

Back to the Future!

Here we go again! Across the industrialized countries there are teacher shortages - just as there were over three decades ago. This dossier highlights the emerging crisis and its impact on schools - especially those in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Demographic and economic factors, the information revolution, government policies, failure to anticipate - these have all played a role in allowing the shortage to arrive upon us quite suddenly. Governments are scrambling to tackle the problem. Education Ministers will debate it when they meet at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) this April. The following articles describe how the problem emerged in several OECD countries - and suggest some solutions.

Developing countries need many more teachers

The Global Campaign for Quality Public Education for All is having an impact on decision-makers around the world. This April the Global Campaign of EI, national unions and our NGO partners will press political leaders to turn words into action. As the campaign succeeds the developing countries will need many, many more teachers. Yet the industrialized countries are now recruiting teachers from the countries of the South, confronting them with a major 'brain drain' problem. The teacher shortage is a global issue - and it is just beginning! ♦

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THE TEACHER SHORTAGE

- How to Get New Talent into Needy Classrooms



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By Robert Sikkes

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR:
 Robert Sikkes is a Dutch research journalist specialising in education. Formerly head of the education desk at ABOP, he has just returned to AOb as head of communications. In between he worked as a journalist on the daily newspaper de Volkskrant, as a free-lance reporter. In 2000 he wrote the polemic book: *The Fairy Tale of the Status Decline, Facts and Myths about Teachers for the Department of Education of the Netherlands*.

Teacher shortage is affecting education nearly everywhere in the industrialised world - from New Zealand to Canada and from the United States to Belgium.

This growing teacher shortage results from a combination of the ageing teacher force and the booming knowledge economy, which makes it difficult for education to compete in the tight labour market for quality people. During the coming decade large numbers of teachers will retire in OECD countries with nearly no one to take their places. Schools in disadvantaged areas (inner city or poor neighbourhoods) will be hit first and most severely. The quality of education is at risk. On a more optimistic note, there are people interested in making a career-switch to education. Taking advantage of this trend requires a new type of teacher training, with tailor-made courses for adults, especially for those with previous work experience. Such an approach would also help to diversify the teaching profession. One of the most promising solutions for solving the teacher shortage could be to convert these 'side-tracks' into 'high-roads' to teaching. An advantage of alternative teacher training is that most of the entrants to the courses already work and live in neighbourhoods where they are most needed. Today, in the poor neighbourhoods of western cities we need new 'talent-projects' to seek out adults, especially those from minority ethnic backgrounds with a talent for teaching.

The combination of ageing workforce and economic growth

Throughout the industrialised countries there are television campaigns for recruiting teachers: "Be a teacher, be a hero" (USA), "Teaching, every day different" (Netherlands), "Everybody remembers a good teacher" (England). Teacher shortage is affecting education around the world and it seems there is a worldwide teacher market: New York recruits in Austria and Chicago in Egypt, while German teachers fill

the vacancies in Holland. England recruits in Australia and New Zealand, but New Zealand is beginning to have problems of its own, and last year sent a special team to British universities to persuade graduates to come to teach at the 'most exciting school in the world',

complete with sunny beaches. The shortage is mostly analysed as the result of bad pay and declining status, but that does not tell the whole story.

1. Ageing

First there is an ageing of the teacher workforce. In the coming decade hundreds of thousands of teachers will retire in OECD countries. This demographic problem is not limited to the education sector - it affects the whole of society. According to the OECD, in the coming 25 years 25

AGEING OF THE TEACHER FORCE: WITH MORE THAN HALF 40+ SHORTAGE-RISKS GROW

Primary education	40-49	50+	Total 40+	Shortage
Austria	37%	13%	50%	none
Flanders (Belgium)	30	22	52%	moderate
Netherlands	38	14	52%	big
France	39	18	57%	none
England	42	17	59%	none
USA	37	22	59%	big
New Zealand	38	24	62%	moderate
Germany	47	32	79%	none

Secondary education	40-49	50+	Total 40+	Shortage
Austria	35%	11%	46%	none
England	43	17	60	big
USA	42	23	65	big
New Zealand	41	26	67	moderate
France	39	26	64	none
Netherlands	42	27	69	big
Flanders (Belgium)	40	33	73	moderate
Germany	49	34	83	none

Source: *OECD Education at a glance 1998*



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million people in the member countries will retire, while only 5 million will enter the labour market. Education - as the biggest employer of people with higher education - will have a hard time.

2. Salaries

The second influence *could* be the salaries that governments pay in the education sector. In the USA the severe gap between teachers and other employees with higher education seems a good explanation for the fact that one third of all new teachers leave the job within five years. This may not be the case in countries like Germany and France.

3. Economic growth

Industrialised societies are moving towards knowledge based economies. Companies have an unfulfilled hunger for personnel with higher education. Adding this factor to the impact of an ageing profession, it is clear that education has to compete in a very tight labour market for graduates. Indeed, all the countries with more than average growth have trouble finding teachers.

ECONOMIC GROWTH ACCELERATES TEACHER SHORTAGES

	Growth 95-99	Shortage	Growth prognoses 2000
Germany	1.5%	none	2.9%
France	2.2	none	3.7
Flandres (Belgium)	2.4	moderate	3.6
New Zealand	2.4	moderate	4.2
England	2.6	big	2.9
Netherlands	3.3	big	4.3
USA	3.8	big	4.9

Source: OESO Economic outlook 2000

4. The baby boom echo

In most countries birth rates are stable (England) or declining (France, Germany), which can ease the problems of teachers shortage. The USA and the Netherlands are confronted with the 'baby boom echo', an unpredicted and spectacular rise in birth rates. There are several reasons. Women have tended to start families later because of career aspirations. Increasing wealth also seems to encourage people to have more children. Due to the rapid rise in four-year old children, thousands of extra teachers are needed in both countries.

5. Class size reduction

During the last three decades education policies (such as increasing retention rates of secondary students) influenced demand on the education labour market. An additional factor in several states of the USA and in the Netherlands has been the implementation of class size reduction initiatives, adding to demand for primary teachers in already tight labour markets.

6. Negligence

Teachers worry about their status, but there is evidence of a gap - in their favour - between teachers' own perception of their status and the perception of the public. In the Netherlands, a survey in Spring 2000 showed that teachers *thought* the general public awarded them an average 4.9 rating on a 1 to 10 scale, a decline from ten years ago, when they *believed* public and parents gave them 6.7. The public *actually* gave them an 8.4 rating. If measured in terms of public opinion, there was no decline in status. There was negligence on the part of the governments, which fed teachers' perception of status-decline. In the eighties - when an economic crisis hit the industrialised world - budget restrictions on education were severe, and many teachers were fired. Already, at the beginning of the 1980s, specialists warned that the teaching force was ageing, leading to problems by the year 2000, but these warning were ignored. Even in 1991 the Dutch researcher Andries de Grip forecast a rapidly growing shortage to his national Department for Education, but, "they didn't believe me", he said. The same negligence could be found everywhere: in the UK, the USA, and France.

