he had difficult moments in the early years of their collaboration, but for whom he developed a genuine admiration. These memoirs stop in the early 1920s, but the book also includes three articles on later events and developments that Phelan wrote for the Irish review *Studies* in the 1950s. Among the highlights of these articles one might mention the detailed account that is given of the delicate negotiations leading up to the admission of the United States to membership of the ILO in 1934 (including the difficulties that this caused with the League of Nations, which the United States had no intention of joining); the appointment of Winant as Director of the ILO, and his decision to move the ILO to Montreal; a most vivid description of the journey across Europe from Geneva to Lisbon before crossing the Atlantic, and of the Spartan accommodation made available to the ILO in McGill University; the circumstances of Winant's resignation, and of Phelan's appointment as Acting Director; the convening of the New York Conference of 1941 and Roosevelt's address to it.

In short, essential reading for anyone wishing to understand the origins of the ILO and its evolution during the first 30 years of its existence.

The book was launched in the ILO on 1 July 2009 with an animated round-table discussion under the chairmanship of the Irish Ambassador in Geneva, Daithi O'Ceallaigh. The presence of Angela Butler and Antoinette Béguin, who knew and worked with Phelan in Montreal, added a warm personal touch to the debate.

30 September 2009

Jack Martin

Royal Tombs of India: 13th to 18th Century, by Ajit Singh Bhalla. Mapin Publishing, India, 2009.

Will Ajit Singh never cease to astonish us? We knew him as a learned economist in the Employment Department. Then we learnt that he had blossomed into an artist and was holding exhibitions hither and yon. Before we assimilated this, we find that he has published a learned book about the Royal Tombs of India; and moreover, illustrated this with his own excellent photographs. What next, Ajit?

From his publisher's note, we learn that Ajit is not only a historian, archaeologist and photographer, but also a Visiting Professor at the School of Contemporary Chinese Studies (Heavens alive! Chinese Studies?) at the University of Nottingham. He has held academic positions in various universities including Cambridge, Oxford, and Yale. He has been the author or editor of 18 publications. One of them is *Poverty and Exclusion in a Global World (also in Japanese)*; heavens alive, does this man write in Japanese as well?

These are high qualifications; all one needs to say is that his latest book lives up to them.

Lord Curzon was an oft-maligned Viceroy of India at the turn of the 19th Century but all his sins must be forgiven because of the protection he gave to historical monuments. He established the Archaeological Survey of India and halted much of the vandalism that was rife. Even now, the protection offered is often inadequate. Bernard Levin, the eminent columnist of *The Times*, once wrote that India did not deserve to have the Taj Mahal because it did not look after it properly.

Ajit Bhalla's book will help in the task of preserving India's ancient monuments. It will help us *to sit and tell sad tales of the deaths of kings*.

4 November 2009

Aamir Ali

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Wilfred Jenks

I received the *Newsletter* today and read with much interest your article on Wilfred. I was very moved and thought you portrayed so much of his beliefs and personality. It was truly a great pleasure for me and I know my sons will be very happy to read the Editorial, so beautifully written. I know that Wilfred always had the highest regard for you.

27 April 2009

Jane Jenks

Philippe Blamont

Il y a longtemps que je voulais vous remercier de m'adresser régulièrement le *Bulletin des Anciens* où je vous lis ainsi que les « co-éditoriaux » de Jack Martin avec intérêt et attention. Liberté d'esprit, liberté de ton, culture (avec pour Jack Martin un choix personnel et remarquable de citations de Shakespeare) goût et sens de l'histoire, connaissance intime du BIT et de ceux qui l'ont servi avec distinction : j'ai apprécié tout ceci et je continuerai avec la même amitié admirative à vous lire l'un et l'autre, même si vous allez désormais porter des « titres » différents.

Mais je souhaitais également évoquer la mémoire de Philippe Blamont dont j'ai appris le décès avec beaucoup de regret.

