

WORLD OF Work

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S.O.S. stress: Mental health in the workplace

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Inside: Pull-out on
Convention 182



The ILO: Then and Now

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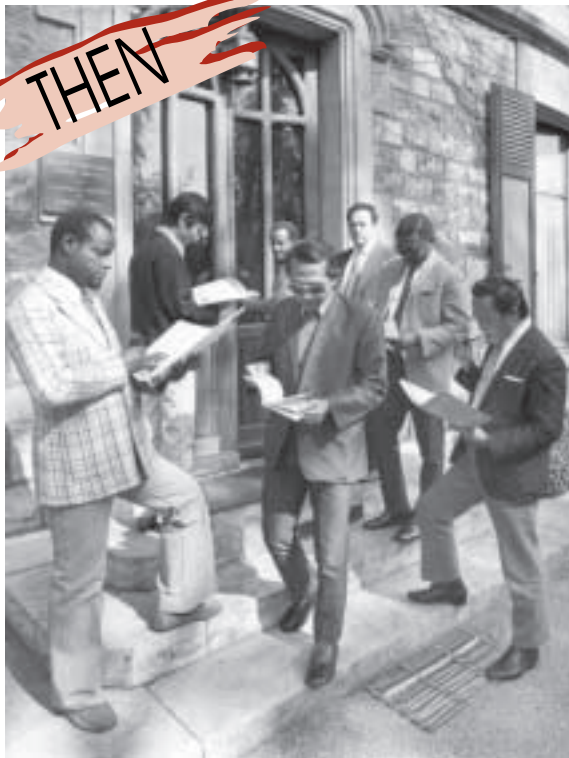
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THEN



ILO

The International Institute for Labour Studies (IILS) was established in 1960 as an autonomous facility within the ILO. Its aim is to further policy research, public debate, and the sharing of knowledge on emerging labour and social issues of concern to the ILO and its constituents. In the early years, the emphasis was on the IILS' educational role and study courses which are still an integral part of the Institute's activities. Over 800 officials from governments, trade unions and employers' organizations have participated in international internship courses. Today, many occupy senior posts in their institutions.

NOW



ILO

Over the years, the IILS has helped identify new areas of inquiry and has acted as a catalyst for new policy design. In the 1980s it carried out innovative research work on employment and industrial organization in small firms. Early in the 1990s, it initiated discussions on the labour and social aspects of globalization. One of its latest contributions? Helping prepare the Director-General's Report on "Decent Work".

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Created in 1919, the International Labour Organization (ILO) brings together governments, employers and workers of its 175 member States in common action to improve social protection and conditions of life and work throughout the world. The International Labour Office, in Geneva, is the permanent Secretariat of the Organization.

S.O.S. Stress at work: Costs of workplace stress are rising, with depression increasingly common

Working more and enjoying it less? If so, you're not alone. A new ILO study¹ finds mental health in the world of work in peril. Employees report burnout, anxiety, low morale and stress – all of which can mean loss of work. Employers report lower productivity, reduced profits and high turnover rates. And for governments, this epidemic translates into higher health care costs and lower national income. This report looks at mental health on the job, and what people can do about it.

GENEVA – In Finland, high unemployment, job insecurity, short-term contracts and time pressure coincided with a marked deterioration in the reported mental well being of the workforce.

In Germany, workers dealing with “rationalization and the rapid introduction of technology” along with rising unemployment, suffered from stress due to increased time pressure and demands for greater quality and quantity of production.

In the United States and the United Kingdom, an array of new technologies and methods of work organization stemming from rising productivity requirements is causing more cases of depression and work-induced stress.

And in Poland, major political changes leading to socio-economic transformation “had serious ramifications for the labour market and for the mental well-being of people in the workplace”.

These findings are from a new report, *Mental health in the*

workplace: Introduction prepared by the ILO. The report notes that while the origins of mental health difficulties are complex and the workplace practices and income and employment patterns differ widely among the countries studied, a number of common threads appear to link the high prevalence of stress, burnout and depression to changes taking place in the labour market, due partly to the effects of economic globalization.

The study of mental health policies and programmes affecting the workforces of Finland, Germany, Poland, the United Kingdom and the United States shows

that the incidence of mental health problems is increasing, with as many as one in ten workers suffering from depression, anxiety, stress or burnout, which lead, in some cases, to unemployment and hospitalization.

The countries were chosen not because they have inordinately high incidences of mental illness, but because they are emblematic of different approaches to workplace organization and welfare systems, embodying different types of legislation, health care, and approaches to mental health issues.



Keystone

Disturbing trends

Ms. Phyllis Gabriel, a vocational rehabilitation specialist and one of the main authors of the mental health study, expressed alarm at the widespread costs of these disturbing trends:

“Employees suffer from low morale, burnout, anxiety, stress, lost income and even unemployment associated in some cases with the inevitable stigma attached to mental illness,” she said. “For

employers, the costs are felt in terms of low productivity, reduced profits, high rates of staff turnover and increased costs of recruiting and training replacement staff. For governments, the costs include health care costs and insurance payments as well the loss of income at the national level.”

The series of detailed country studies address such issues as workplace productivity, loss of income, health care and social security costs, access to mental health services and employment policies for the people with mental illness. The ILO undertook the study because, as Ms. Gabriel emphasized, “the workplace is an appropriate environment for educating individuals and raising their awareness of mental health difficulties in order to target mental health problems and prevent them from developing”.

The report estimates that anywhere from 3 to 4 per cent of GNP is spent on mental health problems in the European Union. In the US, the national spending associated with treatment of depression ranges between US\$30 billion and US\$44 billion. In many countries, early retirement due to mental health difficulties is increasing to the point where they are becoming the most common reason for allocating disability pensions.

Five country examples

Among the major findings of the report, which warns that the costs of mental health disability are rising, is a pattern of increasing personal and mental health problems among the working age populations of all the countries studied. For example:

- In the US, clinical depression has become one of the most common illnesses, affecting one in ten working age adults each year, resulting in a loss of approximately 200 million working days per year;

- In Finland, over 50 per cent of the workforce experiences some kind of stress-related symptoms, such as anxiety, depressive feelings, physical pain, social exclusion or sleep disorders; 7 per cent of Finnish workers suffer from severe burnout, leading to exhaustion, cynicism and sharply reduced professional capacity and mental health disorders are the

CONGRESS ON MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

The ILO hosted a two-day Congress on 9 and 10 October on the topic of Mental Health in the Workplace, organized by World Strategic Partners, a US-based international health industry network aiming to promote innovative thinking in health care policy and services, in collaboration with the World Federation for Mental Health, a nongovernmental organization based in the Netherlands which aims to de-stigmatize mental illness and promote social and economic opportunities for people affected.

At the close of the Congress, to mark World Mental Health Day on 10 October, the ILO jointly organized a Symposium on Mental Health and Work, in cooperation with the World Health Organization and the Federation. ILO Director-General Juan Somavia spoke at the Symposium.

leading cause of disability pensions in Finland;

- In Germany, depressive disorders account for almost 7 per cent of premature retirements and depression-related work incapacity lasts about two-and-a-half times longer than incapacity due to other illnesses. The annual volume of production lost because of absenteeism related to mental health disorders is estimated at over 5 billion DM annually;

- In the UK, each year nearly three out of every ten employees experience mental health problems, and numerous studies indicate that work-related stress and the illnesses it causes are common. Depression, in particular, is such a common problem that at any given time one in every 20 working-aged Britons is experiencing major depression;

- Public health statistics in Poland indicate growing numbers of people – especially individuals suffering from depressive disorders – receiving mental health care, a trend which can be related

to the country’s socio-economic transformation and resulting increases in unemployment, job insecurity and declining living standards.

Is progress being made?

The ILO report sees progress in coming to terms with mental health issues in the workplace in all the countries studied. It notes, for example, that “in the US, employers of all sizes are beginning to recognize that depressive disorders often constitute their highest mental health (medical) and disability cost. A large number of employers understand the relationship between health and productivity and are improving their management strategies by developing and implementing programs supportive of work/family/life issues.”

Finland, the report notes, has actively started to address mental health issues, both at the national and international levels, adding that “the culture of mental health promotion is evolving in the workplace; the Finnish concept of work ability is not just about promoting employees’ physical health but also about mental health in healthy work organizations”.

In Germany, which already enjoys strong institutional and government support for mental health services, corporate health promotion is becoming a higher priority and successful stress reduction programmes have been underway for many years. These programmes include “relaxation procedures, role-playing and behavioural training to increase self-confidence and improve interpersonal skills”.

In the UK, employees’ and employers’ organizations play an active role in mental health issues, and the Government and institutional response to the issue is generally proactive. Some companies have already developed mental health policies for the workplace. Analysis of existing policies has defined certain key elements of good practice, the report notes, adding that “the most fundamental step for organizations is to recognize and accept that mental health is an important issue, and show commitment to mental health promotion.” □

¹ Mental health in the workplace: Introduction. Prepared by Ms. Phyllis Gabriel and Ms. Marjo-Riitta Liimatainen. International Labour Office, Geneva, October 2000. ISBN 92-2-112223-9.

Messages of hope

The ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention: As ratifications mount, Convention comes into force

On 19 November, the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) came into force as international law. To date, nearly 50 countries have ratified the Convention - the fastest pace of ratifications of any convention in the ILO's 81-year history. Worldwide, the movement seems to be accelerating among governments, as well as NGOs and children themselves. Time now to listen to the children's voices.

GENEVA – For 11 year-old Arnold, it was just another day at the school outside Manila where he's been for two years now, when he added his voice to the growing number of child labourers speaking out.

It happened the day he heard the Philippines had ratified the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182). "This could be the end of hard labour and perhaps the beginning of a good future for us and others who might be similarly victimized," he said.

Arnold knows what he's talking about. At the age of 11, he has already worked in dangerous conditions. His job at the fireworks factory exposed him to the risks every day, a fear that marked the then nine year-old boy.

Global events, local results

Young Arnold was one of the millions of children who used to toil in anonymity, victims of the worst forms of child labour as defined under the new ILO Convention adopted in 1999.

Arnold's job held daily peril. Before being liberated by government officials, his chief worry was getting blown up. Today, it's getting good grades and seeing his peers released from the life-threatening kinds of work he used to do.

Like many children liberated from the worst forms of child labour, Arnold and others will mark a milestone in their cause in November, when the Worst Forms

of Child Labour Convention comes into force.

In Thailand, children joined adults in a carnival-type event held by the Foundation of Child Development to promote discussion on the issue of child labour, under the banner of "Children First". Among the booths set up for the children and well-wishers, one featured the music video "My Hope is in You", by the world-



ILO/M. Crozet

Youssou Ndour at the ILO.

renowned musician Youssou Ndour, recently appointed Honorary Ambassador in the Global Campaign Against Child Labour by ILO Director-General Juan Somavia.

Meanwhile, in Jamaica, Mike "Ibo" Cooper and C. Nesbeth, backed by singers named Angie Angel, Lady G, Tony Rebel and Nazzleman, produced "Let us Try", a new reggae song written expressly about the worst forms of child labour with the refrain "We have to do what's right, So that they can be the children they should be, Not living in captivity, just happy and free..."¹ The song will be used as a rallying cry in the Caribbean and internationally to encourage the elimination of child exploitation, especially the worst forms of child labour.

Those and hundreds of other events around the world were held to celebrate the coming into force of the Convention on 19 November 2000, one year to the day after receiving its second country ratification.

To date, nearly 50 of the ILO's 175 member States – or more than 25 per cent of the Organization's total membership – have ratified the Convention, giving it more ratifications in a comparable time than any other Convention during the Organization's 81-year history.²

"This is a clear demonstration of the rapidly growing movement to eradicate as quickly as possible the most abusive exploitation of children," Mr. Somavia

Convention No. 182 has been ratified by 49 countries*

Barbados: 23.10.2000
 Belarus: 31.10.2000
 Belize: 6.3.2000
 Botswana: 3.1.2000
 Brazil: 2.2.2000
 Bulgaria: 28.7.2000
 Canada: 6.6.2000
 Central African Rep.: 28.6.2000
 Chad: 6.11.2000
 Chile: 17.07.2000
 Denmark: 14.8.2000
 Dominican Republic: 15.11.2000
 Ecuador: 19.9.2000
 El Salvador: 12.10.2000
 Finland: 17.1.2000
 Ghana: 13.6.2000
 Hungary: 20.4.2000
 Iceland: 29.5.2000
 Indonesia: 28.3.2000
 Ireland: 20.12.1999
 Italy: 7.6.2000
 Jordan: 20.4.2000
 Kuwait: 15.8.2000
 Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah: 4.10.2000
 Malawi: 19.11.1999
 Malaysia: 10.11.2000
 Mali: 14.7.2000
 Mauritius: 8.6.2000
 Mexico: 30.6.2000
 Namibia: 15.11.2000
 Nicaragua: 6.11.2000
 Niger: 23.10.2000
 Panama: 31.10.2000
 Papua New Guinea: 2.6.2000
 Portugal: 15.6.2000
 Qatar: 30.5.2000
 Rwanda: 23.5.2000
 San Marino: 15.3.2000
 Senegal: 1.6.2000
 Seychelles: 28.9.1999
 Slovakia: 20.12.1999
 South Africa: 7.6.2000
 St. Kitts and Nevis: 12.10.2000
 Switzerland: 28.6.2000
 Togo: 19.9.2000
 Tunisia: 28.2.2000
 United Kingdom: 22.3.2000
 United States: 2.12.1999
 Yemen: 15.6.2000

(*as of 23 November 2000)



ILO/J.M. Derrien



ILO/J. Davies



ILO/D. Browne



ILO/H. Wagner



ILO/J.Matillard



ILO/J.Matillard



ILO/J.Matillard



ILO

said. "Not only is the world's fundamental labour standard on the worst forms of child labour now a reality in terms of international law, but it is generating a groundswell of global support – from governments, employers, workers, non-governmental organizations, parents and even children – all of whom want ratification to lead to implementation of its principles."

