

G8, Live 8 and beyond

Never before have so many people stood in solidarity with the poor. Before the G8 leaders met in Gleneagles in July representatives of the [Global Call to Action Against Poverty](#) and [LIVE 8](#) presented Tony Blair with over 30 million names as part of the LIVE 8 supporters list. An estimated 225,000 people joined the Make Poverty History rally in Edinburgh. They were joined by hundreds of thousands in other marches around the world, and a further 50,000 who took part in an ingenious virtual rally at www.g8rally.com/. White bands appeared on buildings and monuments all around the globe (for more see: www.whiteband.org/News/gcapnews.2005-07-08.7987953275/en). The campaign continues with...

10th September 2005: Quality Public Services Day!

The GCAP campaign has now identified "the right to quality public services" as a key demand in the actions around the UN Summit on 10th September. PSI is encouraging unions to be part of these actions through activities such as:

- running seminars, sending postcards to politicians, letter writing campaigns;
- holding a "Communities Day"; community events/ picnic; rallies and demonstrations;
- Whiteband activities such as wrapping buildings, wearing bands to work, posting bands to political leaders, collecting signatures on a giant white band;
- lobbying, media stories, public information, handing out materials etc.

This is a great opportunity to be heard, and to be effective! Make 10th September **Quality Public Services Day**. For more information contact wendy.caird@world-psi.org.

Wrong questions, wrong answers

A new book on health policy reveals large and growing inequalities in care and access to services. **Health Policy Reform – Driving the Wrong Way?** presents a global overview of reform in over forty countries, and across five continents. The book shows that the main policies on offer ask the wrong questions, aim at the wrong targets, and drive systems in the wrong direction. The author, John Lister, argues that current health spending is almost inversely proportional to the global burden of disease. Market-style reforms are promoted in wealthier countries and imposed upon poor countries, yet these reforms are frequently accompanied by inflated costs with little evidence of improved services. John Lister has been Information Director and principal researcher for London Health Emergency for 21 years. Karen Jennings, head of health at UNISON and chair of the PSI

Health Services Taskforce, says the book is a valuable resource for campaigners and health workers everywhere. Copies can be ordered from: <http://mupress.co.uk/>

Measuring popular resistance

The process of privatisation in water and energy has encountered strong political opposition all over the world. Private-sector investment in developing countries is falling, as multinational companies fail to make sustainable returns on their investments. A new report from [Public Services International Research Unit](#) (PSIRU) examines the role of popular resistance in delaying, canceling, or reversing the privatisation of water and energy. For a copy email communications@world-psi.org

Uprising down under

Hundreds of thousands have taken to the streets of Australia in the biggest display of worker solidarity the country has ever seen. They are opposing the government's agenda for draconian workplace laws (as set in the last issue of PSI World News). PSI has written to Prime Minister John Howard explaining our opposition to the moves, which would place Australia even further in breach of fundamental labour standards established by ILO Conventions. For more information see www.actu.asn.au/work_rights

Millennium Development Goals report

A status report on progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals has been released. We still have a long, long way to go! Regional and global averages are available, as well as world and regional trends. The report (in English, French and Spanish) can be downloaded from: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mi/mi_dev_report.asp

GATS lobbying

In late June PSI organised an intensive lobbying programme between NGO and union activists and a number of key WTO delegations from Member States. The meetings were to discuss issues in the GATS negotiations such as health, water and energy, as well as on cross-cutting issues such as Mode 4, gender issues and domestic regulations. A report on the lobbying process, as well and a briefing paper prepared for delegations (in English only) can be obtained from mike.waghorne@world-psi.org

Working Better Together

A new study from the U.S. looks at labour-management cooperation, drawing together successful examples from over 30 years of experience and showing what can be achieved when unions and management work together to improve public services. **Working Better Together** describes itself as: "a practical guide for union leaders, elected officials and managers to improve public services". Written by Allyne Beach (Executive Director of the Public Sector Labor-Management Committees) and Linda Kaboolian (Lecturer in Public Policy), the study presents background information, problem-solving tips, checklists and planning tools for the development of labor-management co-operation. For a copy of the paper email communications@world-psi.org