Voilà un haut-fonctionnaire du Bureau à la personnalité marquée qui a laissé son empreinte sur cette institution dans les années soixante, années auxquelles je me réfère. J'ignore en effet quelles fonctions lui furent confiées après le départ de M. Morse en 1970 mais il fait partie, à mes yeux, de ceux que l'on ne doit pas oublier car ils ont alors défendu et illustré ce qui faisait l'éminente qualité du Bureau dans ces années lointaines : une fonction publique internationale de très haut niveau.

Philippe Blamont, lorsque je l'ai connu, quittait ses fonctions de chef de cabinet du Directeur général (on dirait maintenant directeur du cabinet). Il avait succédé dans ce poste à vous-même [Aamir Ali] et à Robert W. Cox et fut remplacé par Warren Furth. Il prit alors la responsabilité du Bureau de Liaison de l'OIT auprès des Nations Unies à New York puis, au départ de M. Bacon, ancien Ministre français du Travail, la direction en 1966, me semble-t-il, du Centre international de Turin avec le grade de Sous-directeur général.

Je garde de lui un souvenir très vivant : personnalité brillante et complexe, il avait fait d'excellentes études de droit et devint très jeune Secrétaire de la « Conférence du stage » des avocats du Barreau de Paris. Soucieux d'être toujours le premier, esprit rigoureux, s'exprimant parfois en formules acérées (et souvent justes) qui ne lui ont pas fait que des amis, il était en même temps fidèle en amitié et avait une conception élevée du service public international, celle-là même que vous évoquez dans votre Bulletin 46 de mai 2009 en parlant de M. Jenks.

Ce choix d'une carrière internationale était, d'ailleurs intéressant car Philippe Blamont eût pu faire une honorable carrière nationale en France. Fils du Secrétaire Général de l'Assemblée Nationale de la Quatrième République (régime d'Assemblée s'il en fut) et du début de la Cinquième, habitué des Palais nationaux, frère d'un physicien connu, membre de l'Académie des Sciences, il mena à Genève, à New York ou à Turin une vie différente au service d'un autre idéal.

Dans les différentes fonctions que j'ai citées, il avait su gagner l'estime et l'amitié de M. Morse ce qui n'était pas si commun. Dans ces mêmes fonctions, Madame Blamont et lui-même tenaient leur rang en recevant avec élégance. Philippe Blamont devenait alors un hôte cultivé et spirituel avec des attitudes, des réflexions, des expressions que l'on pourrait penser proches de celles des esprits sceptiques du siècle des Lumières.

Dans les années quatre-vingt-dix, nous eûmes l'occasion de nous revoir, alors qu'il avait pris sa retraite, à Aix-en-Provence, à Paris et à Saint-Cast en Bretagne d'où je vous écris. Il était resté physiquement et intellectuellement inchangé : l'œil bleu, le corps mince, le jugement droit et l'esprit rapide.

2 mai 2009

Charles Barbeau

A career in the ILO

It was with great enthusiasm that I planned to attend the ILO's 90th anniversary to meet again some of my previous chiefs and colleagues, and especially to say hello to you.

I began my life with ILO as a G2 in January 1958 in the Spanish Pool. There Miss Rosita Daly taught me discipline for which I shall always be thankful. Her words "mi hijita" were kind and firm. My best regards go to her.

My colleagues in the Pool helped me a lot, not only in my work, but also in pushing my wheelchair when I broke a foot and had no insurance. They also pushed my little "Topolino" up hill when leaving the old building after work as I had just started to learn to drive. Also in 1960 they succeeded in getting me a one-year fixed-term contract. I still remember their names, but call them now "my pushing Spanish colleagues".

Later I was lent to Personnel (Records and Services Section) where Mr. Louis G. V. Hyde advised me to pass my language exams, which I did, and this enabled me to help my mother financially.

