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EDITORIAL

Mildred Morse

Mildred Morse, widow of our former Director-General David A. Morse, passed away on 8 July 2005.

It must be difficult to be the wife of a public personality. You really live two lives: a public one, and a private one. You have to deal with many people at both levels; you meet them because of your public role but often they are your personal friends too; they cannot ever be unaware of your role. Perhaps it was not so difficult for Mildred because she was an immediately attractive woman and greeted everyone with a genuinely friendly smile that won people over before she even opened her mouth.

Mildred performed her two roles to perfection. She had a warm, outgoing nature which made friendships easy and natural; she knew the role she had to play as wife of the head of an important international organization; this came naturally to her.

The Morses remained in touch with their ILO friends after his retirement and many ILO officials enjoyed their hospitality in New York. Mildred accompanied her husband to the Seventieth Anniversary Reunion of Former Officials (SAR I) in 1989 and participated in the seminar on "How Can Former Officials Contribute to the UN System?"

Her connection with the ILO was not only through her husband but in her own right. These continued after David Morse's death. She attended the Special Commemorative Sitting of the Governing Body on 27 February 1991, which paid tribute to David Morse after his death. She came again to attend the ceremony of naming the David A. Morse Allée on 18 March 1998, in spite of some physical difficulties following a fall. And she came for the inauguration of Juan Somavia as Director-General on 4 March 1999.

Two incidents come to mind. In January 1950 the Governing Body met in Mysore. The Director-General and Mildred were travelling to India by ship and it so happened that Raghunath Rao, the Asian Assistant Director-General was travelling on the same ship. The Morses invited him to share their table in the dining room. Now, small talk was not exactly the strong point of my good friend and mentor, Raghunath, and I don't imagine that he and Morse could spend every lunch and dinner for the 10-12 days of the voyage discussing the forthcoming Governing Body.

So it fell to Mildred, the perfect hostess, to keep the conversation flowing, no doubt receiving little help from the masculine contingent. After a few days, Raghunath, who had probably met her valiant efforts with monosyllabic grunts and gentle, far-away smiles, burst out in a fit of undiplomatic candour: *The trouble with westerners is that they do not know the value of silence.* Mildred loved to recount this incident (I can remember three occasions on which she did so) and every time she would burst out into loud, gleeful laughter. (I heard the story from Raghunath as well (twice), and I am happy to report that the relations between him and Mildred remained extremely warm and friendly.)

Towards the end of March 1960, I accompanied the Director-General on an official visit to Romania; Mildred also came along. We were installed in this enormous old-style hotel, with a cavernous dining room, mostly empty, high ceilings and a sort of hushed silence (which Raghunath Rao would have loved). The food was as might be expected, not gourmet but all right. Mildred and I discovered that we both loved pickled cucumbers and as these were served with most meals, we were able to indulge this taste.

A few days after we got back to Geneva, I received a large parcel of intriguing shape; I opened it and found a large jar of pickled cucumbers from Mildred. It kept me going for weeks.

Incidentally, I discovered another aspect of her during this mission. It was my role to take notes at all the interviews the Director-General had. When we got back to the hotel, Mildred would ask me to go over my notes with her; she was deeply interested in how the visit was going. She also wanted to keep up to date so that she could play her role better at the social occasions when she was present. I realized once again what a strong consort she must have been to the DG.

Almost to the very end, she would telephone us on New Year's day: *You know I never write, she would say, but I think of all of you very often.*

Carol Lubin

It was only a few months ago that tributes were paid by the Director-General at the 85th Anniversary Reunion of Former Officials to the five colleagues who had worked on the secretariat of the Philadelphia Conference, 1944. Among them was Carol Lubin (née Riegelman) who had worked in the Office before the War.

She died on 26 July. She was just about the only link with the pre-War ILO for she joined in 1935 as assistant to the American Assistant Director, John Winant (later Director). She had worked on the *Origins of the ILO* with Professor Shotwell, and the book remains a classic.

She played an important role in the move of the Office to Montreal in 1940, both in Lisbon getting accommodation for those officials who were on the way to North America, and in New York, routing them on to Montreal.

She left the Office in 1952 to marry Isador Lubin, a US delegate to ECOSOC but this did not end her working life. She was extremely active with the NGO movement and an indefatigable participant in their meetings right until the end.

When I retired and found myself on the Committee of AAFI-AFICS, I was instructed by Sven Grabe, the Chairman, and Angela Butler to attend an NGO meeting in the Palais. Having spent much of my working life thinking that NGOs were something to be kept at arm's length, I was nervous about this assignment. I needn't have worried; I found myself sitting opposite Betsy Johnstone (now YWCA) and Carol Lubin, now representing an International Federation of Settlements. The ILO looks after its own and they kindly showed me the ropes.

A footnote: I was expected to write a report on this NGO meeting which I did with great abandon. Sven and Angela were not amused and censored it from top to bottom. A most inauspicious beginning to my AAFI-AFICS career.

Ruth Gordon

Occasionally, a journal gets an unexpected scoop, a bonanza. It was about time we got one, and we did. This is how it came about.

Ruth Gordon joined the ILO in 1945 as a stenographer and a series of events such as can never happen again rocketed her into a most fantastic experience. The ILO had been pressed for many years before the War to hold an Asiatic Regional Conference; when the

War ended, the ILO, seeing the changing shape of things to come, decided to begin the post-War period with such a Conference.

The senior Asian official, Raghunath Rao, who had joined the ILO in Geneva in 1932 under Albert Thomas, was given the responsibility of leading a mission of some dozen officials to visit Asian countries (most of them still colonies), to gather information and to revise the reports that had been prepared in headquarters and left much to be desired. Rao took his secretary along to help him in this task: this was Ruth Gordon.

She spent a year in India, working with members of the mission and with Rao; the year was climactic for India. The newly elected Labour government in London decided that India must become independent. Under Lord Mountbatten's Viceroyalty, the Congress and Muslim League agreed only to a formula of two separate countries: India and Pakistan. The heady euphoria of independence was countered by the most bloody massacres. It was the best of times and it was the worst of times. Ruth found herself in Delhi at the centre of these fast paced momentous events.

Her voluminous letters were preserved by her family; after her death, her son Martin Weinstein passed them on to Sita Excoffier, daughter of Raghunath Rao. Typed recto-verso on flimsy paper, they were not easy to decipher or to transform into forms usable by modern electronic means. Thanks to Fiona's patience and devotion, you will find extracts and a most excellent summary later in this issue.

It is the story of a young Canadian being caught up in momentous events in a very foreign and exotic land – India was a faraway, mysterious, incomprehensible country with few visitors.

I must add my two cents' – or rather two annas' – worth. I had just joined the ILO and found myself a member of this Mission. Dear Reader, do not get carried away by visions of me undertaking my apprenticeship by exploring labour conditions in Asia and writing brilliant reports; my job was to see the colleagues from Montreal and Geneva properly lodged and instruct them about living, eating and washing in India.

I was deeply impressed by their mysterious and incomprehensible ways. Two examples. Travelling in India, we usually took our own bedding and linen with us. How could these people arrive without these essentials? I wondered. So my first task was to arrange for them to be supplied with the necessaries. Secondly, when you wanted a bath, you opened the back door of your room, shouted for the bearer and ordered hot water. Your faithful retainer brought a bucket of hot water; you mixed this with cold water from the tap to get to the desired temperature, and used a *lota* or tin cup to pour water over you.

When I was showing Ruth Gordon her accommodation, she looked for her bath tub. I explained that she had to use the bucket for her bath. *How on earth can I fit into that?* she screamed.

Our Planet and Us

For some issues past, we have included an item: Our Planet and Us. The idea was to provide items culled from journals and newspapers rather than our own texts. This has not been overly successful and I believe that many of you feel this is just repeating what you have already read.

Moreover, this year so much has happened that is relevant to the health of our planet that the item would become absurdly long. I am therefore discontinuing it.

The Fortieth Issue

The next issue of the Newsletter, in May 2006, will be the 40th number. Some of us – particularly those who don't expect to be around to see the 50th number – thought we should mark it in some way. So we've decided to have a Special Issue next May.

As the best journals say: **Look out for this Special Number! Book in advance to avoid disappointment!** (This is just an advertising gimmick; actually you'll get your copy in the usual way.)

15 October 2005

Aamir Ali

PENSIONERS' PARTIES

The December Pensioners' Party will be held on **Thursday, 8 December 2005**.

Next year the Pensioners' Parties are planned for:

Tuesday, 23 May 2006

Thursday, 14 December 2006.

Hope to see you there. In the meantime all best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

CO-EDITORIAL

This issue of the Newsletter is packed with information and reminiscences on a number of episodes in the history of the ILO, as well as on certain personalities who have left their mark on the Organization. Among these are two remarkable women who have passed away since our last issue was published – Mildred Morse and Carol Lubin – and the tributes paid to them by our Editor and by a number of former colleagues, including several who are not frequent contributors to our Newsletter, are among the main highlights of this issue.

Another highlight of this issue is Fiona's account and summary of the letters and papers of one Ruth Gordon concerning her visit to India to assist in the preparations for and the organization of the very first Asian Regional Conference in 1947. Ruth Gordon is a name that will be unknown to most (if not all) of our readers, but if you read nothing else in this issue, you *must* read this. It is quite fascinating.

A name that may be familiar to a few of our more alert readers is Lakshman Kadirgamar. Yes, he was Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka until his appalling assassination last August. But how many know that he was once (for a short time) on the staff of the ILO, and for a much longer time on the staff of WIPO? Read Allan Gardner's excellent letter about him.

Read, too, Djamchid Farman-Farmaian's reminiscences on the Hirsch mission to Iran (how many recall that this was one of the first of the series of Comprehensive Employment Strategy missions to selected countries?); Zubi Ahmad's recollections of her missions to promote greater awareness of the role of rural women (and learn how Paul Wolfowitz has become the latest convert to this cause); Roger Schibli's account of 25 years' membership of the Board of the Pension Fund; and Karin Schramm's reflections on her career (including four years as Director of the Algiers Office – I well remember her cheerful and helpful role during a difficult mission that I undertook to Algiers at that time). Even the slothful Acting Deputy Assistant What's his name has been prompted to contribute an account of a particularly painful episode in the ILO's history (but I would advise you to take a stiff drink before reading that one).

For those who prefer to be kept informed about what is going on in the ILO today, Bert Zoetewij has contributed an analysis of the Programme and Budget and of the World Commission on Globalization, with interesting reflections on the role and objectives of the ILO in relation to those of the World Bank, WTO and the IMF.

And you will all be overjoyed to see that Bimal Ghosh has taken the hint contained in my last Co-Editorial and contributed another poem!

All this and much more awaits you in the following pages. But before leaving you, allow me to wish you all a very Happy and Prosperous New Year, complete with New Year's resolutions to contribute more fascinating articles to your favourite Newsletter!

1 November 2005

Jack Martin

MILDRED MORSE

[Mildred Morse died at home in New York City on 8 July 2005 at the age of 93. She was the widow of David A. Morse, the longest serving Director-General of the ILO (1948 - 1970). A memorial service was held on 19 October at the Temple Emanu-El in New York. Former and serving ILO colleagues John Crawford, Karen Lee and Joan McArthur attended the service. The text of the speech that John delivered on this occasion is published below. Copies of the eulogies by Joan Sutton Straus and Chris Holmes, as well as a recording of the whole ceremony, are available for consultation in the ILO Archives.]

John F. Crawford

It has often been noted in respect of great men that there is almost always a great woman beside them. This observation is of course particularly true in the case of Mildred Morse, and her essential role in the life of David Morse. Mildred provided constant reinforcement and support to David during their 53 years of happy marriage. I will try to recount in the allotted time a few vignettes to illustrate some of the qualities of this most remarkable woman.

I came to know Mildred in 1968, early in my time working with David in Geneva. My first encounter with Mildred – only weeks after my arrival in Geneva – involved a visit to a doctor whom she had identified, and who was trying to diagnose a mysterious (and potentially dangerous) tropical disease which my son, then not yet two years old, had contracted. She was as attentive to his concerns and mine as the most doting grandmother, though she had never laid eyes on him before. She positively radiated an empathy and a warmth which astounded me at the time. As I came to know Mildred better over the years and the decades which followed, I realized that her remarkable human warmth and understanding, as well as her ability to reach across generations and identify with people of all ages, particularly children, were of an extremely rare quality. David and Mildred regularly invited me and my family to dinner in the Vieille Ville of Geneva, sometimes at their home, and sometimes in nearby restaurants. Mildred was a wonderful hostess, whether she was receiving chiefs of state and government ministers, friends from Geneva, or members of the staff of the ILO. She was a very insightful, acute and discreet participant in innumerable luncheon and dinner meetings in Geneva and on missions abroad, and her judgment of people was frequently sought – and relied upon – by David.

One other vivid recollection from that period was Mildred's role during the historic visit to the ILO and Geneva (the city of Calvin) by Pope Paul VI at David's invitation in 1969. She had already accompanied David to audiences in Rome with at least two predecessors of Pope Paul – she had mastered the protocol – and she played the role of hostess to the Pope with the utmost of skill and human feeling. And she was of course by David's side in Oslo later that same year when he accepted the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of the ILO.

When David and Mildred returned to the United States in 1970, initially living in New York, then Washington, and finally back in New York, Mildred primarily looked after the home front; and she lighted up the surroundings both in their successive homes and in the myriad other activities in which she accompanied David. I saw her on a number of occasions during the 1970s and 1980s in Paris, London and Geneva, as well as in the United States. Mildred accompanied David to the very end of his extraordinary passage on earth. Many of those who are here today will recall the inner strength which she displayed at the time of David's death and the various services in David's honour, including the memorable service held here at Temple Emanu-El almost fifteen years ago.

Once again, as so often in her long and exemplary life with David, she was a tower of strength.

In the years since David's death, Mildred has carried on with the balance of her life, continuing to show all of the human qualities which had been hers throughout her life. She rapidly developed a firm commitment to carry on as the "keeper of the flame" of David's memory. This commitment gave rise to a number of activities, of which I will mention only a few. She helped endow, along with many of her friends and David's, an annual memorial lectureship at the Council on Foreign Relations, and she was meticulous in insisting on selecting speakers of the very highest quality. As a result, such great national and international figures as George Shultz, Shimon Peres, Mary Robinson, Nancy Pelosi, Bernard Kouchner, and Kofi Annan have delivered addresses in this programme, and Mildred was particularly radiant on each of those special occasions. In addition, she carried on with the programme of generous donations to the art museum, the library, and the scholarship fund at Rutgers University that she and David had already commenced many years earlier. She also sponsored a fellowship in David's name at the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Institute. And in recent years she has given encouragement and support to a project for the preparation of a biography of David, which is being overseen by Professor Jim Doig at Princeton, where David's public and private papers are kept. I well remember an occasion in 1998 when she accepted an invitation from the city of Geneva to participate in a ceremony for the naming of a street near the ILO to honour David's memory. Having accepted the invitation, the supervening circumstance of a fall resulting in a hairline fracture of the pelvis, which would have defeated most people in their 80s, in no way affected her determination to participate – quite the contrary! In addition to gracing the dedication ceremony with her presence, the trip provided her with an occasion to renew her friendships with many of the people she had known and loved during her 22 years with David in Geneva. And she responded positively the following year to an invitation to Geneva to attend the inaugural of Juan Somavia as Director-General of ILO.

Mildred was a very special human being, combining great beauty, keen intelligence, amazing will-power, sturdy character, strong empathy, special intuition, and enormous human warmth. Together with David, and then on her own after David's death, she was a generous surrogate parent or grandparent to a great many of the younger generations, including my wife Anne, our twin sons, and myself. She touched many lives, and right up to the end continued to give of herself with that very special charm and feeling which would positively illuminate those upon whom she turned her gaze. She will be sorely missed by all of us; but she leaves behind her legions of friends and admirers who will forever cherish the time they were fortunate enough to spend with her.

19 October 2005

Warren Furth

Some retired ILO officials – even those who did not know Mildred personally – still remember her as a very visible personality in the Morse era who provided essential support to her husband's official functions. She took an active interest in current ILO issues and problems and could be seen in the public galleries at virtually every Governing Body and Conference session. Whenever possible she discussed ILO affairs with GB members and Conference delegates, and over the years many of the leaders of the three ILO groups became her real friends. She was the perfect, vivacious and charming hostess at the many informal dinners and luncheons which the Morses gave for government ministers, diplomats, trade union leaders, employers' representatives and ILO officials at their home at 15 Grand'Rue. As many people, including ILO officials, confided in her with the intent that the DG be informed through her, she became the

repository of many secrets – personal, political and other – but as she was very discreet, one could be certain that only her husband would hear what she had been told.

Mildred delighted in accompanying her husband on many of his missions throughout the world, and, as former Cabinet members who travelled with the DG could confirm, she often proved to be an invaluable asset in creating the congenial atmosphere required for fruitful discussions with heads of state or government and other important officials. I remember especially a luncheon in the palace of Emperor Haile Selassie in Addis Ababa in 1968 which I had the good fortune to attend although I was no longer in the Cabinet. Mildred was seated at the Emperor's right and the DG opposite him at a very long and broad table. The Emperor preferred to speak in French, and as David Morse's knowledge of French was rather sparse, Mildred, who was quite fluent in French, carried on a lively conversation with the Emperor and interpreted some remarks of the Emperor for the DG and vice versa. The Emperor asked many questions about the ILO, some of which Mildred was able to answer without having to check with the DG. It is difficult for me to imagine what the luncheon would have been like without Mildred.

Mildred was a true internationalist. A loyal American, she had not the slightest prejudice against any nationality, ethnicity or religion. On the contrary, she was immensely curious about the background of every person she became acquainted with, and the more "exotic" the individual's origin or background, the more she became interested in him or her. She really liked people, regardless of where they came from. During her many years in Geneva, Mildred naturally came to know many ILO officials and their families, some of whom became her life-long friends with whom she remained in touch even after her move back to the United States. Not having had any children of her own, she was particularly fond of the younger crowd among ILO officials. She often invited them to her home for lunch or afternoon tea when her husband was busy elsewhere, and she gladly accepted return invitations to much more modest homes. Her favourite younger friends in the ILO were sometimes invited to spend time with her on her motor boat on Lake Geneva, and I remember one girl called Margaret – who later became my wife – who even learned to water-ski on one of these occasions.

After David Morse's departure from the ILO Mildred moved with him to New York, later to Washington, D.C., and then again to her native New York. I believe that as the wife of a partner in successive international law firms who again travelled all over the world and who had to entertain important personalities from abroad whenever he was in the United States, her life in New York and Washington was not so very different from the one she had led in Geneva. For some years the Morses maintained a small pied-à-terre in Paris, near the Place Vendôme, to which they retired occasionally for short stays, but Mildred rarely came back to Geneva. In fact, the only such visit to Geneva while David was still alive that I can recall was shortly after a dinner in Paris in 1987 organized by John Crawford in honour for David's 80th birthday and attended by both Morses, Francis Blanchard, Francis and Pat Wolf, many surviving former Cabinet members and their spouses, and a number of other ILO or retired ILO officials whom I do not wish to identify for fear that I shall offend one or the other for having inadvertently omitted to name him or her.

In New York and Washington, David and Mildred were always delighted to see old friends from the ILO, and Mildred was ever the gracious hostess. Margaret and I, with or without our children, visited the Morses whenever we could during our home leaves in the United States. In the summer of 1977 we passed through Washington with our children, then aged 10 and 9. We telephoned the Morses; David was in New York, but Mildred invited us all to lunch at their Georgetown house. We had a lovely lunch with lots of talk about "the good old days" in the ILO and Geneva. The children, understandably, became bored and somewhat restless with all this "grown-up talk" which continued after lunch and made it evident that they wanted us to leave. Mildred then

came up with the wonderful idea that we should all go for a swim. As it was one of those extremely hot and humid August days that are not uncommon in the Northeast of the United States, we – especially the children – enthusiastically rallied to the proposal. The Morses' house did not come with a swimming pool, but Mildred had the key to an absent neighbour's house that had a large pool. (Incidentally, the neighbour was Pamela Harriman, who in the 1990s was appointed by President Clinton as Ambassador to France and died while in post.) Fortunately we had our swimming trunks and suits in our car. We revelled all afternoon at and in the Harriman pool until it was time to leave, when Mildred invited us all to have a bite to eat at her house. Thanks to Mildred's gracious hospitality we thus spent a most enjoyable day in Washington. Our children still remember it.