Teacher shortage hits ambitions to raise standards in the schools of deprived neighbourhoods

Teacher shortage does not affect all schools in the same way, but strikes firstly and most severely in under-privileged neighbourhoods. London, New York, Berlin and Rotterdam are hotspots of teacher shortage. The lack of qualified teachers leads to declining results. The daily newspaper *Trouw* in the Netherlands revealed that schools with many 'supply' (replacement) teachers have lower exam-results. *Education Week* writes in a dossier on teacher shortage that the declining position of the USA in the recent Third International Mathematics and Science Study - an international comparison of math scores - is no coincidence but a consequence of the shortage problem. The British educational researcher John Howson links the declining results on tests in secondary education in England directly to the teacher shortage. In every country struck by teacher shortage the pattern is the same. First inner city and poor neighbourhood schools have problems finding 'supply' teachers. When they are confronted with shortages, then try to fill the gaps with unqualified teachers. Next special and vocational schools with lower status will have problems finding teachers. For instance: in the city of Utrecht a gym-

BRITAIN RECRUITS TEACHERS FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Research at the University of North London showed that 40 percent of starting teachers wanted to leave the city in five years. So the city had to recruit new teachers continuously. Reasons were obvious: high costs of living, bad management and heavy workload. As soon as young teachers want to start a family, they leave the capital. This research also showed a positive angle: teachers who live in the city or are born there do not have the same urge to move to the countryside. The researchers therefore made the following recommendations:

- recruit people who are born in London or work there
- scout minority talent and support them financially to follow teacher training courses
- diversify the training courses: work/learn programs, part-time courses and make them tailor made; look for talent instead of diplomas and assess people who do not have formal qualifications
- support initiatives such as small-scale training courses at the Urban Learning Foundation.

TTA thinks that this last recommendation has a promising future, helping to attract not only more adults but also more minority teachers.

THE TEACHER SHORTAGE

– How to Get New Talent into Needy Classrooms

nasium (grammar school) with a largely white population can still choose among applicants, but comprehensive schools in deprived zones with multiracial populations are confronted with severe shortages. Teachers flee from the schools full of problems because now there are enough jobs close to their homes. This pattern frustrates or even kills the ambition to raise standards in inner city schools.

Twelve current recipes for solving the teacher-crisis

A variety of measures have been tried, not all of them have proven to be effective. An overview:

1. Tricks and treats

The first step, taken by schools with lack of personnel, is appointing unqualified teachers. As the shortage grows, that is not a solution in the long term.

2. Fly in foreigners

Secondly, most countries try to fly in foreign teachers. As the problem spreads and with the language differences - this approach will not result in a structural solution either.

3. Keep on teaching

OECD advises countries in general to try to persuade people to work longer and to cancel early retirement programs. In practice, with recent economic improvements people tend to retire earlier anyway. Education is a profession with a high burn out rate for older teachers - trying to keep teachers above 55 or 60 in front of the classroom will not be very successful.

4. Raising status

Much is said about the need to raise status. But how? Making baseballcaps with the text *I teach (USA)? Organising World Teachers' Day (Unesco and EI)?* The status of teachers is not that bad according to a book by the author of this article *The fairy tale of the status decline - facts and myths about teachers*. Teachers think that their status is low, but research in several countries tells us that parents and the public in general hold teachers in quite high esteem.

5. Image building

Image campaigns help, but only if they are embedded in a broader approach. The Dutch campaign *Teaching, every day different* did not raise the number of entrants into teacher training, because it was a general 'image campaign' and recruitment had to be done separately by each university.

6. Centralise recruitment

More effective is centralised recruitment through bodies

like Recruiting New Teachers (RNT, USA) and the Teacher Training Agency (TTA, England). The combination of campaigns, call centres, databases of people who requested information, direct mail, and organised 'taster' courses is necessary and only possible with professional organisations for recruiting teachers.

7. Higher salaries

Salary measures help of course, but governments plead that their budgets do not allow for spectacular increases.

8. Incentives for students

Incentives for students can also help. There are several initiatives. Eliminating college-fees for teacher training, cheap loans, scholarships, 'golden hellos' or training salaries.

9. Attractive first appointments

Organise attractive first appointments for new teachers. In most countries starting teachers only get an appointment as a 'supply' teacher or in a part-time job, filling in the holes in the school schedule. On a tight labour market this is not effective: graduates want to work and earn their living. In the Netherlands and Belgium thousands of new teachers quit because of partial and uncertain employment, switching to other sectors of the labour market. Belgium created a promising scheme: new teachers can get a full appointment in the 'supply-pool'. This approach is good for them and good for schools, which can count on a body of qualified 'supply' teachers.

10. Better facilities

Better working conditions are high on the list of unions and teachers. School buildings and facilities (lack of working places, access to computers or even telephones, administrative help) are not attractive if compared with the

THE NETHERLANDS: A NEW TALENT-PROJECT?

Recruitment in the Netherlands is a disaster. There is a general image-campaign of the Department for Education, but universities and polytechnics compete with each other instead of working together, and two new commercial firms are trying to recruit career-switchers. For people who want information about becoming a teacher, there is no general information point. If education wants to compete on the tight labour market, it should co-operate in one organisation like the British TTA or the RNT in the US. If the school boards in the cities want to secure quality education they have to recruit and train teachers in the cities themselves. In the late 1950s and 60s the sociologist F. van Heek started his talent-project in the north of Rotterdam to educate poor but gifted working-class children. This can be repeated in a new talent-project - attracting talented people from ethnic minorities into the classroom.



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offices where people with comparable education shape the knowledge-based economy.

11. Invest in retention

American analysts compare education with a leaking pool: schools are trying to pour in water, but it flowing away through a big hole in the bottom. Many new teachers leave the profession because they do not get support in their schools during the first difficult years. In the inner city schools of the USA, half of newly appointed teachers quit within five years. California started a successful *New Teacher Program* with coaching for new teachers, summer courses, and workshops - also including budget allocations for supply teachers to replace teachers on courses.

12. Convert 'side-tracks' to 'high-roads'

Alternative teacher training is spreading and seems an effective way to attract more people into teaching, with

several other advantages. As the massive response to two small-scale programs has shown in the Netherlands, a lot of people -after some years of working in dull offices - want to switch to education. Teacher training had previously focused only on students of 19 to 25 years old. Everywhere - in England, the USA, Flanders and Netherlands - there are initiatives to start special programs for adults. They should be tailor-made, short and with financial support for those who want to switch to teaching. Such alternative 'side-tracks' should be converted into 'high-roads' to education, especially for secondary teachers. In the USA alternative routes are growing, in 1998 about 24,000 people were trained in these courses, in 1999 this figure is five times higher: 125,000. An advantage is that these programs have relatively open access. In the USA one third of the entrants into alternative programs come from ethnic minorities. ♦

Supply and Demand in Canada: Trends, Factors and Surveys Spell Concern

The teacher supply and demand situation in Canada is exacerbated by retirements, teacher burnout, a reduction in school support services, deteriorating working conditions and the negative public perception of the teaching profession generated by governments with confrontationist agendas.