I remained as a G7 (by personal promotion) until I took early retirement in August 1986. I shared a large office in the new building with other colleagues. Next to my desk was a small armchair to receive the many visitors each with their different questions – so many faces passed by! I had then replaced, half-time, dear Miss Kay Weir when she passed away.

Another of my souvenirs is when with a group of colleagues, including Mr. Magnin and Miss Aubry, we began a small association called "Rencontre Amicale" whose purpose was to welcome new officials arriving in Geneva for the first time.

We had several social activities one of them being to collaborate in a charity sale at the Hotel Intercontinental to collect funds for the Geneva Gourgas Hospital for Children. Mrs. Blanchard was at the head of "Oeuvres Genevoises" and with her usual charm and ability helped the city where we had all been welcomed.

My chiefs were Mr. Koulischer, Mr. Aboughanem, Miss Lansdorp, and Mr. Castle. In 1976 at the Turin Centre I followed, with other officials, a special course on working with groups – it was like going back to school! The charming and intelligent professor, Mr. Ferrara's advice was "ayez toujours une solution de rechange".

Over the years things changed a lot in Personnel, passing from manual records to feeding this information into the new computer system. I was chosen to organize the work of ten new ladies recruited and we worked on the 3rd floor of the old building.

My other colleagues worked parallel with the previous records until everything was put in place and ran smoothly. A whole new world!

Now, as the years pass, I use just a mobile phone, keep my personal accounts and papers up to date and write to my many friends by hand. I'm sure you will understand.

I am a faithful and enthusiastic reader of your articles written with your ever wonderful sense of humour which always came through in your speeches.

The articles in the *Newsletter* of how people joined the ILO are very interesting as this is how I became a member of staff in the Organization.

Just before Christmas 1957 I was lucky enough to be interviewed by dear Mr. Sorel and took a typing test which I passed. The day he retired I met him in Petit Saconnex as thanks to him I became a financially independent woman, had a marvellous life within the ILO, and now a pleasant retirement.

Today I am the oldest member (79) of my large family as my dear husband died in 2003. I am lucky to be surrounded by 12 nephews, 11 consorts and 20 grand-nephews and nieces, and on my husband's side, five grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. But my best companion is a black-hard-hair teckel named Winnie (Winston Churchill's nickname I believe).

Over the last few years, my hobby has become putting together family photographs in albums going as far back as 1800 with my Irish great-great-grandmother.

My late husband's eldest daughter, Mrs. Cherry O. Sword, living in Rolle, offered to bring me to Geneva especially for the ILO 90th anniversary as last summer I broke both legs. Sadly I am still not recovered enough to travel.

My thoughts go out to ILO on this special occasion, so please do pass on my warmest regards to all my colleagues, and I send my best wishes to you, dear Mr. Ali, as well as your family. Please keep writing!

22 May 2009

Angelina Becerra de W.E. Lees
(Mr. London-in-Begnins)

Optimism... Still possible?

Optimism... at our time of life, with most of us well into our eighth if not ninth decade? Why not? After a very serious traffic accident that left me on the threshold of death, and a spectacular (though too slow for my liking) recuperation – dubbed “miraculous” by some observers – I am decidedly resolved to make the best of what time may be left to me.¹

I have, therefore, revisited and suitably adapted to my present circumstances our well-known administrative practice, the Triple B Principle (Banana, Boomerang, Bounce), as follows: “a Banana peel, boomerang-like, will Betimes Bounce Back, Baiting the Bloody Bastard who Balefully tried to Bring a Brother Being off Balance”.

¹ They gave me up for dead (in the clinic) but I came round. As a genuine Feline, it seems that I have a Cat's nine lives!

Such, I hope, will be the lot of the stupid hobbledehoy whose criminal motorbike (scooter, worse still, according to some witnesses) hurled me upward like a tennis ball, then to plunge downwards and crash on the ground like an egg, with enduring consequences... My late father (to me of blessed memory) trusted in an “imminent” justice. So I believe in a Nemesis that will take care of that reckless youth. Isn’t this optimism – maybe an acrid form of optimism, but optimism all the same. So what?