Mildred's liking of and rapport with young people was evident on many occasions. In September 1985 we took our then 17 year old son Michael to college in the United States and stopped over in New York and visited the Morses. Both David and Mildred showed a real interest in Michael, and he obviously felt at home with them. A few months later Michael spent Thanksgiving vacation with a college friend's family in New York. One afternoon he was walking with his friend on Park Avenue when he noticed that they were in front of the building, number 575, where the Morses had their apartment. Perhaps wishing to impress his friend with the important people he knew on Park Avenue, Michael suggested that they drop in on the Morses. Michael announced himself and his friend through the doorman, and though David was at the office, Mildred let them in. A few hours later, as David told the story, he came home and found Mildred and two boys sitting on the living room floor drinking beer and playing poker.

After her husband died in late 1990 Mildred's life took a new turn. There was much less entertaining and less travelling. She became closer to her and David's nephews and nieces and the adult children of her extended family and friends. She continued to enjoy the visits of old Geneva friends. She often talked of David, whom she greatly missed, and, as Michael's wife once remarked, her main purpose during this part of her life appeared to be to nurture and promote the public's remembrance of David's life, career and achievements. She closely supervised the cataloguing of David's private papers at Princeton University and made sure that David's remarkable collection of modern paintings, which he had bestowed on his university, Rutgers, was well taken care of. She endowed a number of David A. Morse scholarships for needy young students at Rutgers and sponsored the annual David A. Morse lectures on international affairs at the prestigious Council on Foreign Relations. She was absolutely delighted when, thanks to the initiative and efforts of a much younger Geneva friend without any connection to the ILO, the Geneva authorities decided to honour David Morse by naming a street after him. She had just broken an ankle but nevertheless made the effort to travel to Geneva to attend in a wheelchair the inauguration of the "Allée David-Morse". I believe that this was her last visit to Geneva.

Margaret and I continued to visit Mildred whenever we could after David's death. She always insisted on inviting us for lunch. In the early 1990s this usually took place at her club, only a couple of blocks away from her apartment building. A few years later, as she became less mobile, she took us to the excellent restaurant on the ground floor of her building. Still later, as even this became increasingly difficult for her, we had light lunches in her apartment prepared by one of the two devoted ladies who took care of her for many years. She had some health problems as she grew older, particularly with her heart, but her mind remained as keen and her interests as many as in earlier years. She often invited our son Michael, who then worked in New York, and his girl friend, who later became his wife, to lunch or dinner, sometimes with other of her younger friends. Her continuing interest in the younger generations was one of her outstanding characteristics.

The last time we saw Mildred was in early June, exactly a month before her death. This time there was no longer any question of having lunch with her. She was in her bed, looking comfortable and well groomed, but an oxygen respirator was attached to her nose. She spoke softly but clearly, smiling often, though her memory was failing. She still took telephone calls from friends. She was evidently well cared for by her two ladies. We thought that she would not last very long, but we did not think that the end would be so near. I understand that she died peacefully one morning at around 3:00 a.m.

Margaret and I have lost a dear friend of nearly half a century. We feel the loss very deeply.

29 July 2005

Charles Barbeau

Je vous remercie d'avoir bien voulu m'apprendre la triste nouvelle du décès de Mme Morse le 8 juillet à New York.

D'elle, je garde un souvenir très vivant: élégance, distinction, conception aristocratique d'une vie éloignée des contingences ordinaires du monde, acceptation sans joie d'une installation plus longue que prévue à Genève alors que tout l'attirait et l'attachait à New York. C'était une grande dame.

Ainsi, après la mort de M. David Morse, cette lointaine période genevoise des années soixante s'éloigne définitivement.

20 juillet 2005

Robert Cox

Georges-Henri Martin, writing in *La Tribune de Genève* on the occasion of David Morse's leaving the ILO in 1970 characterized him as a 'political animal'. When Aristotle used that concept he meant nothing more than the identity of man with the *polis*, that a man's existence apart from the *polis* would be unnatural and threatening. Today in many countries, and especially in western democracies where individualism is worshipped, politics often has a bad name, implying manipulative, self-serving behaviour in the interest of wielding power. George-Henri Martin used the term with respect and admiration, meaning by it, I think, the instinctive ability to understand the motivations of others and so to be able to dialogue constructively towards finding a common purpose. In that sense Mildred Morse, David Morse's lifetime companion, was also an accomplished 'political animal'.

She shared fully David Morse's view that his office as Director-General of the ILO gave them the opportunity and the responsibility to transcend conflict by understanding what motivated people and thereby trying to bridge different images of the world. This went well beyond labour conflict, the specific domain of the ILO. Both were deeply concerned with the many conflict areas in the post World War II era and none more than the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and its ramifications in the Middle East. It was an education for me to travel with both of them in 1955 through Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Israel as tensions rose in the region towards the Suez war of 1956.

As an inexperienced young official I got myself into trouble at the start of the voyage. In Istanbul a well-meaning member of the local ILO branch office staff had taken me into a popular restaurant for a snack, as a consequence of which I was struck by violent gastroenteritis. It had not let up when we boarded the train for Ankara. Mildred Morse

took the matter in hand and gave instructions that the dining service prepare for me some boiled rice. That along with her expressions of concern for my welfare helped me through the difficulty of the moment. I then and later learned from her and her husband how to conduct myself with safety as well as with courtesy through the hazards of eating while on official mission.

During early 1955 in the higher spheres of Cold War diplomacy negotiations had been under way to form what came to be known as the Baghdad Pact, sponsored by the United States and NATO to bring Middle Eastern countries, beginning with Turkey and Iraq, which was then under British suzerainty, into a regional alliance directed against the Soviet Union. Col. Nasser who ruled in Egypt, having been shunned by the West, was supported by the Soviet Union. He was the hero of the Palestinian refugees, who saw him as the new Saladin, poised to drive the contemporary Crusaders (now in Zionist garb) into the sea. The rumour spread that Jordan was about to join the Baghdad Pact. The Palestinian refugees, then a majority of Jordan's population, rose in protest. This was the situation when we arrived on the Jordan leg of our trip.

I vividly recall being in a small motorcade with officials of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees who were sponsoring our visit in Jordan. As we drove through Ramallah our car was surrounded by an angry crowd. A solitary Bedouin horseman of the Arab Legion, Jordan's military force which was British financed and commanded, sat stoically upon his steed amid the milling protestors, holding his ground but not reacting to the gathering mob. David Morse quietly instructed our nervous driver to stay put, not to provoke the crowd by trying to push through it. After some anxious minutes a path opened so that we could slowly move through the crowd and continue our journey northward up the frontier line on the Jordan side to visit a Trappist monastery. That afternoon, in our absence from our hotel on the Jordan side of Jerusalem, Gen. Burns, the Canadian commander of the UN presence in the demilitarized zone separating the Jordan and Israeli parts of Jerusalem, drove unannounced through riot and bedlam on the streets of Arab Jerusalem to pay his respects to David and Mildred Morse, only to find that they and their party were in their rooms recovering from the events of the day.

Conversations with ministers of government and their advisers in these circumstances were a test of a 'political animal's' sensitivity and skill. While David Morse was speaking with officials in government offices, Mildred Morse would be with their wives. Together they would absorb a sense of what was going on in the minds of people in the countries we were visiting. David Morse was not an avid reader. He absorbed most of his information directly from people, orally and by observation. He relied on his judgment of people for his interpretation of this information. I cannot say whether Mildred Morse was more of a reader, probably she was, but she certainly absorbed and processed information in the same way. They were both perceptive and critical listeners. They encouraged people to express their thoughts without risk of being challenged or cut off. Together they could arrive at a good appraisal of the worldview of their interlocutors. A 'political animal' starts with this knowledge before trying to build it into a process of dialogue towards shaping a common goal.

Mildred and David Morse both felt a profound personal commitment to the state of Israel. This never intruded itself into official conversations during the voyage until we came to our last stop in Israel. They were equally strongly committed to dialogue as the means of dealing with conflict. Their joint talent was to achieve insight into the minds of people who might be persuaded to engage in dialogue.

Prior to this trip, David Morse had arranged for the appointment of Abbas Ammar, a minister in the Egyptian government, as Assistant Director-General in the ILO. This was in a concern for meaningful dialogue. I remember Abbas Ammar as a man of enormous personal stature and quiet authority whose humanity far transcended the prescribed

relationships of bureaucratic organization. His contribution to the ILO went beyond being an *interlocutor valable* from the Arab world. He too was a person with sensitive awareness of many cultures.

It has been customary to record events in the lives of governments and international organizations as being those of the men in positions of responsibility. It is sometimes the case that the women beside them share in the formation of political judgments. This was the case with Mildred Morse. She performed admirably in the ‘diplomatic’ role of Director-General’s wife – entertaining people of influence who came through the ILO, encouraging and supporting other officials and their wives. She was an imposing presence, compassionate and understanding. It was perhaps not so evident to the casual observer that she was also a ‘political animal’, acute in her judgment of persons and situations.

The last time Jessie and I met with Mildred Morse was some years after the death of David Morse. It was by invitation at lunch in her club in New York. She lived serenely in her native city sustained by her many friends in an environment of cosmopolitan sophistication. Last month the news came that she had died peacefully at home after a long illness. She was a most impressive person.

30 August 2005

Holly (Irene) Crosby

I met Mildred Morse during World War II when we both worked in the French Radio Section of the Office of War Information in New York. Like everyone else who ever had the good fortune to know her, I was immediately captivated by her sparkling personality and sense of humour. We often walked across town together after work and the trip took twice as long as it should have because Mildred was constantly greeting friends along the way! New York was her “village” and she seemed to know everybody.

Five years later our paths crossed again and I treasure the years of friendship in Geneva. Mildred had an extraordinary rapport with people of all backgrounds and always a sympathetic ear for their problems. She was a delightful hostess for the DG giving a warm and friendly welcome to her guests from many countries and continents.

Mildred, who took a lively interest in her husband’s work, could often be seen at sessions of the Governing Body and the annual Conference, and accompanied the DG on many of his missions. During the years after the Morses left Geneva, they kept their ties to the ILO and welcomed visits from staff members and delegates.

As Aamir wrote to me, “It feels as if an era has ended with Mildred’s death”, and she will be remembered with great affection.

30 August 2005

George Thullen

For those of us who were associated with David Morse, whether as members of his Cabinet or in other ways, Mildred was a discreet, caring, surrogate “mother.” She made us feel that we were part of a large family bonded together by the ties we had with David. My wife, Sylvia, and I vividly recall her as a wonderful, gracious hostess. In summer 1969, when we were invited to a dinner at the Morse’s apartment on the Grand’Rue, together with Xavier Caballero and his wife, Mildred’s first question when we arrived was to ask if our three young sons were in safe hands back in our home across the lake

while we wined and dined. This continuing interest in the well-being of the “extended Morse family,” even after David passed away, will be remembered as her legacy. We will miss her greatly.

21 September 2005



Mildred and David Morse at the 110th Session of the Governing Body,
3-7 January 1950, Mysore, India

HOW I CAME TO JOIN THE ILO

Professional and personal experience

by Ita Marguet

In late 1969, during a grey and dismal winter in London, I decided to move back to Geneva. After commercial training, I had worked as a qualified medical secretary in various hospitals, as a civil servant in the Foreign Office with an official posting to Paris, and then held a challenging job with a growing computer firm in London. It included six months in Rome with quite extensive business travel to other places in Europe. I enjoyed a good social life and made lasting friendships. In 1964-65 I had also spent eighteen months in Geneva with a small non-governmental organization, the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA). Its purpose was to support the work of the United Nations through its national associations around the world. That provided the adventure of my first mission to New Delhi combined with personal travel elsewhere in India. It provided professional and personal experience.

At approaching my twenty-ninth birthday I was keen to refind the 'spirit of Geneva' and started the long process of completing job applications to UN agencies with special focus on the World Health Organization and the International Labour Office. After interviews and participating in group examinations in London my name was placed on waiting lists but no job offers were forthcoming. In late 1970, I was contacted by the GATT, now WTO, for a position at grade G3/1, albeit conditional on passing the entry examination within three months of arrival! That was easy and the resulting Fixed-term contract allowed me to continue contacts with the local business community and the ILO for more long-term prospects. The former was barred due to the legal requirement of a Swiss work permit.

By 1971 a position had materialized in the ILO at the same grade with the offer of more varied work. It facilitated an inter-agency transfer and guaranteed continuity of non-local conditions. I began as junior secretary at grade G3 in the Employment Promotion and Planning Department. It not only provided a job but later the good luck to meet my husband who also worked in the ILO. With the birth of our two children we became a family. It provided professional and personal experience.

Between 1971 and 1997 before taking early retirement I sought internal mobility, including detachment to meetings and the ILO Annual Conference, while working in different Sectors and Branches of the Office (EPPD/ADMIN, EMP/TEC; DGA/REL, REL/INT, REL/TRAV; SYSTEM; ARAB States in Geneva; and latterly PROG/EVAL). As secretary and/or administrative assistant on direct transfer, or as a result of internal competition, I seemingly gave satisfaction to all. My principal motivation was to learn more about the institution and make my small contribution to the cause of social justice both within the ILO and beyond. I tried not to lose my way in the myriad of complex rules and regulations and red tape, not to speak of glass walls and ceilings or some of the more tangible boundaries that prevailed. I found the multi-layer hierarchical bureaucracy frustrating but also a challenge and used powers of persuasion to be able to participate in different training courses offered by the Office. After twelve years I received a WLT or permanent contract based on performance and length of service. My career path, as it was known, spanned G3 to G6 with the grant of one step for merit at the top of grade G5.

I am proud to have served the International Labour Office for twenty-five years. It included election to the Staff Union Committee, part of it on full-time detachment, which involved assisting colleagues and serving as staff representative on a number of statutory

consultative and other bodies within the ILO and the wider family of the United Nations system. As Staff Union representative, I travelled outside Geneva to attend meetings and also to assist colleagues in ILO offices around the world.

What I learned most was the need for one and all to remember why, and for whom, the ILO was created and the collective responsibility for generations of staff to promote and defend the Organization's *raison d'être*. Without fear or favour I did my best in the house built by workers for the workers. It provided professional and personal experience.

June 2005

REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST

Les missions Hirsch en Iran

par Djamchid Farman-Farmaïan

[Djamchid était fonctionnaire du BIT de 1954 à 1979. Après sa retraite il a écrit un récit fort intéressant de ses souvenirs d'enfance en Iran et en France, et de sa vie professionnelle au BIT et ailleurs. Nous en avons choisi deux extraits d'intérêt général pour nos lecteurs. En voici le premier; le deuxième suivra dans le prochain numéro. FR]

Dès 1972, Etienne Hirsch, ancien Commissaire général au Plan en France, et ancien collaborateur direct de Jean Monnet,¹ fut chargé par le Bureau d'une mission en Iran. Cette mission, étalée sur plusieurs années, consistait à étudier la question de l'emploi et à formuler des propositions destinées à être intégrées dans le futur plan quinquennal de l'Iran. J'eus la chance de participer à ces missions, ayant été chargé par le Bureau de seconder Monsieur Hirsch au cours de ses déplacements en Iran.

Je fis sa connaissance dans le bureau du Dr. Abbas Ammar, Directeur général adjoint chargé de ce programme. Nos déplacements en Iran furent étalés sur plusieurs années allant de 1972 à 1977, chaque séjour ne dépassant guère une dizaine de jours.

Entre-temps, en 1973, les revenus pétroliers avaient presque quadruplé, le prix du baril ayant été porté à son plus haut niveau à la suite d'une décision de l'OPEP en janvier 1973. Cet apport soudain de ressources financières désorganisa la plupart des programmes, et l'on se crut obligé de revoir tous les plans à la hausse, de peur de ne pouvoir dépenser toute cette manne. Ce fut une inflation de projets improvisés de toute sorte, qui furent sans doute à l'origine des troubles qui allaient surgir quelques années plus tard. Cette manne pétrolière fut un « cadeau empoisonné ». Tout fut importé grâce aux devises. Ce fut la période des vaches grasses.

Etienne Hirsch avait connu de près les problèmes de développement et la situation de la France au lendemain des hostilités en 1945. C'était un homme remarquable, parlant peu mais avec bon sens et se méfiant des grandes théories. C'était une personnalité attachante, avec laquelle j'entretins par la suite des relations privilégiées. Sur le plan politique, il partageait les vues et les idéaux du parti socialiste, qui était à cette date (1971) en période de croissance.

Je me souviens de notre participation en 1972 à un séminaire sur l'Emploi, organisé à Chiraz par l'Organisation du Plan, où de nombreux experts étrangers étaient aussi invités. A notre arrivée à Chiraz, d'autres participants étaient déjà sur place. Parmi ces derniers, Hirsch me présenta à l'un d'eux, qu'il semblait très bien connaître, en me disant : « C'est Monsieur Jacques Attali, le plus grand économiste de France ». En effet, Jacques Attali avait été convié par le Plan à ce séminaire, où il apporta une remarquable contribution. C'était la première fois que j'entendais son nom, mais ce ne devait pas être la dernière.

Nous séjournions dans le même hôtel au pied des ruines de Persepolis et je me souviens que Jacques Attali suggéra que nous assistions le lendemain au lever du soleil sur les ruines de Persepolis, ce qui fut décidé, et l'on nous réveilla dès potron-minet. Nous fîmes

¹ Premier Commissaire général au Plan après la guerre de 1939-1945 et collaborateur direct de Robert Schuman, le « Père » de l'Europe.

donc à trois cette petite excursion et j'eus ainsi le loisir de m'entretenir avec lui. Ses yeux pétillaient d'intelligence et je ne fus pas surpris qu'il gravât plus tard les échelons les plus élevés avec autant de rapidité et de facilité. Depuis, je suis toujours avec plaisir ses interventions dans les médias et ses publications.

Les premiers contacts de la mission eurent lieu à Téhéran en octobre 1971, en accord avec le gouvernement. Abbas Ammar fixa les objectifs de la mission. Il s'agissait de définir une stratégie de développement plus « appropriée » au 5^e Plan, tenant compte des objectifs sociaux et des nécessités de la main-d'œuvre en Iran. Notre interlocuteur privilégié était à cette date le Dr Khodadd Farman-Farmaïan, mon frère cadet, Directeur général du Plan, auprès duquel nous reçûmes un accueil chaleureux. Lui-même économiste distingué, il fit ressortir dans son exposé le problème principal auquel l'Iran se trouvait confronté, à savoir l'existence d'un secteur moderne où la croissance pouvait atteindre jusqu'à 15 à 20% par an, à côté d'un secteur défavorisé qui stagnait, comme par exemple l'agriculture, où le taux de croissance annuelle ne dépassait pas 0,5%. Cette disparité, de par ses effets pervers, devait être combattue, et notre équipe devait avoir pour objectif non pas de discuter de concepts, mais de trouver et proposer des moyens pratiques de résoudre les problèmes. C'est ce que nous essayâmes de faire par la suite.

La conférence régionale asiatique qui se tenait au même moment à Téhéran en décembre 1971 confirma notre point de vue et se félicita que les activités de l'équipe d'experts mise en place par le BIT coïncident avec la préparation du prochain plan quinquennal de 1973-1978.

Le travail de la mission prit fin en juin 1977. Tout au cours de la période 1972-1977, la mission a dû tenir compte de la volatilité de la situation en Iran pour ajuster chaque fois ses propositions en fonction de nouveaux facteurs économiques, de la création de nouvelles infrastructures, ainsi que de la révision des objectifs du plan dans certains secteurs eu égard à la manne pétrolière.

Cependant Etienne Hirsch, dans ses dernières conclusions en juin 1977, avait déjà alerté le gouvernement au sujet des goulots d'étranglement qu'il avait constatés, et l'avait mis en garde en l'avertissant que les résultats économiques de la planification pourraient être inférieurs à ceux prévus si des mesures d'assainissement draconiennes n'étaient pas prises. Il convenait notamment de prendre des mesures pour pallier l'insuffisance des informations et l'absence de statistiques fiables, remédier à la décentralisation insuffisante de l'organisation du Plan, donner priorité à la construction de logements pour les couches de la population les plus démunies et freiner la tendance au développement tentaculaire de Téhéran, et bien d'autres suggestions, qui hélas devaient rester lettres mortes, et conduire à la situation que nous avons connue en Iran par la suite.

6 mai 2005

Women's role in development

by Zubeida M. Ahmad

I read with interest an article concerning World Bank Policy describing President Paul Wolfowitz's first visit to India and Pakistan (Financial Times 20-21 August 2005). It would appear from this article that Mr. Wolfowitz has made equal rights for women and rural development key themes in World Bank loaning strategy for Asia.

During his mission into the rural heartland, Mr Wolfowitz visited a number of villages and spoke to women's self-help groups where the warmth of the reception he received took him by surprise. He saw that self-help groups had been set up by women to assist them gain access to small loans for starting employment-generating projects. This has

provided them with valuable income enabling them to send their children to school and buy food and other essentials, previously unavailable to such rural poor. In addition this new income has given them the means to support one another in their daily battle against discrimination due to their sex and caste.