C182 into force: What it is, what it means

Convention No. 182 defines the worst forms of child labour as slavery, debt bondage, prostitution, pornography, forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflict, use of children in drug trafficking and other illicit activities, and all other work harmful or hazardous to the health, safety or morals of girls and boys

under 18 years of age.

The Convention was adopted unanimously by the International Labour Conference on 17 June 1999. The first ratification was by the Seychelles on September 28, 1999, and the second by Malawi on November 19, 1999. The date of 19 November, 2000 thus emerges as its date of coming into force, since the Convention itself provides that it would come into force 12 months after the date of the second ratification.

It is important to differentiate between the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, and the previous ILO core convention on child labour, called the "Minimum Age Convention". This convention, numbered No. 138, was adopted by the International Labour Conference in 1973 and entered into force in 1976. It aims at the overall abolition of child labour, rather than focusing on its worst

forms, and stipulates that the minimum age for admission to employment shall not be less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling.

The recent global mobilization to eliminate child labour has been reflected in the sharply increased ratification rate for the Minimum Age Convention. The pace of ratifications of this previous convention has increased rapidly this year, from only a few per year in the early 1990s. By the end of October 2000, 102 ILO member States had ratified Convention No. 138.)

The text of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention has been available since its adoption a year ago. Member States were free to take action as indicated in its terms. However, now that it is "in force" as an international law,

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Globalization's downside

From shipyard to graveyard: Is there a decent way to break ships?

On sloping beaches in south Asia, most of the world's ships are taken apart by hand, surrendering their once proud prows to the torches and hammers of a horde of local workers. Bought for nearly nothing, the ships quickly become piles of scrap and removables, feeding local economies. Recent ILO initiatives are looking for ways of improving working conditions for the shipbreakers. The ILO's Sanja Göhre visited Bangladesh to survey the beaches and found a growing industry beset by high risks, low pay and emerging issues.

CHITTAGONG, Bangladesh – Across 20 kilometres of Chittagong's coastline, an array of tankers rests in the shallow waters in various stages of destruction. Built horizontally from the bottom up, these ships are now being taken apart vertically from the top down, leaving strange shapes: one side fully intact, the other gaping open, a whole section gone.

Once the pride of the industrialized world's shipyards and ship owners, these vessels are now the bottom of globalization. Bought on the world market for between US\$120 and US\$185 per ton, they are being "recycled" (as the shipyard owners want the work to be called) to satisfy local demand for scrap steel.

Before Bangladesh, China, India, Pakistan and Viet Nam became the world's ship breakers, ships were either sunk or taken apart where they were built: in industrialized countries. But high costs and environmental restrictions drove ship owners to look elsewhere for a way of disposing these vessels. South Asian countries stepped in with a solution that also feeds the local economies. Before ship breaking, Bangladesh, for example, imported all of its scrap steel. Today the wrecked ships satisfy 80 per cent of its needs.

"All development activities of a country depend on the infrastructure of a country, and for infrastructure iron and steel plays

an important role," says Mohamed Rahman, the President of the Shipbreakers Association of Bangladesh in an interview. "In Bangladesh, ship recycling is very important".

But scrap steel is not the only value imported from the gaping bowels of these ships. Lining the streets close to the ship-breaking yards are various shops selling anything from bathtubs and toilets to boilers and generators removed from the ships after they are beached. The shipyard owners estimate around 200,000 Bangladeshis benefit indirectly from this business conducted on their shores. In India, the biggest shipbreaking nation, the figure is half a million.

Benefits for some, disasters for others

Local businesses and others say the annual breaking of some 700 ships benefits the five nations (India, Bangladesh, China, Pakistan and Viet Nam) where the work takes place these days. But critics claim these countries have become dump sites for the industrialized world; an environmental disaster and an example of poor, often highly dangerous working conditions.

"Ship breaking on the beaches in Asian countries, of course, represents the downside of globalization," says ILO expert Paul Bailey. "After industrialized countries of the western world are through

using their ships, they get scrapped on beaches without drydock facilities or safety measures for workers. The challenge facing us is how this can be done in a safer manner. It will never be perfect but improvements can be made."

Indeed, there is much room for improvement in this dangerous and back-breaking work. Over several months (an average ship will take up to six months to be recycled) younger and older men, armed only with gas torches and their bare hands, take the vessels apart in an almost ritual manner.

The potential for accidents is everywhere, from falling steel plates to frayed winch ropes which can snap and remove a limb or a head. Explosions claim the highest toll, caused by leftover gas or other explosive substances ignited by cutting activities. Compulsory gas-free certificates have been introduced in all shipbreaking countries to curb this problem, but some officials are stricter than others. In Chittagong, shipyard owners talk of a simple eyewash test only or cold weather conditions that belie the existence of gas which expands once the beaches heat up.

Gas cutters often work with no protective goggles, leg or arm protection. Armies of steel-plate carriers trample barefoot across debris-littered shipyards, small squares of cloth between their shoulders and their heavy loads. Singers, often paid as much as the gas cutters



IL/O/Sanjja Göhre

who rank as the highest-skilled and highest-paid in the yard, keep the carriers moving through rhythmic song.

No respite off the job

Living conditions offer no respite. Many workers, often far away from their homes in poorer rural districts, stay in villages close by or live in rough structures erected by shipyard owners. A loft made from steel plates taken from ships allows workers to sleep in rows next to each other. A ladder connects them to the ground floor where most of the cooking is done and personal belongings are kept.

Most yards lack toilets and all workers share water for cooking, cleaning and drinking, from one tube-well sunk into the yard. The only divide between work and home is a brick wall. The sound of banging and cutting is forever present to those trying to call it a night.

“These people have no place to sleep. They sleep on the ground, in the same place they have to eat, sleep, live life,” Nazrul Khan said in an interview in his office. The Executive Director of the Bangladesh Institute for Labour Studies, which recently brought out a report on the working and living conditions in Chittagong shipyards, adds: “I would

not say they are like slaves, slaves can leave, but the conditions under which they are working is like slavery because they have no rights to say anything, to bargain, to establish an organization of their own.”

According to Khan, trade unions are not allowed in the shipbreaking yards, and some workers who have tried to speak up have either been beaten or have lost their jobs.

Shipyard owners see it differently. Mohamed Mohsin, Managing Director of the Peace, Happiness and Prosperity (PHP) Shipbreaking and Re-cycling Industries, used to collect bolts in his father’s shipyard to sell. His father thought of this scheme to get his son interested in his own growing business, and today he runs the company

“To be honest, trade unions did try to come here,” he says. “The trade unions only come up with the demands, they don’t do the work.”

Mohsin’s reality is a tough business with low profit margins and a need for cross-subsidization from some of his other businesses. He blames high taxes, customs and excise duties standing at 25 per cent of the ship’s sale value as crippling employers like him, and calls for some of the tax money to be rein-

vested into the shipbreaking yards in the form of hospitals, proper accommodations, and a fire brigade.

The government’s response? “If someone starts a business, he definitely has to come up with some capital. Banks are there, so he can take a loan. So [he] should not face any problems. It’s not that they are not making any profit. So if he earns [a] profit he has to invest also,” says Salamoth Ullah, Chief Inspector in the Ministry of Labour and Employment from his Dhaka office.

For workers, few options

In the meantime, workers have few options. In the most densely populated country in the world, they are only too grateful to have a job, no matter what the cost to their health and safety. But if local conditions are not conducive to wide-scale improvement, what is the international contribution to changing the nature of shipbreaking in south Asia?

Ship owners say: there is not much we can do. “Our responsibility is a principal one, raising the profile and the understanding of the issue,” says the Secretary-General of the International Cham-

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Ten years on: Eastern Germany still awaits transition from brown coal to "Blühende Landschaften"

Ten years after reunification, the differences between living standards in West and East Germany are still considerable. The hopes of many people in the eastern lands of a quick transition from drab Communism to the promised "Blühende Landschaften", or "flowering landscapes", have failed to materialize. Still, for many former East Germans, working and living conditions have improved: freely chosen employment, freedom of association and better protection against invalidity and illness for older people.

UECKERMÜNDE, Germany – This former East German town has smartened itself up, like someone replacing a depressing grey smock with a stylish new suit of clothes.

The market square is newly paved with red bricks, the shops lining its sides gleaming from a fresh coat of paint.

On the nearby coastal beach of this small, northeastern village in the Federal Republic, large quantities of fine sand have turned the Oderhaff lagoon from a brackish backwater into a broad beach beckoning summer visitors from Berlin.

Ueckermünde not only looks better, it is better. Bordering the crystal beach, once-crumbling facades and dreary state storefronts have given way to new housing and smartly dressed shop windows. Inside, shelves groan with consumer goods which shoppers could have only dreamed about ten years ago.

Change, but was it good?

When Herbert Quade walks past all this on his way to the yacht harbour, the sparkling glass facades of the new "Cultural Centre" built in the 1990s, remind him that a great deal has changed since Germany's reunification ten years ago.

Today Mr. Quade is a pensioner with plenty of time to spend – at long last

– on sailing his small boat. As chairman of the works council after the changeover of 1989, he spent seven years fighting for the survival of VEGU, the "West Pomeranian Ironworks". The struggle paid off – the works are still there, if under another name.

In the days of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), VEGU, a manufacturer of cast-iron parts, had been the largest employer in the area, with its workforce of 1,200. In 1990, a year after the changeover and immediately before the introduction of the West German Deutschmark (DM), most of the old social facilities at the works had been abolished and the workforce had been reduced by about 200. At that time, Herbert Quade had voiced the fear that a further 200 might have to go.

What actually happened was worse, far worse. In 1995, after several changes in ownership and several waves of dismissals, the company was employing only 250 persons – and was still the largest employer in the small town on the Oderhaff lagoon. A year later,

(continued on p. 12)

Global dialogue on the future of work

The ILO at EXPO 2000

In a speech to the world on 3 October, the tenth anniversary of German reunification, ILO Director-General Juan Somavia reminded his audience that there is a “global decent work deficit”. The address was part of the ILO’s contribution to the Global Dialogue on “Future Works – Labour, Sustainable Business and Social Responsibility” from 2 to 5 October at the World Exhibition 2000 in Hanover, Germany.



HANOVER – With, over 3,000 people a day dying because of work-related accidents and diseases, one-third of the world’s labour force either unemployed or underemployed, 90 per cent of the working age population having inadequate social protection and half the world’s population living on less than two dollars a day, ILO Director-General Juan Somavia said here recently we must reduce this worldwide “decent work deficit”.

He expressed a strong belief that decent work is possible: “Some may think decent work for all is a dream. I would simply remind them that today we celebrate the tenth anniversary of a dream that many believed could not be realized...German reunification.”

The Director-General advocated policies and solutions “that improve the lives of ordinary people and their families” and “institutions and policies at the global level which promote and reflect common values and goals”. He asked for leadership in the multilateral system and in civil society: “Governments have to look beyond the next election. Enterprises have to look beyond the bottom line. Unions have to look beyond the next negotiation, nongovernmental organizations have to look beyond the next demonstration, and international organizations have to look beyond their bureaucratic interests.”

Juan Somavia insisted that the basic rights in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work “are valid in all countries at whatever stage of development, from the sweatshops and ‘inner cities’ of the North to the shanty towns...of the South.” According to the Director-General, these rights “are not dependent on an economic justification – they stand on their own – but in general they are good for productivity, too”.

The speech was followed by a discussion with prominent representatives of the world of work and the academic community, including Ursula Engelen-Kefer, vice-chairperson of the German Trade Union Federation, Club of Rome member Patrick Liedtke, and Raymond-Pierre Bodin, Director of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. The presence of the German TV channel “Deutsche Welle” assured a worldwide audience for the speech and the debate.

A series of workshops co-organized by the ILO addressed salient contemporary issues of employment and work. Participants discussed to what extent social dialogue leads to better labour market outcomes. Exemplary initiatives to combat unemployment, and innovative forms of social dialogue and collective bargaining were presented by academics, government officials, representatives from workers’ and employers’ organizations, NGOs and the ILO.

Future of Work – Future of Women’s Labour

The future of women’s labour and the role of affirmative employment policies at the enterprise, national and international levels were other topical issues. In spite of higher and more visible female labour participation worldwide, a “decent work deficit” for women persists. Promising new approaches to improving women’s access to quality work and to reducing social exclusion should involve all levels of society. The discussions in the workshops highlighted the positive effects of enabling national equality policies, including monitoring mechanisms, strengthening social responsibilities of the business community, developing solidarity networks among vulnerable groups of women, and fostering a broad social dialogue on gender equality, as a strong pillar of their development agenda.



ILO/Didier Bregnard

International Labour Conference 1990 – four months before German reunification: The East German labour minister, Regine Hildebrandt, meets her West German counterpart, Norbert Blüm.

(continued from p. 10)

75 more jobs had disappeared and definitive closure seemed to be only a matter of time. When Quade retired in 1996, only 85 of his workmates, men and women, were left behind in a highly insecure situation.

Salvation came in early 1999, in the form of “Intermet GMBH”, a subsidiary of an American group of companies, with headquarters at Neunkirchen in the Saarland in Western Germany. The firm, specializing in half-finished cast-iron parts for the automobile industry, wanted to develop its capacity; it bought the works, then on the very brink of the abyss, and put it back on its feet.