But there is another reason for a measure of optimism, despite my present plight of temporary physical handicap: it is the Triple D Diagnosis (self-diagnosis? What does it matter?). Here it is:

Decrepit? Definitely Dapper still, Despite eight Decades!
Damaged? Disgraced, rather, but only temporarily – hopefully!
Dotty? Decidedly not gaga yet!

I dedicate these lines to all my fellow-sufferers who are in constant pain, particularly to my dear, lifelong friend George and to the much admired Master, Aamir.

And so, my esteemed suffering colleagues in retirement, cheer up and be optimistic – if only for once! Opportunities for a good moment never fail: enjoy them! Carpe Diem, as the Ancient Pagans used to say, “let us eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die”. They certainly knew where they stood. Cheers!

15 July 2009

Fritz-the-Cat

The 50th anniversary celebration, 1969

When we were waiting in the hall of the old ILO building for the start of the tour of the recently uncovered murals, you suggested I ought to write an account of the 50th Anniversary Celebrations for the Newsletter. Well, I find I did just that way back in 1988. The following is an edited extract from a letter I sent to Aamir Ali on 24 July 1988, which I assume found its way into the Newsletter. [*It did!*] When I wrote it, plans were already being made to celebrate the 70th Anniversary.

“Mention of the 70th Anniversary reminds me of the great celebrations connected with the 50th Anniversary, in particular the evening party held in an around the old ILO building. I think I can safely claim that I was responsible for that party taking place! I was a member of the Social Activities Groups and the Welfare Committee and so, when ideas for the Anniversary were first discussed, I was anxious to know what was in them for the staff. As far as I could tell there was nothing planned for us at all. I thought this was a pretty poor show and decided to try and do something about it. As Clerk of the (now defunct) Committee on Industrial Committees, I was in an excellent position to lobby members from all three groups of the Governing Body, and lobby them I did, vigorously. The first news that I had succeeded came from dear old Jean Möri, the Swiss Workers’ delegate, who one day put an arm on my shoulder and said “Tu auras ton jubilé, toi”. For a moment, I couldn’t think what he meant – I had completely forgotten that a 50th Anniversary was also a jubilee.

So I did have my jubilee! A joint Staff/Admin Committee was formed to organize the affair and the evening soon began to take shape. Among other delights there was to be dancing and a cabaret in a marquee on the lakeside lawn and another orchestra in the Salle des Pas Perdus. A suggestion was made early on that retired officials should be invited to attend, which met with instant general approval. However, one colleague took three or four minutes to indicate that he, too, approved of the suggestion that the

invitation be extended to retired officials – “those who were still alive”. Well, yes – preferably!

The great night came, the weather was perfect, I had the first dance with the Director-General and it was all a tremendous success, except, possibly, for one thing. In addition to the ILO staff, past and present, most of the inhabitants of Pâquis were there too! It had not occurred to any of us to make it a ticket-only affair!”

That was forty years ago! In May of this year we pensioners had a very enjoyable three days celebrating the 90th Anniversary. Was anything done for the serving staff?

22 August 2009

Irene Chamberlain

NAMES AND NEWS

BALANCHE, Jacques, La Ranche, 42820 Ambierle, France. Tel.: +33 477 656106.

[See his Letter under the Editorial.]

BARBEAU, Charles, 11 rue de la Chrétienté, 92330 Sceaux, France.

[See his Letter to the Editor.]

BECERRA DE LEES, Angelina, Goya 38, 28001 Madrid, Spain.
Tel.: +3491 575 14 73.

[See her Letter to the Editor.]