If the evidence available is even remotely correct, there will be considerable competition for qualified teachers in North America and in other parts of the world for the next several years. As Canada braces itself for the exodus of thousands of teachers who are expected to retire in the next few years (45 per cent of the current teaching force by 2008), territorial and provincial governments and school boards have done little to address the issue in a positive fashion.

Planning and preparation are essential in attempting to avert, or at least to minimize, potential teacher shortages. The Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) hopes that its initiatives in this regard will provide the necessary public focus on the issue and will lead to measures designed to rectify the situation.

Last October, CTF put the issue of teacher supply and demand squarely at centre stage of discussions at a conference it sponsored in Ottawa, Canada. Some 160 participants from territorial and provincial Member organizations converged in the nation's capital and heard special guest speakers and colleagues share data and information on this issue. Speakers included a well-known Canadian pollster and colleagues from the NEA of the US and the NUT in the UK, with representatives from several Canadian universities as well as teacher organizations. The CTF conference was the ideal backdrop for the release of

the results of a major survey of Canadian school boards conducted in the summer of 2000. The survey revealed that more than two-thirds of Canadian school boards expect to have difficulty hiring teachers next year. It also indicated that 51 per cent of school boards have found it increasingly difficult over the past four years to attract qualified candidates for full-time teaching positions, especially in rural areas. When asked to name the top three factors which will contribute to teacher shortages in the next five years, 78 per cent of school boards rated teacher retirement as first, 70 per cent cited an increased number of students with special needs and 58 per cent said fewer graduates. Of the boards surveyed, 42 per cent cited a high turnover of beginning teachers as a contributing factor to shortage.

CTF has called on provincial and territorial governments to increase the number of spaces in teacher training institutions and develop support programs. It is also asking governments and school boards to:

- work to improve the conditions under which teachers teach and children learn;
- maintain supportive programs, resources and competitive remuneration packages;
- utilize the pool of substitute and part-time teachers to fill full-time positions;
- provide greater opportunity for in-service training; and
- increase investment in public education and provision of education resources.

For more information on the survey and the supply and demand situation in Canada, visit our website at www.ctf-fce.ca.

John Stapfe
Director of Economic Services
Canadian Teachers' Federation

Schools Face a Serious Shortfall in Teacher Supply



© Photonews

About half of Australia's teachers are now 45 or older and over the next decade most will retire. An increase in resignations is also likely, yet in some states teacher education institutions cannot even meet current underlying demand. These facts were disguised by the surpluses of the 1990s. But now shortfalls are apparent nationally and it is becoming harder to fill casual, short-term and other positions. Students and inappropriately qualified people are being engaged while teachers are denied leave because replacements cannot be found. The tightness of the labor market will intensify. Universities will not be able to respond to the increased demand. University administrations, not education faculties, determine the broad quotas for teacher education intakes and education is usually low in priority and power.

When major changes were needed in teacher education numbers in the past, there was national leadership. Responding to and anticipating demand, the Federal Government ensured rapid expansion from fewer than 20,000 teacher trainees in the early 1960s to a peak of about 65,000 in the late 1970s. By the late 1980s they had dropped to about 55,000, and shortfalls then became apparent, especially in specialisations such as mathematics and science. Some enrolment growth occurred in the early 1990s, to about 60,000, taking effect as the recession-driven teacher surpluses of the early to mid-1990s emerged. But after restructuring of higher education institutions, and the amalgamation of colleges with universities and institutes of technology, numbers dropped by the late 1990s to around 40,000.

However, recent responses to the teacher problem from both the Federal Department of Education and Training (DETYA) and the Council of State Education Ministers have been quite inadequate. The data used is often inaccurate, inappropriate or anomalous. Some official statistics are plain wrong. As a basis for policy and strategy, a key study by the Ministers' Council makes nation-wide generalisations that reductions in initial teacher education were not too large and that, anyway, intakes were increasing. This without recognising that the magnitude of the cuts varied markedly between the states, and between primary and secondary, or with any assessment of whether, even nationally, current numbers were sufficient to meet underlying demand. To meet any emerging shortfalls the council paper argues that increased enrolments in graduate programs could easily provide the numbers required. This shows a lack of understanding of how intakes in initial teacher education are usually determined. In particular, many of the faculties of education with graduate programs are not in a position to increase enrolments substantially at short notice. In fact, some are subject to ongoing pressure from university administrations to cut numbers.

Similarly, this study expresses misplaced confidence that publicity campaigns encouraging school leavers and others to enter initial teacher education can make a difference. Such campaigns can certainly improve the quality and commitment of teacher education students, and might increase the proportion of students in specialisations with shortfalls, but they have little effect on the numbers commencing courses. That requires commitment from the universities' central administrations and that, in turn, requires national leadership with clear support from school authorities.

In November 2000, the Federal Government responded at last to a March 1998 Senate inquiry into the status of the teaching profession, and the Senate's report, entitled: *A Class Act*. The senators devoted a chapter of the report to teacher supply and demand, recommending that detailed information on teacher supply and demand be part of the annual National Report on Schooling. The report also recommended the Federal Government introduce scholarships for university graduates to undertake teacher education courses, and that the student loan program be changed because of the disincentive to potential mathematics and science teachers. In its response, the Government did not refer to the supply and demand analysis. On most recommendations, it merely stated the matters were primarily the province of the states and territories and non-government school authorities. However, the Government did refer to the ministerial council and its recently established task force to "inquire into the skills base and qualifications of (graduating) teachers ... to establish whether the needs of employers are being met currently and for the future". The State Ministers taskforce will continue the work on teacher supply and demand, and has the opportunity to collaborate with stakeholders, including the teacher unions. All stakeholders have an interest in getting the best possible projections and properly basing policies and strategies on the findings. This is essential for quality schooling and the efficient use of resources in the future. It is also essential that the Federal Government provide national leadership rather than shirking its responsibilities by taking the position that the issue is "primarily a matter for teacher employers in the states and territories". ♦

Barbara Preston is an educational research consultant who has prepared teacher supply projections for the Australian Council of Deans of Education. For information about sources for this article contact prestonb@ozemail.com.au

UPDATE

In the Australian state of Victoria, the release of first-round tertiary offers for 2001 revealed a 25% increase in the number of students wishing to study teaching. This dramatic turnaround comes just months after the government struck deals on pay and conditions with teachers union, increasing wages by up to 17% over the next three years.

Recruiting

In the United Kingdom, by the year 2006 about half the teaching profession will be over 50. Schools will need to recruit 200,000 teachers over the next decade. Demand for teachers varies widely from region to region and across curriculum disciplines, but there are several geographic and subject areas that consistently report a high need for qualified teachers.

Recruitment incentives attract new teachers

A growing number of people are ditching their careers to become teachers following the introduction of a number of recruitment incentives, according to the British Teacher Training Agency. Training salaries, which pay people £13,000 to learn on the job, are proving so popular that demand is outstripping the supply of available places. New £6,000 bursaries for those embarking on teacher training, as well as the £4,000 "golden hellos" for teachers in "shortage subjects" such as maths, have also helped to bolster numbers. A new advertising campaign uses the slogan "Those Who Can, Teach" and concentrates on telling people there are many reasons to go into teaching apart from the traditional vocational ones, including increased pay, prospects and responsibility.