The day following Mr. Wolfowitz's visit to India, the World Bank announced that a substantial loan was to be made to India phased over a three year period aimed at improving rural infrastructure, in particular irrigation, drinking water, sanitation and roads, together with providing better housing, and making electricity and telecommunications more generally accessible.

Could it be that the inspiration for these new employment projects was drawn from the International Labour Office's World Employment Programme? The rural women's projects on employment generation for the disadvantaged were first started with the aid of extra-budgetary funding. This was because we had great difficulty convincing the ILO establishment that lending money to poor women's groups was a secure means of raising income levels. The implementation of the projects demonstrated however that women made good use of the money, repaid the loans punctually and used their resources in the interests of their family. These projects were, in effect based on the Grameen Bank Movement started earlier in Bangladesh by Mahammad Yunus.

Perhaps the ILO should consider making more readily available other potentially valuable material on the Programme to the services in the World Bank. They might gain from our early experience and the ILO may then in turn receive due credit.

Reading the article brought back to me the excitement of my work with these rural women and the many interesting missions that I undertook to promote the Programme. As in the case of Mr Wolfowitz, their keen and eager spirit struck those of us who worked with these disadvantaged women. Their enthusiasm was contagious and stimulated our ILO team* in all our activities.

I remember organizing, at very short notice and just before the end-of-year budget deadline, an International Seminar on the sharing of experiences amongst women's groups from different countries at the Turin Training Centre. Unfortunately I had completely forgotten that my visa to France and Italy had already expired, which resulted in my being stranded for some time at the border crossing along with my patient colleagues, Martha Loufi and Andrea Singh, neither of whom needed visas being American.

Many of the missions we undertook were to remote villages, however, well away from any hotel accommodation or good transport links. On one occasion we stayed in a Community Centre that had neither running water nor electricity. That night and following a particularly arduous field trip, we assembled at the Centre to review our findings beneath the dim glow of the kerosene lamps. Finding my hands itchy and greasy, for I had used copious quantities of mosquito repellent that day, I went in search of somewhere to wash my hands. In the gloom of the interior I tripped on a steep step in the corridor, lost my footing and fell hard against the edge of a sink. I was bent double with excruciating pain and slowly realized that I had most probably fractured a rib. It began to dawn on me that I was in a very remote district that lacked doctors or access to any sort of health care with a jeep drive of more than three hours over rough terrain to the nearest hospital.

I will never forget the village of Jhilimili or that most uncomfortable drive back to the city. Later I was informed that the washbasin I had troubled to find was not even connected to running water.

* The International Labour Office's Employment Programme team comprised myself, Anisur Rahman, Andrea Singh, Martha Loutfi, Shimwayi Muntamba, Elizabeth Cecelski, Anne-Marie Causanillas, Lynda Pond, Evelyn Ralph and Evelyn Schaad.

5 September 2005

Quelques souvenirs de mes 27 ans et demi au BIT (1966–1993)

par Karin Schramm

Mes débuts

Si je prends ma plus belle plume (nouveau PC!) aujourd'hui pour relater ces quelques souvenirs, c'est de la faute d'Aamir Ali que j'ai croisé par hasard un jour dans un parc du Petit-Saconnex et qui m'a convaincue d'écrire ces quelques lignes !

Ce n'est pas un poisson d'avril, mais ce fut tout de même un 1^{er} avril que ma carrière débuta au BIT au Service de la Formation professionnelle. En plus, le 1^{er} avril 1966 étant un vendredi et devant me rendre en Allemagne pour un mariage, je commençais en fait par un jour de congé !

J'avais posé ma candidature 6 mois auparavant, ma licence ès sciences politiques, mention relations internationales (HEI) en poche. On avait sorti mon dossier, parmi d'autres, et si j'étais finalement sélectionnée, me disait-on, c'était parce que je savais, en plus, taper à la machine... Ce détail est amusant et intéressant pour plusieurs raisons. Mais, en fait, j'avais avant ma licence HEI fait des études secondaires et universitaires en sciences économiques et commerciales, accompagnées de cours de pédagogie – d'où mon affectation au Service de la Formation professionnelle.

Finalement, je ne me rappelle pas avoir eu à dactylographier beaucoup. On a dû découvrir que j'étais plus compétente dans d'autres domaines !

« To type or not to type »

Toutefois, lorsque je me trouvais – quelques 20 ans plus tard – à la tête du Bureau d'Alger, j'étais surprise – c'est le moins qu'on puisse dire – de voir l'adjointe du Représentant résident du PNUD calée derrière sa machine à écrire.¹ Pour taper les textes confidentiels de son chef ?

Tous ces souvenirs me sont revenus lorsque j'ai lu, avec un certain intérêt, la critique du livre de Margaret Anstee « Never learn how to type », parue dans le Bulletin d'AAFI de juin 2004, sous la plume d'Aamir Ali – encore lui.

Pour des raisons évidentes, je ne puis être d'accord avec Ms Anstee sur ce point, même si j'ai pour elle beaucoup d'admiration depuis que j'ai entrepris mes premières missions au Maroc (1969/1971). Etre femme et Représentant résident du PNUD au Maroc n'était pas évident à l'époque.

Femme en Afrique du Nord

Le fait d'être femme (à la tête d'une organisation) ne comporte du reste pas que des inconvénients et même des avantages, dirais-je ! J'en ai fait l'expérience plus tard en

¹ Nos bureaux n'étaient pas encore informatisés à ce moment-là.

Afrique du Nord. Pour Margaret Anstee, cela voulait aussi dire: échapper à l'attentat contre le Roi Hassan II qui eut lieu lors de sa fête d'anniversaire en juillet 1971 à Skirat. En effet, l'invitation du Roi ne s'adressant qu'aux hommes, Ms Anstee prenait apparemment chaque année congé à cette époque et c'est ainsi que son adjoint avait l'honneur d'y assister à sa place et – attentat oblige – de se trouver couché par terre au bord de la piscine, avec les frayeurs qu'on peut aisément imaginer.

Mon propre séjour en Afrique du Nord (1986/1989) reste pour moi la période la plus intéressante et la plus exaltante de ma carrière au BIT quoique semée d'embûches et loin d'être facile. Toutefois, une chose est sûre: les difficultés étaient inhérentes au poste, et non pas à ma qualité de femme. Mes prédécesseurs et successeurs pourraient en témoigner. Au contraire, en faisant montre de compétence, mais aussi de flexibilité, et en montrant l'exemple, on peut obtenir le respect de ses interlocuteurs. Par ailleurs, la fonction « protège » et fait oublier le sexe (« gender »). Ce qui ne veut pas dire qu'il ne faut pas savoir tenir tête à certains moments, et à certains interlocuteurs. Un « NON » justifié est du reste très bien accepté. J'en ai fait l'expérience.

Gagner au tribunal

Je ne puis relater ici tous les épisodes et les expériences faites durant ces presque 4 années passées en Afrique du Nord. Mais j'aimerais brièvement raconter ce qui m'est arrivé, non pas comme fonctionnaire du BIT, mais en tant que simple citoyenne.

Lorsque le propriétaire de mon logement a essayé de m'extorquer la garantie (en devises !) que j'avais déposée au début de la location de mon appartement à Alger et pour y arriver est allé jusqu'au tribunal, avec l'aide d'une amie avocate algérienne, nous avons gagné en première instance et même en appel. Les autorités, mises au courant, auraient voulu arrêter la procédure. Mais, victime d'un escroc, j'avais le droit de mon côté et un dossier en béton, et je n'ai donc pas voulu d'intervention officielle. D'autant plus que les immunités diplomatiques ne s'appliquent pas dans un tel cas. J'ai toutefois compris au cours de la procédure que l'exercice du droit n'était apparemment pas le même qu'en Europe. Mais la fin m'a donné raison.

Malgré ces vicissitudes – et il y en avait d'autres – je garde un excellent souvenir de ces années en Afrique du Nord : j'étais acceptée, bien introduite dans la société et je me suis fait des amis.

Après un tel défi, la suite est nécessairement moins exaltante. Je suis néanmoins contente de ce que j'ai pu faire à mon dernier poste de responsable de la formation du personnel. Toutefois, lorsque j'ai réalisé que je ne pouvais plus retirer de la satisfaction de mon travail, j'en ai tiré les conséquences, et je suis partie. C'était une excellente décision que je n'ai jamais regrettée.

Travailler comme consultante

Ont suivi 7 années de travail comme consultante au titre de la coopération technique, allemande principalement, mais aussi danoise, avec divers financements (Banque Mondiale, Union Européenne etc.). Des missions qui m'ont amenée en Afrique et en Asie, mais avant tout dans les pays de l'Afrique du Nord et du Moyen-Orient. Mon séjour de plusieurs années en Afrique du Nord, mes missions dans nombre de pays du Proche et du Moyen Orient (y compris l'Iran et Israël), en plus de mon expérience des systèmes de formation des ressources humaines (y. c. de la formation duale allemande) y ont été pour quelque chose, je pense. L'OMS a également à deux reprises fait appel à moi. Et, faut-il le souligner ? En tant que consultante, j'ai dû me servir de l'ordinateur... et taper mes rapports !

C'est ainsi que mes dernières missions se sont déroulées en 2001 au Yémen. Je connaissais ce beau pays suite à deux missions en 1977 (Sanaa) et 1985 (Aden). C'était dans le cadre de la coopération technique du BIT et avant la réunification des deux Yémen. J'en ai gardé de merveilleux souvenirs, tant des paysages et coutumes que des hommes et femmes rencontrés. 25 ans plus tard, la bataille était loin d'être gagnée.

J'étais chargée, dans le cadre d'un projet financé par l'Union Européenne d'entreprendre une étude visant à améliorer la participation des femmes yéménites au processus de développement, en diversifiant les possibilités de formation professionnelle, notamment technique qui leur sont offertes, et en tenant compte du marché de l'emploi. Quiconque connaît ce pays, sait que c'était la quadrature du cercle...

En y associant des femmes yéménites, j'ai toutefois pu concevoir un beau projet, tenant compte des réalités socio-économiques et culturelles du pays et d'expériences similaires entreprises au Pakistan p. ex. Hélas, les responsables européennes ont dû avoir peur de leur propre courage initial (en organisant cette étude). Ils ont décidé de consacrer les sommes disponibles au financement d'une école hôtelière...

L'âge de la retraite a finalement sonné, et j'ai redécouvert qu'il y a tant de choses à faire dans la vie, en dehors du travail !

13 septembre 2005

25 années au service des institutions de prévoyance du BIT

par Roger Schibli

[Pendant de nombreuses années, Monsieur Ernest Kaiser, mathématicien résidant à Genève et bien connu pour ses travaux de concepteur de l'AVS suisse et très apprécié pour sa collaboration active aux travaux de l'AISS, a œuvré comme membre du Comité tripartite aux séances de la CCPPNU, de l'ancienne Caisse de retraite que le BIT avait « hérité » de la Société des Nations à l'issue de la seconde guerre mondiale, ainsi qu'au fonds de secours (Special Payments Fund).

Le décès prématuré de M. Kaiser au printemps 1979, alors qu'il exerçait encore comme conseiller de nombreuses activités en faveur de diverses caisses de retraite de droit public en Suisse et qu'il poursuivait son travail au sein de l'AISS, a laissé un vide au sein des diverses instances dans lesquelles il s'était beaucoup investi.

Sous l'égide de Monsieur Aamir Ali, alors Directeur des ressources humaines, l'Organisation s'est adressé à l'Etat de Genève, en vue de trouver une personnalité suisse pouvant reprendre rapidement les divers mandats qu'exerçait M. Kaiser comme délégué gouvernemental au sein des institutions de prévoyance du BIT. Ce fut chose faite par la désignation de M. Roger Schibli, choix qui fut ratifié par le Conseil d'administration du BIT. Entré en fonction en octobre 1979, M. Roger Schibli a exercé son rôle de membre des diverses instances précitées durant un quart de siècle ! Il a récemment demandé à en être déchargé, vu qu'il avait atteint l'âge de la retraite selon la législation suisse et qu'il estimait judicieux de « passer main » à une personnalité plus jeune, pour qui la participation aux travaux de la CCPPNU notamment pouvait représenter une excellente source de connaissances nouvelles et une expérience enrichissante dans le contexte international. Ainsi en octobre 2004, Monsieur Thierry Montant, administrateur de la Caisse de retraite des fonctionnaires de la Police et de la prison de l'Etat de Genève, a succédé à M. Roger Schibli.

Pour agrémenter le Bulletin des anciens fonctionnaires du BIT, nous avons demandé à M. Roger Schibli qu'il nous fasse part brièvement de quelques souvenirs de sa longue et fructueuse activité au service des institutions de prévoyance du BIT. Nous lui cédon la parole.]

J'ai bien connu M. Ernest Kaiser comme expert en sécurité sociale et promoteur de systèmes de financement mixtes, entre capitalisation et répartition, pouvant être appliqués aux institutions de prévoyance de droit public en Suisse. C'est à ce titre qu'il a été appelé par le Conseil d'Etat genevois pour aider la « CIA genevoise » (Caisse de prévoyance des fonctionnaires de l'Instruction publique et des membres de l'Administration centrale) à instaurer un système de financement alliant les avantages (et les inconvénients !) de la capitalisation et de la répartition. Comme responsable de l'administration de cette Caisse, j'ai donc pris part à l'analyse des diverses propositions qu'avait formulées cet expert et qui ont abouti après son décès à la mise en place d'un système de financement mixte, pour le fonctionnement duquel la pérennité de l'institution et celle de ses effectifs de cotisants est bien sûr indispensable.

Je ne m'attendais pas du tout à être appelé au BIT, mais je compris que cette Organisation souhaitait trouver un Suisse pour succéder à M. Kaiser, lui aussi de nationalité suisse. Le BIT se trouvait à cette époque déjà confronté à une importante crise budgétaire et il était avantageux d'avoir au sein du Comité de la Caisse un représentant gouvernemental ayant son domicile à Genève. Cela permettait en effet d'économiser des frais de déplacement non négligeables. Faire appel à un spécialiste des caisses de pension, ayant une pratique quotidienne des problèmes rencontrés dans une grande institution en matière d'invalidité, de gestion de dossiers d'affiliation, de démission et d'entrée en pension représentait un autre avantage. Pour faire face aux diverses questions qui pouvaient se poser dans le travail du secrétariat BIT de la CCPPNU, la présence d'un praticien pouvait s'avérer très utile. Enfin, ses connaissances du système des « 3 piliers » de la prévoyance vieillesse, décès et invalidité pratiqué en Suisse, ainsi que certaines particularités de la législation genevoise, pouvaient également rendre service, vu l'implantation du siège du BIT à Genève.

Au courant de cette longue période d'activité, j'ai en effet pu, à plusieurs reprises, faire bénéficier le comité permanent de l'expérience acquise en matière de prévoyance au sein de la Caisse de pensions des fonctionnaires genevois. Notamment pour traiter les cas d'invalidité et mettre en place une procédure d'élection des représentants des salariés au sein du Comité, j'ai fait appel aux connaissances que j'avais réunies dans l'exercice de ma fonction de directeur de la principale caisse de pension de droit public du Canton de Genève. Par ailleurs, je me suis réjoui d'avoir pu apporter ma contribution dans la résolution des questions posées par l'introduction d'une prestation aux conjoints divorcés en cas de décès de leur ex-conjoint. Ce problème n'était pas simple à résoudre, vu que la notion du mariage, respectivement du divorce n'est de loin pas la même dans les divers pays du globe, où des organisations internationales affiliées à la CCPPNU sont présentes. Trouver la bonne formule a nécessité une vaste et longue réflexion, ainsi qu'une maturation des points de vues qui a duré une bonne dizaine d'années ! En instaurant une telle prestation, la CCPPNU a adapté sa réglementation pour la faire correspondre aux normes de sécurité sociale en vigueur dans la plupart des pays occidentaux. Une autre innovation que j'avais soutenue devant le Comité des pensions du BIT était d'introduire la notion d'invalidité partielle dans la réglementation de la CCPPNU. Malgré plusieurs tentatives bien documentées, corroborées par la pratique de plusieurs systèmes nationaux de sécurité sociale, dont notamment celui de Suisse, cette forme de prestation n'a à ce jour pas encore pu être introduite à la CCPPNU. Le fait de ne pas pouvoir créer d'invalidité partielle a quelques fois rendu très difficiles les prises de décisions de notre comité permanent. En effet, dans plusieurs cas concrets, la situation des personnes demandant une invalidité ne nous permettait pas de conclure à l'absence d'une part d'invalidité ou au contraire à la présence d'une invalidité complète empêchant l'exercice

de toute activité professionnelle ! J'ose espérer que ce problème trouvera prochainement une solution satisfaisante tant pour les personnes concernées que pour les organisations rattachées à la CCPNU.

Durant ces 25 ans de présence dans les institutions de prévoyance du BIT, j'ai œuvré avec de nombreuses personnes représentant tant les assurées, les gouvernements que le Directeur général. J'ai toujours été très agréablement impressionné par la qualité des débats et le soin apporté par les uns et les autres pour sauvegarder à la fois les intérêts financiers de la Caisse et les intérêts légitimes des assurés. Il a été très rare que l'examen de cas concrets ne nous permette pas d'aboutir à des décisions unanimes. Je garde de l'ensemble des personnes impliquées dans la gestion de ces institutions un excellent souvenir, notamment des secrétaires successifs, dont j'ai apprécié la compétence et la disponibilité. C'est Mme Jean Flügel qui à mon arrivée m'a « initié » au fonctionnement de la CCPNU, ainsi qu'à celui de l'ancienne caisse du BIT, ayant pris le relais de celle de la Société des Nations. Par la suite, ce fut Monsieur Antonio Busca, qui comme actuaire, fut fortement impliqué dans divers dossiers techniques, touchant notamment la fixation du traitement assuré, l'indexation des pensions selon les particularités de la double filière. C'est lui également qui a été l'artisan de l'accord qui a permis à l'Organisation de reprendre les obligations qu'avait l'ancienne caisse par rapport à ses derniers bénéficiaires et ayants droit. M. Rodolpho de Magistris, qui fut l'adjoint de M. Busca, lui succéda et lorsque celui-ci entra en retraite, la fonction de secrétaire fut dévolue à Ms. Colleen McGarry, avec laquelle j'ai entretenu une collaboration agréable pendant de nombreuses années.

C'est toujours avec plaisir que je me suis rendu au BIT et je suis heureux d'avoir participé aux travaux des instances dans lesquelles le Conseil d'administration m'a nommé.

En guise de conclusion, je tiens à remercier ici tout spécialement M. Aamir Ali qui, en retenant ma candidature pour succéder à M. Kaiser, m'a permis de vivre cette belle expérience d'être associé à la gestion des institutions de prévoyance du BIT !

17 juin 2005

[I am quite pleased with myself for having played a part in getting Roger Schibli appointed as a Governing Body representative on the ILO Pension Committee, on the Administrative Board of the old ILO/League Fund and on the Board of Trustees of the Special Payments Fund. We wanted someone who would be a link with the Geneva authorities and also be a technical expert. Roger Schibli was both; and equally important, his pleasant and easy personality allowed him to fit in easily with all the other members. His contributions were always most valuable and he became a close friend. A.A.]

A passage to India: Ruth Gordon's mission, 1947

by Fiona Rolian

“Never having ventured more than four hundred miles from home, and then only on short visits to the sheltered environment of relatives and friends, I felt it was quite an adventurous undertaking to be going to India for a year. I had seen sea-going vessels only in pictures and in the movies. My own experience was limited to a row-boat. I was embarking on a journey to a country which I had read about a lot, heard about a great deal and which for a long time had held a fascination for me.

After several weeks of preparation which included a total of ten immunizations against diseases like cholera, yellow fever and smallpox, I left Montreal on a cold, windy night in early December [1946]. Excitement was tempered with apprehension. Would I fit in with these strange people, their strange ways of life, a new office devoid of the routine to which I was accustomed, where there was always some department one could readily refer to in case of need. In short, was this job more than I could handle?"

These are the opening paragraphs of the first "résumé" Ruth Gordon sent home to her family in Montreal at the beginning of her year-long mission to India in 1947. These résumés and more than 70 letters describing her impressions and daily activities have been preserved by her son Martin, scanned and made available on CD Rom. The *Newsletter* is most grateful to Martin for kindly permitting us to reproduce extracts from the correspondence; and to Sita Excoffier, daughter of Raghunath Rao, for having brought this correspondence to our attention.