BEQUELE, Assefa, Executive Director, The African Child Policy Forum, P.O. Box 1179, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Assefa's many friends will know of his commitment to improving the welfare of children, promoting children's rights and combating child exploitation. The African Child Policy Forum, of which he is Executive Director, has built up a solid reputation for serious, objective research, policy advice and advocacy action in favour of child rights and the protection and well-being of children. Its latest book: *Child Poverty: African and International Perspectives* was launched at a special ceremony in Geneva on 9 October on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The ceremony was presided over by the present and previous Chairpersons of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, and was attended by many experts and personalities in the field, as well as a large number of Assefa's friends and former colleagues from the ILO. The book was presented by Assefa, and was very favourably commented on by participants. It contains an impressive overview of the manifestations and causes of child poverty, not only in Africa but also throughout the world, and of the policies for attacking it, in papers written by eminent specialists such as Richard Jolly, Dharam Ghai, Jeffrey Sachs and Stephen Lewis, as well as by Assefa himself. JPM.

18 October 2009

CASTLE, Peter, 7 Boulevard de Grancy, 1006 Lausanne. Tel.: 021 617 50 00; E-mail: peter.castle@hotmail.com

[See his letter under the Editorial.]

CHAMBERLAIN, Irene, E-mail: irene54ch@aol.com

[See her Letter to the Editor.]

DOWDING, Ed, E-mail: eudowding@xtra.co.nz

We have finally decided that we will not be able to attend the reunion. As I think you know, Una could not face the airports en route and at both ends and I would not leave her alone. Additionally, our daughter-in-law has to go into hospital at about the same time to have two new knees fitted. I am sure that it will be a great success. Please convey to all those involved my appreciation of the work they are doing as I feel that you and I were in some ways responsible for ensuring that the reunion kept going after the first one. To be

able to meet one's colleagues face to face after years of separation is a wonderful experience which I shall miss greatly.

20 April 2009

I was sorry not to be at the reunion and to meet the few colleagues of my time still on their feet. I hit the 90 mark this month and am still able to climb ladders and mow lawns and do most of the things I could do thirty years ago but certainly with less enthusiasm and speed than previously. Una had another fall recently and managed to do so without breaking any bones. Does this prove that modern medicine works? As usual her fall was due to my carelessness as I left a grass catcher in her garage in a place I thought safe but obviously it was not.

AFUNO [Association of Former UN Officials] is still carrying on but we are not getting new members which does not auger well for the future. I still look after pension matters and our test case on tax is still proceeding but I am sure the tax department considers the safest course is no action unless pushed. If we had to get lawyers to take a case there is no chance we could raise that sort of money and I am sure that the tax department realizes this.

2 October 2009

LEMOINE, Angela, 37 chemin Moïse Duboule, C.P. 309, 1211 Genève 19.

[See her letter under 90th anniversary reunion.]

RENSHAW (PEARSON), Irene, 19 Willes Terrace, Leamington Spa, CV31 1DL.
Tel.: +44 1926 770600. E-mail: immrenshaw@hotmail.com

[See her joint article with Lynne Crocker and Betty Lothian under Gallimaufry.]

RINGENBACH-CARRICHE, Louise, EMS Eynard Fatio (chambre 511), 1 bis chemin du Pré-du-Couvent, 1224 Chêne-Bougeries. Tel.: 022 869 28 24.

J'aurais été heureuse d'assister à la réception et au déjeuner d'anniversaire de notre cher Bureau en pensant au plaisir que se serait fait mon mari, malheureusement décédé. Quant à moi, sa femme, j'ai eu il y a un mois une attaque au cerveau. Je pense souvent au Bureau, où Marc a été si heureux. Mais je suis et probablement jusqu'à la fin de ma vie dans un très bon EMS dont je vous donne l'adresse ci-dessus pour le cas (très improbable) où quelqu'un se souviendrait encore de moi ! Toute nouvelle du BIT m'intéressant encore peut – si cela ne dérange pas – m'être envoyée à l'adresse ci-dessus. Merci beaucoup.