From: © THE TIMES EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT, 31/10/2000, www.tes.co.uk

The Teaching Awards

According to the adverts, nobody forgets a good teacher. The question facing the judges in the Teaching Awards each year is how to identify one. An even more pressing issue is how to pick the "best" teachers, first in each region, and then in the whole country. Last year's winners made the sort of disarming speeches that you would expect from seasoned pros who understand what teaching is really about. They knew very well that they were members of a team, partly dependent on the quality of its members and on the children they taught, often stating that some of their colleagues were just as meritorious as them. This year's winners have also been impressive, and equally modest about what they do.



The demands on today's teachers are huge. In Victorian times pupils only attended school briefly, or not at all. Most were gone before their teen years. In former times those children entered work, now adults continue on in school. To that can be added the many demands from government, parents, employers and society at large. Some of these are in the form of national targets for 11, 14, 16 or 18 year olds. Others are for personal qualities that school leavers need to have. Look at any employer's recruiting literature and before long these requirements are spelled out clearly: willingness to learn, persistence, maturity, sociability, sensitivity, determination, punctuality, reliability, teamwork, imagination, initiative. Superhumans welcome; the rest please form an orderly queue!

By the year 2006 about half the teaching profession will be over 50. We shall need to recruit 200,000 teachers over the next decade. Last year's winners have already shown that they are not only standard bearers, indicators of what is best, but also fine ambassadors for the profession.

From: © The Guardian, education unlimited, Tuesday October 31, 2000 ◆

Norma Machell, BT's teacher of the year 1999 with British Prime Minister Tony Blair

The Shortage Affects School Secretaries too - from the AFT



It sounds like something out of a Dilbert comic strip: A secretary has so much work that she's basically doing the job of two people. What does her employer do? Give her a second computer system.



Unfortunately, this really happened to an AFT member, which makes it a lot less amusing. Office employees represented by the AFT around the country certainly are not laughing about the crushing workloads--and the accompanying job-related stress--they face. An online survey the AFT has been conducting among secretarial-clerical employees in school districts as well as colleges confirms both how common the problem of excessive workload is and how unhappy many office employees are about their jobs.

Answers to the survey's very first question--"Are unrealistic or excessive workloads an issue of concern in your school district/college?"--show the extent of the problem: 83% say yes. What's more, 94% of elementary school secretaries say unreasonable workloads are "widespread throughout the district."

Among the other survey highlights:

- 69% say they spend at least 30 minutes per day completing work outside their regularly scheduled hours;
- 22% frequently or usually take work home.
- Only 5% of them always get paid for this overtime.
- 18%--rising to 44% for elementary school employees--are never able to take a break.

Given a chance to add their own comments to the survey, the complaints practically jump off the page. Here are just a few:

- I hate to come to work and start feeling sick to my stomach when I am at work.
- I cannot get the job done that I was hired to do.
- I take the job home with me, sometimes only mentally, other times physically.
- I am so busy that I do not have time to even stand and stretch as I should. I only use the restroom two times a day and have bladder and kidney infections as a result.

When asked to select among a list of factors contributing to work overload, respondents overwhelmingly pick three: increased paperwork, improper staffing and reduced staffing. Clearly, the final two are related; no one

who answered the survey complimented their employer on hiring lots of new office employees. The other significant finding is how common many of the complaints are across the board, whether in higher education or K-12, central office or school site, elementary or secondary school.

It could get worse

The survey also shows that many office employees regularly work without taking their allotted breaks or collecting overtime pay for extra hours. Comp time is sometimes offered, but if someone can't take time off because of excessive workloads, comp time is not helpful, says Ruby Newbold, of Detroit and an AFT vice president. The common challenges office employees face in many districts--Cincinnati and Detroit, among them--are striking. In those districts, as well as many others around the country, new school systems have pushed extensive decentralization. For office employees, that has meant a shift of duties from the central office to individual schools--with no corresponding increase in staffing. *"The workload has almost tripled or quadrupled,"* says Newbold. *"They don't have a moment to breathe."*

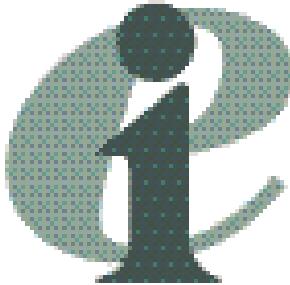
The same thing has happened in Cincinnati, where secretaries have had to take on new duties related to purchasing and student tracking. Betty Grawe, president of the office personnel local, explains what that means: Secretaries have essentially become business managers--without receiving additional training or pay. *"Even some of our best people, who have been in the district for years and are great employees, are struggling,"* Grawe says. *"That worries me."*

Other duties as assigned

The situation is no better for higher education office employees. At Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College Joetta Ford, a union member who manages the bookstore and does "other duties as assigned", says she and her colleagues have been denied vacations because they simply don't have enough staff. At one point, Ford says, she worked in a such a high-stress office that the majority of the employees were on anti-depressant medication.

Across every job category, increased stress--cited by 85% of respondents--is by far the No. 1 problem office employees have experienced due to workload problems. ♦

THE UNITED STATES
In the United States, the scarcity of qualified teachers, especially in central city public schools and small towns, has led to a situation in which the nation's most challenging classrooms get the least qualified teachers. The website launched by the US National Teacher Recruitment Clearinghouse contains the latest useful and topical information on a wide range of issues related to teacher recruitment and retention policies and practices. This information can be found throughout the four content sections: "All About Teaching," "How to Find a Job," "How to Become a Teacher," and "How to Find and Keep Teachers."
<http://www.recruitingteachers.org/>



The Education Sector

Many of us take much for granted when it comes to trade union rights. The right to freedom of association, collective bargaining, freedom from forced and bonded labour are all rights, that although guaranteed in international conventions, are still violated in many countries of the world for education personnel.

In many countries where teachers have the status of public servants the right to collective bargaining is still severely curtailed. In Francophone Africa, union rights in the education sector are limited because of this factor despite ILO rulings that teachers should have full unionisation rights including the right to strike.

Where collective bargaining rights have been assured in law, education unions have seen the introduction of new legislation to curtail such rights. While New Zealand went furthest in this direction, other governments introduced elements of the New Zealand experiment through legislation. In Ontario, Canada the School Boards and Teachers Collective Negotiations Act of 1975 gave teachers the right to bargain all matters relating to the teachers' terms and conditions of employment, including class size and preparation time. The right to strike was also established with the exception that principals and vice-principals who were included in the bargaining unit were required to remain on duty during strikes and lockouts. The Education Quality Improvement Act (EQIA) of 1997 repealed the 1975 Act and teachers were made subject to the general labour relations legislation as modified by the EQIA. Principals and vice-principals were removed from teacher bargaining units and excluded from coverage under the labour relations act. Class size and preparation time were removed from collective bargaining and became the prerogative of the government.

The Turkish Cypriot Teachers' Union criticised the economic policy and budget available for education. The result was a raid on their offices, confiscation of equipment and harassment and intimidation of

union leaders. In Turkey the leadership of EgitimSen continues to be persecuted by means of arrest, suspension, transfer and dismissal.

