

## World News - N° 18 , 2002

Alice Carl dies  
New code of practice on workplace violence  
Public services work!  
OECD meeting discusses WTO collapse  
Women promote rights of informal workers  
South African unions solidarity on Human Rights Day  
Reports on privatization in Argentina and Colombia  
New PSI website – your ideas please!  
And...

### Alice Carl

It is with great sorrow that we inform affiliates of the death of Alice Carl, a much-appreciated member of the PSI staff. Alice joined PSI in 1988 and was research and information officer for many years before becoming director of communications at the end of last year. She was also very active in the network of NGOs with which PSI has collaborated over several years. Alice's death is a great loss to her friends and colleagues who have lost a valuable member of the staff and a great person. Her husband and two daughters have opened an account called the Alice Fund, all contributions to which will go towards cancer research, particularly for breast cancer. Details are as follows: Bank: Société Générale (France) - Bank number 30003 - Branch number: 00109 - Account holder: Hans Carl - Account number: 00036932123 - Cle 01 - SWIFT: SOGEFRPPFEV – IBAN: FR76 3000 3 0010900036932123 01

### New code of practice on workplace violence

An ILO meeting of experts has agreed a new code of practice on workplace in services sectors. The meeting held on 8-15 October was given the task of developing a code on workplace violence and stress. The employer "experts" said that they could not agree to have stress in the code because it was not "clearly definable". Despite strong opposition to this view from both the worker and government representatives, the meeting agreed on a code on violence, with a recommendation that further work should be undertaken on the general issue of workplace stress in the services sector.

The new code will be available by 2004 once it has been approved by the ILO Governing Body meeting in March. PSI will then send out copies all affiliates. For further information contact [alan.leather@world-psi.org](mailto:alan.leather@world-psi.org).

### Public services work!

As an initiative of the Quality Public Services campaign, PSI has commissioned research into the history of public services, approaches to ensuring quality and some experiences from around the world. This is reported in the booklet "Public Services Work!" which can be found on the website. "Public Services Work" is based on the central premise that the

world has a great and long-term experience in why public services matter. Services such as healthcare and education have been developed in almost every country on earth over the last century or two. The effects of such systems are delivered and studied over years and decades, and debated by the public and politicians throughout this time. It is these experiences that the booklet draws on.

As the 21st century progresses, it is becoming apparent that the ideals expressed in the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals will not be met under prevailing market based economic policies. If the world is to achieve the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, universal primary education, improved health and lower infant mortality rates, equity and sustainable development, there must be a positive plan built on a foundation of quality public services.

#### OECD meeting discusses WTO collapse

On 20 October in Paris, the OECD's Trade Committee held a one-day consultation with NGOs on the implications of the failure of the WTO Ministerial Conference negotiations. Mike Waghorne from PSI was part of the TUAC delegation. Many member states - especially the US, Australia and Mexico - held NGOs largely to blame for the conference's failure, since they supposedly briefed the developing country delegations against any deals in Cancún. Apart from the insult that this is to developing country negotiators, it at least acknowledges that developing countries are getting more assistance from NGOs than they do from the WTO itself. Virtually all NGOs agreed that the Singapore issues had played a significant role as a block and that they should now be broken up into separate packages and not be proceeded with in tandem. Several member states agreed with this. However, some other Member states claimed not to understand why people did not want to take these issues straight to negotiations. Some, including the European Commission representative, argued that, even if NGOs agreed that these were important policy tools - essential to fight corruption and cut wasteful red-tape - any opposition to immediate negotiations must mean that we support corruption. At a lunch between the Trade Committee Bureau and TUAC, a much more positive tone was obvious: we discussed a comprehensive Swedish proposal for the Trade Committee to look at the whole structural adjustment process and what it means for trade issues and we also discussed how to proceed with Mode 4 GATS negotiations - temporary migration issues. TUAC would support both such projects.

#### Women promote rights of informal workers

On 4 October at the Fourth International Trade Union Women's School held in Rovinj Croatia, women unionists from 32 trade unions confederations and 22 countries in Central and Eastern Europe adopted a "Women's Declaration on the Informal Economy". Women represent the majority of workers employed in the informal economy who typically work at low-status, low wage jobs with little or no health and safety protection. They have no access to pensions, health care insurance, professional education, technology, loans, etc. The declaration calls on trade unions, governments and employers to take steps to legalize informal employment, implement social protections and create multidisciplinary teams to design programmes for dignified work.

#### South African unions solidarity on Human Rights Day, 10 December

The PSI affiliates in South Africa have agreed to host two delegates from Colombia for five days around the 10th December as part of activities relating to the fight for human and trade unions rights. At a meeting of the national leaders of the unions it was also agreed that trade union and

human rights are being abused and neglected closer to home. Citing events in Zimbabwe and Swaziland, where trade unionists are being harassed and workers rights to freedom of association suppressed, delegates felt that South African unions should be more vocal and more active in condemning this situation. They are working on an action programme.

#### New PSI reports on privatization in Argentina and Colombia

For the past six years, PSI has conducted extensive research on privatization policies in countries where affiliates have been adversely affected by these actions. As part of the research program, PSI has produced reports on loans from the Inter-American Development Bank for the purpose of privatization in Argentina and Colombia. The reports demonstrate that the rights of workers are not the cause of failed privatization projects. PSI opposes privatization that is driven by ideological considerations, such as many of the initiatives executed and funded by the international financial institutions (IFIs). The reports are available on the PSI website. Go to Publications, then Privatisation and Deregulation.

#### PSI new website – you can contribute!

PSI will soon be redeveloping its website. Work will begin shortly on a content management system-based site, enabling easier access for members, staff and visitors and a more attractive and user-friendly site. We want the website to reflect the needs of our affiliates - that means you! Please give us your feedback by completing our web survey. Complete the survey [here](#).

This is your opportunity to have a say in the way we can improve the PSI website. Thanks for your participation!

And...

In PSI affiliated unions, 104 union presidents are women and 465 men. The record is no better for General Secretaries: 94 women and 477 men.

PSI Women 19 – PSI's regular publication especially for women - is now available on the website.

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