Today, what was once the VEGU is called “Intermet Ueckermünde” and, with a workforce of around 150, continues to be the largest commercial employer in the infrastructure-deficient area. A certain amount of recruiting still goes on. Herbert Quade has reason to be proud of his many years of committed effort. The company has survived – unlike most other enterprises of the old GDR economy.

New country, old story

The story of the pensioner Herbert Quade and “his company” is a run-of-the-mill East German story. The transformation of the economic system and of a whole system of values which took place ten years ago has changed almost everything

in the lives of former citizens of the GDR.

Despite the billions of DM pumped in by way of subsidies, the 1990s saw East German industry collapse practically across the board. Unemployment exploded. Almost every East German has had a spell of unemployment since the changeover. For many it meant the final farewell to active life.

In the early 1990s the number of persons in employment fell from 11 million to the present level of about 6.7 million. Of about 2 million jobs in East Germany’s metal industry, only 300,000 are left today. The downward trend has only been halted in the past two years. Today, for the first time since the changeover, there is a slight upturn. But unemployment in Eastern Germany, amounting as it does to 16.6 per cent of the active population (1.3 million), is still roughly twice the West German figure. Some 400,000 persons are covered by job creation schemes and retraining projects of various kinds.

Germany today offers an ambivalent picture of an integrating economy and a society whose two halves have not fully overcome its mental divisions. Economic differences between West and East continue to be appreciable. Although the trade unions have sought to align East German salaries with those in the West for years, real take-home pay for workers in the East remains 20 to 30 per cent below that of their counterparts in the West, while the work week is longer by as much

as one or two hours. Of course, this is not an easy task if we consider the ongoing considerable backlogs in production. Experts agree that this gap between East and West may be closed during the coming decade.

Traces of the past are still to be seen everywhere – in spite of the smartened-up city centres and the bright new paint of refurbished cities, such as Leipzig, Halle or Berlin. The broken windows of many industrial ruins remind one of the collapse of an entire national economy.

In residential areas, many grey, undecorated houses which were characteristic of the East German townscape remain untouched and unimproved. Many are also uninhabited and left to ruin. The unwashed windows of these empty dwellings are symbolic of the mass exodus to the West. Hundreds of thousands of people, often young and capable, have left their homes because they could see no future for themselves in East Germany. The population of Ueckermünde, for example, has lost 3,000 of its 15,000 residents. Most of them moved to West Germany.

The other side of the coin is that the East German lands have completed a crash course in the difficult development from an industrial to a service-oriented society. Only 31 per cent of all jobs are now located in the manufacturing industries (as against 34 per cent in West Germany), almost all the rest being in the public or private services sector.

There are signs of an economic upturn in success stories like Stefan Schambach, a young entrepreneur whose e-commerce company “Intershop”, with headquarters in the United States, has today given him the status of a “global player”. At his German headquarters in Jena (Thuringia), Schambach currently employs 320 persons, most highly skilled. “Jenoptik”, also located in Jena, is another example of the successful transformation of an East German industrial undertaking into a modern high-tech enterprise.

Investments by major groups of companies, such as Volkswagen at Mosel or Opel at Eisenach, have created highly productive industrial islands in a region swamped by crises. Yet the dynamic economic upswing of the last two years has largely swept by East Germany because the reconstruction process was less dynamic than expected.

Taken as a whole, East Germany's economic growth is lagging behind the growth rates observed in West Germany. Regions less attractive to tourists, such as Ueckermünde in the northeast or Görlitz in the southeast of the new lands are threatened with desolation.

More beauty, but few buyers

According to Herr Kruse, the head of the economic department of Ueckermünde's municipal board, not a single manufacturing company has set up shop in the city in the past three years. Despite efforts to sell the "flowering landscape" and unspoiled environment to potential investors, large tracts of industrial land outside the city gates, developed at great cost with public funds, are being overgrown with grass.

Herr Kruse has little hope of attracting any new companies in the foreseeable future. And the same is true of most other officials responsible for economic policies in places outside the major agglomerations such as Leipzig and Berlin.

Still, while hopes of an early alignment between East and West German living conditions dwindle, the former works councillor Herbert Quade is enjoying his retirement. He is now 62 years old. Four years ago, when he took early retirement, he was less well-off than he is today.

Not only the company but he, too, was standing on the very brink of an abyss. After recovering from two heart attacks, doctors told him another four years as a works councillor in such troubled times would probably kill him. Today he is content merely to drop in at "his" old company once every few months. He is pleased to see that things there are looking up at last. The success is partly due to him. But he knows what a heavy price he and many of his former workmates have had to pay for it.

For Herr Quade the battle is over. But life goes on. In a few days' time, he says, he will sail his boat in a German-Polish regatta between Ueckermünde and Stettin (Szczecin) on the mirror-smooth waters of the Oderhaff lagoon. That's something that would have definitely been impossible eleven years ago. □

Martin Kempe

Messages of hope

(continued from page 7)

the mechanisms described below become activated.

- A member State, which has ratified Convention No. 182 and for which it has come into force (i.e., 12 months after its own ratification date), becomes bound under international law to align its national law and practice to the requirements of the Convention. In short, member governments must take immediate and effective action to prohibit and eliminate the worst forms of child labour for all those under 18 years of age. Even where national legislation defines childhood as ending earlier, everyone up to age 18 must be protected.

- A ratifying member State must also report regularly to the ILO (i.e. the Organization) regarding the application of the Convention and be accountable for allegations of violations. The ILO is assisting member States to fulfill their obligations through its International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), which works in 70 countries to withdraw children from work, provide them with education and rehabilitation, and provide their families with economic alternatives.

- Furthermore, the progress of ratification will be closely followed by the Governing Body as a part of the ratification campaign for the ILO core Conventions, which the Office has been carrying out since 1995, following the Copenhagen Social Summit.

For the purpose of campaigning and awareness-raising, ongoing since the adoption of Convention No.182, the above legal effects may have less direct impact, but will add pressure even for those countries where the Convention is not yet in force.

C 182 and the Declaration

The coming into force of C182, the eighth core Convention, will have a direct impact on the Annual and Global Reports under the follow-up to the ILO Decla-



ILO/David Browne

ration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, adopted in 1998. In 2001, for the first time, those member States which have not yet ratified Convention No. 182 will be asked to report on their situation with regard to respect for the principle of the abolition of the worst forms of child labour, and the efforts they have made to this end. They will be given the opportunity to request technical assistance from the ILO.

Thus, member States which have not yet ratified the ILO's core Conventions relating to child labour must, without being bound by all of their provisions, still gear their policies towards the effective abolition of child labour. As long as they have not ratified both Convention No. 182 and Convention No. 138, they must report annually on their promotional efforts in this respect.

The 2002 Global Report, issued by the Director-General under the same follow-up, will examine the global situation with respect to the abolition of child labour, including its worst forms. It will also assess the effectiveness of ILO assistance in this field, and draw preliminary conclusions on future priorities for technical cooperation. The Report will be discussed at the International Labour Conference in June 2002. □

¹ "Let us Try", written by Michael "Ibo" Cooper and C. Nesbeth with DJ lyrics by Angie Angel, Lady G, Tony Rebel and Nazzleman, is a campaign song supported by IPEC and performed by local artists and children of Children First.

² The ILO's stated goal is to obtain 87 ratifications, or half the Organization's member States, by the end of 2001.

From Solidarity to "crumbling bastions"

Twenty years after Gdansk: How Solidarity and trade unions have fared in post-Communist Poland

In August 1980, the gates of the Lenin Shipyard in the Baltic port of Gdansk were festooned with flowers, Polish flags and posters heralding the birth of the first independent trade union in the Communist bloc. An 18-day strike led to the formation of the NSZZ Solidarnosc (Independent, self-governing trade union Solidarity) which shook - and ultimately crumbled - the foundations of communism and triggered the end of the Cold War. Yet today, Solidarity and other trade unions have been called "crumbling bastions" in the new capitalist Poland. Reporter Ruth Ellen Gruber, who covered the 1980 Gdansk strikes and has followed the former East Bloc since then reports on this new reality.

W ARSAW, Poland – When Polish politicians and international leaders paid tribute at the Gdansk ship-

yard this August to Solidarity's central role in bringing social and political change, few workers attended. And for Tadeusz Korzinski, a 45 year-old welder who took

part in the 1980 strikes and still works at the shipyard, the event left a bitter taste.

"There are no workers at this feast," said Korzinski, "just men in coats and ties. Nothing remains of Solidarity except its name. It has lost its essence, they have betrayed and forgotten us."

Poland's Solidarity revolution has bequeathed a complex, sometimes contradictory, legacy to this country as it makes the transition from communist state to free-market economy. The ouster of the communists, dynamic economic growth, membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the creation of a solid, functioning democracy, are all fruits of the seeds planted in the Polish August.

But, so too is the painful fallout from these wrenching changes, including political fragmentation and economic hardships which paradoxically have targeted Solidarity's very core, and led to sharp erosion of support for trade union activities.

"Solidarity's strongholds were the big State enterprises – the coal mines, the shipyards and so on," said Janusz Onyszkiewicz, a member of the Polish Sejm, or Parliament, who was national spokesman for Solidarity in 1981. "These factories were those hardest hit by the changes of the 1990s."



Keystone

Angry shipyard workers burn tyres to block traffic in downtown Gdansk, March 1997. Some 2,000 workers from the bankrupt shipyard demonstrated to preserve their jobs. The Gdansk shipyards – cradle of the famous "Solidarity" union that ended communist rule in Poland – announced the layoff of all 3,700 workers.

Even Solidarity's birthplace, the Gdansk shipyard, went bankrupt in 1996, after its Solidarity-led management resisted post-Communist restructuring, Onyszkiewicz said. New private owners eventually took over and began a radical makeover.

"This is a certain irony of history and a tragedy of Solidarity," said Onyszkiewicz. "To introduce historic change, Solidarity had to cut the branch it was sitting on."

Seeing red

Over the 1980s and into the early 1990s, Solidarity became the victim of its own success. From its very start, Solidarity was more than a trade union, and its multifaceted legacy is rooted in its compound identity. Its now famous icon, the flowing red-and-white logo became a world-renowned symbol of the anti-communist crusade and it survived suppression under martial law imposed from 13 December 1981 until 22 July 1983.

But Solidarity fragmented when the common enemy – communism – collapsed in 1989. And although it remained as a trade union, Solidarity activists formed numerous small, bitterly opposing, political parties ranging from the liberal, business-oriented Freedom Union to special interest groups and extreme nationalist splinter formations.

This fragmentation was symbolized in the nation's first free presidential election since the end of World War II and the arrival of the Communist state. The 1990 poll pitted two former Solidarity allies against each other – legendary Solidarity founder Lech Walesa, the populist workers' hero and former Gdansk shipyard electrician who led Solidarity into existence in 1980 and Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the Roman Catholic thinker and editor who had been the leading intellectual advisor to Walesa and his strikers in August 1980.

The bitter fight divided anti-communist forces, and left festering differences. Solidarity faced painful dilemmas thanks to its close association with rightist governments whose shock therapy reforms hurt the union base. The former Communist Party, meanwhile, consolidated into the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD).

Solidarity's dilemmas have become



Ruth Gruber

The new Warsaw is exemplified by the glass and steel Europlex multiple cinema and shopping mall, built on Pulawska Street on the site of the old Kino Moskva (Moscow cinema), which was a city landmark under communism.

especially painful since 1997, when a government headed by the rightist Solidarity Election Action (AWS) was voted into office. The same man – Marian Krzaklewski – heads both the Solidarity trade union and the AWS. AWS managed to win by pulling a number of bickering, rightist factions under a single, Solidarity-led umbrella. But continuing infighting has contributed to a sharp drop in support. Recent opinion polls give AWS only 15 per cent of public backing.

Today, said journalist and commentator Konstanty Gebert, "The idea of 'solidarity' with a small 's' has disappeared ... it's a different mental universe." Solidarity, he said, was a "national liberation movement masquerading as a trade union movement; the bond uniting people was national. It can't be duplicated because the nation is not in danger – the danger is ourselves. The legacy is that we now live in a national society masquerading as a civil society."

Presidential elections on October 8 illustrated these changes. Incumbent Aleksander Kwasniewski, a former communist who heads the Democratic Left Alliance, was re-elected with a landslide victory. Solidarity leader Kzzaklewski came in a distant third. One-time hero Lech Walesa, heading his own tiny Christian Democratic party, received a humiliating one

per cent of the vote and later announced he was withdrawing from politics.

With growth, solidarity declines

This political ferment has gone on against a background of extraordinary growth. Poland's recovery has been the fastest among the post-Communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The evidence is everywhere, from the new glass and steel high-rises on Warsaw's skyline, to sleek boutiques, multiplexes and shopping malls, to traffic-choked city streets and the high-profile presence of multinational chains and companies. Poland hopes to join the European Union by 2005.

But the inequality of the social and economic boom is also easily apparent. Unemployment remains high, with a jobless rate of 14.5 per cent predicted for the end of 2000, and the economy has been described as operating on three tiers: a dynamic private sector, a "leaden-footed" state sector, and an "unreformed and stagnant" agricultural sector.

The influence and effectiveness of trade unions has diminished amid the economic boom – particularly as Poland's private sector, which amounted to only 31 per



THE ILO'S ROLE

As pointed out in the recent ILO document, "Your Voice in Work", developments in Poland demonstrate the role that ILO action and assistance can play in facilitating not only social, but also political change. In fact, it says, "The lesson of much recent history is that the seeds of democratic change were sown in social struggles over how people are treated at work."

Supported by Solidarity strikes across the nation and bolstered by an unprecedented alliance between workers and intellectuals, strike leaders in Gdansk in August 1980 formulated 21 demands which encompassed broad social and political rights, as well as bread-and-butter issues.