Despite ILO decisions requiring the Government of Peru to reinstate trade union licences, the government continued to deny this right. With a new government in place, demands by trade unions may now have an opportunity to regain lost ground.

In Djibouti and in Ethiopia violations of trade union rights continue. Persecution of elected trade union officials, transfers to the most remote corners of the country, dismissal and even jail sentences have been imposed on those who believe exercising their rights to unionise.

Cambodian teachers, currently on strike to increase their salaries from \$30 per month, are faced with a Ministry that refuses to negotiate and is considering a plan to temporarily fill striking teacher's positions with officials from the Ministry of Education. The striking teachers are subject to harassment and intimidation from police and from education authorities.

The list could continue. The need for continued vigilance and solidarity in defence of trade union rights is obvious. We have learned some lessons from the attacks of the last two decades. If we are to represent our members effectively we must;

- Strengthen our organisations;
- Broaden our membership base;
- Provide members with accurate information that links what is happening in other sectors and its impact on education personnel;
- Ensure that members participate actively in the union and know that they can influence the decisions taken;
- Present a clear vision of what is important and the kind of society we believe is possible;
- Initiate change and engage in debate with the public;
- Honestly assess the effectiveness of our actions, our strengths and weaknesses;
- Shape change through partnerships with like-minded groups.♦

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Sheena Hanley
Deputy General Secretary



Legalised but Crippled Teacher Unions

EI EXECUTIVE BOARD'S RESOLUTION ON COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RIGHTS IN SOUTH KOREA

Noting and supporting strongly the just struggle to further teachers' rights, trade union rights and human rights, and to develop democracy, social justice and social cohesion in Korea,

The EI Executive Board urges the Government of South Korea to respect the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Minister of Education and CHUNGYO signed on 3 July 2000.

Further the Executive Board urgently requests the South Korean Government;

- to immediately release from detention the two CHUNGYO leaders Kim Yeun Hyung, Chief Vice-President and Cho Hee Joo, Chief of Seoul branch;
- to fully respect the ILO Declaration of Fundamental Principles of Rights at Work;
- to improve the collective bargaining processes to enable CHUNGYO to exercise the basic trade union right to bargain collectively on behalf of its members.

October 2000



Hyun-joon Kim
Vice-President Chunkyojo

After ten years of struggle, the National Assembly of Korea legally recognised Chunkyojo (Korean Teachers and Educational Workers' Union) in July 1999 with the passage of the 'Act on the Establishment and Operation of Trade Unions for Teachers'.

When the Act was initially discussed at the Tripartite Commission in late 1998, Chunkyojo demanded that the basic labour rights of teachers should be guaranteed by revising the existing Trade Union and Labour Relations Adjustment Act, which had excluded the unionisation of teachers. The government insisted that a special law should regulate the labour rights of teachers, because the status of teachers as public servants was different from that of ordinary workers. Thus was born the special legislation.

Dishonour of the state

The struggle was not over. Teachers' rights have come to be defined, regulated, and restricted by this special Act. It limits the organisation of teachers' unions and the scope of collective bargaining. It prohibits any industrial action or political activity by a teacher' union. The Act attempts to weaken and incapacitate the newly recognised organisations. Concerns over the limitations embedded in the Act became a sad reality in the face of the historically unstable relationship between teacher unions and the Ministry of Education (MOE).

The first-ever collective bargaining negotiations between the teachers unions and the MOE began in July 1999 shortly after the registration of the unions. The issue of the structure and process of negotiation became the first barrier. The two sides agreed to adopt a two-tier system of titular sessions and working-level sessions. The system, however, ground to a standstill due to the government's reluctance to hold the second titular session where the attendance of the Minister of Education is mandatory. In a period of three months, the Ministry of Education failed to turn up to 10 titular sessions requested by the unions. As a result, bargaining halted for three months from December 1999 until the new Education Minister took office in February 2000.

Bending to keep from breaking

The second obstacle was the scope of collective bargaining. Chunkyojo proposed some 500 issues for collective agreement. The government, however, rejected these issues as inappropriate agenda items for collective agreement, claiming that issues -- such as, education budget, personnel policies for teachers, class and school



size -- pertained to education policies that were exclusively the prerogative of the government. The historic negotiations came to a critical crossroads: a choice had to be made between a breakdown or a breakthrough in the bargaining process. Chunkyojo decided to set aside many of the initial issues and demands to avoid abandoning the negotiations. The subsequent discussions were limited to some 40 items, resulting in the conclusion of a collective agreement in July 2000, one year after the formal recognition.

False promises

The last and decisive barrier in the relations between the government and the newly recognised teachers' union came in the implementation stage. The Ministry of Planning and Budget, simply rejected the product of collective bargaining by disregarding the agreement in formulating and finalising the government budget. It asserted that it could not accommodate or honour the agreement, as the budgetary principles and policy direction set by the government were non-negotiable.

Thus, the first-ever collective agreement between the teachers unions and the government turned out to be not worth the paper it was written on. Chunkyojo members were enraged by the government's unfaithful and cynical attitude. Again teachers came out in struggle against the government. On September 22, 2000, Chunkyojo central executive board occupied the office of the ruling party for a sit-in strike for 2 weeks. Chunkyojo also held an emergency National Congress to discuss and adopt a campaign plan. A strong resolution against the government was adopted. The emergency Congress led to consecutive rallies in front of the Ministry of Education. The police detained hundreds of teachers as well as many union leaders.

While teacher unions are now recognised by the law, they are constrained and denied their basic rights (the right to bargain and the right to avail themselves of the strength of collective action). This law, and others like it, only reflect the government's lack of respect for the principle of collective bargaining. There is, for Chunkyojo, a long way to go before securing the fundamental labour rights of teachers and their unions. ♦



Teacher Organizations and the Development and Preservation of the Rights of Teachers

The Caribbean trade union movement has its roots in the latter nineteenth century, when people emancipated from two centuries of pre-industrial slavery sought to unite to preserve their newly won rights and to assert their dignity as a people.

As early as the 1860's, the emancipated people of Jamaica fought a reluctant plantocracy to broaden their representational rights. A rebellion in the town of Morant Bay led to a total loss of representational rights in 1866, and brought most of the English-speaking territories of the Caribbean, except Barbados, under the direct rule of British governors.

The loss of political representation provided the basis around which many groups united. Incipient teacher organisations like the Jamaica Union of Teachers (JUT) and Barbados Union of Teachers (BUT) emerged. During the next four decades, many of the lamentable legacies of the slave societies were corrected.

The latter part of the nineteenth century witnessed the formation of friendly and benevolent societies. These were the first real working class associations to provide a forum for representation of the various views of a people who would otherwise not have a voice in the Legislative Councils. These friendly societies encouraged thrift, self-help, and emphasised a collective approach to solving common problems.

Trail blazers

In 1884, elementary school teachers formed the Jamaica Union of Teachers (JUT). This marked the emergence of professional organisations. The JUT became the focal point for struggle against colonialism, including campaigning in defence of teachers' rights against school management boards and methods of payment to teachers.

Teachers organisations formed in this period also functioned as a training school for many aspiring teacher-politicians. It is this particular aspect of Caribbean Unions which differentiates them from those elsewhere in the world.