Ruth started her ILO career on 30 July 1945 as a stenographer in the Montreal Office. Within a year she was appointed Secretary of the Asiatic Questions Service, of which Rao was the Chief. She quickly made herself indispensable to the team, performing a variety of tasks in preparation for the Asiatic (later Asian) Regional Conference which was to take place in New Delhi in October-November 1947. She also found time to be useful to members of the Indian Delegation to the 1946 Montreal Conference where she no doubt made some excellent contacts. When the Director-General decided that a small team of ILO officials should be sent to Delhi for consultations with Asian governments on the finalization of the Conference documents, Rao asked Ruth to accompany him as a member of the Mission. She was just 28 and had clearly never travelled far from home. It was, after all, almost 60 years ago and a very different world from today.

After a long train journey from Montreal to San Francisco, Ruth and Rao boarded the S.S. Marine Adder, a reconverted troop ship, and set sail for Madras via Hong Kong and Singapore. The sea journey took 23 days in cramped and difficult conditions but she "*had come prepared for any eventuality*" and refused to dwell on the discomforts – there was too much to see and she was thrilled by this unique experience.

Delhi

They arrived in Delhi on 25 January 1947 and were provided with accommodation in "hutments" in the grounds of Pataudi House, former residence of the Nawab of Pataudi. She set to work immediately at the Delhi Office which was under the directorship of Dr. P.P. Pillai (Gopinath's father). Her immediate task, other than acting as Rao's assistant, was to serve as clerk to the Mission, whose staff included: Marguerite Thibert, Elna Palme Dutt, P.P. Pillai (Chairman of the Mission), Lore Bodmer, Hervey de Bivort, Sadhu Singh Dhami, Aamir Ali, K.E. Matthew, Hai-fong Cheng (Vice-Chairman), Tien-kai Djang, K. Kuriyan and V.D. Sharma. Ruth was frequently called upon to interview officials of the Labour Department, make complicated travel arrangements for members of the Mission, and supervise the work of temporary staff engaged in India. In fact she worked for everybody and gave of her time "unsparingly and ungrudgingly", according to her annual report for the period.

The first few days were frustrating for her as she noted: "*Things have been pretty hectic here. It's not that I work so hard but that it takes such a long time to get things done. ...What would ordinarily get done in half an hour at home takes about five hours here. Actually it's very good for me. Impatience should be knocked out of me by the time I get home!*"

It didn't take long before Ruth was also caught up in the whirl of the never-ending and glamorous social life that was Delhi in those days:

“I went to tea yesterday afternoon at the home of the Secretary of Labour for the Government of India [Shamaldharee Lall, later Chairman of the Governing Body]. All I can say about the home and the huge garden to match the home is that Hollywood has a lot to learn. For sheer unadulterated luxury and gracious living, Delhi has everything I’ve ever seen beat hollow. ... Last night I was invited to dinner by one of the members of the Governing Body, also in the Government. I am arranging a tea for him for this afternoon in honour of our Mission.”

And almost as an afterthought in a letter dated 10 February:

“I met Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the leader of the Indian Interim Government. I was at Dr. Pillai’s waiting for some things to be signed when I walked Pandit Nehru to see K.P.S. Menon [first Indian Ambassador to China]... The funny part is that I didn’t recognize him! He looks quite different from his pictures. ... The whole thing took only a few minutes but when I found out later who he really was, I was weak with the thrill of having shaken the hand of the first man in India.”

The Mission staff went out to tour the region at the beginning of February and Ruth was able to relax a little for about three weeks until their return which she apprehended – *“I won’t know which way to turn first, I shall be so busy”*. There followed another relatively calm month when all but three of the Mission staff left India until the Conference. Rao, Djang and Lore Bodmer went off to tour Ceylon, Burma, Siam and Malaya and although Rao wanted to take Ruth with him, the Office wouldn’t agree to the additional expenditure. She was just as happy to stay behind and took a few days off to sightsee in Delhi and visit Agra and the Taj Mahal.

By the beginning of April, the heat in Delhi was almost unbearable. Ruth, who had started to wear a sari on the boat coming over to India, was not going to give in: *“I sit here by my typewriter in my silk sari, as hot as hell in a temperature of about 100, but determined to get used to the yardage of Indian feminine wear.”* She wore a sari for official functions throughout her stay in India and looked quite stunning by all accounts. In spite of her fear of insects (referred to later as “zeppelins” and “B29s” because of their size), the heat was such that she forced herself to sleep outdoors.

Simla

In the past, the entire Indian Government used to move their offices up to Simla (7,000 feet) to escape the summer heat, but the Interim Government and Congress now considered this a luxury. The Government printing presses, however, were still there and since the Mission had to get their reports completed and printed, it was decided that those who were left would proceed to Simla. Rao and Ruth arrived there in mid April – Aamir Ali and Elna Dutt a little later – and installed themselves at the Clarke’s Hotel where they all remained until the end of August. Ruth writes:

“My first glimpse of the Himalayas made me feel that I was having a treble portion of forbidden fruit. Their beauty is overpowering and even after three days of it, the effect is the same. ...The air here is marvellously fresh and very invigorating. My appetite has increased by leaps and bounds...”

Living and working conditions in Simla were a distinct improvement on Delhi. No cars or bicycles were allowed in the streets; shopping was simpler; the food at the Swiss-run hotel bore no comparison to Pataudi House fare; her room which also served as her office, although not as spacious as in Delhi, had beautiful views on the mountains; *“and last but not least, I have running water in my bathroom, and every morning thus far, I jump into a bath tub with hot water up to my neck and I flush the toilet for the sheer beauty of listening to the water”*. All in all, as she summed it up, *“We live a nice,*

pleasant day-to-day existence where the work is interspersed with walks before and after dinner and our excitement consists of a sherry before dinner.”

Ruth does not dwell on her heavy workload, remarking only that there was a great spirit of cooperation amongst the team. However, her particular admiration for Marguerite Thibert is worth mentioning:

“Madame Thibert left yesterday [22 May] for Europe. Her part of the mission is over and she has gone back to Geneva at which time she will retire from international life. She is a woman of 60 with grandchildren and in spite of her years and a weak heart has just completed a tour, not only of India, but of China and Indo-China... She returned about a month ago and spent this time in writing her report on her findings. She doesn't write English very well so she did it in French. It naturally fell to me to type her report. It was a terrific job but it was fascinating and as soon as I have the chance I intend going through it again, this time for absorbing the details. This woman of 60 travelled about in a jeep, in a truck, in a flat-bottomed boat – anything she could get to take her where she wanted to go. The woman is dynamic.”

Partition and Independence

These were exciting times in India. The Viceroy and Nehru met in Simla in May for discussions on the situation in the region. On 2 June a summit was held in Delhi between the Viceroy, Jinnah and Nehru to decide to whom power should be transferred. Would there be a United India or a divided one, with part becoming Pakistan? Would the 560 or so states and territories which did not form part of British India remain independent? Even though far from the trouble spots, public meetings were forbidden in Simla and the tension was keenly felt. Ruth wrote to her father that day to reassure him, as she had done ever since she arrived in India, that she personally was in no danger. She was furious with him for having telephoned the Office to have her recalled and accused him in very strong terms of endangering her position there.

The decision to partition India into two states, India and Pakistan, was broadcast by Mountbatten on 3 June. It was decided that the two new governments would come into being on 15 August. Ruth wrote home in July that *“Everyone seems to be of the opinion that Pakistan won't last long and that eventually the two dominions will link up much the same way as English and French Canada did. That, of course, remains to be seen.”*

The big day finally arrived. Before dinner on the evening of 14 August, the members of the Mission went out into the Mall, the main street in Simla, which was packed with people. They soon discovered that there were to be no celebrations on the actual day of independence (other than the raising of the Indian tricolour flag) in deference to the as yet unresolved boundary issue in the Punjab, of which Simla was part. She nonetheless sensed *“the general spirit of the crowds who, that evening, had already got the feeling of the importance, the world-wide importance, of the event that was to take place that same night... – they were once again masters in their own country.”* The small group (no doubt including Aamir) then gathered in Ruth's room to listen to the Transfer of Power ceremony which was broadcast from Delhi at 11.00 p.m. (Hindu astrologers had augured the 15th as inauspicious and to satisfy all the parties concerned the transfer took place exactly at midnight.) There were speeches by Rajendra Prasad, President of the Constituent Assembly; a beautifully-worded one by Nehru in both Hindi and English; and by Sir Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, India's outstanding contemporary philosopher. When the clock struck midnight, the House resounded with cheers, the pledge of allegiance was taken and Mountbatten was appointed India's first Governor-General. Ruth considered herself *“very lucky indeed to have been there on this day of days”*.

The Conference

At the end of August Ruth returned to Delhi after a brief holiday in Bombay. She and the Raos were now lodged in adjoining apartments in Cochin House, the Delhi Office premises. After a period of feverish activity, there was another lull in the work since the reports had been completed, *“and now we must think of material arrangements for the Conference – that means accommodation for the delegations, office staff, transportation (cars, buses), communication (telephones), etc.”* She hired two receptionists for the Information Desk and was happy at the thought of being in charge of the desk – it meant she would be in the thick of things, looking after the needs of delegates and answering all sorts of questions, which of course she loved. She also provided secretarial assistance to Rao and Jef Rens, Secretary-General of the Conference.

The plenary sessions of the Conference were held in the Constituent Assembly Hall where the Transfer of Power ceremony had taken place barely two months earlier. Four hundred delegates from twenty-two countries were present at the Conference and a 14-member delegation from Pakistan also attended. [Several had been in the Indian Labour Ministry till August and helped in making the arrangements. Among them Mohamed Aslam, later ILO Correspondent in Pakistan, and Anwar Shaheed, who joined the ILO in 1956.] The United States sent an observer delegation. Jagjivan Ram was elected President of the Conference and Prime Minister Nehru addressed its opening session on 27 October.

Entertainment, of course, played a major role in the proceedings. As a result of her extensive contacts with the Embassies regarding material arrangements, Ruth knew virtually every head of delegation present and was designated by Rao to stand on the receiving line and help with the introductions to Lord and Lady Mountbatten of 600 of Delhi’s most important people. It was also her duty *“to bring up the people who I thought should be introduced for a more informal conversation, so there I was, a mere stenographer, bringing up members of the Governing Body, years my senior, my official superiors, and certainly my social ones..., asking them if they would like to speak to their Royal hosts.”*

The Conference ended on 8 November and Ruth wrote to her family with relief and satisfaction: *“In short, the past week has been full of work, full of receptions, full of excruciatingly exciting moments, and full of praise for the work I have done.”*

The doubts that Ruth had expressed about being able to handle the job she had taken on a year earlier were clearly unfounded!

Homeward bound

A good part of the winding up of the Conference fell to Ruth. But now it was time to organize the return journey to Montreal and pack up all her souvenirs – *“You’d better push out the walls. I’ve stopped at nothing short of menus.”* The Raos and Ruth left Delhi on 23 November, stopping off in Bombay and Madras. She then made her way alone to Colombo and stayed with V.V. Giri, the Indian Representative to the Government of Ceylon and later President of India. She sailed to London in early December from where, after spending Christmas and New Year with friends, she sailed back to New York.

What had this extraordinary year meant for Ruth? In her own words, *“It has been a year of hard work, of thrills, of enjoyment and of education. It has been a year of luxurious days, of uncomfortable moments and of insects. I shall never forget India and I doubt whether I shall let you forget it either. I have made friends here and I say, quite honestly, that the thought of leaving them is not agreeable, but you can’t have everything.”* And then a little later, *“ ... I have got so used to this country with all its funny ways and*

strange customs, its slow-moving habits, its nonchalant hospitality, its dress and its food that I feel very much as though I belong. I shall miss it, I know.”

* * *

I miss it too, Ruth. India was my home for the first 20 years of my life. I arrived there as a tiny baby on 14 August 1947, on the night of independence which you describe so vividly in your letters. But unlike you, I have never been back. For you, this mission was the first of many to India and the region – Burma, Ceylon, China, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines – when you accompanied Rao to the newly-independent countries of Asia as they became members of the ILO. For me, India was my childhood and my happy memories are still very much intact.

Thank you for sharing your incredible experience.

June 2005



Members of the Preparatory Mission of the First Asian Regional Conference,
Cochin House, New Delhi, January-February 1947
Front row from left to right: Marguerite Thibert, Elna Palme Dutt,
P.P. Pillai (Director of New Delhi Office), Ruth Gordon, Lore Bodmer.
Second row: Hervey de Bivort, Raghunath Rao, Sadhu Singh Dhami, K. Kuriyan.
Back row: Aamir Ali, V.D. Sharma, K.E. Matthew. The two Chinese members are missing.

WHEN THE UNITED STATES LEFT THE ILO

by Jack Martin

*In July of this year I was invited to present a paper at a Conference in The Hague organized jointly by the American and the Dutch Societies of International Law. My paper (entitled *The United States and the ILO: Default, Withdrawal and Return 1970-1980*) aimed to describe the events that led up to the US withdrawal from the ILO in 1977 and its subsequent return in 1980. Extracts from this paper are reproduced below; the full version of the paper is being published by the T.M.C. Asser Institute in the Hague under the following provisional title: *Proceedings of the Hague Joint Conference on Contemporary Issues of International Law – 2005, 30 June-2 July 2005*.*

The abridged version below omits an introductory section concerning the origins, role and structure of the ILO and the background to the relationships between the ILO and the United States. It also omits footnotes and some other explanatory material. In preparing the paper I benefited greatly from comments received from several former colleagues – including Francis Blanchard himself as well as Aamir Ali, Bill Simpson, Ali Taqi, Francis Maupain and Don Skerrett – but needless to say I bear full responsibility for any errors, omissions or misrepresentations in the paper, and for the views expressed in it. Readers' comments – or indeed their own recollections of the events of those difficult years – will be most welcome.

Default

The incident that triggered off the crisis was the decision taken by the newly elected Director-General, Wilfred Jenks in June 1970 to appoint a Soviet national to a post of Assistant Director-General. In any other organization, this event would have passed almost unnoticed; every other UN organization at that time had at least one national of a communist country in a senior position, without this having any disruptive effect on the functioning of the organization. But for George Meany, President of the AFL/CIO and a militant anti-communist, this appointment was “the last straw” in a long sequence of events since 1954 that had led to a strengthening of communist influence in the ILO. With the support of the US employers he brought the matter before the Appropriations Sub-Committee of the House of Representatives (whose Chairman, John Rooney, was a close political friend of his) which recommended the withholding of the United States contribution to the ILO for 1970. This recommendation was supported by the Senate Sub-Committee, and Congress deleted the contribution to the ILO from the appropriations for 1970.

The ILO was plunged into a major financial crisis, as the United States contribution amounted to 25 per cent of the Organization's regular budget. At first, it was expected that the crisis would be short-lived – US government representatives in the ILO Governing Body and elsewhere constantly reaffirmed that the United States recognized its obligation to pay its contribution in full. But the crisis was not short-lived. Ignoring a proposal by the Administration, Congress voted in 1971 not to restore the 1970 arrears or to provide for any payment at all of the 1971 contribution to the ILO; draconian measures had to be adopted by the ILO to deal with a critical financial situation: e.g. postponement of virtually all meetings, complete freeze on recruitment. The Director-General was also given authority to borrow in order to meet commitments, and many staff members contributed to a voluntary fund. But significantly, no member State responded to an appeal by the Director-General to contribute to an emergency fund to assist the ILO. Even the closest allies of the United States were appalled at the failure of

the United States to meet its financial obligations, and were not prepared to let it off the hook.

The embarrassment of the US Administration at this state of affairs was such that President Nixon himself felt obliged to issue the following statement at the end of 1971:

“It is simply not consistent with our national dignity to attempt to maintain influence and membership in the ILO if we are not prepared to pay our dues. The Administration will therefore have no choice but to give notice of withdrawal from the ILO unless Congress sees fit to provide our assessed contributions to that Organization.”

In 1972 the United States would have lost the right to vote if it did not resume payment of its dues. For the next five years therefore it paid enough to maintain the right to vote, although it remained in arrears. But the threat of withdrawal loomed larger and larger.

Towards Withdrawal

The threat was taken seriously by the friends and allies of the United States in all three groups, and they tried to dissuade socialist and developing countries from provoking the US any further, as did the Director-General (Wilfred Jenks) himself. But to little avail. The next stage of the crisis was provoked by the situation in the Middle East, which has continued to poison the atmosphere in the ILO ever since. At the 1973 session of the Conference, a resolution had made its way through Committee condemning “the policy of racial discrimination and violation of trade union rights which the Israeli authorities are pursuing against the Arab peoples”, and inviting the Governing Body to set up a Committee to investigate “Israel’s persistent violations of trade union freedoms and discriminatory practices against Arab workers”. In his speech of reply to the Conference, Jenks warned that “for the ILO first to condemn and then to call for an inquiry to confirm such a condemnation would be to offend the principle of due process on which all our work relating to the implementation of Conventions rests”. The resolution failed to be adopted for lack of quorum, to the fury of Arab delegations who withdrew their support from the Director-General. The United States praised the Director-General’s stand, but this did not prevent him from continuing to be subjected to pressure and even abuse in Washington. The strains and pressures to which he was subjected from all sides led to his sudden death in October 1973. Francis Blanchard of France was elected to succeed him.

The new Director-General did not have an easier time than his predecessor. The 1974 session of the Conference was a particularly black one for the United States. It adopted a resolution on Israel very similar to that which had failed to be adopted in 1973. Another blow to the United States in 1974 was the failure of the Conference to adopt the report of its Committee on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations which *inter alia* singled out the Soviet Union for practices which violated the Convention on forced labour which it had ratified. An unholy alliance of Communist countries and right-wing dictatorships in Latin America (which were also singled out in the report) succeeded in getting enough support to prevent the Committee’s report from being adopted.

The fateful moment came at the 1975 session of the Conference when it amended its Standing Orders to enable observer status to be granted to the PLO. In this the ILO Conference was only following the lead of the General Assembly of the United Nations (as specialized agencies normally do on political matters); but it was too much for George Meany who, with the support of the employers, called on the US Government to withdraw from the ILO. The letter giving notice of withdrawal, signed by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, was received by the Director-General on 6 November 1975.

Withdrawal

The Kissinger letter made it clear that the US did not desire to withdraw, and did not expect to do so. But it considered the ILO to have been falling back on “four matters of fundamental concern”:

- erosion of tripartism;
- an appallingly selective concern for human rights;
- disregard of due process;
- increasing politicization of the Organization.

Even those most sympathetic to the US position could not fully support it on all these “four matters of concern”. For instance, it was difficult to see how tripartism was being “eroded” – employer and worker groups continued to play their role in ILO organs in complete autonomy. The allegation of “selective concern for human rights” implied that the ILO’s supervisory bodies were quick to condemn certain countries friendly to the United States (e.g. Chile, Argentina, Turkey) for the violation of workers’ rights, while communist countries were “granted immunity”. But this ignored the fact that the ILO’s Committee of independent experts had year after year addressed strong criticism to the USSR and other communist countries for violation of the most basic ILO standards, including those on freedom of association and forced labour. The communist countries were thus constantly under pressure, even though they were generally able to secure enough votes to prevent a formal condemnation by the Conference. Moreover, the United States would have been on stronger ground if it had itself ratified the relevant ILO Conventions; in fact it was among the very few countries not to have ratified any of the ILO’s basic human rights Conventions.

Nevertheless, the United States certainly had every reason to be concerned at a country being condemned by Conference resolutions without due process; and it was this issue, more than any other, that led to US withdrawal. Attempts by Arab countries at the 1977 Conference to condemn Israel for violation of ILO Convention No.111 on discrimination in employment and occupation were defeated in the Conference Committee on Application of Conventions – a victory for Israel and the United States; but the report of the Committee failed (as in 1974) to be adopted by the Conference. A further blow was the failure of the Conference to adopt an amendment to its Standing Orders which aimed to prevent resolutions condemning a State for violation of ratified Conventions without due process coming before the Conference. These two developments destroyed all hopes of the United States remaining in the Organization.

President Carter took the decision to confirm the withdrawal of the United States effective 6 November 1977. The only good news was that the US had to pay up all its arrears of contributions before leaving!

During the two-year notice period, the Director-General had had a contingency plan prepared for dealing with the financial consequences, so that within two weeks of the US withdrawal the Governing Body had before it detailed proposals for reductions of expenditure and of programme in the 1978-79 budgetary period. The package of reductions ultimately approved by the Governing Body amounted to \$36.6 million (21.7 per cent of the approved budget). It naturally involved some very painful cuts (e.g. in publications, research, meetings), and difficult decisions had to be taken (particularly concerning staff reductions, reorganization and restructuring the Office). But special care was taken not to impair the effectiveness of the ILO’s standard-setting activities or its capacity to provide technical cooperation for developing countries; indeed the ILO succeeded in attracting increased amounts of extra-budgetary funds from UNDP and elsewhere for its technical cooperation programmes. Moreover, in contrast to the period when the United States had been in default, voluntary contributions were received from

numerous governments and other bodies around the world to help the Organization over its difficulties.