"Our main demand was based on the ILO Charter and its international Convention on labour relations," Polish Parliament member Janusz Onyszkiewicz, Solidarity's national spokesman in 1981, recalled in an interview. "We were looking for some legal framework in which we could work. It would have been impossible to have formed a political party. The Communists said all political parties were listed in the Constitution, so there was no room for another."

"Every association had to be registered by the authorities, who, of course, could refuse to register them," he said. "the only exceptions were trade unions. There was no legal basis [to refuse registration] because Poland had ratified the Convention that made registration of trade unions automatic."

The Gdansk Agreement ending the strikes on August 31, 1980, included the Government's overt acceptance of the principles of Conventions Nos. 87 and 98. In October 1980, Poland's Parliament, the Sejm, adopted a new Trade Unions Act allowing trade union pluralism, but when the new union, Solidarity, could not obtain the registration of its by-laws, the Director-General of the ILO undertook a mission to Poland to help unblock the situation, and in November of that year, Poland's Labour Minister appeared in person before the Committee on Freedom of Association and announced Solidarity's registration.

This victory was short-lived, however. Martial law was imposed on December 13, 1981. Trade union activities were barred and existing trade union structures were dissolved. Measures were taken against Solidarity, its leaders and its members.

Nonetheless, the ILO was able to visit Poland, meet with Government and trade union representatives, and visit Solidarity leader Lech Walesa who, like other union leaders, was held in detention.

During the 1980s, the ILO made several recommendations and issued negative reports about the Polish Government's record vis-à-vis unions. These included recommendations calling for the adoption of legislation compatible with Conventions Nos. 87 and 98, the release of the trade unionists still under detention, and the reinstatement of workers dismissed for trade union activities. These were rejected by the Polish Government. The ILO Committee of Experts continued to monitor the situation closely and in May 1987, the ILO Director-General returned to Poland and met with Government and trade union representatives, including the leadership of Solidarity, which was still not authorized to operate.

A new wave of strikes in 1988 forced the Government to agree to round-table negotiations with Solidarity representatives. These led to a transfer of power to Solidarity-allied forces, through partially free and later free elections. Upon ILO advice, a national tripartite commission was established in January 1989, in part to draft new trade union legislation. To consolidate reforms in the early 1990s, the Polish Government actively supported social dialogue through a project funded by the European Union and executed by the ILO. Sensitization seminars, practical training in bargaining and dispute resolution, and tripartite study tours (involving both trade union federations) to countries with well-functioning social dialogue and dispute resolution mechanisms, gave the social partners comparative references and helped solidify freedom of association and collective bargaining in Poland.

cent of GDP in 1990, has become the main engine of growth, representing nearly 70 per cent of national output and employment, and dominating the fields of retailing, construction and foreign trade.

"We can observe the erosion of trade unions in the privatized enterprises and a rejection of trade unions in the sector of new private businesses," said a Western diplomat who monitors trade union activity here. "At the same time, the authority of trade unions is declining and fewer employees are members of trade unions. New economic and ownership solutions are generally hostile to trade unions."

These new solutions include foreign investors eager to turn around newly privatized industries.

"Current legislation in support of trade union bargaining power is quite weak, and all power lies with the employers," said the diplomat. Investors, the diplomat said, may go through the "usual processes" of meeting with union representatives but rarely back down from their original positions, and usually win.

An opinion poll conducted by the Public Opinion Studies Center (CBOS) in March 1999, estimated the number of trade union members in Poland at 2.5 million, but trade unions themselves estimate that the number is nearly twice that, or about 4.5 million.

The survey indicated that 40 per cent of employees in the state and public sector and 31 per cent of employees in the social services sector belonged to unions, while only 3 per cent in the private sector did so (the survey did not include agriculture).

In fact, said a study called "Crumbling Bastions?" published by the Instytut Spraw

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Nepal's Kamaiyas are free, but will it last?

In July, the Government of Nepal outlawed bonded labour in Nepal, declaring the practice illegal, ordering bonded labourers freed immediately from any debt and written or oral contracts with landlords, and mandating 3 to 10 year prison terms for anyone who continued the practice. That would seem major progress, and it is. But for the ex-Kamaiya, the challenge is sustaining their freedom.

SURYAPATUWA, Nepal – In western Nepal, a bumpy, 40-minute ride from this Bardiya District capital through fertile paddy fields, leads to the home of Jung Bahadur and his wife, Asha Tharu who've recently arrived in the twenty-first century.

Until July of this year, many families here, including Jung Bahadur's, were *Kamaiya*, or bonded labourers, living a miserable life, working night and day for a landlord, or *Zamindar*. Then in July, the Government freed them, ending a practice that has kept thousands of local farmers and their families in poverty and debt for decades.

"We are very happy about this change and are trying to meet as many other Kamaiyas as possible to persuade them to quit," Jung Bahadur told a recent visitor. "Now, I can save money – there's no need to borrow anymore."

Freedom, but can a caged bird learn to fly?

On the face of it, it would seem that Jung Bahadur and his fellow Kamaiya are a success story in finding an end to an archaic practice and providing decent work to people who could only dream before of earning their own livelihood. And in some ways, it is.

Jung Bahadur was in fact one of the lucky few who, even before the government decree, had managed to pay off his debt of Rs 10,000 (about \$140) by earning extra cash from carpentry and casual agricultural work. Now the family is free



IL/O/Kathmandu

to make its own choices about how to run their lives. His wife Asha works in the kitchen garden and raises the children. Jung Bahadur owns a small piece of land (2 *khatta* or 0.07 hectare) and supplements his income through wage labour and carpentry.

But the acknowledged improvement in Kamaiya lives is not as clear cut as it seems. Some, like 51-year-old former Kamaiya Chun Budhiya, are too old to find other work, so he and his family continue working for the landlord in return for 4.5 quintal (450 kg) of paddy per year, plus food and a shelter. He does all types of work for the landlord, cutting grass for the animals, ploughing, planting, and irrigating, making him still dependent on the landlord despite his ex-Kamaiya status.

"Parrots who have been caged for too long have difficulties learning to fly," says an official of the Banke District Development Committee on the situation of the liberated Kamaiya.

The Kamaiya system

The Kamaiya system was prevalent in five districts of western Nepal, and mostly affected the Tharu ethnic group. Under it, a Kamaiya agreed to work for a *Zamindar*, under an oral contract for one year, receiving wages paid in kind in the form of a fixed quantity of paddy or a fixed portion of his production, or sometimes in cash. Often, his wife and children would also work for the landlord for little or no extra income.

Wages were rarely adequate, however, to meet the basic needs of the family, thus forcing the Kamaiya to take a loan from the landlord to meet social obligations like traditional festivities, or medical and other expenses. Debt service forced the Kamaiya to forfeit income. The Kamaiya were thus unable to free themselves from the spiral of poverty and debt, which was transferred from one generation to the next.

The Kamaiya system probably existed for five decades, evolving as farmers migrated from hills to lower land. Though they tilled the land, the farmers – mostly Tharu – had no legal rights to ownership. When the state awarded many civil servants, army personnel and royal personages large plots of land in the 1960s,

(continued on page 20)

Planet Work



NEW LABOUR MARKET ISSUES

● After a decade of continuous economic growth and with unemployment running close to zero, **Ireland** has a shortage of workers. This reverses a centuries-old trend of people leaving the country to find work. The Government estimates it will need to add 200,000 people to its workforce in the next six years to sustain its boom. Fas, the training and employment agency of the Government, is launching a global recruitment tour to fill the gap. Shortages are particularly critical in the areas of communications, information technology, construction, health services, and hospitality and catering. (*The Guardian*, 21 September 2000)

● In the **United States**, some companies – especially small businesses – are actively recruiting mothers with small children. Allowing them time off for child-related matters creates strong loyalty to the company, which is considered priceless in the midst of a 30-year low in unemployment and a job market in which workers can readily change jobs. The US Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that the number of working mothers with children under three years of age rose 9.5 per cent to 5.3 million between 1990 and 1999. But the pool of such workers appears to be drying up; during the 1980s, the number rose 47 per cent. (*Wall Street Journal Europe*, 20 September 2000)

A regular review of trends and developments in the world of work

● The rate of labour participation of women in **Argentina** varies according to their education and social level. The ILO reports that it is especially difficult for poor women to enter the labour market; among other factors, finding someone to take over their family responsibilities is a major obstacle. In the 1970s, 26.5 per cent of Argentinian women were working outside the home. At the end of the 1990s, this percentage grew to 44.7. (*La Nación*, Buenos Aires, 15 October 2000)

MICROCREDIT

● Can microcredit help people help themselves and be profitable at the same time? Yes, says a new report from **Opportunity International**, a US based private humanitarian organization. Opportunity International, which provides microcredit to the working poor in the form of small, collateral-free loans, says it distributed US\$43.8 million in 1999, representing 196,266 loans to 176,147 clients in 25 developing countries, and that

this money created 276,886 jobs. The organization said that fully 96 per cent of those loans were repaid on time and at the market rate of interest. (*Wall Street Journal Europe*, 14 September 2000)

FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

● The **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU)** has reported more violations of workers' rights around the world. In its annual survey, the ICFTU said at least 140 trade union members around the world were assassinated in 1999, nearly 3,000 arrested, more than 1,500 wounded, and 5,800 harassed because of their union activities. In 113 countries, freedom of association is hampered by the authorities, and in 80 of those countries, the right to strike is limited. (*ICFTU*, Brussels)

● Some companies in the **United States** are reportedly becoming more aggressive in threatening to close or relocate operations abroad if labour unions attempt to organize workers. According to a study by the US Trade Deficit Review Commission, in the past two years, 68 per cent of companies in mobile industries – such as manufacturing and communications – which faced attempts to organize their workers, threatened to relocate all or part of their operations. This is in sharp contrast to the late 1980s when less than 30 per cent of em-



ILO/Jacques Maillard

COMBAT CHILD LABOUR: JOIN THE GLOBAL CAMPAIGN

"The worst forms of child labour are morally abhorrent in any society, whatever its developmental stage or cultural traditions".

*Juan Somavia
ILO Director-General*

The world is uniting to move millions of child labourers from the workshop to the school yard. The International Labour Organization's Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No. 182 is now a force in this global campaign. So far, it's been ratified by scores of countries, more than any other Convention in a comparable period in the ILO's 81-year history. When they ratify this convention, ILO member States must incorporate its provisions into national law and practice. ILO members must take "immediate and effective action" to prohibit and eliminate the worst forms of labour for children under 18. Even where national legislation defines childhood as ending earlier, everyone up to 18 must be protected.

Join the fight to eradicate the worst forms of child labour! Our hope is in you.

www.ilo.org/childlabour



INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION

Produced by the ILO Bureau of Public Information

Olivera Zebian

ployers made similar threats. Workers voted in favour of unionizing in only 38 per cent of cases when companies warned they might shut down, as compared to 51 per cent where no such threats had been made. (*Uneasy Terrain: the Impact of Capital Mobility on Workers, Wages and Union Organization*, US Trade Deficit Review Commission, *Financial Times*, 16-17 September 2000)

WORKING CONDITIONS

- In **India** has more than 150,000 seafarers working on vessels around the globe. The National Union of Seafarers of India (NUSI) alleges that 30 per cent of them suffer at the hands of recruitment agents representing certain foreign-flag owners. Leo Barnes, General Secretary of NUSI, says that unscrupulous agents “recruit Indian seamen desperate for jobs, which offer low wages and poor service conditions”. Lloyd’s of London says the situation makes it abundantly clear that India must ratify the ILO Seafarers’ Identity Documents Convention, 1958 (No. 108) and the Recruitment and Placement of Seafarers Convention, 1996 (No. 179). (*Lloyd’s List*, 13 October 2000)

- In the **United States**, truck drivers who are fast asleep at the wheel, or nearly so, kill or injure an average of 56 people every day. In a US Department of Transportation (DOT) survey, 28 per cent of drivers reported falling asleep at the wheel at least once during the preceding month, and the DOT says that driver fatigue is a factor in an average of 755 fatalities and 19,705 injuries per year. Both experts and truckers agree that the underlying cause is the decline in

profits since the industry was deregulated in 1980, leading to a 30 per cent decline in the median earnings of long-haul truck drivers, who now must work longer hours – above the legal maximum – to earn their former salaries. (*US News Online*, 9 November 2000)

EQUALITY

- In Switzerland, women’s salaries still lag behind those of men. The average gross salary of women in the machinery industry is 5,250 Swiss francs per month compared with 7,200 Swiss francs for their male colleagues. Women with a certificate of competency are the least penalized, with gross salaries averaging 89 per cent of those of men having completed their apprenticeship, while women with diplomas from specialized institutes are penalized the most, with a gross salary only 80 per cent of that of their male colleagues. (*Fédération des associations suisses d’employés des industries mécanique et électrique (VSAM)*, quoted in *Le Temps*, Geneva, 22 September 2000)

POVERTY

- The World Bank reports that one out of every five people in the world (or 1.2 billion people) are living on less than US\$1 per day, while nearly half (2.8 billion) are living on less than US\$2 per day. In a new report, the Bank says that in sub-Saharan **Africa** between 1987 and 1998, the number of people living in poverty grew by some 50 million, followed closely by **south Asia** with an increase of some 45 million. The infant mortality rate in sub-Saharan Africa has also exploded, to 90 out of every



ILO/Jacques Maillard



1,000 births, the high number being attributed primarily to AIDS. (*Le Figaro Economie*, 13 September 2000)

- In 1996, **France** had 1.3 million “poor workers” (60 per cent men and 40 per cent women), or 6 per cent of all workers. They are defined as people who worked for part or all of the year, but live in a household earning less than 3,500 francs per month for a single person, or 7,350 francs for a couple with two children. It is estimated that more than 2 million people 17 years of age or more, plus another 830,000 children less than 17 years old, live in “poor workers” households. (*Le Monde*, 28 October 2000)