The teachers constituted the single most coherent group of workers. They had access to education and in many instances, were recipient of tertiary level education in Britain or elsewhere. Much of the debates on the shortcomings of the colonial system were initiated within the teachers' organisations, and they often were part of the colonial legislatures. As forerunners, teachers' organisations often provided leadership in the

growing union movement.

Trade unionism was propelled forward in the 1930's with the continuous eruption of strikes and violence. Beginning with a strike at a cooling station in Castries, St. Lucia, labour unrest ignited protests throughout the region where strikes were still illegal. The labour movement leadership included inspiring individuals like Arthur Cipriana (Trinidad), Grantley Adams (Barbados) and Hubert Nathaniel Crichton (Guyana). By the end of the labour uprisings, a Royal Commission ceded and recommended protection of trade unions from actions for damages during strikes; establishment of departments of labour; improvements in education; and self-government based on Universal Adult Suffrage. By the 1940's, all territories had registered trade unions.

A perfect union

The strength of the teachers' unionism lies in the fact that teachers' unions became forums for discussion of political and national issues.

In an emerging society where education is seen as a means of social improvements, this group of professionals used the national forum to fight for social change and against the injustices of deficient colonial order. Teachers are also at the forefront of political organisations.

In all territories, since the establishment of Universal Adult Suffrage, teachers have been both organisers within political parties and elected public officials at the local, municipality, and national levels.

Teachers in the Caribbean interface with the citizens at all levels and because of the influence they wield in community organisations, service clubs and the church (which had taken the lead in the development of public education), politicians have sought to consult with, and conciliate, rather than take an antagonistic posture.

The modern political parties had their genesis in trade unionism. The first party leaders were trade unionists. Political parties owe their substantive support to trade unions. The trade union movement in the Caribbean is very assertive and has managed to get political representation at the highest levels. Many of the rights won have been preserved through vigilance as well as through assistance from regional and international agencies.

The teachers of the Caribbean have managed to not only maintain their own rights but also in agitating for broader human and individual rights, have influenced the quality of civil laws in respective territories. ♦



Mr Patrick Smith
JTA's Liaison Officer
on behalf of CUT

Teachers' Rights in French-Speaking Africa

It is not possible to address the issue of teachers' rights in Africa without first recognising that the Constitutions of African States contain the right to education as a sovereign prerogative.

The relevant and authoritative ILO conventions and the international community's recommendation on the status of teachers must also be taken into account. These issues do not exist in a vacuum; the overall human rights situation is inseparable from educational issues, political development and the sovereign rights of governments.

During the early years of independence, the social and professional rights of African teachers to such benefits as welfare coverage, relatively substantial and regular salaries, appropriate initial and continuing training, and the right to join trade unions were generally respected. It was also a time in the field of education when structural and pedagogical harmony served the socio-political objective of offering the same quality education to all school-age children in a given country. The fact that the first generation of African Heads of State cherished a clear vision for development in their respective countries had an obvious and positive impact.

From 1980-1990, in French-speaking Africa particularly, dominant single party state structures coincided with the climax of a grim economic and financial crisis that had a crippling impact on social development. African educational 'systems' are still paying the price.

Marginalisation

In order to tackle the mounting problems and deal with the obligatory repayment of debt at the same time, African states are forced to adopt draconian measures. Accordingly, with the active collusion of the IMF and the World Bank, the education sector has begun to see the first con-

tingents of teachers experiencing an officially precarious status (e.g. temporary teachers, volunteers, and the Raccrochés*). They share a single common denominator, irrespective of which country they came from,

the legal subjection to a harrowing socio-professional situation in comparison to that of their older colleagues, the Décrochés*. As a matter of policy new teachers are sent to out-of-the-way villages where they receive their whole salary in edible goods from pupils' parents; sometimes, like piece-workers, they receive no pay at all during the holidays.

The group of 'Raccrochés' teachers in Côte-d'Ivoire was formed back in 1991, and accounts for 20.63% of the 38,760 serving teachers. They are distinguished from the 'Décrochés' teachers by ill-focused vocational training and a lower starting salary (about 26% lower), but they enjoy all the other benefits given to employees who, like them, are civil servants. A similar situation afflicts over 1500 teachers in Gabon where expatriate teachers are exempt from having to acquire the necessary professional qualification, and have no trade union rights or freedom of association.

In the lead for loosing out...

In Senegal, a leader in reducing the conditions for teachers, there are 900 temporary teachers with a pay rate of USD 2 an hour for 20 hours a week, 5550 volunteers at a pay rate of USD 70 a month, and 1200 contractual teachers only paid USD 110 a month. These teachers received only sketchy training, and have neither trade union rights nor freedom of association, despite the fact that they accounted for 27.09% of the country's 28,239 teachers. In spite of initial agreements between the State and the teachers' trade union coalition in 1996 and 1997 to put a stop to the illegal, but common practice, nothing has changed.

In Mali, a combined total of 4161 education volunteers and temporary teachers are employed under fixed-term contracts governed by the Labour Code. They can be dismissed without notice or compensation, their haphazard training lasts no longer than 45 days to justify their headline salaries. EI affiliate SNEC demands that teachers to be given civil servant status.

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Propaganda

Recently, the new Head of State in Djibouti publicly described teachers as mercenaries, and promised to personally bring them under control. This is a reaction to the teachers' union's unenthusiastic position on the government's policy of citizens' bondage. In this particular case, no words can adequately sum up the moral and physical persecution from the State to which they are subjected daily.

The proliferation of precarious conditions of employment for teachers that is now the standard in the majority of African countries, is the denial of human dignity. The underlying excuse that it is a way of identifying efficiency and equality is a slap in the face for basic human rights and common sense. Even if the reason for such policies are a desire to quickly achieve the objectives of the 1991 Jomtien Conference, it is a paradox. According to the statistics published by the World Bank, countries that have most energetically embraced the objectives are not the countries that have made the most progress at achieving universal primary education or reducing illiteracy. Rather it reflects a logic involving the destruction of the public quality education services, with a view that it will be abandoned to the law of the market like any ordinary service.