Even more significant, no other member State followed the United States out of the ILO. Some circles in the US had thought that the work of the ILO (and its tripartite structure) could be transferred to some other Organizations less subjected to communist influence – such as OECD or the Organization of American States. But this initiative received no support at all. The ILO survived, although weakened, and carried on with its work.

On the other hand, US withdrawal did have a sobering effect on the remaining membership. Sessions of the Governing Body and the International Labour Conference were more businesslike (no provocative political resolutions were adopted in 1978 or 1979). Paradoxically, too, the United States started taking more interest in the work of the ILO than when it had been a member. A Presidential Committee was established to follow developments in the ILO, and US Government representation in the ILO (in an observer capacity) was upgraded.

Return

The decision to return to the Organization was taken by President Carter in February 1980. Compared with the drama of withdrawal, the return of the United States was almost an anti-climax, and the reasons for its return after such a brief absence were not altogether clear (and are no clearer today). US spokesmen justified the decision by claiming that withdrawal had forced the ILO to change its ways. Nobody wished to contradict them at the time, but it was difficult to see in what way the ILO had changed. The Soviet ADG whose appointment had triggered off the crisis in 1970 was still in post; the PLO continued to enjoy observer status at the Conference; no significant progress had been made on any of the four “matters of fundamental concern” identified in the Kissinger letter. One innovation introduced during the absence of the United States was intended to go some way towards addressing US concerns: an amendment to the Conference Standing Orders was adopted in 1979, which introduced the possibility of vote by secret ballot – in the hope that this would encourage delegates to vote according to their conscience rather than to instructions. But any illusions that this would prevent “political” resolutions from being adopted were dashed at the Conference in 1980 – immediately after the return of the United States – when a resolution concerning Israel was adopted after a vote ... by secret ballot!

Consequences

The ILO emerged from the crisis with its reputation, if anything, enhanced. Much of the credit for this should go to Director-General Blanchard who had very skilfully and responsibly handled a situation which could have been terminal for the Organization. The crisis had indeed resulted in a sizeable reduction in the resources available to the Organization (the level of the budget was not restored to its former level when the United States returned), but this forced the ILO to concentrate on its main priorities and to undertake some streamlining of its structures and procedures.

The events that precipitated the crisis were in many respects peculiar to the ILO, because of its tripartite structure. But the fury of the United States against the ILO was fuelled by the treatment it was receiving in other Organizations – especially in the General Assembly of the UN where on one critical issue after another the US found itself in a humiliating minority. The ILO was in a sense a useful scapegoat, and withdrawal from the ILO was meant to send a signal to the rest of the UN system. Perhaps, however, US policy-makers realized soon after withdrawal that they had made a mistake in picking on the ILO, and in allowing policy to be dictated by the whims of one George Meany.

Today, some 30 years later, the ILO crisis is all but forgotten – a product of the Cold War, with little relevance to today's world. Perhaps its most serious long-term consequence is that it created a *precedent* for using financial pressure and withdrawal (or the threat of withdrawal) to attempt to achieve certain aims in international organizations – a precedent that has since been followed by the United States (and by other countries). On the other hand, the most important lesson that should have been learned (but does not appear to have been learned) from these events is that such aggressive methods can be quite counter-productive. It is difficult to see how the United States benefited from using these tactics against the ILO. It isolated itself from its allies (including the world trade union movement and employers' circles), it tarnished its reputation for financial integrity, it flouted international law, and it also underestimated the potentially important role that the ILO – for all its imperfections – could play in the promotion and defence of workers' rights, tripartism and democracy, a role that it was to play with much success a few years later in upholding trade union rights in Poland. The United States was able to achieve its objectives much more effectively when it resumed membership and constructive participation in the ILO than when it brandished threats and exerted financial pressure against it.

August 2005

GALLIMAUFRY

Odyssey 2005 by Hanne and David

by Hanne Kattwinkel

On a sunny morning early in March we left the house to take a KLM flight to Amsterdam, en route to the States. We got there alright. We even got into the plane from Amsterdam to Memphis – en route to St. Louis, MO, where David's brother and wife were expecting us. We saw heavy snow falling in Amsterdam, were told that there was only one runway snow-ploughed for landing and take-off and it continued to snow gently – nice to see. We realized that there might be a delay, so what, retired people have time. The first **six hours** in the plane on the runway, only water was served, then the pilot told us that we were plane No. 36 waiting for take-off and de-icing. We did get de-iced after the trucks had been reloaded with water and we realized that our pilot was an optimist. After **seven hours** on the runway, moving maybe 100 metres, he announced that we wouldn't take off, the airport had been closed and it would take a few more hours to find a gate to unload us. Everybody was hungry and Hanne took action. Of course she could not talk to the pilot himself but she talked to the business class stewardess and was informed that they were not allowed to serve food – or even soft drinks and peanuts – while on the ground. Miracles happen; she must have told the pilot that the passengers were demanding food and everybody was happy and some even thankful to Hanne... when we were served.

Before finding a gate for unloading the 350 people the pilot announced that we should go to T-6 – transfer desk 6 – and that mattresses would be available for all of us. We got back into Amsterdam Airport at 23.30 and not a soul was at the transfer desk, at any bar or restaurant, or any KLM counter. Only 2 policemen were to be seen who couldn't help the stranded people. I found a lounge chair and took off the luggage. When the man came back I told him chairs were for people and not for luggage. David started to stretch out on the floor. There were no mattresses, of course. Later a nice lady offered him her chair, the privilege of being an elderly person...

The next morning we joined the mob at the transfer desks three times hoping to get a new boarding pass for our flight, which was still shown on the monitor as having departed the day before at 14.15; it was delayed not cancelled. We gave up, nothing moved. Finally I found a KLM employee at some gate who told us that the stub of yesterday's boarding pass would do. What a relief! We still felt the nine hours on the runway without flying and the night spent in the airport when we re-boarded our plane from yesterday, with a delay of a few hours only. When the pilot announced that we had a leak in one of the engines, the crowd only sighed; when he announced an additional stopover in Detroit en route to Memphis because he couldn't work beyond the allowed working schedule, the crowd pronounced a sarcastic laughter. "It comes in three" or "jamais deux sans trois".

We took off with "only" a delay of five hours, had a quick stop-over in Detroit for change of pilot and crew and made it to Memphis. There it was no longer "weather-related" and the airline Northwest looked after us. From leaving our house door to opening the hotel room door we had travelled **55 hours** and were happy to find a bed. Next morning we called our folks who had no idea where we were after not having shown up on the scheduled flight in St. Louis, Missouri. For two calls we paid US\$18 at the hotel rate. Meanwhile we found out that we would not have made it in time to St. Louis anyhow since immigration procedures with finger prints and photos take some time, and one should have at least 2½ hours between connecting flights. So it took us **3 days** to get to St. Louis, our flight to Florida to see David's grandson was rescheduled,

at Orlando we only found a hotel for US\$309 due to a spring training of a new baseball team plus a motorcyclists' meeting. The breakfast was 5 stars, OK, and we then found a reasonable hotel where his son lives in Melbourne. Back to St. Louis where we had a rest, a tour at the Salk Institute, a visit to the Museum of History where Hanne bought a Baule Guro Mask. Off to San Diego, California, where we drove 580 miles in 3 days, a wonderful trip fulfilling Hanne's last life dream – she always wanted to go to California. After a normal return flight from St. Louis via Detroit to Amsterdam and from there to Geneva, we enjoy being back home and used the Easter holidays to work outside the house: spring has come.

28 March 2005

The war on poverty

by Bert Zoetewij

Actions taken by the IFIs [International Financial Institutions mainly the World Bank, IMF] can be at cross-purposes with those in agencies engaged in advancing social objectives.

World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization

Reactions to “The Office now and then” in FNL 35 ranged from “refreshing to see some comments that are generally positive”, through “perhaps a tad optimistic”, to scornful “an outsider cannot judge how the Office functions”. The latter opinion notwithstanding, here is a brief follow-up, for readers interested in goings-on in and around their workplace of many years, on the Programme and Budget 2006-07 (PB from now). As that is devoted to implementation of the DG's Decent Work Agenda – the “global goal of decent work” and “working out of poverty”, especially in poor countries, as elaborated by the World Commission on Globalization (FNL 37) – I add some further remarks on that Commission's report and its follow-up. But first the financial basis of the PB.

For several years the Office has been labouring under the harsh rule of “zero real budget growth”: any increase in one major programme must be wholly offset by a reduction in others. Thus, the PB increases funding for standards and social protection, at the expense of employment and social dialogue (ILO-speak for industrial relations). But the DG had also proposed an increase of \$23m (4% of the budget total), mainly for “Institutional investment and extraordinary items”, such as major repairs and maintenance and the new security arrangements of the dilapidating Headquarters building; a new computerized information system; staff training; and a new evaluation unit. He did not get it. “Frustrated”, he had to make downward adjustments elsewhere in the PB to the full amount of his proposal. Meanwhile, a group of major contributors paying more than half the budget, kept pressing for “zero nominal growth” – no new money even for cost increases – but so far they have not got that either.

On the other hand, extra-budgetary contributions are expected to rise by a net \$31m: \$45m more for standards, less for other major programmes. Most of these funds come from the US. This generosity dates from the second Clinton administration, and a brief digression on politics may be of interest. At the time, the US was negotiating international free-trade agreements to the dismay of trade unions, Bill's faithful allies. To keep them on board, he steeply increased financial support for the ILO, especially its standards work: a tool in the work boxes of globophobes as well as social reformers. And so far the US Congress has continued it. Clinton's move reflected the “New Democrats” philosophy (sometimes dubbed “triangulation”) that had been the platform of his 1992 election campaign. It chimed with Tony Blair's “New Labour” concept and similar ideas of Schroeder in Germany, d'Alema in Italy, Kok in Holland and, more ambiguously,

France's Jospin. It all coalesced in the "Third Way" notion of a modernized social democracy: by hearing everybody you can replace old-style left-right confrontation by consensus at the centre. The Third Way leaders were also keen to help developing countries overcome poverty. The ILO's tripartism and work in poor countries were in the same spirit. And so in 1999 Somavía was invited to a Third Way Summit in the company of the prime ministers and Prodi of the European Commission, where Clinton spoke of "opportunity for all", social justice, labour standards, AIDS, ordinary people being unsure they will benefit from globalization, and other themes echoed by the World Commission set up two years later.

Back now to the PB. Its architecture, designed to house Somavía's "results-based management", is world-class. Akin to today's most advanced budget systems called "new public management" as practised in the US, the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Holland and Scandinavia. Decide what you ultimately want to achieve in various policy fields (the ILO's "Strategic Objectives" of the major programmes). What measurable progress toward these goals is to be made in the budget period (the ILO "Indicators" and "Targets") and in what ways (the allocations to means of action: standards, research, technical cooperation, their distribution to the field and headquarters, etc.). After the budget period, say how far you did, or did not, meet the targets, and what lessons are learned from the experience (the performance report). Briefly, make yourself visibly effective, transparent and accountable.

Of course, what good all this will eventually do depends greatly on the wisdom or otherwise of the objectives and targets chosen; priorities, as reflected in the distribution of funds (standards compared with, say, employment); and means of action. And, last but not least, on converting long-established staff work attitudes to the needs of a new dispensation. Especially the latter cannot be achieved overnight – it is a long-drawn process. GB members pointed to imperfections (unambitious or vague indicators and targets, overlapping and other shortcomings) in the PB and performance report. And the DG announced some sensible measures he will take to deal with them.

The ILO, writes the DG in his Introduction to the PB, shall strive to make employment and training for all "the cornerstone of poverty reduction policies". Poverty reduction is the aim of many organizations, such as UN agencies, UNDP, World Bank, IMF, US and other governments, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (Nepad) and countless NGOs. Even multinational businesses engaged in Kofi Annan's Global Compact. Which brings them together with UN Agencies and others. (e.g., Ericsson's communication centres for rural poor, ABB's electricity projects for rural villages; an EXXON pipeline in Chad. The World Commission asked the International Organisation of Employers – basically the ILO Employers Group – to strengthen its participation in the Global Compact.)

The Commission sees incoherence among these efforts – such as that in the quotation at the head of this article – as the main reason why globalization lacks a social dimension. In follow-up of its recommendations, an Office paper for the March 2005 GB Session proposed three projects to end this conundrum. The ILO would take the lead in organizing a Policy Coherence Initiative; a Globalization Policy Forum; and a set of Policy Development Dialogues. Each to involve combinations of multilateral organizations (UN and its agencies, World Bank, IMF, WTO, OECD, NGOs, etc.) for discussing a panoply of topics, some of which seemed to me a bit puzzling – e.g. "strengthen the knowledge-base on coherence" – or surprising – "the ILO already analyzing" problems of rich countries' textiles and garment industries facing competition from poor countries. (Back in 1984 the ILO Textiles Committee discussed at length my report on this very question. In the following decades, the industry failed to prepare. Although the last barriers to competing imports were at last lifted in January 2005 – though known since ten years before – the US and European Union soon began

reinstating some.) In the GB, the proposals received qualified, sometimes lukewarm, support.

Coherence is certainly desirable, especially among and between NGO and bilateral government aid efforts. The ILO spearheading such initiatives is a bold and noble idea. In fostering social justice and fighting poverty it has always done valuable, important work. But compared with other bodies, its role can only be a modest one, and for it to bring about coherence with and among the IFIs and WTO may be too ambitious, if not unnecessary. The leading agency in the war on poverty is the World Bank. And against the widespread, sometimes violent or abusive criticisms of that institution, especially by NGOs, something has to be said in its defence.

The Bank has far more money (\$20bn a year in loan disbursements) and employs more analysts and experts, of higher average professional calibre, than any other multilateral agency or NGO. And very much of these resources – as, to a lesser extent, the IMF’s – has for many years been dedicated to poverty reduction. (For more on much of what follows, see S. Mallaby, *The World’s Banker*, Penguin 2004). The Bank’s concern about poverty dates back as far as George Wood’s presidency (1963-68; David Morse knew him). Declaring poverty in developing countries “*the* central drama of our times”, he worked hard to make rich countries pay more to the International Development Association (IDA, the Bank’s soft loan/grants arm for helping the poorest countries). His successor, McNamara, broadened and intensified the battle: “poverty to be eradicated by the end of this century”. His passionate speeches on this theme sometimes moved his listeners to tears. And to equip the Bank for the task he set up an Employment Division, a Rural Development Department, and a Population, Health and Nutrition Department – not to make ILO, FAO and WHO redundant, but to have a solid basis for financing projects in these fields. Within the Bank there has certainly been a high degree of coherence among its actions in the war on poverty.

As the end of the less impressive Preston’s mandate approached (but he did set up a strong environment department in the Bank), the White House energetically looked for a suitable successor. Helped by his own shrewd manoeuvring and McNamara’s support, many-talented though in some ways far from perfect Wolfensohn, won. In 1995, Third Way Clinton chose him over some other very qualified men pushed by senior Administration members.

He knew poverty at first hand – childhood in a poor family, business trips to Africa in an earlier career – and immediately made (Wolfowitz says he will keep) the Bank’s focus on the problem sharper than ever. He travelled again to Africa, not just to talk to governments, but going to slums and rural areas, sleeping there, inspecting defunct schools and clinics, walking around with villagers (sometimes at the risk of tumbling in a muddy ditch or open sewer, or stepping on a land mine) and joining them in tribal dancing. He told Washington staff to spend a week in such villages, and moved most country directors to the field. A Third Way-man, he reached out to international NGOs, turning Oxfam, Care and World Vision into allies, and trying hard to find a consensus with many others.

So the World Commission’s contrast between IFIs and socially-oriented agencies is false. But their approaches may differ. For instance, ILO “working”, vs. IFI economically “growing” out of poverty.

Parts of the Commission/ILO analysis may seem a bit unbalanced: overstating globalization’s possible downside, underplaying its upside. For instance, without any evidence or source, “the vast majority of mankind” is disillusioned, and “global governance is in crisis”. Then, “most poverty reduction occurs in just two countries”, without adding that China’s and India’s success came only after they had opened up to

globalization. In Chile, poverty has fallen much when that country did the same; there is still high unemployment, but this is widely thought to be due in part (as in India) to overprotective laws for those lucky enough to have jobs. Somavía had said that globalization's worst failure was to help creating the 500m jobs needed in the next ten years. This year, the Office reported that 50m jobs had been created in 2004. Right on target, you might think. But no; "only enough to keep pace with growth of the working population", grumbles the Office report.

For its part, the Commission saw the opposite imbalance in the work of the main drivers of globalization policy: WTO, the IFIs and the governments shaping their programmes. Overstating its economic benefits, underplaying social needs. "Neoliberal" (meaning, in most current political discourse, "heartless" if not outright evil) economic orthodoxy is to blame. The doctrine of growing out of poverty wrongly assumes economic gains trickle down to the poor; has burdened poor countries with unbearable debts; strangled their governments' right to set their own policies by imposing harsh adjustment programmes and loan conditions; caused income and gender inequality between and within countries; and harmed the environment. For these reasons the economic agencies' actions and those of socially-oriented multilateral bodies and NGOs must be made coherent by the above Office projects in the PB.

China's, India's and Chile's astonishing economic growth at the same time as massive reductions in poverty show that "trickle down" need not be a myth – as the Office has maintained since the 1970s. True, it sometimes is. For instance, when oil discoveries yield riches but few jobs, while the new revenues are not used for developing other activities but squandered or stolen by corrupt, larcenous governments – as happened, e.g. in some African countries. By the mid-1990s, the Bank had found that corruption poisons programmes for growth and poverty reduction. Thirty percent or more of governments' and its own money ending in the pockets of politicians, their cronies, rapacious bureaucrats and middlemen, or in projects favouring hospitals for the rich instead of rural clinics and so on. (In the Commission's bulky report, corruption gets only one bland sentence.) Strictly implemented conditions for oil projects, and allocating Bank funds to village councils rather than the central government have helped to tackle the problem. So has the conditionality in IMF/Bank Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers demanded from countries seeking debt relief. The papers leave it to the countries themselves to say what problems need what funds, giving them "ownership" of the strategies. But they must do so the Third Way: involving local NGOs, lower level authorities, other multilateral agencies (including the ILO) and so on.

Do infrastructure projects (dams, dikes, irrigation and other water systems, reliable electricity supply, roads, canals, airports, etc.) trickle down? Indeed, do they do poor countries any good at all? They are expensive and often need financial help. But they can help farmers increase their crops and gain access to markets where they can sell them; village craftsmen to use power tools and larger firms to raise and improve their output, protect people from floods and provide safe drinking water, and so on. They are also often the targets of furious NGOs based in rich countries, sometimes but not nearly always, endorsed by more pragmatic local ones (or others more worried that the project may harm their power or financial interests than by environmental, social or cultural threats) as well as Bank directors representing Third Way governments anxious to keep on the right side of their own nationals' NGOs.

When taking office, Wolfensohn immediately put the Bank on the Third Way. NGOs had campaigned against a dam project that would have provided electricity to some of the 90% of Nepalese who did not have it. So it was cancelled. Then the Bank made a myriad of environmental, social and cultural rules. To enforce them, projects were submitted to frequent studies, survey missions, project re-appraisals, burdensome loan conditions, all taking much time and money. And many projects were frozen. In this way, it was

expected, NGO campaigns could be avoided. They were not. In 1999, a project in a Chinese province bordering Tibet was to move some 60,000 farmers voluntarily from an infertile, overpopulated hillside to a nearby valley in the same province which would be irrigated. London- and Washington-based NGOs were up in arms. In China, moving people could only be compulsory, and prison labour would be used for the work to be done (both had been firmly ruled out in the loan conditions); the valley belonged to Tibet (well, in the course of 2000 years of mostly Chinese rule there had been a period, ending 200 years ago, when it did); Chinese would displace Tibetans in the settlement area (there weren't any, but from the Tibetan minority in the area of origin many were among the volunteer settlers). A "social and ecological disaster", nay "genocide" would be caused (pure fantasy). The NGOs managed to get support in the US Congress; Clinton announced that the US Bank board's member would vote against the project. Then the Chinese Government withdrew its request for help and implemented the project on its own. Other governments needing infrastructure finance also looked for other sources than the Bank's conditions-laden offers. In 2003, the Chinese and Indian members of the Bank board, pointing out that they represented one third of mankind, forced it back to its earlier, more businesslike approach to infrastructure lending.

The ILO Commission's report does not mention dams or infrastructure. But it has much to say against IFI loan conditions. Correctly, up to a point. As the Bank and IMF themselves had to conclude, conditions imposed on unwilling or incompetent governments did not work. And when they did, they were often unnecessarily harsh or detailed. Hence the IFIs new Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers. The countries themselves decide how to use the money they need, and if their plans are realistic they will get it. But, as in the case of oil projects and corruption, Bank conditions may sometimes be very useful. Anyway, many unnecessary conditions were abolished.