MISCELLANEOUS

- The Government of the **Philippines** has signed an optional protocol to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which raises the minimum age for recruitment and participation in armed conflicts from 15 to 18 years. UNICEF-Manila says that 20 to 25 per cent of the recruits in one rebel army in the country are children. United Nations figures estimate that 300,000 children below the age of 18 are participating in over 30 armed conflicts around the world, as frontline combatants, porters, sex slaves, messengers, or spies. (*Manila Bulletin*, 17 September 2000)



ILO/P. Deloche



● Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the former **Eastern bloc countries** are facing a wave of migration. In Hungary, for example, the number of migrants has doubled every year since 1995. Illegal border crossings are currently estimated at 60,000 per year, with some 40,000 caught. Coming mostly from Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, and other countries of Asia, the migrants can cross the former Soviet Union almost without border or visa checks. Once inside, they can easily

continue into the European Union Schengen free-movement zone. (*Financial Times*, 11 October 2000)

● **World Teachers' Day**, October 5, was celebrated worldwide by some 50 million teachers. On that same date in 1996, UNESCO and the ILO adopted recommendations concerning the status of teachers. In Bangladesh, the celebration came in the aftermath of a 45-day strike by non-government teachers seeking increases in the govern-

ment-provided portion of their salaries, the recruitment of teachers through a national recruiting authority, and acceptance of the ILO/UNESCO recommendation on the status of teachers. (*The Independent*, 5 October 2000, distributed by *Worldsources Online*)

● In the aftermath of the killing by fellow passengers of a 19-year old man who was trying to kick down the cockpit door on their plane in mid-flight, the Association of Flight Attendants has repeated its

call for more training for crews in conflict resolution and understanding the psychological aspects of "air rage". ALPA, the pilots union, also advocates more training for flight attendants in managing confrontations and in techniques of physical restraint. Currently, in such cases, cabin crews are encouraged to summon help from passengers. (*The Wall Street Journal Europe*, 27 September 2000) □

Nepal's Kamaiyas

(continued from page 17)

the Tharu found themselves evicted and ultimately dependent on the landlords.

A recent survey indicates there are over 7,000 ex-Kamaiya families in the Bardiya District of which around 3,000 have no home and no land of their own. The government is identifying state-owned land for redistribution to these families, giving priority to those without homes. The hope is to provide sufficient land for families to be able to produce enough for their own subsistence needs so that the children will have a better life than that of a farm labourer.

But land alone is not enough; also needed are education, health services and alternative employment opportunities for the adults. Empowerment of ex-Kamaiyas is essential if they are to escape falling again into other forms of exploitative labour.

Support needed

The government Ministry of Land Reform and Management has drawn up a proposal for the rescue and rehabilitation of the emancipated Kamaiyas, but needs the support of donor agencies for its implementation.¹

The ILO InFocus Programme on Promoting the Declaration, and the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) have come together to design a project on the Sustainable Elimination of Bonded Labour in Nepal, with US\$3.5 million funding

from the US Department of Labor, and which will be implemented by the Nepal Government and nongovernmental agencies, including workers' and employers' organizations. The Project builds upon achievements of IPEC's earlier projects aiming specifically at the elimination of child bonded labour in Nepal.

The new project recognizes bonded children as part of Kamaiya bonded families, and thus adopts an integrated approach to tackling a range of problems faced by poverty-stricken households in western Nepal. Key elements include strengthening the capacity of the Government, the social partners and NGOs to support effective rehabilitation of former Kamaiya families, including enforcement

of minimum agricultural wages; awareness-raising and advocacy on fundamental principles and rights at work, and ILO Conventions including the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182); assisting the reintegration of Kamaiya families into their communities; and providing appropriate, high-quality education to former Kamaiya children through mainstreaming them into schools or giving them non-formal and vocational training.

The project will collaborate closely with the ILO Social Finance Unit's (SFU) sub-regional project on combating debt bondage through microfinance schemes, which covers Nepal as well as Bangladesh, India and Pakistan.

In these four countries, the SFU project aims at facilitating access to alternative sources of credit, savings and insurance for a population at risk of becoming bonded in the first place or relapsing into debt bondage after being freed. The strategy is to break the (quasi-) monopoly of the employer as a money-lender in the local market in order to discontinue this linkage between the labour and capital "market". Since bonded labour is made up of a complex web of relations which are not exclusively financial, complementary support will also be organized in the areas of sensitization, education, primary health care, income-generating activities, group organizations, and social empowerment. □

GLOBAL REPORT

Under the Follow-Up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, a Global Report is produced by the Director-General each year for discussion at the International Labour Conference. The topic for the Global Report in 2001 is the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour. The Report will be launched prior to the 89th Session of the ILC in June 2001. Its findings and the discussion at Conference will be used in the drafting of paper for the November 2001 Session of the Governing Body, on priorities and action plans for technical cooperation on the elimination of forced labour.

¹ This project is part of the Social Finance Unit's Bondage Eradication Standards and Tools (BEST) programme to make debt bondage a thing of the past.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Global employment levels in textile, clothing and footwear industries holding stable

ILO tripartite meeting examines labour practices in the industry

Employment in the production of textiles, clothing and footwear (TCF) remained stable at approximately 30 million jobs during the 1990s, after suffering a global decline of 16 per cent during the 1980s. However, during the last decade the geographical distribution of jobs in the industry shifted dramatically toward Asia, with China emerging as a major producing power in the industry, according to a recent ILO report.*

GENEVA – The report, prepared for a tripartite sectoral meeting held in Geneva from 16 to 20 October, says that Asia's share of total employment in the TCF industry rose from 69 per cent to 72 per cent during the period 1995-98. "Among Asian countries," the report notes, "China is by far the largest employer," accounting for nearly 20 per cent of the global workforce. In 1998, China was also the world's largest exporter of clothing (over US\$30 billion).

Indonesian employment grew substantially during the period and TCF jobs more than doubled in Bangladesh. Thailand and Sri Lanka also registered gains. Other countries which saw increases include Lesotho, Botswana, Jordan, Kuwait, Tunisia and Mauritius, although most of them increased from a very low base. In sheer numbers, India is the second largest employer in TCF industries, but during the latter half of the 1990s the country registered a decline of about 10 per cent

below its 1980 total of TCF jobs.

Countries with the relatively highest losses in textile employment during the last two decades include Poland, Hungary, the UK, Spain, France, Hong Kong (China) and Germany. Clothing employment in the Americas "fell steadily throughout the 1990-98 period", the report finds. Europe saw a fall in employment of nearly 50 per cent between 1990 and 1998, partly due to a sharp decline in employment in Central and Eastern Europe. However in spite of the large job losses in Europe, "European clothing output fell by only 10 per cent during the 1990s, suggesting a substantial rise in produc-

tivity during the period," according to the ILO report.

"In general," the report notes, "the less developed countries were the gainers in textile employment throughout the period under consideration and the more developed countries the losers." The ILO says the trend "is scarcely surprising, given the high labour content in clothing production".

At the end of the 1990s, the report finds, "some of the largest exporters of clothing to world markets were among those with the lowest labour costs: China, Indonesia, Pakistan and Viet Nam, with labour costs under US\$0.45 per hour.



ILO/Jacques Maillard

more progress in poverty reduction and decent work.

● Adopted the latest Report of the *Committee on Freedom of Association*² at the same session, drawing special attention to the grave and urgent situation prevailing in Guatemala, where the exercise of trade union activity is frequently subject to violations of human rights, including murder, physical assaults, death threats, raids on the homes and attempted abduction of trade union officers and members, anti-union dismissals, obstruction of collective bargaining, and the requirement for approval of collective agreements on working conditions. In response to allegations made by Education International (EI) and the Ethiopian

Teachers' Association (ETA) of government interference in trade union activity in Ethiopia, the Committee requested "the Government, once again, to take the necessary measures to ensure that all the ETA members and leaders detained or charged are released and all charges withdrawn". This serious case, concerning the killing of trade unionists, arrest, detention, harassment, dismissal and transfer of trade union leaders and members, as well as government interference in trade union functioning, has been examined by the Committee over several years now. □

¹ The Governing Body is the executive body of the International Labour Office (the Office is the secretariat of the Organization). It meets three times a year, in March, June and November. It takes decisions

on ILO policy, decides the agenda of the International Labour Conference, adopts the draft Programme and Budget of the Organization for submission to the Conference, and elects the Director-General.

It is composed of 56 titular members (28 governments, 14 employers and 14 workers) and 66 deputy members (28 governments, 19 employers and 19 workers). Ten of the titular government seats are permanently held by states of chief industrial importance (Brazil, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States). The other government members are elected by the Conference every three years. They are Algeria, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chad, Croatia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Namibia, Peru, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Switzerland, Trinidad and Tobago, and Venezuela.

² The Committee on Freedom of Association, established in 1951, oversees compliance with the fundamental principles of freedom of association, which guarantee, inter alia, the right of workers to organize and to engage in collective bargaining. It meets three times annually and consists of three government representatives, three employer representatives and three worker representatives.

From shipyard to graveyard: Is there a decent way to break ships?

(Continued from p. 9)

ber of Shipping, Chris Horrocks, in his London office. "We are now aware of the problem, but there's a limit to what we can do; we can only cajole and encourage within the ship-owning industry. If regulation will come it will come, but from the owners' point of view it will clearly stop short of facilities and conditions."

Who then will ultimately be responsible? Projections by maritime magazine, Lloyd's List, foresee the number of scrapable ships tripling in the coming years, as vessels built during the 1970s become obsolete and unseaworthy, and single-hull vessels are banned. The increasing number of ships to be scrapped will intensify the pressure on shipbreaking yards to work faster as more boats come ashore. Yet there may also be a positive side to this race against rust; more boats may mean more pressure to improve working conditions as the industry expands.

"Now, only four five countries do the job," says Shipbreakers Association head Rahman. "We are not only breaking the ships, we are saving you...If you consider the global context, then we are doing a very big job. Otherwise like the Titanic, [they will] have to be sunk to the ocean floor."



ILO/Sanja Göhre

There is much room for improvement in this dangerous and back-breaking work. The potential for accidents is everywhere, from falling steel plates to frayed winch ropes which can snap and remove a limb or a head.

ILO expert Paul Bailey says a global solution will involve all stakeholders. "Although the problem might seem insurmountable, there are a number of practical measures which can be taken, including providing training for the workers, safety equipment and hygienic living quarters. Workers alone will not be able to solve the problem. We need a global

partnership of shipowners, shipbreakers, employers, trade unions and, of course, government inspectors who will see that these standards are enforced. This is yet again a test for globalization and decent work." □

See Media Shelf for information on a recent ILO video production on the subject.



A regular review of the International Labour Organization and ILO-related activities and events taking place around the world.

G8 SEEKS GREATER PROMOTION OF CORE LABOUR STANDARDS

▲ G8 leaders meeting in Japan in late July pledged to “engage in a new partnership with non-G8 countries, particularly developing countries, international organizations and civil society, including the private sector and nongovernmental organizations.” In a July 23 communiqué, the leaders expressed specific support for increasing cooperation between the ILO and the international financial institutions (IFIs) “in promoting adequate social protection and core labour standards”, and urged the IFIs “to incorporate these standards into their policy dialogue with member countries”. In addition, they stressed “the importance of effective cooperation between the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the ILO on the social dimensions of globalization and trade liberalization”. G8 leaders also reiterated their commitment to primary education, the fight against poverty and measures to combat HIV/AIDS.

EUROPEAN EMPLOYERS MEET IN ESTONIA

▲ European employers discussed the future of “Social Europe” and European integration in mid-September, at two meetings in Tallinn, Estonia, ably hosted by the Estonian employers (ETTK). An ILO Workshop on “Employers and Social Dialogue – Employer Strategy for the Europe of Tomorrow” took up the European Union requirements on candidate countries, and discussed ways to improve “East-West’ cooperation between employers. Following this event, the International Organization of Employers (IOE) assembled a record thirty European member organizations for its annual European meeting, discussing “ILO and Employers” and “Social security in the XXIst century”. The meeting was attended by Estonian Prime Minister Mart Laar and ILO Director-General Juan Somavia.

For further information, please contact the Bureau for Employers’ Activities, phone: +4122/799-7748; fax: +4122/799-8948; e-mail: actemp@ilo.org

TRIPARTISM AND SOCIAL DIALOGUE IN CENTRAL AMERICA

▲ With resources from the Government of Norway, an ILO project on tripartism and social dialogue was started in Central America in June 2000. The project will cover Costa

Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama and contribute towards strengthening the relevant government agencies and social partners both through institution building and mechanisms for consultation and dialogue. The promotion of gender issues and participation of women in this process is another major objective of the project. Another Norwegian funded project for the promotion of sound labour relations in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Vietnam started already in 1998.

For further information, please contact the InFocus Programme on Strengthening Social Dialogue, phone: +4122/799-7035; fax: +4122/799-8749; e-mail: ifpdialogue@ilo.org

PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY IN RUSSIA

▲ High levels of formal and legal equality of men and women existed in the countries of the former Soviet Bloc. Unlike in many Western societies, the integration of women into the labour market was not accompanied by a feminist



ILO/Jacques Maillard

debate questioning the traditional role of women in the family and the household. So many women workers carried the heavy burden of two jobs. In recent years, the situation for many women has gone from bad to worse. Single mothers have become one of the most vulnerable and poorest groups in the society. Jointly with Russian researchers and the

Moscow Trade Union Federation, the ILO has started a project to stimulate the discussion on gender equality at the workplace in Russia today. The preliminary findings of this research are presented in the report "Gender issues at work: Case studies on Russian enterprises".