5 mai 2009

CEUX QUI NOUS ONT QUITTÉS

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

ACHIO, Françoise	6 mai 2009
AZIMI, Sadegh (ancien Ambassadeur d'Iran auprès des Nations Unies à Genève)	1 novembre 2009
BANCZYK, E.	8 janvier 2009
BEGUM, Asghari	28 avril 2009
BENCZYK, E.	8 janvier 2009
BOAGLIO, Carlo	19 mai 2009
BONNEAU, Daniel	26 février 2009
BOSSON, Arlette	12 septembre 2009
BRACCO, Anna Maria	16 juillet 2009
BRETT, Jacques G.	14 décembre 2008
CARRILLO, Christiane	9 mai 2009
CARTER, Vivienne	20 avril 2009
CHARPENTIER, Françoise	10 mai 2009
CHOWDHURY, Abdul Mujib	13 février 2009
CORADINHO, Shelagh Anne	23 septembre 2009
CROSS, Gerald (époux d'Irene Cross)	20 décembre 2008
DIARRA, Oumar Baba	3 septembre 2009
DORLAND, Odette	5 août 2009
DOSS, Rafik	22 septembre 2009
ESPINOSA, Justiniano	22 mai 2009
FAULDS-NEWSHAM, Faith Eli	8 juillet 2008
FORGEAIS, Jean	27 avril 2009
FRASER, Dorothy (veuve de Charles Fraser)	10 octobre 2009
GHERARDI, Marguerite (veuve d'Edilio Gherardi)	26 juin 2009
GRAZIANI, Sara Enea (veuve d'Italo Cordischi)	31 octobre 2009
GUERRY, Isabella (épouse de Paul Guerry)	6 mai 2009
HALSTEAD, Rennie	24 janvier 2009
HECKSCHER, E.	11 décembre 2008
HIGELIN-LAZZARO, Suzy	22 septembre 2009
KAECH, Julien	24 septembre 2009
KIRILOFF, Michel	15 avril 2009
KRUMMEL, Carl	30 mai 2009
MAKHLOUF, Mustapha	2 février 2008
MOREL, Cécile	14 septembre 2009
MULLER, Françoise (épouse de Jean-François Muller)	5 juin 2009
NAVARRO, José A.	4 septembre 2009
OBERSON, Cécile (Rédactrice du Bulletin de l'AAFI-AFICS)	25 septembre 2009
PAKISI, Masoro	3 mai 2009
PEREIRA, Patricia	21 mai 2009
PERRIN, Liliane (veuve de Guy Perrin)	11 avril 2009
POUKHOV, Valentin	16 mars 2009
RAFIUDEEN, Chantal (Service médical commun)	11 octobre 2009
RHEE-LA HOVARY, Hélène (veuve de Hans-Albert Rhee)	2 février 2009
SAWIKA, Janina	24 décembre 2008
SEGOVIA, Isabel Petrona (veuve de Luis Segovia)	19 août 2009
SIAM, Noaman Mohamed	19 mai 2009
SIEGEL, Hannah (épouse d'Herbert Siegel)	13 avril 2009
STUART-WILLIAMS, Derek L.	29 décembre 2008

TAMURA, Yunko
THEOCHARIDES, Stelios
VANEK, Margaret
WATSON, Marjorie (veuve d' Alan Watson)

13 décembre 2008
28 avril 2009
16 septembre 2009
13 mars 2009

Corrigendum:

A most unfortunate error concerning Mrs. Julia E. Valdez Buscaglia was published in this section of the May issue of the *Newsletter*. We are happy to report that Julia Buscaglia is alive and well and living in Uruguay. It was her husband, Ricardo Buscaglia, who passed away on 9 September 2008. We offer Mrs. Buscaglia our most sincere apologies for this regrettable mistake, which was reproduced from the January 2009 AFICS New York Bulletin.

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