Young workers web page

One person in five is aged between 15 and 24. Of these, 85% live in developing countries. 88 million young people are unemployed. 238 million earn less than 1\$ per day, with young women facing higher unemployment rates and daily confronting discrimination in education, jobs and pay. To learn more about the reality and struggle of young workers, with news and links to further information, see our new web page at: www.world-psi.org/youngworkers

Waves of Regret

US citizens' watchdog Public Citizen has documented key lessons learned from water privatization fiascos in the United States. **Waves of Regret** provides detailed case studies of municipalities which have seen negative results including inadequate service, higher rates, failure to perform under contractual obligations, and impeded economic development. **Waves of Regret** can be downloaded (in English only) from: <http://www.citizen.org/cmep/Water/reports/>

Key report on CAFTA kept secret

The US administration *just* managed to get CAFTA through the House by portraying it as a national security issue. The vote was 217-215 - the closest vote ever for a free trade agreement. A subsequent report has shown that the administration worked for more than a year to keep secret a study it had commissioned on working conditions and labour rights in the countries covered by the agreement. The study found that: "labor laws in Central America are not sufficient to deter employers from violations, as actual sanctions for violations of the law are weak or non-existent." An updated version of the study is available at:

<http://wid.ap.org/documents/cafta/execsum.pdf>

The 'compensation culture' myth

A new report from the UK shows that nine out of ten workers injured or made ill by their jobs never receive a penny, and that the best way for employers to ensure they stay out of court and keep costs down is to make their workplaces safer. **The Compensation Myth** sets out to demolish the most commonly held myths regarding the cost of compensation paid out as a result of workplace accidents and injuries. It shows that the number of civil compensation cases involving claims against employers has fallen every year for the last five years. The UK also pays out much less money in compensation cases, as a proportion of its GDP, than any other European country except Denmark, and the cost of compensation payouts has remained the same, in real terms, since 1999. Copies of the report are available from communications@world-psi.org

Organising and new technologies

Thanks to [LabourStart](#)'s Eric Lee for this brief but useful collection of writings (compiled by the TUC's Organising Academy) for unionists interested in the potential of new technologies in relation to organising.

- Building international solidarity www.ericlee.me.uk/archive/000117.html
- How to win an online campaign www.ericlee.me.uk/archive/000094.html
- The difference a decade makes www.ericlee.me.uk/archive/000065.html
- What to do when email campaigns no longer work www.ericlee.me.uk/archive/000061.html
- Google and online campaigning www.ericlee.me.uk/archive/000003.html
- Email: The 'killer app' of online campaigning www.ericlee.me.uk/archive/000004.html

PSI would be interested to hear of other online organising resources which affiliates have found particularly useful.

Growing unity in face of violence

At the time of writing the [South African Municipal Workers' Union](#) (SAMWU) is intensifying "Project Escalate". The strike, which centres around a wage demand of 8%, has been marked by shocking police attacks (including stun grenades, rubber bullets and mass arrests) and increasing unity on the union side, with historic rivals SAMWU and IMATU joining forces nationwide for the first time ever. The strike is the latest in a series of labour actions in South Africa, including the largest gold mining strike in 18 years.

No compulsory HIV testing

A recent AIDS policy released in Kenya protects the rights of HIV-positive civil service employees, as well as those who join the service in future. Borrowing heavily from the ILO Code of Practice (which PSI was involved in developing), the policy has deemed the testing of civil servants for HIV as "criminal". According to William Ole Ntimama, the Minister of State for personnel management, the document, which affects teachers, local government workers, the police force, parastatals and all ministries, also bans dismissal due to positive HIV test results. A local newspaper quoted Ntimama as saying: "HIV/AIDS screening should not be a requirement for job applicants, nor for persons already in employment. Personal data relating to a worker's HIV status shall be bound by the rules of confidentiality."

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