For further information, please contact F. Hoffer, EECAT Moscow, phone: +7095/933-0810; fax: +7095/933-0820; e-mail: hoffer@ilo.ru

ICFTU REPORTS VIOLATIONS OF ILO CORE CONVENTIONS

▲ In 1999, at least 140 trade unionists who stood up for workers' rights were murdered, disappeared or committed suicide after they were threatened, reports the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) in its latest report on trade union rights in 113 countries. ICFTU General Secretary Bill Jordan noted that the report's key findings include "ruthless repression in Latin America, attacks and interference in Asia, arrests and imprisonment in Africa,

severe restrictions and non-payment of wages in Eastern Europe, and a growing trend to 'union busting' activities in industrialized countries".

CARIBBEAN ENTERPRISE FORUM

▲ How can businesses and unions become stakeholders in a process of trust-building that makes both parties winners? CEO's, union leaders, international and Caribbean experts and practitioners will speak about enterprises which have made a difference at the ILO's first Caribbean Enterprise Forum, 25-26 January 2001, which will be organized with support from the US Department of Labour (DOL). The Forum will also see the launch of a major ILO/DOL programme entitled "Promoting Human Resource-oriented Enterprise Strategies and Workplace Partnerships in the Caribbean".

For further information, please contact L. Hazel, phone: +868/628-1453; fax: +868/628-2433; e-mail: hazel@ilocarib.org.tt



BANGLADESH. FIGHTING CHILD LABOUR: FROM DREAM TO REALITY

▲ Pioneering work on giving child workers valid alternatives to work began five years ago in Bangladesh, when the country's garment manufacturers' and exporters' association (BGMEA) agreed with UNICEF and the ILO to an integrated plan against child labour. Over the last four years, some 27,000 children were withdrawn from BGMEA member factories and the percentage of children working in those factories dropped from 40 per cent in 1995 to 5 per cent in mid-2000.

The integrated plan against child labour involves a monitoring system, an income replacement scheme for former child workers and their families, learning centres, and the provision to adults in the child worker's family of micro-credit and skills and entrepreneurship training. Basic education, stipends and skills training have opened avenues of hope to thousands of children, and the country's leading export industry was saved from the threat of a crippling boycott by importers.

Similar strategic alliances have been created under the

ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) in other industries, such as soccer ball assembly in Pakistan and footwear and fisheries in Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand. These and other strategies to banish child labour from the global economy were discussed by experts from 16 countries at an ILO/Japan Asian Regional Meeting on Monitoring Child Labour at the Workplace, in Dhaka (Bangladesh) from 24 to 26 October 2000.

The ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of child Labour (IPEC) was launched in 1992 to help countries combat child labour through action programmes, research, development and advocacy. From a core of less than 10 countries, IPEC has grown into a global alliance now operating in 65 countries in all regions in the world.



ILO/Serge Cid



Away from trade union diplomacy

Unions without borders? Congress of the International Metalworkers' Federation (IMF)

Perhaps this won't be the last conference of its kind. But the future of international cooperation between trade unions will look very different after the 10th World Automobile Conference of the International Metalworkers' Federation (IMF), held at the Wolfsburg Congress Park, Wolfsburg, Germany, on 26 and 27 September 2000. Shop stewards and trade union representatives of the automobile industry and its suppliers from all over the world had come to Wolfsburg to discuss "global solidarity in a global industry", the meeting's central topic.

▲ WOLFSBURG, Germany – “We must get away from trade union diplomacy and move on to a network of day-to-day communication round the globe,” declared IMF President Klaus Zwickel (IG-Metall/Germany). Noticeably impatient with the rapid path of globalization, he tried to impress upon the participants that what will be needed in the future are not fine-sounding resolutions against the devastating effects of globalization – well-founded as they doubtless are – but day-to-day cooperation leading to swift and direct trade union action across national frontiers.

Few sectors are as highly internationalized as the automobile industry. After a spate of mergers, cooperation agreements and integration, six worldwide manufacturing conglomerates – General Motors, Ford, Daimler-Chrysler, Toyota, Renault and Volkswagen – have emerged in the last few years. Between them they account for roughly 82 per cent of the world's automobile output. Four smaller enterprises (Honda, Peugeot-Citroen, BMW and Daewoo) and a number of “niche” manufacturers share the remainder between them, and some of them are seen by some observers as medium-term candidates for take-over.

At the same time, the profile of the major companies' activities is shifting increasingly towards the provision of services. Ferdinand Piëch, CEO of the Volkswagen group, gave a talk outlining his vision of Volkswagen as the leading purveyor of mobility services in all fields connected with the motor car. Employment in the sphere of actual production will continue losing in importance compared with pre- and post-sale services. The recently opened “Auto City” at Wolfsburg, a lavish theme park affiliated with the Volkswagen factory, where customers can take possession of their new car in what amounts almost to a ceremonial act, was, he said, a step in that direction.

For the representation of workers' interests at the company and trade union level this entails a twofold task. They must organize themselves as globally as the groups of companies, and they must penetrate new industries hitherto largely closed to trade union activities. The unions at the Volkswagen plant in Wolfsburg constitute a positive exception. They have succeeded in organizing the majority of the newly

recruited employees at Auto City. And since 1999, they have had at their disposal a worldwide works council on which delegates from Volkswagen's major production sites in twelve countries are represented.

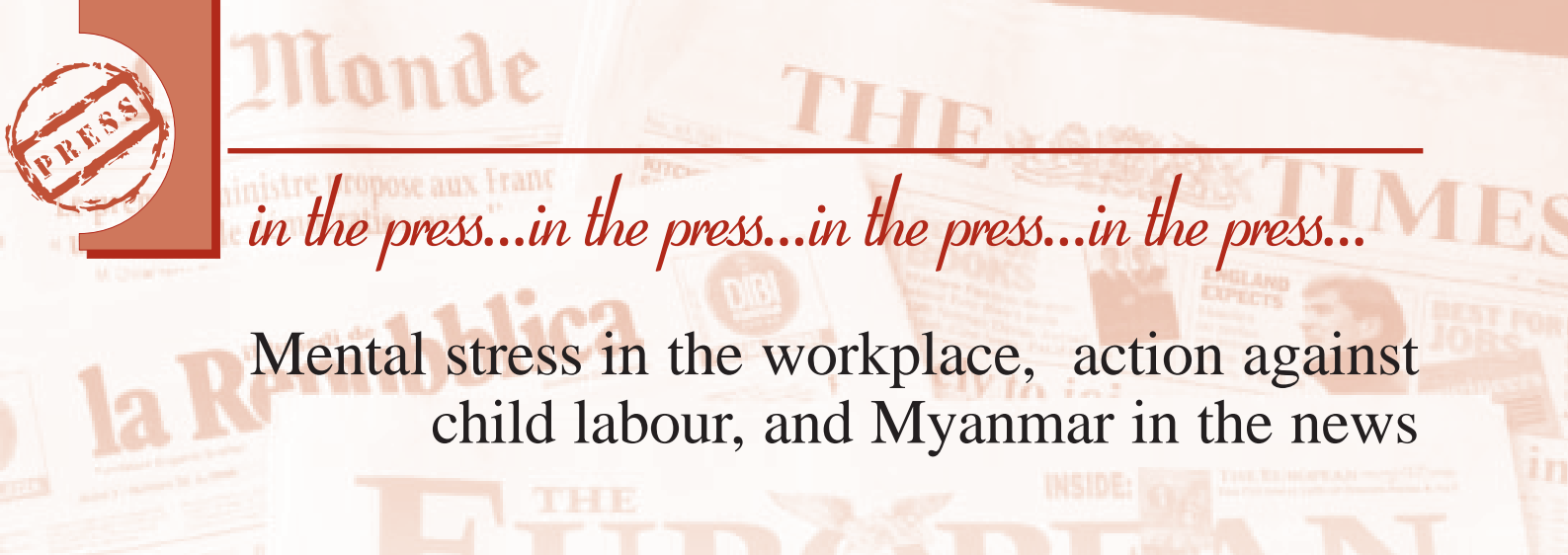
A meeting of VW's World Works Council held a week before the IMF Congress demonstrated how important direct, immediate cooperation is to workforce representatives outside the central production site. Conflicts with local managements due to non-respect of wage rates or legal regulations in connection with overtime requirements, were reported by representatives from several locations. The World Works Council provides an opportunity to bring such situations directly to the attention of the group's top leadership.

In most other groups of companies, such possibilities are as yet non-existent. As a first step, this gap is being closed within the framework of the IMF by “world councils” which, however, do not operate on a permanent basis. An additional working group within the IMF is therefore to be set up whose task, in the words of IMF general secretary Marcello Malentacchi, will be “to help build up a global network of the metalworkers' movement”. Parallel to this, the IMF has prepared a draft Code of Conduct, embodying the ILO core labour standards, which it is hoped companies will ascribe to.

In another major shift, and in order to respond more rapidly to globalization, the IMF will be devolving most of the responsibility for organizing the World Works Councils to the union with the largest membership (usually the home country of the multinational) while concentrating itself more on international solidarity.

To facilitate social dialogue, Paul Bailey, automotive industry analyst of the ILO's Sectoral Activities Department, moderated two panel discussions: the first on the impact of auto industry trends on workers, and the second on union responses.

*Martin Kempe,
with staff reports*



in the press...in the press...in the press...in the press...

Mental stress in the workplace, action against child labour, and Myanmar in the news

The Financial Express

(India)

Process of marginalising farm sector must be reversed, ILO

Our Political Bureau
New Delhi, Sept 18

Agriculture sector has effectively been marginalised in the process of globalisation. With most gains going to manufacturing-export industries, says an International Labour Organisation (ILO) report.

Underlining the urgent need to draw lessons, for the process can be altered to benefit the maximum number of people and countries, the report says the urgency arises from the fact that agriculture still contains over half of the world's labour force and over two-thirds of world poverty.

The report has been prepared for a four-day tripartite meeting at the ILO headquarters at Geneva beginning on Monday which will be attended by representatives of 26 countries.

The meeting, organised under the auspices of the ILO's Sectoral Activities Programme, will address questions like "How is the agriculture sector-the largest employer of the world labour force-affected by globalisation". What role does it play and how can this role be enhanced in a sustainable manner to improve the living standards of farmers and farm workers?

The report, gist of which was released here on Monday by the local ILO office, says the benefits of globalisation for the farm sector have so far come in the form of diversification of the export base to non-traditional crops like fruits, vegetables and flowers.

FT.com

FINANCIAL TIMES

1. BUSINESS TIMES (MALAYSIA): MALAYSIA RATIFIES ILO CONVENTION ON CHILD LABOUR

BUSINESS TIMES (MALAYSIA): MALAYSIA RATIFIES ILO CONVENTION ON CHILD LABOUR
89% match; Business Times (Malaysia) ; 21-Sep-2000 12:00:00 am ; 343 words
BY HAMISAH HAMID

Malaysia has ratified the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 182 on the prohibition and the elimination of the worst forms of child labour.

Human Resources Minister Datuk Dr Fong Chan Onn said the Cabinet agreed to ratify the convention during its meeting last Wednesday.

The ILO Convention on the worst forms of child labour, involving those below 18 years old, include all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, the production of pornography or for illicit activities and work likely to harm the health, safety and moral of children," he said at a news conference after chairing the ministry's post-Cabinet meeting in Kuala Lumpur.

El Mundo

10Oct2000 ESPAÑA: Salud mental. Uno de cada 10 trabajadores sufre depresión, ansiedad o estrés. Informe de la OIT.

Por MARÍA TERESA BENITEZ DE LUGO. Especial para EL MUNDO.
SALUD MENTAL / INFORME DE LA OIT

Uno de cada 10 trabajadores sufre depresión, ansiedad o estrés GINEBRA.-Uno de cada 10 trabajadores de los países industrializados sufre depresión, ansiedad, estrés o cansancio crónico, lo que ocasiona graves consecuencias económicas y sociales en el trabajo, según un nuevo informe de la Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT) publicado ayer en Ginebra.

El informe, titulado La salud mental en el trabajo, realizado por Phyllis Gabriel, especialista en rehabilitación profesional, analiza la situación de la población trabajadora en cinco países - Finlandia, Alemania, Polonia, Estados Unidos y el Reino Unido-que representan diferentes sistemas de organización laboral.



IT revolution fuels workplace stress

A new report says that increasing numbers of people suffer from stress because of changes in work practices - and it is costing governments and companies billions of dollars a year.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO), a UN agency handling employment issues, drew these conclusions in a survey drawn from separate studies conducted in five industrialised countries.

The results led the ILO to predict a dramatic worldwide increase in depression and stress as new technologies grow and globalisation accelerates.

It said that incidences of stress, depression and burnout had increased over the past decade with up to one in 10 workers affected.

Stress damage

US: One in 10 adults suffer from a depressive disorder each year

Germany: Absenteeism related to mental health problems costs \$2.2bn each year

01Nov2000 AUSTRALIA: Workforces hit the IT panic button.

By Lisa Gilby.
WORKERS around the world are depressed, anxious and burnt-out as a result of the information technology boom. Experts said workers were exposed to chronic occupational stress because of inadequate information technology training, unreliable technology systems and increased competition in the workplace. An International Labour Organisation study of mental health policies and programmes in Britain, the United States, Finland, Germany and Poland showed the incidence of mental health problems was rising. As many as one in 10 workers were depressed, anxious, stressed or burnt-out. This often led to unemployment, and in the most severe cases, hospital admission. "The impact of the information (c) 2000 Queensland Newspapers Pty Ltd. Sources: Courier Mail (Queensland)

11Oct2000 SUÍÇA: Stress de empregados dá prejuízos bilionários.