More could be said about the Commission's comments on current globalization processes as to inequality, the IFIs' structural adjustment programmes, debt relief, etc. But space does not allow more than a concluding remark. Many of the Commission's recommendations in its mostly impressive report deserve serious consideration. But those on global coherence may have to be toned down. There is already coherence within the Bank's many-sided structure and quite some between its policies and the Fund's. While the ILO's modest share in the war on poverty makes it an unlikely force for changing IFI policies. Perhaps the Office is realizing this. The Philadelphia trumpet, sounded in the Commission's report and its presentation to the Conference, of the ILO overseeing all economic and social policies, is not heard in the PB and the coherence paper. And the Office coherence proposals are mostly for technical discussions among officials, not on policies. So what *could* the Office do?

Most GB discussion of globalization takes place in a Working Party. Meaning no minutes, only a chairman's oral report; the entire GB membership, and some non-members, participating, together with a host of observers from international organizations and their advisers, filling the GB room to overflow (Dharam Ghai, one of the Commission report's writers, once could not find a seat). In this forum, the US Government sensibly said that the Office coherence proposals could take place in that working party, without needing separate meetings and secretariats, which the PB could not fund. Next, the World Bank observer welcomed the Office wish for coherence dialogue, and suggested that the two meet and exchange their ("*empirically verified*", he stressed) research in fields of common interest. Good. The DG often boasts of an ILO "comparative advantage" in knowledge of employment, and labour problems generally. The Bank's idea might be a splendid opportunity for the Office to prove and flex its professional muscle in labour economics and related disciplines in the war on poverty.

June 2005

P.S.: Thanks to François Agostini for his “randomly” thoughtful views of globalization (FNL 38). Historical perspective is needed to understand much of today’s world economic scene. So is pre-history, as in P. Seabright, *The Company of Strangers*. More modestly, in return economic perspective helps clarify some historical trends and events, e.g., P. Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, and D.C. North, *The Rise of the Western World*.

P.P.S.: Beware! In 1950 I came to the ILO straight from a central bank, almost the only such case ever – Allen Rau was the other. I have also had several friends working in the World Bank and IMF.

Causeries

par Antonio Andres

La dernière parution du *Bulletin des Anciens* est un florilège d’esprit et de bonne humeur. Il nous a détourné du sérieux, parfois un peu aride – quoique toujours bien dit – auquel nous sommes habitués.

En nous égayant avec le récit désopilant de ses incursions sur le Web, Aamir Ali nous fait toucher du doigt (si l’on peut dire) la mauvaise foi – programmée en usine, j’en suis convaincu – de ce système qui nous rend tous « tarés » à des degrés divers. Moi, qui handicapé par une grande maladresse s’apparentant à la mauvaise volonté, et qui n’ai jamais réussi à obtenir la moindre faveur ni concession de mon « ordi », perdant piteusement toutes les batailles que j’ai menées contre lui, ai bien ri en voyant avec quelle lucidité, mais aussi avec quelle sage résignation accueille-t-il ses défaites. Je ne doute pas que c’est le Diable qui a inspiré les savants du CERN dans leur invention du Web, car c’est bien lui, le Diable, qui l’a voulu ce « machin » capricieux qui sème la confusion dans les esprits – et les foyers –, qui paralyse nos trains et ascenseurs, qui exige, impérieux, l’obéissance aveugle aux « instructions » sous peine de devenir muet et nous priver de sa « mémoire », etc... Eh oui, mon « ordi » étant plus, bien plus rusé que moi, et surtout plus têtu, il a failli me rendre fou (c’est peut-être déjà fait). C’est pourquoi j’ai voulu me venger en l’enfermant dans un placard dont il ne sortira plus jamais... Peut-être.

Mais revenons à notre *Bulletin* pour redire le plaisir que j’ai eu à lire le co-édito de Jack Martin dont la Muse (sa conscience) dans des vers éloquentes, se révèle altermondialiste, pacifiste, tout à fait politically incorrect devant son ego bien gêné. Really delicious!

Et puis il y a Sutcliffe (dont je me rappelle l’excellence des « works »), lequel nous guide avec finesse « through the universe of music, poetry and art », comme nous le dit Jack Martin. Je me rappelle de l’excellence de ses « works » lesquels, comme il nous l’apprend, continuent à prendre une partie de son heureux temps de retraité.

Il y a aussi les autres, tous les autres, dont la plume fait merveille dans ce *Bulletin* No. 38. Merci à tous.

Mais voilà, les francophones étaient, une fois de plus, presque absents de la fête. Et c’est bien dommage car parmi eux les bons esprits, les talents, les manieurs de belles phrases ne manquent pas.

A ce propos : savez-vous, les amis de la langue française (et les autres aussi) que les bibliothèques de la Ville de Genève, ainsi que certaines communes, proposent chaque année des concours d’écriture (notez : pas de littérature) ouverts à tous. Dotés de prix modestes, ces concours ne visent qu’à donner le goût de l’écriture aux amateurs de tout

niveau et culture. N'ayant rien à gagner (ou presque) c'est l'occasion pour les plumitifs sans prétention de se faire lire par un jury sans crainte du jugement.

Et c'est bien pour donner du mouvement à mes méninges, que j'ai déjà participé à l'un de ces concours en trois occasions. Mais mon intention ici n'est pas de vous parler de ces joutes, sinon de vous encourager à faire de même. En effet, rien de tel que d'écrire (même maladroitement), pour remuer et maintenir en forme la cervelle. Du moins je le crois... J'ai voulu, avant tout, venir au secours d'Aamir Ali en lui envoyant pour publication mon dernier texte envoyé au concours. Ceci non pas pour m'en vanter et encore moins pour épater qui que ce soit – car quand on a le pied bot on ne court pas bien vite – mais pour apaiser sa soif des textes en français. Je l'entends dans ma tête crier : « du français !, du français ! » comme si, mourant de soif, il criait « de l'eau !, de l'eau ! ». Ainsi même si l'eau que je lui propose n'est pas de bonne qualité, elle aura (peut-être) fait fleurir un sourire sur son visage.

* * *

Concours d'Ecriture – Ville de Lancy – Juin 2004

CAUSERIES

A Nicolas, mon bien cher petit-fils,

J'ai beaucoup regretté que ton séjour à Genève, cette ville que tu as quitté voici deux automnes en suivant tes parents à l'étranger, fut si court. Si court qu'il ne nous permît que de faire une promenade au bord de ce lac Léman que tu continues à aimer si fort. Cette flânerie nous conduisit à l'île Rousseau, ce qui amena pour toi le souvenir du Collège du même nom où tu as passé tant d'heures studieuses. Tu parlais du contraste entre les rêveries pastorales (ainsi tu disais) de notre bon Genevois Jean-Jacques et le monde moderne, « chaotique à la folie », où les choses changent si vite que, tu le disais aussi, on pouvait évaluer l'âge d'un film « à une année près » (!) de par les objets qu'on y trouvait... Le jugement d'un encore « teen-ager » étant en la matière bien plus sûr que celui d'un homme mûr, surtout si cet homme est, comme moi, allergique aux nouvelles technologies, je te laissais dire avec plaisir mais un tantinet perplexe... Puis, moi je te parlais de ce qu'un homme apprend comme étant l'essentiel après avoir traversé une vie, une vie presque toujours tumultueuse et ardente dans sa jeunesse, passionnée et douloureuse dans sa maturité et finalement angoissante au même temps qu'apaisante dans sa vieillesse. Je te parlais donc de l'usage de la raison, de la futilité des choses, de la nécessité de minimiser les événements de la vie... En somme je te parlais de calme, de sérénité, d'oubli. Tu me demandas si c'était cela la sagesse, alors que je sais que cela n'est que le déclin de la force au soir de la vie. Et à la fin tu me demandas encore de relater un événement éloigné qui me soit resté en mémoire... Tant de choses restent dans la mémoire au cours d'une longue vie et il nous restait si peu de temps, que je promis de le faire non pas par la parole mais par le texte.

Je te dirai avant tout, jeune homme, qu'il arrive un moment où le passé ne vit en nous que par les émotions qu'il nous a fait vivre ou par les joies qu'il nous a données. Et que ce sont parfois de petites choses, sans importance apparente qui, de-ci, de-là, ont le plus ébranlé nos sentiments et ont gagné une place privilégiée dans le tiroir de nos souvenirs. En te faisant ce récit par écrit, j'ai voulu faire un petit retour sur ma jeunesse et revivre ces instants qui m'ont beaucoup fait penser à la somme de ces petites misères, souvent si bien cachées, qui rendent tant de pauvres vies encore plus misérables.

Voici donc.

C'était il y a bien longtemps dans la grande ville qui me vit naître. A cette époque, les voitures étant rares (et les chiens encore plus rares, cela soit dit en passant) on pouvait

marcher dans les rues en regardant les nuages. Et puisque il fallait bien se déplacer, on marchait – beaucoup – ou l’on utilisait le tram et le métro. Seuls quelques « privilégiés » possédaient une bicyclette. La rareté des véhicules privés concentrait les foules sur des transports publics peu fréquents et rarement ponctuels. Bien entendu, ceux-ci étaient toujours bondés et à certaines heures ils étaient même archibondés.

Les trams – sans portières à cette époque – transportaient de véritables grappes humaines suspendues sur les côtés, telles des calamars accrochés au rocher, alors que dans le métro les portes peinaient à fermer et que les wagons semblaient éclater à chaque station, laissant échapper ses vomissures par ses portes béantes. La promiscuité y était forcément acceptée... et parfois désirée. Les hommes et les femmes, collés les uns aux autres, il fallait faire attention à ses propres regards et plus encore à ses mains afin qu’elles ne traînaient et ne s’égarassent n’importe où, vu que les bras restaient souvent dans la position où le hasard les avait placés. (Situation celle-là inimaginable aujourd’hui pour tous les innombrables courts sur pattes qui jamais ne s’abaissent à prendre les transports publics.) Cette promiscuité, était-elle un supplice... ou un bienfait pour les solitaires et les timides?... Eh bien, ça dépendait : à un regard furibond on trouvait le contrepoint d’un sourire bienveillant ou complice. Naturellement l’âge et l’apparence corporelle jouaient un rôle d’aimant ou de repoussoir dans cette promiscuité forcée... Inutile de dire que les distances étant longues, les places assises étaient assez prisées, surtout en fin de journée, par une foule fatiguée. Ce qui n’empêchait pas les messieurs de les céder avec déférence aux dames âgées, suivant en cela les manières de ces temps-là.

Il y avait – et il y a toujours – une station de métro située au cœur de la ville, sur laquelle convergeaient plusieurs lignes. Dans le ventre de cet important carrefour souterrain, les wagons se vidaient en bonne partie de la foule des voyageurs à chaque ouverture des portes, foule aussitôt remplacée par une autre formée de ceux qui parvenaient à y entrer tout seuls et de ceux qui y étaient poussés de force... Force puissante celle-là à laquelle s’abandonnaient souvent les moins costauds... C’était l’occasion, en étant leste, de conquérir une place assise pour ceux qui restaient à l’intérieur.

Ce jour-là c’était la fin de la journée. A cette époque ils étaient rares les « cols blancs » car l’immense majorité des travailleurs étaient plutôt « bleu de travail ». C’était donc un jour durement ouvrable, comme tous les autres jours ; la journée avait certainement été harassante et les gens n’avaient qu’une envie : celle de se reposer, de ne penser à rien. Aussi, lorsque le train arrivait ce jour-là à cette station centrale, véritable fourmilière humaine, un chanceux assis, à moitié assoupi, esquissa le mouvement annonciateur de la vacance de son siège. Ce mouvement ne passa pas inaperçu à deux travailleurs qui, chacun de son côté, s’épiaient du coin de l’oeil, se préparèrent discrètement à prendre la place en premier... Vlan ! L’assis à peine levé, au même instant, d’un même élan fébrile, les deux se laissèrent tomber sur le siège laissé vacant... si bien que l’un tomba sur les genoux de l’autre... Mais !... Chacun, interloqué, resta immobile un instant... « Mais... qu’est-ce que vous faites », parvint à dire le plus agile à celui qui, toujours assis sur ses genoux, restait paralysé par la surprise.... Celui-ci devint tout rouge.... « Mais... mais quoi, je me suis assis avant vous ! » répondit-il en bégayant dans sa confusion. L’éclat de rire qui accueillit ces paroles parmi les témoins de la scène fut d’anthologie. Moi aussi, je ris, cependant je fus grandement peiné par le désarroi de cet humble travailleur, maltraité une fois de plus par le sort, alors qu’il n’avait que désiré véhémentement un moment de repos.

Cet événement, anodin pour nous tous, ne fut certainement aussi innocent pour celui qui souffrit si méchamment la morsure du ridicule.

Cruelle est la vie pour celui qui peine,
des rages comme des épines lacèrent son cœur
remuant des rancœurs tristes, des haines féroces

qui soulèvent des cris et des bras, hélas trop faibles.
Terrible est la douleur de ces colères sans force,
amer est le regard de ceux dont le seul bonheur
est le baume apaisant de leurs tristes pleurs.

Cher Nicolas, voilà mon récit. Il peut te sembler sans intérêt; mais jamais je n'ai pu oublier cet incident. Comme si j'avais été moi-même la cible de ces rires.

L'affection et la confiance que tu me témoignes m'autorisent, je crois, à te parler d'un précepte qui devrait guider la vie de chacun et que tu souhaiteras peut-être adopter: ne porte jamais atteinte à la dignité d'autrui ; fait que jamais personne n'ait à rougir devant toi. L'humiliation subie est plus cruelle que l'épée. Sache que si un jour un homme frappe à ta porte pour se venger, cet homme ne sera celui que tu as traité durement mais celui que tu auras offensé.

J'ajoute : méfie-toi des idées communes ; elles sont presque toujours fausses. Et n'oublie pas ce que je te disais en empruntant à Cicéron : « Que les armes le cèdent toujours à la toge ». Vis ta jeunesse avec enthousiasme tout en restant lucide. Peut-être as-tu déjà compris que face à ton avenir tu es seul, que ta vie ne sera que ce que tu en feras. Mener sa propre vie à bon port c'est à la fois une petite et une grande responsabilité : petite parce que c'est une vie parmi des milliards d'autres, mais grande parce que c'est la tienne et qu'elle est unique et contient tout l'univers.

Je t'embrasse bien affectueusement. Peut-être voudras-tu me faire part de tes premières « impressions » universitaires ?

Ton grand-papa

* * *

Voilà, amis lecteurs du *Bulletin des Anciens*, le texte-concours présenté à l'appréciation du Jury. Sans doute avez-vous déjà deviné que le jeune Nicolas n'existe que dans mon imagination. C'était ma façon à moi d'énoncer, en toute simplicité, quelques uns des préceptes que je souhaiterais voir plus et mieux répandus en société. Je suis naïf, je le sais.

24 août 2005

A child cries

by Bimal Ghosh

I noticed from Jack's Co-Editorial (shows how carefully I read what comes out of his pen) that he has challenged me to produce yet another verse! I wanted to take up the challenge. But, alas, age must be catching up with me, and slowing me down. I have several unmet deadlines – from publishers, journals and institutions – lying in front of me! So I looked at my old stock of scribbling, and found a verse which I am sending you.

Here is the background. Since before the bloodbath that surrounded the partition of India, I have seen much violence. During my years with the ILO and the UN, too, I have been in many troubled spots, tattered by rampant violence. The recent – and seemingly endless – conflict and violence in Iraq have once more shocked me profoundly. Maybe more so, partly because several of my friends and colleagues were victims – Sergio Vieira de Mello and Arthur Helton (of the US Council on Foreign Relations) are dead, and Gil Loescher (of Oxford University and a contributor to one of my books) is crippled perhaps for ever. I was in close touch with them for several years and had planned to

meet them again soon after the time when the tragic event happened. I wrote the poem in the wake of this violence.

The message is simple: we need to look at the root causes of the seemingly rising tide of violence stemming from racial intolerance, religious fundamentalism and widespread terrorism, and reach out to those who feel (rightly or wrongly) alienated, aggrieved, or deeply humiliated. Military might by itself cannot do the job.

A Child Cries

A child cries, lonely, painful cry
So painful, so near;
But I can hardly hear.
The roaring blasts of dreadful bombs
Dusty, nasty, debris of destruction
And ugly noise all around me
Deafening my ear;
I can hardly hear.
The lonely cry, so sad, so near
But I can hardly hear.

More planes now in the sky,
Thickening the air – flying low, flying high
Coming from nowhere
They throw deadly, ghastly bombs
Here, there... everywhere.

I see deaths all around me
A sweet, little girl dies near me,
A mother loses her daughter;
A husband his wife, never again to see.
Small, orphaned children, hopeless, helpless –
They ask: Why, Why
Homeless, hearthless, they cry.

I can't stand, I can't stare
I cannot bear any more.
My tortured ears, my tired eyes
Fail to take anymore
And keep these pains in store.

You say you fight the enemy
The evil, so crafty,
That lurks and hides in deep dens of darkness
You wage a reckless, ruthless fight
To throw the evil out of sight.
But the enemy thrives, swells in numbers
In the depth of darkness, fed on hate and hatred
Heaping on humiliation, densely endless.

You are set to win the ghastly, ruthless fight
But not the enemy's heart and mind.
The fragile bonds of mutual trust
Now torn and tattered, soon to be totally crushed,
No more to last.

But you feel, surely you do, you can't afford
To be thoughtful or unduly kind
To win the enemy's heart and mind.

In punishing the enemy
The evil it be
You make him strong.
An elusive fight, and in vain;
But you make the world suffer in pain.

In punishing the enemy,
You seem to punish your soul;
It's awfully sad,
You miss your cherished final goal.

In punishing the enemy
You fail to hear
The orphaned child's painful cry.
Why not try?

3 June 2005

BOOK NOTES

Love, Laughter and Tears. An Anthology of Poems, by Sunil Guha. Okini Publishers, 2004. Rs. 125.

Poetry seems to be bursting out all over in the *Newsletter*; the latest contributor is Sunil Guha, formerly Chief of EMP/URG. He started writing poetry at an early age – in the 1950s – and has put together a collection of over 60 poems. In preparing this collection, he had the help of his family and three poems by his daughters are also included. The copyright is with Mrs. Meena Guha, so that this is a friendly, family publication.

Sunil recognizes the difficulties of someone writing poetry in a language which is not his own, and he expresses his gratitude to his various teachers and mentors for having taught him how to deal with this.

Like painting, I am sure that writing poetry must be a satisfying pastime, and as Sunil says himself, can occasionally be a way “to unload pain and suffering.” Indeed, several of his poems are a reflection of personal sorrow and personal joy; Sunil shares these with us.

For his friends, it will be pleasant to know that he is willing to do this.

June 2005

A.A.

Ketty Leibovitch: **La moitié de beaucoup; regards sur une enfance.** Genève, Editions du Tricorne, 2004

Tous ceux qui ont connu Ketty (ou Kitty) Leibovitch – et même ceux qui n’ont pas eu la chance de la connaître – seront enchantés par son récit d’une enfance tout à fait extraordinaire. Née en 1909 à Saint Petersburg, fille d’un médecin russe et d’une mère française, elle raconte en toute simplicité et avec beaucoup d’humour sa plus jeune enfance dans une famille aisée (ses parents, son frère Lova, sa tante Mania), une enfance qui est vite perturbée par les événements chaotiques qu’a connus sa Russie natale. La guerre, la révolution, les voyages que cette famille a entrepris à la recherche d’un pays d’accueil – à Kiev, en Crimée, à Constantinople, en France, à Londres, à Hambourg, et de nouveau à Londres – tout cela vu à travers les yeux d’une jeune fille qui ne comprenait pas grand’chose de ce qui se passait, mais dont le témoignage est à la fois charmant et émouvant.

Août 2005

J.P.M.

Ehsan-Ullah d’Afghanistan: **Le Voyage d’Aman Ullah, Roi d’Afghanistan,** CEREDAF (Centre d’Etudes et de Recherches Documentaires sur l’Afghanistan), 2005.