A simpler truth

Illiteracy rates declined between 1980 and 1998 as follows: in Senegal: **-14.5%** (79% in 1980 to 64.5% in 1998); in Burkina Faso: **-11.5%** (89% in 1980 to 77.5% in 1998); in Niger: **-02.5%** (88% in 1980 to 85.5% in 1998); in Chad: **-23%** (83% in 1980 to 60% in 1998); in Côte-d'Ivoire: **-21%** (76.5% in 1980 to 55.5% in 1998); and in Mali: **-25%** (86.5% in 1980 to 61.5% in 1998). In none of the above countries did the average annual fall exceed **1.40%**. This confirms that the use of teachers on precarious conditions of employment simply fosters an illusion of short-term financial saving, and the large-scale promotion by States of indignity and poverty. The 'success story' of which certain 'experts' in the field speak is purely theoretical. Clear evidence of this emerged in April 2000 when Education for All released its eval-

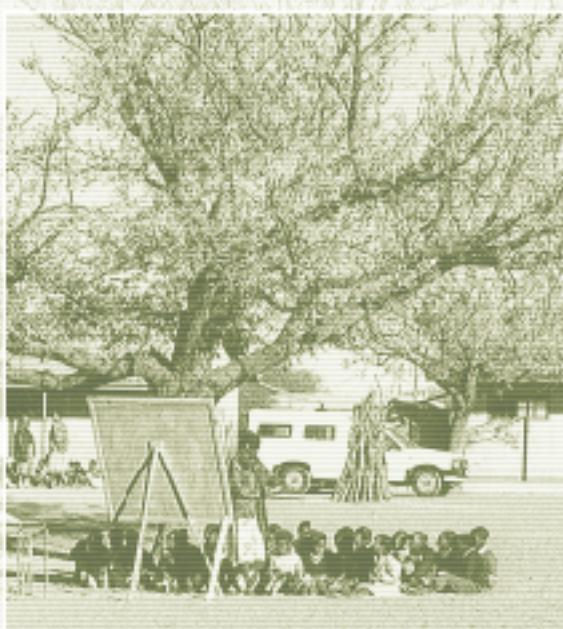
uation of progress of education in African countries over the past ten years.

More seriously, the question of respect for teachers' professional rights in Africa goes further than the specific cases of teachers with precarious conditions of employment. In several countries like the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Djibouti, even teachers who are thought to enjoy statutory protection are subjected to ignominious and humiliating treatment: this includes salaries not paid for months on end, obstructions placed in the way of them exercising their trade union rights and freedoms, arbitrary postings, and an absence of social protection. In some extreme cases, for example in Gabon in 1992 and in Ethiopia in 1997, trade union activists and leaders have been murdered with impunity.

Contributing to change

That is why, if we are to adopt an optimistic stance, greater compliance with teachers' professional rights and basic human rights, and the necessary democratisation that is associated with it, must be placed on the agenda of urgent commitments that the international community demands from Africa. This improved compliance should embrace a constant concern not to be subservient to the financial and geo-strategic interests of international financial institutions, multinational companies and the big powers. As it has been universally proved, teachers' conditions influence the quality of school education, which in turn has a powerful impact on the progress of nations and of peoples.

However, teachers and their organisations must first undertake to change their lives by making communities aware of their roles and their cause by urging States to respect them. As much use as possible should also be made of inter-union co-operation between the north and the south to stem the flow of repeated, gratuitous breaches of teachers' rights in Africa. Indeed we cannot ignore the fact that the impelling decisions on national policies that have a profound influence on attitudes are to be found outside such co-operation.♦



Samuel Ngoua Goua
Regional Co-ordinator, EI

* Raccrochés are teachers hired after a 1991 decree by the Government of Côte-d'Ivoire lowering the pay and training levels of teachers. Décrochés are the teachers hired prior to the 1991 decree. This lower status for teachers is now a common practice throughout Africa.

ILO Supervisory Mechanisms

All workers everywhere want decent working conditions. Perfection may not be of this world, but the International Labour Standards nonetheless provide tools with which it is possible to make significant improvements.

Although Conventions should ideally be ratified as widely as possible, ratification itself does not necessarily mean application. In this respect, trade unions have a key role to play in ensuring that application becomes a reality.

There are a number of safeguards that are available to trade unions to ensure that the provisions of Conventions are reflected not only in their national law, but also in practice:

- reports on ratified Conventions (Article 22 of the Constitution);
- reports on non-ratified Conventions (Article 19 of the Constitution);
- representations of non-observance (Article 24 of the Constitution);

CORE CONVENTIONS

Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention- No. 87: Ensures the right of all workers and employers to form and join organisations of their own choosing without prior authorisation.

Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention -No. 98: Protects against anti-union discrimination and for measures to promote and encourage collective bargaining.

Forced Labour Convention - No. 29 and Abolition of Forced Labour Convention -No. 105:

Prohibit the use of any form of forced or compulsory labour in all its forms.

Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention - No. 111:

Calls for eliminating discrimination in access to employment, training and working conditions.

Equal Remuneration Convention -No. 100: Calls for equal pay for men and women for work of equal value.

Minimum Age Convention - No. 138: Establishes a number of minimum ages depending on the type of employment or work.

Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention - No. 182: Calls for "immediate and effective measures to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency."

PRIORITY CONVENTIONS

Tripartite Consultation -International Labour Standards- No.144: Provides for effective consultation between the representatives of the government, of employers and of workers on international labour standards.

The Labour Inspection Convention -No. 81 and The Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention - No. 129: Oblige the maintenance of a system of labour inspection.

The Employment Policy Convention - No. 122: Member states will pursue, in consultation with employers and workers, an active policy of full employment. This is an idea quite distinct from one that expects employment to flow automatically from economic growth.

- complaints (Article 26 of the Constitution);
- Complaints to the Committee on Freedom of Association.

Reports on ratified Conventions

First and foremost, under Article 22 of the ILO Constitution, governments are under an obligation to report on Conventions that they have ratified. Core Conventions and promotional Conventions are reported on biennially. These reports are drawn up with the help of a questionnaire prepared by the Governing Body, and must be received by the organisation every year between 1 June and 1 September. The complete list of years for which reports are due is available from the Bureau for Workers' Affairs. This year reports on core Conventions will focus on Conventions No 81, 98, 105, 111, 144 and 182. In 2002 it will be the turn of Conventions No. 29, 87, 100, 122, 129 and 138. The cycle continues in the following years. Although, as their name suggests, core Conventions are very important, the Workers' Group consistently emphasises that all Conventions deserve the attention of the trade unions as they contain protection for working people.

In the case of countries that have ratified Convention No. 144 on tripartite consultation, there is an obligation on the part of governments to consult employers' and workers' organisations. Even in countries that have not ratified Convention No. 144, governments are obliged under to Article 23(2) of the ILO Constitution to copy their comments to representative trade unions. From the point of view of workers, all trade unions should make it their duty to forward their comments to the International Labour Office so that we have an accurate picture of what is happening. If no comments are received, only those sent in by governments will characterise the situation in a given country.

A committee of independent experts studies these comments, which analyses them from a legal standpoint. These analyses are then published in the Report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations. This is then distributed to governments, employers' and workers' organisations of ILO Member States. The Conference Committee of the Application of Standards studies the report every year during the International Labour Conference in May. Every year in its general remarks, Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations deplores the paucity of comments received from trade unions. This is a very important stage in the hierarchy of resources placed at the disposal of trade unions as it frequently acts as a barrier to even more serious breaches. It is clear that governments do not normally enjoy being referred to in the committee's report, and publicity of this kind is usually enough to correct the situation.



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Reports on non-ratified Conventions

Each year, the Governing Body decides on an issue (a Convention or a Recommendation, as the case may be) that has been dealt with in reports by Member States that have not ratified the Convention in question. In this area of the monitoring system, too, the trade unions have an important role to play by sending in their own comments. On the basis of these reports, the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations draws up a general report that is also discussed by the Conference Committee on the Application of Standards at the annual conference. The outcome of these discussions is extremely important when determining the ILO's programme of activities, and impacts the possible adoption of new standards. Moreover, it makes it possible to assess the instruments' effectiveness and current value. It also gives governments an opportunity to review their policies and implement other measures in fields of key importance and, where appropriate, to carry out further ratifications.