Internacional (Brazil)

Genebra, 11 de outubro de 2000 - Alertando contra o que chama de 'epidemia global de stress' no mundo do trabalho, a Federação Mundial para a Saúde Mental (FISM) conclamou ontem governos, empresários e sindicatos a trabalharem num plano de ação urgente para combater o problema. Pelos seus cálculos, somente a depressão psicológica na Europa e na América do Norte provoca um prejuízo de US\$ 120 bilhões por ano, dois terços dos quais representariam perda de produtividade. A entidade diz que o crescente problema de distúrbios mentais entre trabalhadores é uma forte advertência aos empresários, que só têm a perder com a situação.

Ao final de um seminário internacional realizado em Genebra em conjunto com a Organização Internacional do Trabalho (OIT) e a Organização Mundial da Saúde (OMS), a FISM voltou a atribuir o registrado aumento de problemas psíquicos às transformações no mundo do trabalho provocadas pela economia centrada nas novas tecnologias. "É agora um mundo com 24 horas de trabalho por dia, hiper-competição, excesso de informação e fim da segurança no emprego".

A entidade propõe um plano de ação contra a depressão nos locais de trabalho, que inclui eliminar expectativas pouco claras e prioridades confusas, medir a produtividade em termos de quantidade mas também qualidade. Também recomenda que as empresas tenham pôr fim a dez fontes principais de stress (veja o quadro abaixo).

(Assis Moreira).
(c) 2000 Gazeta Mercantil S/A.

Sources: GAZETA MERCANTIL 11/10/2000

TRIBUNE DE GENÈVE (Switzerland)

JEUDI
28 SEPTEMBRE 2000
OIT

Somavia salue le cap des mille ratifications

La campagne de ratification des Conventions de l'OIT progresse. Le directeur général du BIT, Juan Somavia, a salué récemment le cap de la millième ratification.

Mais seulement vingt-deux pays ont accepté les huit textes considérés comme fondamentaux. Cinquante-deux autres pays ont accepté sept des huit Conventions. Le plus souvent, la ratification de la récente Convention 182 sur les pires formes du travail des enfants de 1999 fait encore défaut (37 pays seulement).

FINANCIAL TIMES

FINANCIAL TIMES TUESDAY OCTOBER 10 2000

LABOUR CONDITIONS ONE IN TEN WORKERS 'SUFFERS MENTAL HEALTH DISORDER'

ILO warns of 'epidemic of stress'

By Frances Williams in Geneva

Mental-health campaigners yesterday issued a call to action to governments and employers to tackle what they claim is a "worldwide epidemic" of serious mental health disorders, often linked to stress in the workplace.

As many as one in 10 workers in Europe and North America is suffering from depression, anxiety, stress or burnout, according to a five-country study by the International Labour Organisation, which said the incidence of mental health

problems was rising. The costs are huge. The ILO report estimates that in the European Union spending on mental health problems may be equivalent to 3 or 4 per cent of gross national product.

Meanwhile the World Federation for Mental Health, a US-based advocacy network, says depressed employees may be costing business in North America and the EU some \$120bn a year in absenteeism, low productivity and sick pay.

Mental health disorders have overtaken low-back pain as the most common

Quotidien du Maroc

(Morocco)

Genève: Selon une étude de l'OIT sur la santé mentale

La population active menacée de troubles psychiques

Les troubles psychiques et autres troubles mentaux de plus en plus répandus sur les lieux de travail, un véritable fléau de la mondialisation de l'économie, ont été au centre d'une conférence internationale de haut niveau organisée par l'OIT à Genève pour les 100 ans de son existence.

L'étude de l'OIT, publiée à l'occasion de la Journée mondiale de la santé mentale et portant sur les politiques et programmes d'hygiène mentale conçus à l'intention des travailleurs de l'Allemagne, des Etats-Unis, de la Finlande, de la

Pologne et du Royaume-Uni, souligne l'importance que sont en train de prendre les troubles psychiques, en particulier dans les pays industrialisés. Les pays de l'Union européenne (UE) consacrent ainsi entre 3 et 4% de

leur PIB aux problèmes de santé mentale, tandis qu'aux Etats-Unis, les dépenses publiques occasionnées par le traitement de la dépression se situent entre 20 et 44 milliards de dollars.

Articles have been excerpted and are not always in the exact format in which they appear originally. They are trimmed and rearranged sometimes, for space reasons.



in the press...in the press...in the press...in the press...

THE IRISH TIMES

WORLD Thursday, October 12, 2000

One in 10 workers affected by 'despair'

Layoffs, mergers, short-term contracts and high productivity demands have taken their toll in the last 10 years, writes Andrew Osborn

UN REPORT : The workers of the world, according to a United Nations report, are united in just one thing these days: stress.

The report warns that anxiety levels are likely to increase dramatically in coming years as globalisation continues and economic costs for business increase.

The survey examines stress in the workplace in five countries. The UN's International Labour Organisation (ILO) found that levels of anxiety, burnout and depression are spiralling out of control.

The problem is costing employers billions of pounds in sick leave and lost working time, and often leaves employees grappling with a series of complex mental disorders for years afterwards.

The study focused on the problems of stress and mental illness at work in the UK, the US, Germany, Finland and Poland.

Handelsblatt

(Germany, 10.10.2000)

Stress-Schäden kosten deutsche Wirtschaft fünf Milliarden DM

HANDELSBLATT, 10.10.2000
egl DÜSSELDORF. Auf zunehmende gesundheitliche Schäden durch die psychologische Belastung am Arbeitsplatz weist die Internationale Arbeitsorganisation (IAO) in einer groß angelegten Studie hin. Sie umfasst Deutschland, die USA, Großbritannien, Finnland und Polen.

In einer Untersuchung über die Krankheiten und Arbeitsunfähigkeiten durch psychologische Belastungen am Arbeitsplatz in Deutschland kommt das IAO-Expertenteam zu dem Ergebnis, dass die Produktionsausfälle, die der Abwesenheit vom Arbeitsplatz wegen Stress-Krankheiten zugeordnet werden können, sich in Deutschland auf 5 Mrd. DM jährlich belaufen.

31Oct2000 TURKEY: CHILD LABOUR CENTRE ESTABLISHED IN YALOVA.

YALOVA, Oct 31 (A.A) - A "Child Labour Centre" was established in Marmara Yalova province within the structure of Yalova Governorship. The sources said on Tuesday that the centre, which is established by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, and Yalova Governorship, will first determine the children working in the streets. The centre will carry out works on protection of the children working in the streets of Marmara Yalova province, and will also give physiological counselling to the families of these children. (c) Anadolu Agency.

Sources: ANADOLU NEWS AGENCY 31/10/2000

15Nov2000 THAILAND: Thailand to Ratify UN Convention to Eliminate Child Labor.

BANGKOK, November 15 (Xinhua) - Thailand will ratify a United Nations convention to eliminate the worst forms of child labor, the International Labor Organization's (ILO) regional office for Asia and Pacific said here Wednesday. "Thailand's expected ratification of Convention 182 will put a high priority on the elimination of the worst form of child labor since it requires ratifying states to take immediate and effective measures to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labor as a matter of urgency," said a press release of ILO. Sources: XINHUA NEWS AGENCY BULLETIN Source: Xinhua News Agency Bulletin



(11.10.2000)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

NO. 243, VOL. CLXXIII

IT revolution adds to workplace stress

GENEVA: One in ten office workers in Britain, the US, Germany, Finland and Poland suffers from depression, anxiety, stress or burnout, an International Labour Organisation survey showed Monday.

Information glut resulting from technological advances, the pace of globalisation, dysfunctional office politics, overwork and job insecurity after a decade of downsizing are the main contributors to workplace stress, the survey found.

Depression in the workplace is now the second most disabling illness for workers after heart disease, said the survey. (Reuters)

TRIBUNE DE GENÈVE

(Switzerland, 9.11.2000)

BIT

Youssou N'Dour contre le travail des enfants

Le chanteur sénégalais Youssou N'Dour a été nommé hier par le BIT ambassadeur honoraire contre le travail des enfants. Le chanteur s'est dit prêt avec sa musique à rompre le silence sur les enfants qui souffrent. La Convention sur les pires formes de travail des enfants, adoptée en juin 1999, a été ratifiée jusqu'ici par 46 Etats. ATS

(Sri Lanka, 25.10.2000)

Daily News

ILO urges Asia break child labour, poverty

DHAKA, Oct 24 (Reuters) - The International Labour Organisation (ILO) said on Tuesday efforts to end child labour would not succeed until developing countries broke the vicious cycle of poverty.

"Child labour and poverty are intertwined. Poverty produces child labour and child labour leads to poverty and we need to break this cycle," said Mitsuru Horiuchi, ILO regional director for Asia and the Pacific.

At least 250 million children aged between five and 14 were working in the developing world and more than 60 percent of them lived in Asia, she said.

Horiuchi, based in Bangkok, was speaking on the first day of a three-day regional meeting of the ILO to monitor child labour.

She said that Bangladesh has 6.3 million working children in more than 300 sectors, including a large number in agriculture.

"The government is closely monitoring the situation and making all possible efforts to tackle the problem in a pragmatic and socially responsible way," said Bangladesh Labour and Employment Minister Abdul Mannan.

Neue Zürcher Zeitung

(Switzerland, 11 October 2000)

Hohe Kosten von Stress und psychischer Belastung am Arbeitsplatz

Die Weltgesundheitsorganisation und das Internationale Arbeitsamt brechen ein Tabu. Eine von der Weltgesundheitsorganisation (WHO) und dem Internationalen Arbeitsamt (ILO) erarbeitete Studie zu einem häufig tabuisierten Thema kommt zum Schluss, dass in Europa über 37 Mio. Personen an beschäftigungsbedingter Depression leiden, dass Stress und psychische Belastung am Arbeitsplatz der europäischen und nord-amerikanischen Wirtschaft jährliche Kosten von 120 Mrd. \$ verursachen.

16Nov2000 USA: World-Wide.

Myanmar's military regime made forced labor a criminal offense, after the International Labor Organization said it was considering sanctions against the country. The requisitioning of forced labor will be punishable by a maximum of one year in jail and a fine.

Sources: ASIAN WALL STREET JOURNAL 16/11/2000

08Sep2000 NEPAL: Nepal signs agreement to eliminate child labour within two years.

Text of report by Nepal News web site on 8th September

Kathmandu, 8th September: Nepal and the International Labour Organization [ILO] signed an agreement Thursday [7th September] in the Nepali capital to eliminate child labour in the next two years. The agreement was signed by Secretary at the Ministry of Labour and Transport D.B. Bhattarai and Nepal-based senior adviser to the ILO Ms Leyla Tegmo-Reddy. The agreement will come into effect from 15th September.

Source: Nepal News web site, Kathmandu, in English 8 Sep 00. BBC Worldwide Monitoring/ (c) BBC 2000.

Sources: BBC MONITORING INTERNATIONAL REPORTS , BBC MONITORING SOUTH ASIA - POLITICAL 08/09/2000

THE NATION

(Thailand, 20.11.2000)

ILO's child labour tool comes alive

Agence France-Presse

GENEVA - A campaign to rid the world of the most dangerous and exploitative forms of child labour received a boost yesterday when a convention providing a new legal tool to combat the problem came into force.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) convention aims to stop the use of children as slaves, in debt bondage, prostitution, drug trafficking and their forced recruitment for use in armed conflict.

(U.K.)

THE TIMES MONDAY OCTOBER 16 2000

Stresses of modern working

Technology is bad for your health, and that's official. According to a survey by the United Nations' International Labour Organisation (ILO) into mental health in the workplace, stress is a big cause of depression — and one of the biggest causes of stress at work is the march of new technology.

The impact of "information overload" is becoming apparent, socially and economically. People are suffering and corporations are paying the price through lost man-hours and disability claims.

John Doohan, spokesman for the ILO, says: "Technological development is creating the need for constant reskilling in the workplace."

"People are expected to learn to operate new gadgets and cope with a vast and diverse information flow.

The Guardian

(Tanzania, 6.11.2000)

Child labour, stubborn problem

Steps taken to combat child labour in the country are to bring to the notice of all Tanzanians the worst forms of child labour. Our correspondent Casmir J Ndambalilo writes

DURING the last five years Tanzania has made progress on this important front, joining the International Labour Organization (ILO), International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC).

We know that hundreds of thousands of schoolage children in the country are not in school. Most of them are labouring in gold pits or hawking their mothers' burns or groundnuts. We also know that every year a child attends school dramatically reduces the chance that he or she will end up in economic servitude.

Tanzania has been identified as one of three countries which will implement a time-bound programme that would achieve a sustainable prevention of the worst forms of child labour.

in the press...in the press...in the press...in the press...

The New York Times

(USA, 17.11.2000)

Sanctions for Burmese

By The New York Times

GENEVA, Nov. 16 — The International Labor Organization, cleared the way today for sanctions against Myanmar for using widespread and systematic forced labor.

Last June, for the first time in its 81-year history, the organization, a United Nations agency, resolved to invoke an article of its Constitution to allow sanctions by Nov. 30 unless Myanmar provided evidence that it had ended the use of forced labor.

Though Malaysia led an effort to soften any penalties, it was overwhelmingly defeated today by the agency's governing body.

The Washington Times

(USA, 17.11.2000)

ILO adopts sanctions on Burma forced labor

GENEVA — The International Labor Organization (ILO) called on its members here yesterday to review their ties with Burma over the country's use of forced labor, a spokesman for the ILO said.

The ILO's governing body rejected a last-minute attempt by Malaysia to put off the sanctions and the measures against Burma will take effect from Nov. 30, spokesman John Doohan said.