Dans ce livre notre ami d’Afghanistan fait le récit d’un voyage extraordinaire qu’a fait son père, le Roi Aman Ullah, de décembre 1927 à juillet 1928 dans douze pays – essentiellement des pays européens, mais aussi l’Inde, l’Egypte, la Turquie et l’Iran. Le Roi Aman Ullah s’était déjà distingué en obtenant l’indépendance totale de son pays de l’Empire britannique, mais il avait aussi l’ambition de faire entrer l’Afghanistan dans la modernité – ce qui l’a amené à entreprendre ce long voyage, que de nos jours on aurait appelé un voyage d’études. Ce livre retrace dans le détail ce long voyage – un voyage qui s’est fait en bateau, en train, en automobiles. (L’exploit sans doute le plus remarquable du Roi était de conduire lui-même une voiture de Téhéran à Kaboul à la fin de ce voyage – la première fois que ce parcours de plus de 2.000 kilomètres sur des pistes déplorables a été réalisé autrement que par des caravanes). Le Roi a été reçu par les plus hautes autorités des pays qu’il a visités, et les grandes réceptions et dîners qui ont été organisés en son honneur sont décrits en détail. Mais il recherchait surtout les technologies et les idées nouvelles qui permettraient la transformation de son pays en un état industriel moderne. Sans doute voulait-il aller trop loin trop vite. Les réformes qu’il envisageait, et qui entre autres visaient l’émancipation des femmes et l’éducation des filles, se sont heurtées à la résistance des mullahs et à l’incompréhension d’une grande partie de la population. Quelques mois après son retour de ce long voyage, il a dû faire face à un soulèvement et pour ne pas faire couler le sang il a abdiqué.

L’intérêt de ce livre ce n’est pas seulement qu’il brosse un tableau passionnant de la vie et des mœurs de la Cour d’Afghanistan, et des pays que le Roi et la Reine ont visités il y a 80 ans; c’est aussi qu’il rappelle des événements qui sont à bien des égards toujours d’actualité dans l’Afghanistan d’aujourd’hui.

Août 2005

J.P.M.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Computers again

The May Newsletter arrived this morning, thank you. No I have no golden words for publication in the Newsletter but I am writing a note to thank you for your editorial. I thought I was the only person who did not understand the warning messages that constantly appear on my screen. My first reaction is always to turn off the machine before it explodes. I too had to buy a second pair of glasses because I could not focus on the screen.

Jack showed no interest when I bought a computer. Recently, however, he did have the idea of typing a few poems from memory on Word in order to acclimatize himself with the keyboard. He was constantly interrupted by the Office Assistant (the little fellow on the bicycle) who did not like Wordsworth's spelling and suggested improvements!

16 May 2005

Celia Ryan (Pamphilon)

[As far as not understanding messages on the screen, Celia, you have a life member in me. Actually, I have never had a machine which actually exploded: it is one's temper that does that.

How lucky to have a little fellow on the bicycle to bully you; I have a really ugly creature with bulging eyes: an octopus? a frog? a toad? a creature from the deep?]

Beyond Empire and Terror

I wish to thank you for directing our attention to, and reviewing, the article by Bob Cox in the *Friends Newsletter*. In the meantime I have read the article in full. I found it very inspiring. At first I was not sure whether the author was really the Director of the IILS. But then Salah confirmed it after talking to Aamir and Jack. I regret that I have never met him.

23 May 2005

Werner Sengenberger

Friends Newsletter No. 38

I read this number with the usual pleasure. What a valuable source of information and insight this publication is.

The Editorial was particularly diverting because I have a horror of these machines, so much so that I employ a Thai lady to do the needful for me. For her it is a useful source of extra income to her daytime job with an NGO and for me it opens amazing access to all sorts of information without all the aggravation. I call it the limousine access to the internet, another blessing of living in a "developing" country.

An example: a download of the Hornby Company the resurrected manufacturer of toy trains and meccano sets located in Margate, Kent. According to an interview on CNBC Asia with its CEO Hornby's production is done in China but design, marketing and

finance remain in England. This is the company that made the (clock work) trains. I played with as a boy – made of metal with the grand old names of Southern, Great Western, London North Eastern and London Midland Scottish railways. The website is www.hornby.com for railway buffs and nostalgics.

Receiving my hand-delivered copy of *Le Monde* with the full results of the 29 May EU referendum I decided to pay the monthly bill from the newsagent in person to show my appreciation and I asked him if he was the only purveyor of foreign newspapers in town. No, he said, there are two others, but they download and reproduce copies from the internet websites. Simply amazing.

Some good points were made in “English vs. the World” but I still have the sentiment that French matters and it still makes sense to struggle for its survival. The pleasure one gets watching *Télématin* five days a week on TV5 as well as programmes like *Ailes et Racines*, *Thalassa* and Bernard Pivot’s “*Double Jeu*” are but some of the rewards you get as a bilingual TV viewer.

The “Farewell to Gopinath” was a privileged insight into the higher levels of the BIT mandarin.

The late John Strawson’s “How I came to join the ILO” made an impact on me. How many of us could start such an article with the words “I joined the ILO through an external competition”? Pas moi en tout cas. Apparently his quick reflex to switch to French during a job interview that started in English clinched the deal coming first of 136 candidates. I hardly knew John although we both worked on the finance side of the house but he always impressed me as being a congenial and competent man. His account of the working capital fund and negotiating stand-by credits with UBS and other banks means something to me.

“Ceux qui nous ont quittés” carried more familiar names for me than usual; five, including the very Gallic Jean Fauchon and Khun Mathana Mathanasutr, perhaps the most warm hearted and cheerful person I ever encountered in the UN system.

Maybe this was not the greatest number of the *Newsletter* (when you have three and a third pages of quotations from other publications on “Our Planet and Us” I think we’ve got a problem) but it was varied, entertaining and literate. Keep them coming!

6 June 2006

William B. Tate

Quelques propos charmants sur le vieillissement (suite)

I wish to dispel any doubt which might have arisen after reading Curt Fernau’s letter to the Editor (published in *Newsletter* No. 38) about a possible plagiarism by me.

The sentences of my father’s friend, Mr. Gouat, which I sent previously for issue No. 37, were quotations drawn from the speech of the mayor during the funeral ceremony, published in the *Bulletin Collonges Infos* dated May 2004, a photocopy of which I recently sent to the Editors.

Knowing the humorous wisdom of Mr. Gouat, who died when approaching 100 years of age, I was, in all good faith, convinced that he could express such remarks about ageing. In fact it appears that he read them somewhere and was using them to alleviate concerns of becoming old.

Both Curt Fernau and myself (as well as others) didn't realize that the full text was a "classic" already published by the Former Officials Section of the ILO Staff Union (No. 33 dated May 2003) as an anonymous contribution, and I was told recently that it is nowadays also on the Internet.

29 September 2005

Jacques Monat

Que reste-t-il?

When I read E.U. d'Afghanistan's rather negative account of the results of UN and ILO technical collaboration I thought of Hans Diener, a Swiss forester who worked for the ILO in Burundi and Uganda in labour-intensive public works projects. A field worker at grass-roots level, not a report writer in 4 or 5 star hotels, connected to old boys networks here and there, passing through the capitals of "donor" and "receiver" countries.

I first met Hans Diener in 1967 during an international training course on occupational safety and health in forestry which I organized in Germany on behalf of FAO, ECE and ILO. Since then we have been in touch during further similar events dealing with forest working techniques and vocational training, subjects with which Hans Diener was very familiar through his work in Switzerland.

Hans Diener was a very open, frank and humorous person. He laughed a lot – perhaps a little too much for his serious Swiss colleagues – but this did not annoy his African counterparts, on the contrary! They adored him and his wife Trudi who joined him in the very isolated district of Karamojo in Uganda. Both of them loved the Ugandans and were loved by them. In that locality a popular name for girls became "Trudi" and for boys "Dinar"! Most of the trees planted in the ILO projects in Burundi and Uganda probably did not survive the subsequent warfare in the two countries. But what survived is the example of unselfish help given by these two people.

And more than that: the Dieners, after returning from Uganda, collected clothing and other useful things and sent them to their friends in Uganda. Hans Diener helped founding and establishing in Uganda a vocational training centre, supported by various Swiss aid organizations and the Boy Scouts in Switzerland and Uganda. Fifty young people are leaving this centre annually after a 3-year training course in joinery, masonry, sewing and other crafts. This centre is about to become self-sufficient. The dormitory for the girls is called "House Trudi" and that for the boys "House Hans".

Que reste-t-il?

No glamorous achievements, no glorious reports – but an example of what can be done through hard work, enthusiasm and love.

Hans and Trudi Diener passed away in 1998 and 1999. Their memory will live on for many years, and their work continues to bear fruit.

30 July 2005

Bernt Strehlke

Carol Lubin

[Carol Riegelman Lubin died suddenly after a short illness on 26 July 2005 at the age of 95. The Newsletter has received the following tributes to her which we publish below.]

The news of Carol Lubin's death saddened all those who knew her and admired her devotion to the ILO and the cause of social justice. As she liked to recall, she had known all ILO Directors-General and served under four of them, namely H. Butler, J.G. Winant, E.J. Phelan and D.A. Morse. Those were years during which the Organization underwent major tests. First came the pre-war growth of fascism and Nazism – two ideologies firmly opposed to the ILO's objectives and approach and whose proponents, Italy and Germany, soon slammed the door on the Organization; then came the wartime years during which the ILO, whose greatly diminished staff was generously harboured by the Canadian Government at McGill University in Montreal, managed to keep the flame burning despite the odds. The subsequent post-war years, in contrast, were a period of rapid growth and adaptation to the challenges of a different and rapidly changing world. Carol lived and worked through those years with passion and an unflinching devotion to social justice, which continued to motivate her well after she left the ILO in the early 1950s.

I met Carol when I joined the ILO as a junior research assistant in 1945. We were in the same unit – then called the Employment and Migration Section – and Carol, who had joined the Office some ten years before, impressed me with her vast experience and commitment to the task, as much as with the kindness with which she sought to help her young colleague. She was then mainly immersed in the ILO's migration activities. There was a "Permanent Migration Committee" for which papers had to be prepared and whose meetings had to be serviced. A new Convention and Recommendation on Migration for Employment (eventually adopted by the Conference in 1949) were under preparation to revise pre-war instruments no longer suited to the vast expansion and changing nature of migration movements after the war. In 1949 a generous grant of one million dollars from the OEEC (now OECD) made possible the launching of a Special Migration Programme which culminated with the holding of a Migration Conference at Naples in 1951. It had been hoped that the Conference would lead to the creation of a Migration Administration and a Migration Aid Fund under the aegis of the ILO. It was a great disappointment, not least to Carol, who had been very closely involved in the preparation of the Conference and in its work, when the Conference failed to support these proposals, largely because the U.S. Congress was opposed to entrusting (and funding) such activities to an Organization that had communist countries in its membership (those were the days of McCarthy hysteria). Not long after that, Carol married Isador Lubin, former Commissioner of Labor Statistics under Roosevelt, and resigned from the ILO to return to the United States.

Her commitment to social justice never relented, however. She was a consultant for US social welfare organizations concerned with women, children, housing, and unemployment. She represented the International Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centers at the UN. At the same time she kept her interest in the ILO. She was a frequent visitor at the ILO Liaison Office in New York and often came to Geneva to attend the Conference. It was not, however, until after I had retired from the Office in 1983, that we resumed much closer contacts. By then she had embarked on an ambitious project that she carried out jointly with Anne Winslow, former Editor-in-Chief at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. The outcome was a very substantial study entitled *Social Justice for Women. The International Labor Organization and Women* (Duke University Press, 1990). To my knowledge, this is the first and so far only comprehensive study of the role of women in shaping the development of the ILO since its inception, and of the evolution of its approach to women workers' problems featuring a shift from a major emphasis on protective legislation in pre-war days to the promotion

of equality in regard to conditions of work, remuneration, and access to training and employment including decent self-employment.

One might have thought that with this book, which brilliantly crowned a lifetime career in the social field, Carol could have taken a well-deserved rest. But it only whetted her appetite for digging further into the ILO's life. Had she not known, or at least met, each of the ILO's Directors-General? Was this not a unique and fascinating experience to be shared with others? She was close to her ninetieth birthday and others might have shrunk from the task. Not Carol! She embarked anew on a vast programme of reading, digging into archives and discussing with knowledgeable people, including substantial interviews with those D-Gs still living, and many serving and retired officials. The subject was vast. It was difficult to isolate the specific contribution of each D-G from a general history of the ILO, which was beyond her ambition and, as she knew, would have been well beyond the capacity of any single author. Yet, chapter by chapter, the book was taking shape. The last I heard from her was that it had been accepted for publication by an American publishing house, although it still needed some final checks and finishing touches. She was engaged in that work when she passed away. She was 95 years old. I hope the book will come out, although it is a pity she will never see it.

Carol was a small, wiry, lively little person. She liked people and loved discussing with them. Her energy and unflinching commitment to the task she had set for herself were amazing. As she worked on each book, we had a number of exchanges as draft chapters flew over the ocean with requests for bits of information or comments. She was remarkably flexible for accepting changes, she never resented or argued about critical remarks and came back for more as work progressed. I suspect that few authors are so accommodating, but she felt that she owed it to her subject to take account of any useful contribution. Let this be a testimony of her dedication to the cause she believed in.

6 October 2005

Antoinette Béguin

75 Years of Service to the ILO and Development

Over the past 75 years, so many ILO colleagues have had the pleasure of knowing Carol Lubin – and will share my condolences with her family regarding her death on 26 July 2005 in New York. Her death came in the midst of her continued daily work in support of NGOs within the UN system and her determination to finish her latest book. I expect many of us will also share still quite vivid memories of Carol's exuberant and determined commitment to make things better! What I remember so extraordinarily special about Carol was that if you knew her – you also worked with her on one or more of her many "campaigns" for change and new initiatives. She had an incredibly effective way of bringing you, often dragging you, into her "world of work".

I was particularly lucky to have worked with Carol repeatedly within the ILO over the past thirty years in New York and at ILO Conferences or at various other international conferences – but as well during my own sabbatical forays into the world of Non-Governmental Organizations and the science community in 1997-99 and 2000-01.

As recently as June 2005, she had invited me to her Annapolis, Maryland beach house to discuss her latest publication project: a series of reflections on the ILO based on her personal relationship with all of the ILO's Directors-General. She had asked me to join her there to look over a few last sections of her book which she was determined to finish before her 96th birthday in September. Nevertheless, in true Carol Lubin style, her primary motive was to give me her firm and resolute views (and those who knew her well also know that all her views tended to be firm and resolute!) on my future as I had

recently told her that I had decided to take early retirement from the ILO. She stated that she was 95 going on 96 and she had still not “retired” and she was determined to influence what I was going to do next! As we had worked a lot together via the ILO and when I played a lead role in the Science Community within the Commission on Sustainable Development and at Rio and Johannesburg, she quite clearly set out what she thought I should be doing with the next 30 plus years of my active life – after all, she reminded me, she had “retired” from the ILO in 1952 – 53 years ago.

Carol’s links to the ILO began back in the 1920s when she wrote her undergraduate thesis at Smith College on the Standing Orders of the ILO. From there she went to the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace to work as a research and editorial assistant to Professor James Shotwell, one of the most distinguished scholars of ILO history. She personally joined the ILO in 1935 as assistant to the first US Assistant Director of the ILO, John Winant. Carol later played an active role in the removal of the ILO from Geneva during WWII, via Lisbon, to its wartime quarters in Montreal, Canada in 1940.

She also earned a PhD from Columbia University and her dissertation was prepared as an ILO Report on Employer/Workers Cooperation in Wartime.

However, in 1952, her marriage to Isador Lubin, a member of the New Deal ‘brain trust’ and former Commissioner for Labor Statistics, led to her leaving the ILO to begin a life of commitment and dedication to the development of the NGO community and its role and place within the UN system. While most of us from the ILO focus on her life-time contribution to the ILO, her commitment to NGO’s has had – and will continue to have – a very significant impact on the entire UN system. I would particularly note her leadership role in the International Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centers (IFS) and her active and traditionally outspoken and constructive participation in many international conferences, including the UN Conference on Population and Development (1994), the Beijing Conference on Women (1995), the Habitat II Conference in Istanbul (1996) and the Social Summit in Copenhagen (1995). In between her NGO commitments, however, Carol continued to take time to continue her interest in ILO issues, for example in 1991 she co-authored a study published by Duke University on “Social Justice for Women: the ILO”.

There are far too few special and unique characters like Carol Lubin in this world and we will indeed miss her on the international scene. She has influenced many of us who have had the opportunity to share her energy, determination and commitment to world peace, community and social development, and particularly the fundamental importance of gender to development.

But given that I knew Carol quite well, I know that she would find this brief note about her “unnecessary” – so I can not end it without recognizing that she would want me to remind “ILO” colleagues to continue to contribute to the ILO and to each of our own “causes”. After all, she kept working up until her last days at the UN in New York – and she will expect us to do the same. My guess is that if she could comment on this note she would say: “Larry, all that’s fine, but what are you and others going to do to move my agenda forward.” I am still working on my answer to her!

October 2005

Larry R. Kohler

What a remarkable woman; what a remarkable life

The death of someone who was only two months away from celebrating a 96th birthday should not have come as a shock. Yet at 95, Carol Lubin still was enjoying such a full life that one easily could imagine that this remarkable woman had many more productive

years ahead of her. It was for good reason that in preparing a book on the ILO's nine Directors and Directors-General she chose to tell the story of their successive administrations from the point of view of a survivor. She was, after all, the only living soul who had known each and every one of our DGs from Albert Thomas to Juan Somavia. It is thus with deep sadness and a real sense of loss that I look back on a relatively short period in Carol's life and career in which I had the pleasure of knowing and working with her.

My initial contact with Carol Lubin dates from 1993 when the ILO sent me to New York to work with the UN Secretariat in preparing the World Summit for Social Development to be held in Copenhagen, in March 1995. Carol introduced herself to me at an early preparatory meeting in the buildup to the Social Summit. She informed me of her active role in the International Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centers (IFS) and the fact that she was the IFS' UN Representative. However, Carol was just as eager to let me know of her long association with the ILO which began in 1929. During the summer of her junior year in college, she went to Geneva and studied the history of the ILO's Standing Orders. This led to her being hired in 1930 as a researcher and editorial assistant by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace where she helped prepare a study on the origins of the ILO. Then from 1935-1952, she served as an ILO staff member. It was obvious that some forty years later she still felt a deep attachment to the ILO and what she regarded as its very important work. I should not have been surprised then that over the next 18 months she took a keen interest in what the ILO participant in the Social Summit Secretariat was, in a manner of speaking, bringing to the party. With Carol keeping an eye on me, there was no need to worry about the goal of full employment and the basic rights of workers being neglected in the draft Declaration of Principles and Programme of Action under preparation.

Carol participated actively for the IFS in the successive phases of the preparatory work that paved the way for the Social Summit and, of course, she was present at Copenhagen. This was not surprising because Carol traveled to all the major conferences – Cairo, Beijing, Istanbul, etc. – both those preceding and those following Copenhagen. Well into her 80s, Carol pursued a travel schedule that left some of us relative youngsters in awe. Wherever one encountered Carol, it was hard not to admire her sharp mind, high degree of motivation and, of course, her tenaciousness.

Following the Social Summit, Carol and I both returned to New York. I had been asked by the Office to stay on in the Big Apple as Director of the ILO's Liaison Office with the United Nations. Over the remaining 28 months that I spent in New York, Carol and I became friends and, of course, now that I was the ILO's top dog in New York, she had even more reason to keep an eye on me. On a number of occasions, Carol approached me, sitting in the ILO seat at the General Assembly or other UN meetings, and suggested that the ILO's Representative might wish to respond to an intervention by a previous speaker, a statement with which she obviously had disagreed. A smile sometimes crossed my face as I thought, "In this wonderful job I basically am accountable to two people: the Director-General back in Geneva and Carol here in New York".

I returned to Geneva in mid-1997 and stayed in contact with Carol who visited Geneva for her work once or twice a year. When we met over lunch or dinner, there was little time for small talk. I always could anticipate a barrage of incisive questions. Carol's inherent curiosity and clarity of thought never ceased to amaze me.

Little did I know then that my new job as Chief of the ILO's Bureau of Publications was about to open another chapter in my association with Carol. When we first learned of her intention to prepare a publication on the ILO's Directors-General, I was struck by the ambitious nature of the project. However, I knew that once Carol set her mind to it, there would be no turning back. She persisted, without seeming to sacrifice anything else in

her busy schedule, and was putting the finishing touches on the Somavia chapter at the time of her death. She had interesting things to say about all nine DGs, but when I read and commented on an early draft, it was the chapters on the DGs under whom she served directly that I particularly appreciated and enjoyed reading. The pages devoted to Butler, Winant and Phelan are filled with anecdotes and historical tidbits that will charm any reader who is eager to know more about those formative years in our Organization's glorious past.

Carol brought to this manuscript the same high degree of commitment that was so characteristic of everything she did. Carol's remarkable life served as a source of inspiration to so many, particularly in her later years. Nothing would please her more than to know that those whose lives she touched share and will make every effort to carry on her commitment to achieving the social goals that she held dear.

October 2005

David H. Freedman

Getting Old

I received the following text today, my birthday. I fully endorse it, except for one or two points I prefer not to mention. The author is unknown.