Representations of non-observance

Where more serious breaches take place, trade unions can make representations under Article 24 of the Constitution. A representation is a special procedure that is governed by strict criteria of admissibility. It must:

- Be communicated to the ILO in writing
- Come from a professional organisation of employers or workers
- Refer expressly to Article 24 of the Constitution;
- Concern a Member State of the ILO
- Deal with a Convention that the Member in question has ratified
- Indicate the area in which the Member State has not effectively applied this Convention within the limits of its jurisdiction.

If the admissibility criteria are met, a tripartite committee appointed by the Governing Body examines the representation. This committee reports directly to the Governing Body with its formulated conclusions and recommendations. The government in question is then invited, to ensure equal representation, to take part in deliberations relating to the case. The Governing Body decides whether it is appropriate to publish the representation and any reply by the government. It sends its decision to the organisation and the government concerned.

Complaints

For the most serious breaches of ratified Conventions, it is possible to lodge a complaint under Article 26 of the Constitution. One government against another government under certain circumstances may invoke this pro-

cedure, but in practice this never happens. It may also be invoked by the Governing Body either on its own initiative or following a complaint from a delegate to the Conference. In those circumstances, the Governing Body sets up a Commission of Inquiry with a mandate to study the question that has been raised and to file a report on the matter. The report is then sent to the government concerned, which must in turn indicate whether it accepts the conclusions. If it does not accept them, it must indicate whether it wishes to submit them to the International Court of Justice, the decisions of which can not be appealed.

This procedure has been used in recent years against Myanmar (Burma) concerning forced labour, but when

the situation in Myanmar did not improve, the Conference decided to implement Article 33 of the Constitution for the first time in its history. That means that a session is specially devoted to the issue at each Conference, that Member Countries of the ILO must review their relations with Myanmar so that they do not help to perpetuate forced labour. The Director-General must also inform other international organisations of the failings that have been noted, and call on the United Nations Organisation to place the matter on the agenda of the next Economic and Social Council.

Complaints to the Committee on Freedom of Association

The special procedures may only be used when Conventions have been ratified. There is only one exception to this principle, and that concerns complaints brought before the Committee on Freedom of Expression. This Committee examines complaints of breaches of freedom of expression whether or not the government being accused is bound by the Conventions on Freedom of Expression. The principles contained in Conventions 87 and 98 are also set out in the Constitution. This requires that all countries must abide by them.

Complaints are examined by a tripartite committee which meets three times a year and reports to the Governing Body. The reports are then published.

It is clear how trade unions play a very important role in making the ILO more effective, and ensuring that workers all over the world enjoy optimum social justice. ♦



Monique Cloutier
ACTRAV
Bureau for Workers' Affairs

A Scandinavian Perspective

Even though teachers and other public and private employees still have a wide range of rights in Sweden, Lärarförbundet is witnessing some restriction of those rights. Ms. Gunilla Runnquist, head of the negotiation department for and Mr. Tor Nitzelius, legal adviser, share their opinions.

How do you explain the high level of unionisation in Sweden?

Gunilla Runnquist: In the beginning of the 20th century, the blue-collar unions were closely linked to the social democratic party. This was regarded as an obstacle for the white-collar workers who therefore formed their own trade union central with no strings to any political party. This was with the blessing of the blue-collar central. This is probably one important reason why 90% of teachers and other white-collar workers are unionised in Sweden.

How did unions manage to achieve and hold to teachers' rights over the years? Is there a method that could inspire unions in other countries?

Tor Nitzelius: Schools and education are important tools to uphold and develop democracy. It is impossible for anybody to question the rights of the teachers to speak and work for democracy. Teachers' freedom of speech is protected by the constitution. Even if the government is by tradition open to the unions' opinion on different matters, the teachers' unions have always had a strong position as a speaking partner for the government and school authorities when it comes to important political decisions in the field of school and education. The teachers have through legislation gained the same trade union rights as other employees. These rights have been a base for a respectful attitude from the employers' side and fruitful collective bargaining, which has led to collective agreements aimed not only at giving teachers increased salaries and better working conditions, but also at developing the organisation and methods of education in the schools.

Gunilla Runnquist: The relatively "peaceful" relations between the unions is another reason for the high level of unionisation. By uniting teachers – through various union mergers – we have obtained more strength and influence than if there had been several unions fighting for different objectives and fighting against each other.

How would you describe the current social climate?

Gunilla Runnquist: Lately the government and private employers started to question the right of social partners to

negotiate without any intervention by the government as well as the fundamental right to collective bargaining and industrial action. Using the European Union convergence objectives related to low inflation and wage costs, the Swedish government and parliament have legislated a very strict agenda for the negotiations at the central level for salaries and working conditions. This law is restrictive and must be regarded as a remarkable intervention in the long tradition of giving a wide responsibility for bargaining and negotiating to the social partners. Teachers still have the right to take industrial action, but the legislation makes it more difficult to use that weapon.

The theme of Education International's next World Congress is "Educating in a global economy". How is globalisation affecting teachers rights in Sweden?

Tor Nitzelius: During the 90's Sweden was, as was many other countries, struck by economic depression and unemployment. Today the gaps between different social classes in Sweden are getting wider even if the economy is strong. The Swedish economy is now recovering and Lärarförbundet has successfully fought for more funding for schools and teachers.

Gunilla Runnquist: Globalisation affects all countries and Sweden is no exception. A difficult period for education and the public sector was during the heavy structural adjustments made in the latter part of the nineties. The unemployment among teachers grew and teachers became more "silent" and were afraid to speak out freely in fear of losing their jobs.

The market economy and individualisation means more privately run schools in Sweden, although still funded by the government. It is still too early to draw conclusions, but it is clear that teachers employed by private schools do not have the same rights.

The ongoing decentralisation is another consequence of the globalisation. Lärarförbundet is developing its policy in order to adjust to and benefit from this development. Previously we negotiated salaries exclusively on the central level: salaries and working conditions were regulated in central agreements to a great extent. Today we negotiate on the central level as well as on the local in order to benefit as much as possible from the decentralisation.

Naturally we are opposing attacks on our rights, but at the same time we have to manage the situation under the circumstances and continue our fight to defend and promote teachers' rights. We are proud to have about every tenth member serving as an elected representative of some kind – members of the local board or just a union representative at the work place. ♦



Gunilla Runnquist
Lärarförbundet Sweden
Head of Negotiation Department

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EDITOR RESPONSIBLE AT LAW:

Fred van Leeuwen, General Secretary
EDITORIAL STAFF: Dominique Marlet,

Peter Dawson, Lisa DuMouchel,
Ulf Fredriksson, Sheena Hanley,
Bob Harris, and Anabel Vallines

ADDRESS:

Education International
5, Boulevard du Roi Albert II

1210 Brussels, Belgium

Tel.: +32 2 224 06 11

Fax: +32 2 224 06 06

E-mail: headoffice@ei-ie.org

Internet: <http://www.ei-ie.org>

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