The move, adopted without a vote, recommends ILO members — workers and employers' groups, and countries — review their relations with Burma and take steps to ensure their ties do not help continue or extend forced labor.

Herald Tribune

(17.11.2000)

Labor Group Seeks Burma Sanctions

GENEVA — The governing body of the International Labor Organization agreed Thursday to go ahead with sanctions against Burma because of the country's use of forced labor.

In an informal vote, only four of the group's 56 members opposed the move, which will take effect Nov. 30. The sanctions will be applied under an article of the organization's constitution that has never been used before in the group's 80-year history. European nations, the United States and Canada backed the decision.

"This reflects more than three decades of frustration with the Burmese regime on their failure to stop the use of forced labor — a practice that is abhorrent," said the U.S. deputy labor secretary, Andrew Samet. (AP)

LE FIGARO

premier quotidien national français

(France, 17.11.2000)

SOCIAL Le BIT adopte pour la première fois des sanctions contre un pays membre, la Birmanie

Le Myanmar condamné

Genève: Jean-Louis Validire

« Trop peu, trop tard. » La majorité des gouvernements, le collège des travailleurs et même celui des employeurs a décidé hier de ne pas accepter les justifications du Myanmar devant le conseil d'administration du Bureau international du travail. Pour la première fois de son histoire, le BIT utilise ainsi l'article 33 de sa constitution qui lui permet de sanctionner un pays

qui ne fait aucun effort pour faire respecter une convention qu'il a ratifiée.

Le Myanmar est ainsi condamné pour son absence d'empressement à mettre en place la convention 29 de l'OIT qui interdit le travail forcé. Toutes les procédures habituelles, dont l'envoi d'une commission d'enquête directe en 1998, avaient été utilisées pour tenter d'infléchir une pratique dénoncée depuis des années

par les syndicats et certains gouvernements. La Conférence internationale du travail, en juin dernier, avait enjoint au gouvernement de Rangoon de mettre en œuvre les recommandations de la commission d'enquête qui avait constaté que le recours au travail forcé était « systématique et généralisé ».

Une nouvelle mission revenue fin octobre 2000 avait conclu que les progrès étaient insuffisants.

THE ASIAN WALL STREET JOURNAL

(17.11.2000)

Myanmar looked certain to face sanctions from the International Labor Organization. The U.N. body recognized that the country had made moves to improve the situation, but speakers said these were "too little, too late." The group said there was still no guarantee that forced labor wouldn't occur in Myanmar,

(Belgium, 21.11.2000)

21Nov2000 MEXICO: Verdrag tegen ergste vormen kinderarbeid treedt in werking.

Snelste ratificatie sinds oprichting IAO

MEXICO-STAD (ips) - Kinderrechtenactivisten beschikken sinds zondag over een nieuw juridisch instrument om economische uitbuiting van kinderen te bestrijden. In een recordtijd hebben veertig lidstaten van de Internationale Arbeidsorganisatie (IAO) een conventie ter bestrijding van de ergste vormen van kinderarbeid geratificeerd, waardoor het verdrag in werking is getreden.

Sources: DE FINANCIËLE-ECONOMISCHE TIJD 21/11/2000 P7

From Solidarity to "crumbling bastions" Twenty years after Gdansk

(continued from p. 16)

Publicznych, "in those ownership sectors where trade unions are undergoing erosion, union members enjoy lower status than other employees [and] union members undergo relative marginalization in the sectors hostile to trade unions".

Sporadic mass protests — such as last year's rallies, marches, sit-ins and strikes by hospital workers demanding better pay — frequently have had no result. (An exception has been sometimes violent

mass protests and road blockades by militant farmers' unions led by the radical populist farm leader Andrej Lepper.)

Solidarity is one of two main trade union associations in Poland. The other is the All-Polish Trade Unions Agreement (OPZZ). Like Solidarity, the OPZZ is also highly politicized. It was founded in the 1980s out of the official Communist unions, and since 1991 it has formed part of the post-Communist Democratic Left Alliance (SLD). Both unions sit with government and employer representatives on a Tripartite Commission established in 1992 to monitor the economic situation.

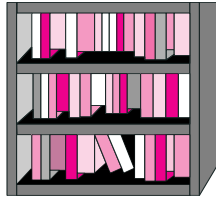
But analysts say that the macro-level political involvement of these two main trade union bodies weakens their involvement in the day-to-day problems of workers and union organizations on

the local or enterprise level. Some analysts stress that a new approach to unions and their role must evolve to accommodate new political and economic conditions.

"It will be hard for the current generation of union leaders to draw back from their links with the main parties," said the Western diplomat. "However the rank and file in both main unions already believe that the main role of the unions, defending workers' interests, is incompatible with close links with the government of the day ... Polish unions still see militancy as the main route to achieving their objectives, but a younger generation of leaders is beginning to recognize that negotiation usually delivers better results than confrontation." □



Media shelf



In print

■ **Working time arrangements in the Australian mining industry: Trends and implications with particular reference to occupational health and safety.** Working paper. By Kathryn Heiler, Richard Pickersgill, Chris Briggs. ILO Geneva, 2000. Sectoral Activities Programme. ISBN 92-2-112252-2.

The impetus for this study came from the realization that the rate of change in working time in the mining industry was not being matched by changes in other related parameters at the workplace, including those affecting occupational safety and health. Ninety per cent of Australian mines with more than 20 employees were contacted and 93 per cent of them (180 mines) provided information. This is

a strong response from an industry that has often been very sensitive about the issue of shift arrangements.

■ **Homeworkers: Towards improving their working conditions in the textile, clothing and footwear industries.** Working paper. By Catherine Barme. ILO Geneva, 2000. Sectoral Activities Programme. ISBN 92-2-112246-8.

This study seeks to show that the poor conditions of work and the low remuneration levels which exist in the textile, clothing and footwear industries (TCF) are not dictated by fate, nor inevitable. It looks into recent initiatives undertaken in different parts of the world to improve the condition of homeworkers in the TCF

industries, and assesses the impact of such initiatives.

Some of the experiences reviewed would appear to have been successful in making homeworkers' working conditions more equitable, particularly in these industries. The study seeks to underline the innovative character of some of these initiatives.

■ **The changing conditions of higher education teaching personnel.** Working paper. By Thierry Chevallier. ILO Geneva, 2000. Sectoral Activities Department. ISBN 92-2-112251-4.

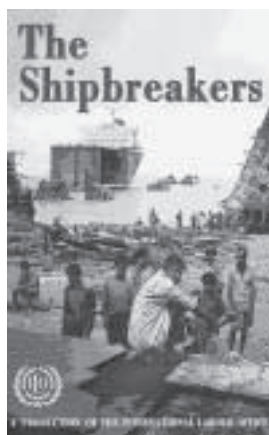
Have higher education teachers lost their specificity or is the profession breaking down into several specialized trades coordinated by a managerial institution? The study points

out that two contradictory evolutions have affected higher education personnel in the last decades. The nature of work has diversified to such a point that it is difficult to speak of one profession. Academics are doing different jobs, sometimes in succession as their careers evolve.

Higher education staff are going through a crisis. It is not in the sense that academics are dissatisfied with their working conditions or feel out of place with their environment; the crisis is deeper, since it affects the very future of the institutions in which they work. New technologies in information and communication seem to portend, in the near future, a reconstruction of the patterns of knowledge production and skills learning.

■ **Public participation in forestry in Europe and North America.** Working paper. ILO Geneva, 2000. Sectoral Activities Department. ISBN 92-2-112268-9.

■ **Video: The Shipbreakers.** Director: Sanja Göhre, 23 minutes. Where does a ship go to die? For decades, the work of shipbreaking has been cast adrift from one port to another. Until today, only a handful of nations are willing to accept the dirty and dangerous work of dismantling a ship by hand. It is one of the world's most unregulated industries, leaving debris, disability and even death in its wake.



This video exposes the atrocious working conditions of the men who dismantle ships. ILO cameras were granted special access to the

shipbreaking yards of India and Bangladesh where ships are turned into scrap amid conditions that can turn workers into unwitting victims of gas explosions or tons of falling steel. Interviews with shipowners, government and industry experts as well as the workers themselves, reveal the complex and often misunderstood issues which surround this industry.

Is there a decent, humane way to break a ship? The questions posed by this video are questions to challenge the course of globalization.

(See article on Shipbreaking on page 8).



This report has been prepared as an input to the clarification of the concept of public participation in forestry, and to integrate it more fully and transparently into forest policy, making and management. Public participation has been defined as various forms of direct public involvement,

where people, individually or through organized groups, can exchange information, express opinions and articulate interests, and have the potential to influence decisions or the outcome of specific forestry issues. The intensity of public involvement varies from simple information exchange to more elaborate forms of collaborative decision-making or implementation.

The aim of this report is to offer guidance for decision-makers and practitioners in

forestry to understand better the concept of public participation, and to create the best possible conditions to develop, implement and evaluate public participatory processes.

■ **Labour practices in the footwear, leather, textiles and clothing industries.**

Report for discussion. ILO Geneva, 2000. Sectoral Activities Programme. ISBN 92-2-112202-6. Price: 20 Swiss francs.

This report considers recent



developments in labour practices in the TCF industries (textiles, clothing, leather and footwear). These developments reflect the increasing globaliz-

ation of these sectors, in which international subcontracting is widely practised, both by multinational enterprises and major distribution groups, and by smaller enterprises. The importance of small enterprises and the informal sector in the subcontracting which characterizes the TCF industries also tends to prevent the social partners from organizing effectively and, consequently, hinders social dialogue. □

■ **International Labour Review**

(Printed edition: One-year subscription (four issues): 99 Swiss francs US\$80; GB£48; 60 Euros. Two-year subscriptions and electronic version also available. More information on <http://www.ilo.org/revue>)

The selection of articles in the current issue of the *Review* (Vol. 139 (2000), No. 3) spans a variety of topics, two of which are concerns of increasing import in the particular context of globalization. The first of these is the oft-assumed link between trade liberalization and growing international inequality. The other, stemming from the internationalization of employment relationships, is the applicability of national labour law to international contracts of employment. Also examined in this issue are developments in Japan's labour management practices and, to begin with, child labour.

How much is reliably known about the complexities of child labour? *Richard Anker's* article provides a conceptual framework within which to measure the economic aspects of the phenomenon. Contending that policy approaches have so far been too simplistic, the author outlines the reasons for concern about child labour, before explaining how its various forms should be defined and measured, and indicating pitfalls to avoid. Exploring these complexities raises questions such as school quality, whether child labourers take adults' jobs, and positive aspects of certain non-hazardous forms of child labour. Finally, he draws policy and programme implications.

Trade liberalization is popularly seen as responsible for growing international economic inequality, adverse trends in employment and low-skilled wages in industrialized countries, and lowered global labour standards. Analysing data on employment and trade between Japan and the United States and six large developing countries, *Ajit K. Ghose* concludes that growing international economic inequality is attributable not to trade liberalization but to factors such as non-

liberalization of trade in agricultural products, and poorer economies' inadequate infrastructure and dependence on exporting primary commodities. The global net effect of international trade on overall employment is positive, and helps raise labour standards in developing countries.

Susumu Watanabe's article tackles the view that Japan's lifetime employment system (LES) and seniority-based wage system (SWS) are nearing collapse. Starting with an overview of the development of the "Japan Model" of production and labour management, and that of its wage systems, the author then argues his case, presenting evidence mostly from manufacturing industries and individual enterprises. He discerns no major changes in the LES but finds that drastic changes have occurred in the wage system: a general move towards multiple wage systems, some growth in work-based elements in wages, and a decline in the concept of the age-based living wage.

Finally, *Marie-Agnès Sabirau-Pérez* looks at the difficulties involved when the parties to an international contract of employment decide, in the course of its performance, to make it subject to the law of a different country, or to relocate to another country the place where it is performed. A court having to settle any dispute which arises thereafter will first have to determine the (new) law applicable to the contract. In such situations the Rome Convention of 19 June 1980 offers a much-needed framework for assessing the validity of a choice of law, or the implications of relocation for the contract's legal regime with due regard to the parties' interests.

The *Books* section contains reviews of two books having globalization as their principal theme, and book notes on one book that counters current theories of the end of work and of the proletariat, and another that paints a gloomy picture of the formulation of the European Union's social policy. There are also notes on eleven new ILO publications.

ILO publications for sale can be obtained through major booksellers or ILO local offices in many countries, or directly from ILO Publications, International Labour Office, 4 route des Morillons, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland. Tel: +4122/799-7828; fax: +4122/799-6938; e-mail: pubvente@ilo.org; Web site: <http://www.ilo.org/publns>. Catalogues or lists of new publications are available free of charge from the above address. The ILO Publications Center in the US can be contacted at tel: +301/638-3152; fax: +301/843-0159; e-mail: ILOPubs@Tasco.com; Web site: <http://www.un.org/depts/ilowbo>.

InFocus Programme on Skills, Knowledge and Employability

Target group

disability and work

disability and the world of work

An estimated 386 million of the world's working age population are disabled. These people have the potential to make a valuable contribution in the workforce.



the ILO disability programme

policy and research

code of practice

mental health and work

information technology

job retention

The Disability Programme advocates the inclusion of people with mental health difficulties into mainstream training and employment.

technical cooperation

The Disability Programme supports policymakers and social partners in the design and implementation of vocational training and rehabilitation programmes.

The ILO promotes decent work for women and men with disabilities, and the removal of obstacles preventing people with disabilities from full participation in labour markets.

The ILO is developing a Code of Practice on Managing Disability in the Workplace, to provide guidance to employers on the recruitment, promotion, retention and return to work of people with disabilities.



International
Labour Organization

For further information, please contact:
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