The other day a young person asked me how I felt about being old. I was taken aback, for I do not think of myself as old. Upon seeing my reaction, she was immediately embarrassed, but I explained that it was an interesting question, and I would ponder it, and let her know.

Old age, I decided, is a gift. I am now, probably for the first time in my life, the person I have always wanted to be. Oh, not my body! I sometimes despair over my body – but I don't agonize over it for long.

I would never trade my amazing friends, my wonderful life, my loving family for less grey hair or a flatter belly. As I've aged, I've become more kind to myself, and less critical of myself. I've become my own friend. I don't chide myself for eating that extra cookie, or for not making my bed, or for buying that silly cement gecko that I didn't need, but looks so *avant garde* on my patio. I am entitled to overeat, to be messy, to be extravagant. I have seen too many dear friends leave this world too soon; before they understood the great freedom that comes with ageing.

Whose business is it if I choose to read until four a.m., and sleep until noon? I will dance with myself to those wonderful tunes of the 50s and 60s, and if I at the same time wish to weep over a lost love, I will. I know I am sometimes forgetful. But there again, some of life is just as well forgotten – and I eventually remember the important things. Sure, over the years my heart has been broken. How can your heart not break when you lose a loved one, or when a child suffers? But broken hearts are what give us strength and understanding and compassion. A heart never broken is pristine and sterile and will never know the joy of being imperfect.

I am so blessed to have lived long enough to have my hair turn grey, and to have my youthful laughs be forever etched into deep grooves on my face. So many have never laughed, and so many have died before their hair could turn silver. I can say "no", and mean it. I can say "yes", and mean it. As you get older, it is easier to be positive. You care less about what other people think. I don't question myself anymore. I've even earned the right to be wrong.

So, to answer the question, I like being old. It has set me free. I like the person I have become. I am not going to live forever, but while I am still here, I will not waste time lamenting what could have been, or worrying about what will be. For the first time in my life, I don't have to have a reason to do the things I want to do. If I want to play games on the computer all day, lay on the couch and watch old movies for hours or don't want to go to the beach or a movie, I have earned that right. I have put in my time doing everything for others, so now I can be a bit selfish without feeling guilty.

I sometimes feel sorry for the young. They face a far different world than I knew growing up, where we feared the law, respected the old, the flag, our country. I never felt the need to use filthy language in order to express myself. And they too will grow old someday.

I am grateful to have been born when I was, into a kinder, gentler world.

Yes, I like being old!

3 August 2005

Ed Sackstein

Chinois et Urdu

Un article récent du journal *Le Monde* confirme les orientations de vos articles du *Bulletin des Anciens* au sujet de l'avenir des différentes langues actuellement parlées dans le monde.

J'imagine que dans 50 ans, le *Bulletin* pourrait être rédigé essentiellement en chinois et en Urdu. Le français, qui se trouve déjà sur une pente fatale aurait disparu, quant au catalan, je n'ose y penser.

1 septembre 2005

Alfred Delattre

My friend Ken Gordon

It is always sad to hear of friends passing away. But I feel especially upset about the loss of Ken Gordon. He was a very special person in many ways: superficially he seemed to give the impression of being totally absorbed in enjoying life; in reality, he had great depth of character and feelings. I first got to know him in the Office (we worked together in the Cooperative and Social Institutions Branch, under Mr. de Givry), but later he became a family friend. My children maintained contact with Ken long after they left home. His very Caribbean humour and laid-back style, together with his own warm disposition, were infectious.

Ken believed in helping people; I remember well one of our colleagues got into trouble over a minor error of judgement, and Ken spending hours studying the ILO Rules and Regulations, to find a way out for him. As a member of the Staff Union, Ken had studied the Staff Regulations carefully and could often recommend the correct presentation of a point under dispute. His sympathies always lay with the underdog.

Ken taught me a great deal on how to function in a bureaucracy. He was by no means bureaucratic in his approach to work, but he made it a point to understand the mechanics of how to function efficiently in a bureaucratic set up. He always gave me invaluable advice on how to deal with all the petty problems of daily life within a large

organization, like the ILO. He was often at our home and greatly appreciated Manzoor's refined Moghal cuisine.

Ken has been out of circulation now for many years because of his long illness. But he will nevertheless be greatly missed by his many friends and relations. My heart goes out to his wife, Eunice, who has looked after him throughout his long illness.

13 September 2005

Zubeida M. Ahmad

Aimé Fardet

Un ancien collègue qui mérite un hommage tout particulier nous a quittés récemment. Aimé Fardet, né en 1922, obtint en 1947 son diplôme d'ingénieur agronome de l'Institut national agronomique, l'une des principales 'grandes écoles' françaises. Il exerça tout d'abord dans les services agricoles de son Jura natal où il garda toujours de profondes racines et très tôt fut nommé Ingénieur en chef du génie rural, des eaux et forêts. Il convient de mentionner aussi que, jeune officier, il était venu d'Afrique du Nord avec les troupes qui contribuèrent à la libération de la France, participant entre autres au débarquement du 15 août 1944 en Provence.

Dès le début des années 60, il fit bénéficier de ses compétences la Division des travailleurs ruraux du BIT. Ayant appris avec soin – comme tout ce qu'il faisait et en plus de sa connaissance de l'anglais renforcée encore lors d'un stage aux Etats-Unis – l'espagnol, il figura parmi les experts français qui entretenaient d'excellents contacts dans de nombreux pays hispanophones. On parlerait aujourd'hui de multiculturalisme. C'est ainsi qu'Aimé Fardet passa la deuxième moitié des années 60 au CINTERFOR (Centre interaméricain de recherche et de documentation sur la formation professionnelle) à Montevideo comme expert et l'un des adjoints du directeur. Homme de terrain, outre des études et rapports, il fit de nombreuses missions, animant également avec un réel succès divers séminaires et il devint conseiller régional en formation professionnelle rurale pour l'Amérique latine.

Différents pays d'Afrique, notamment francophone, bénéficièrent ensuite de son inlassable activité et les hasards de l'existence firent qu'il accomplit de fréquentes missions au Burkina Faso (ex Haute-Volta) où son père avait fait une partie de sa carrière.

Enfin après son retour au siège en 1975 et ayant jadis travaillé aussi au Service des coopératives, Aimé Fardet fut un des membres de l'équipe de pionniers d'un programme des travaux publics à haute intensité de main-d'œuvre lancé par Emile Costa, qui devint par la suite le Service d'emploi d'urgence (EMP/URG) du BIT. Il fut l'un des co-auteurs en 1977 avec Messieurs Emile Costa, Sunil Guha, Ibrahim Hussein et Mme Phan Thuy d'un ouvrage majeur intitulé '*L'organisation des programmes spéciaux de travaux à haute intensité de main-d'œuvre – Principes directeurs*'. Malgré sa grande compétence technique et son pragmatisme de terrain, unanimement reconnu, son tact, son calme, son ouverture d'esprit et son sens de l'écoute en faisaient le contraire d'un arriviste. Il ne fut donc promu au grade P5 qu'en 1981 à la suite d'un reclassement lors de la création du Service d'emploi d'urgence.

Aimé Fardet est resté, tout comme il était dans la vie, un époux attentionné et un bon père de famille, un homme courtois, soucieux d'harmonie et du respect des autres qui avait l'art de désamorcer les conflits et d'aider à progresser nos jeunes fonctionnaires. Il est de ceux auxquels le Bureau et le développement du monde rural doivent beaucoup. Il en fut dans sa grande discrétion l'un des plus solides piliers.

15 septembre 2005

Jacques Monat

Lakshman Kadirgamar (1932-2005)

[Kadirgamar was a fine fellow. I met him at Balliol and used to dine with him and his wife in Geneva. I last saw him about ten years ago, when I drove him to the airport. The more I think about him the more I admire him, as I hope my text conveys. A.B.G.]

In the evening of 12 August 2005 Lakshman Kadirgamar, the Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka, fell to a sniper's bullet as he climbed out of his own swimming pool in the Cinnamon Gardens district of Colombo. The government of which he had been a leading light blamed the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam; the Tigers accused the government's own security forces.

The Minister was himself a Tamil, a man of moderation and tolerance who held to an anchoring belief that one day peace would take up lasting abode in his troubled country. Throughout twenty-odd years of seemingly inextricable civil war – in which 65,000 died – he trusted to enlightened pluralism, rooted in democracy, to draw all the ethnic and religious strands of the island's people together in harmony. That was why he refused to have a scrap of land made over to lawful dominion by the Tigers, whom he branded as "fascist". He showed bravery in weathering the tremendous rough-and-tumble of politics and in living for years under the constant threat of assassination. Leaders of all four faiths – Buddhist, Christian, Hindu and Moslem – were as one in praising him. At his public funeral the throng of mourners stretched a mile long.

He had great intellectual gifts. He went to Trinity College, Kandy, read law at the then University of Ceylon and did post-graduate studies at Balliol College, Oxford. His affability and eloquence won him, in 1959, the presidency of the Oxford Union, the famous debating club of the University and cradle of many a world statesman. He wrote, and contributed to, works of legal scholarship. He was called to the English and Sri Lankan bars. In Colombo he built up a thriving practice in the law of copyright and patents.

Balked in that course by new restrictions on the language of pleading in court, he made his way to Geneva. In the early seventies he did a brief stint in the International Labour Standards Department of the ILO. From 1974 to 1988, in a return to his preferred branch of law, he served WIPO in senior positions of influence. It was while he was on mission for that Organization that, some thirty years ago, he was aboard an aircraft that burst into flames at Athens airport; to escape he had to jump from wing to tarmac, and he suffered painful and chronic injury.

In 1994, at the age of sixty-two, he was first elected to the Sri Lankan parliament and at once became Foreign Minister. By strength of conviction and cogent diplomacy he gained the understanding of the American, British and Indian Governments, among others, for his country's policy on Tamil separatism. He waged a successful campaign abroad to have the Tigers outlawed as terrorists. On visits to London he learned how authority was seeking to end internecine strife in Ulster. In 2001, the government having fallen, he shifted into opposition. When the new government struck an uneasy truce with the Tigers, he continued to warn against allowing them unwarranted concessions: only if they espoused democracy in the areas they held *de facto* should their claim to formal autonomy be entertained.

There came yet another political upheaval in 2004, and he again became Foreign Minister, but, as fate would have it, only for a span cut short by immolation at the shrine of others' conscience. His outspoken determination had incurred the wrath of too many. And in the eight months since the tsunami had wracked the island's shores, old rifts had widened in bitter wrangling over the allotment of some three billion dollars' worth of foreign aid.

Despair deepens; protest rises ever louder against what many scorn as spineless appeasement of the Tigers; the murder may halt altogether the faltering steps towards peace; and the government soldiers grimly on with the backing of a mere minority in parliament. Yet the President, Mrs. Bandaranaike-Kumaratunga, vowed in a broadcast to the nation in August that her government would stiffen its resolve to negotiate the devolution of power; only the fruition of its policy, she said, would make the death of Lakshman Kadirgamar no vain sacrifice.

8 October 2005

Allan B. Gardner

Anonymous Letter to the Editor

We have received an anonymous letter from “A group of friends of the *Friends Newsletter*”.

Like most reputable journals and newspapers, we do not publish anonymous letters. If the “group of friends of the Friends NL” (and we love all our friends) wish to come out of hiding and sign their letter, we would be happy to publish it.

July 2005

Aamir Ali

NAMES AND NEWS

Chapman, Robert L., 21 Iron Bark Way, Irvine, CA 92715, USA

[Robert Chapman, Professor of Economics, Irvine University, spent his sabbatical year 1981-82 at the International Institute for Labour Studies. Thanks to Bernt Strehlke, we've received a copy of Chapman's brochure Pursuit of Organizations: My Professional Adventure; some extracts.]

The Sabbatical (1981-82)

My research was done both in the US and at the International Labour Organization.

“The wider perspective, new plentiful information, and fresh ideas were overwhelming. With ample time to think about these matters, I read, studied, discussed, and wrote about unemployment, economic growth, and industrial relations.

From the ILO perspective, technological unemployment was just the tip of the iceberg. Underneath were the poverty, famine, disease, deterioration of the environment, and destitution of underdeveloped countries (UDCs). The big hope, it seemed, was that economic growth would be a first step in dealing with such problems. Much about economics and attempts to help UDCs was new to me. But from the perspective of an organization researcher, interventions lacked respect for the complexity of the phenomenon. To no surprise, failures to stimulate UDC growth exposed unwarranted assumptions and inadequacies of the economic models used.” ...

“The view from the ILO was indeed a broad one. International organizations had been established which collected information (usually with great difficulty), made critical (but inconclusive) analyses, best efforts spent (with some effect). Tripartite interactions were interesting, limited, but helpful.

Clearly, unemployment, economic well-being, disease, environment deterioration, and all the rest were world not local or national problems and required a motivated international approach. Such an organization did not exist. Even in the face of nuclear proliferation, recognized as a serious, and immediate, threat to stability, actions to control it were hampered by lack of united purpose.” ...

“So what's different after 15 years?

Science and technology have made substantial impacts on the threat to stability and hope for economic well-being of underdeveloped countries.

Threats to world stability are more urgent:

- Nuclear capabilities have spread to more regions.
- Terrorists have made violent attacks throughout the world. All nations (Homeland Security notwithstanding) remain extremely vulnerable.
- Environmental deterioration has become more urgent in the sense that while critical events may be a decade off, coping with them will take two decades.
- We come nearer to the limit of energy and material resources.
- Poverty and disease ravage much of the world.
- China and India forecast to become major players in the world economy will destabilize the dominance of the US and Western Europe.

Even with the continued activity of many international organizations (and the United Nations pledging to eliminate poverty in 20 years), no international commitment to an overriding goal for mankind has emerged.

While in theory Christians, Jews, Muslims share many common ethics and appreciation of each other, in practice these religions are divisive and more a cause for concern than basis for recognizing aspirations for mankind.”...

“The old age issue of whether humans are capable of participating in a democratic process is still before us.

There is no right way; instead we must muddle along together, adjusting to reality as it is revealed to us and as our insights permit.”

4 July 2005

Favre, Jean-Jacques, “La Pouilleuse”, F-26220 Dieulefit, France (His regular domicile in Geneva is: 22 avenue des Amazones, 1224 Chêne-Bougeries.)

Je suis toujours domicilié à Genève, mais je passe l’été à Dieulefit, dans la Drôme (où je suis né en 1917), dans une maison de village assortie d’un petit jardin entouré de murs où poussent quelques arbres, quelques vignes et quelques fleurs, baignés du soleil provençal.

Je suis un peu les affaires du BIT et l’AAFI, mais à distance et par le canal de leurs Bulletins. Je t’admire de garder ces contacts. Depuis ma retraite, les milieux de mon origine (Dieulefit) et de ma belle-famille (Genève) m’ont, en quelque sorte, un peu réabsorbé, sans parler des limitations de l’âge.

Praetorius, Elisabeth, 12 avenue Trembley, 1209 Genève

Please note my new address as from 1 September.

I should hate not to receive the *Friends Newsletter* any more, although I never have anything interesting to report.

August 2005

Sutcliffe, Peter, 31 Kamachili Road, Ayala Westgrove Heights, Silang, Cavite 4118, Philippines; e-mail: petersutcliffe007@msn.com

Yes, Virginia, there *is* a Santa Claus, and he’s alive and kicking here in the Philippines.

He’s also known as Ayala Land, Incorporated – the country’s premier property developer – and he’s just pulled out of his sack a splendid toy for me. It’s called a ‘solo’. In the art world, this means an exhibition of exclusively one painter’s work. They used to be known as one-man shows; that was before men finally conceded that women could also paint.

It came about thus. I’ve messed about with paint for half a century, periodically spoiling a few perfectly nice ILO walls in the annual UN Arts Club show in Geneva. One reason I chose to retire in Manila was prior knowledge of its vigorous arts scene; I figured that joining it would do my performance a deal of good.

Footballers feel much the same about Real Madrid or Manchester United.

So it has transpired. I built myself a studio, and paint incessantly with a progressive amateur group coached by a professional. He has the rare gift of lifting one's game to undreamed of levels, and soon had me attacking canvas by the square metre.

A leading critic has labelled me a post-modern iconoclast, which will surprise those of you who may recall the innocent little watercolours of my recent past.

I've been in three group exhibitions and three more are on the way, one in Manhattan. The ILO sub-regional office in Manila displays my wares semi-permanently. I write a regular column on the arts, and teach talented youngsters.

So, Bingo! A wholly new career has materialized: embellished, thanks to Santa Ayala Inc., with the jackpot of a solo show.

Not before time, you may say. Let's be frank, it hasn't happened before simply because my work wasn't good enough. The Philippines has made it happen, and I'm grateful.

I'll sup Ayala's champagne on opening night with proper reverence. They're sponsoring the show in Lorenzo the Magnificent style, and also putting it on tour subsequently to galleries around the country.

What's more, the company has appointed me Artist in Residence at its Westgrove Heights estate, where I live. I'm not sure what this entails. Something on the lines of a secular UNICEF goodwill ambassador? As was the case on my transfer to Africa in 1967 to invent a regional information service, I'll write my own job description. It will be modelled on the estimable Fellowship of All Souls', Oxford, a WLT contract demanding no more of its incumbents than to decorate the occasional banquet and to publish – if the spirit so moves – an infrequent slim volume of scholarship. In my case it could be an Arcadian oil for the boardroom depicting a landscape before the company's bulldozers move in.

And I guess I'll be summoned to exhibit myself from time to time as an example of what nice things can happen if you buy an Ayala Land Inc. building lot.

Of course I shall require a uniform. We Resident Representatives of the Muse never appear in public without one. I'll ask the UN Women's Club to come up with a suitably Ruritanian design, with forceful Gauguinesque overtones. Something startling, like the rococo threads sported by the Presidential Guard at the White House, only more *Ballets Russes* Bakst. Lots of rings on my fingers and bells on my toes.

And a ceremonial sword for spearing cocktail olives, silencing critics and sharpening pencils.

Thus does post-ILO life pursue its enchanting course out on the Pacific rim. Every day is Christmas Day, Virginia, and Santa Inc. is here to bless us all right merrily, every one.

June 2005

CEUX QUI NOUS ONT QUITTÉS

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

ALLARDYCE, Hilda Gladys	14 décembre 2004
BERTUCCIOLI, Janine	25 septembre 2005
BIZIOS, Ioannis	8 septembre 2005
CVETKOVIC, Milica	15 octobre 2004
DI MAIO, Catherine	28 août 2005
DOUDINE, Khaled	7 juillet 2005
DURAFOUR, Blanda (épouse de René Durafour)	19 septembre 2005
FARDET, Aimé	25 juillet 2005
FAVRE, Pierre	23 septembre 2005
GORDON, Ken	7 septembre 2005
GOTTSCHALK, Heinz	10 mai 2005
de GRAZIA, Renée	22 septembre 2005
GUTHRIE, Kathleen	18 septembre 2005
HOFFNER, Ingeborg A.C.R.L.	17 novembre 2004
HOPS, Miriam (épouse de Leighton Hops)	4 août 2005
KADIRGAMAR, Lakshman	12 août 2005
LIZANA-RODRIGUEZ, Isabel	24 juillet 2005
LUBIN, Carol (née RIEGELMAN)	26 juillet 2005
MARTINEZ DE RITUERTO, Margarita	11 janvier 2005
MATTHEWS, Blaire Edith	17 mars 2005
MORSE, Mildred	8 juillet 2005
MUNUNU DABANZA, Xavier	14 octobre 2005
MURRAY, John	25 octobre 2005
NORDAHL, Carmel (épouse de Ketil Nordahl)	17 juin 2005
NORSKY, Karel	17 août 2005
O'CONNELL, Olga Caroline	30 novembre 2004
PERRILLAT, Guy (époux de Marie-Louise Perrillat-Gheno)	6 février 2005
PORTA, Felice	7 août 2005
SABATER, Marcel	19 août 2005
SANCHEZ COLINA, Maria de los Angeles	16 juin 2005
SANTARELLI, Dolores	4 juillet 2005
SENE, Alioune (Ancien Ambassadeur et Représentant permanent du Sénégal, membre du Conseil d'Administration du BIT)	21 avril 2005
STRAYTON, Rex	12 mars 2005
TARRAGANO, Victoria	16 novembre 2004
TEYLOUNI-APETZ, Annie (épouse de Rafik Teylouni)	22 septembre 2005
TRAN, Dinh Hue	17 mai 2005
VASSEUR, Jean Florent Henri	17 septembre 2005
VERWILGHEN-CLAEYS, Francine	9 juillet 2005
WADHAWAN, Sahdev Kumar	28 novembre 2004
WOLLNER, Georges	12 septembre 2005

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