



international federation of social workers

Newsletter

Secretariat: 33 Rue de l'Athénée, 1206 Geneva, Switzerland.

November 1988

IFSW' NEW LEADERSHIP

Professor Gayle Gilchrist James (Canada) was elected President of the International Federation of Social Workers at the General Assembly held in Stockholm, July 24-26, 1988. Well known to the Federation after three terms of outstanding service as Vice President for North America (1978 - 1984) and one term as member of the Executive Committee (1986 - 1988), Gayle James brings to her new task a wealth of experience and the trust and friendship of her colleagues worldwide.

To succeed the outgoing IFSW President, Augusta McCabe of Ireland, is no easy matter. However, Gayle James is well equipped to master it, as she mastered other challenging tasks, in her country and for IFSW. As Second Vice-President of the International Conferences on Social Development Consortium, she was one of the main architects of the Federation's suc-



cessful Montreal Symposium in 1984. As one-time President of her Provincial and National Association and present Chair of her country's National Council of Welfare, she adds a high national profile to her international standing. And her present and past official connections to the International Association of Schools of Social Work and the

International Council on Social Welfare, ensure optimum co-operation between the three "sister organisations" in the social field.

Member Associations look forward to the fulfilment of their President's promise to visit all Regions of the Federation during her term of office.

The following persons were elected to assist Gayle James to guide IFSW in the two years leading to the next General Meeting in 1990:

Vice Presidents:

Africa	N. Bruno Gnansounnou (Benin)
Asia	Michiko Uehara (Japan)
Europe	Paul Dolan (U.K.)
Latin America & Caribbean	Carlos Pascanan (Argentina)
North America	Suzanne Dworak-Peck (USA)

Treasurer:

Richard Ramsay (Canada)

Executive Committee:

Dr. Dudley Dissanayake (Sri Lanka)

Richard L. Edwards (USA)

Dr. Yitzhak I. Kadman (Israel)

Paul K. Y. Lee (Hong Kong)

William Mallya (Tanzania)

Wilna Saavedra Cortes (Chile)

Njal Petter Svensson (Norway)

Anthony Tan (Malaysia)

Sheila Truswell (Australia)

Monika Vyslouzil (Austria)

STOCKHOLM CONFERENCE AND MEETINGS

More than 1.600 social workers from 78 countries assembled in Stockholm, July 26 - 30, 1988 for the best attended conference in the life of the Federation. True, just over half the participants came from Scandinavian countries but the gist and flavour of IFSW's 10th International Symposium on "Attitudes, Values and Ideology in Social Work Practice" was, as always, definitely international.

From the various keynote addresses by prominent social workers and others, including Lisbet Palme, Chair of the Swedish Committee of UNICEF and the well-known Brazilian educator, Professor Paulo Freire, to a vast number and variety of workshops led by social workers from East and West, North and South, participants were able to sharpen their intellect through debate, acquire knowledge and inspiration and, not least, to make contacts and friends.

The Swedish organisers did a superb job. Without a hitch and with fool-proof provisions for any event, they gave participants a taste of life in Sweden's social welfare state.

The social problems of various countries showed the variety of tasks which social workers have to tackle. Delegates from Western countries led a full attack on neo-conservatism and the "new-wave" of privatisation. Delegates from Socialist countries spoke of social ills and social work problems which had been long neglected and which they seemed glad to share with their colleagues. From the South, came tales of struggles for survival and solidarity with the poor. Human rights were, as always, in the forefront.

One of the highlights of the 1988 event was doubtlessly the Grant Fund Seminar for some 60 participants from the "Third World". They spent one week in Stockholm learning about social welfare in Sweden and exchanging information about the different social problems in their own countries, one week in small groups touring Scandinavian countries, and one last week prior to the Conference, exchanging experiences of their study tour. This generous project was made possible through contributions from social workers and trade unions, churches, the Swedish Red Cross and other organisations in Sweden and, not least, the assistance of social workers and their associations in other Scandinavian countries.

The establishment of an IFSW Commission on Human Rights was one of the important events of the General Meetings which grew out of the Federation long-standing involvement in this field. Among the priorities for the next biennium, human rights issues figured prominently together with the completion of an innovative Draft Declaration on Principles of Ethics in Social Work, an in-depth study of the future structure of the organisation and the designation of a new Secretary General.

The presentation of WHO's Dr. Manuel Carballo on the organisation's Global Programme on A.I.D.S. furthered the implementation of the WHO/IFSW Counselling Project on A.I.D.S. and H.I.V. infection. Several IFSW counsellors have since attended, or conducted, WHO training sessions in different parts of the world. The presence of a Representative of the United Nations Population Fund at the Conference, opened additional avenues of IFSW co-operation within the U.N. System.

A warm welcome was extended to the associations of Kuwait and Benin which brought national membership in the Federation to 50. The presence of Observers from China and USSR, the latter a first appearance, was warmly applauded by the delegates. Representatives from Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia participated and led workshops at the Conference.

NEWS FROM MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

AUSTRALIA

The Australian Association of Social Workers contributed Aust. \$ 1.000 to the IFSW Solidarity Fund in accordance with its President, Sheila Truswell's offer made at the meetings in Stockholm. The Solidarity Fund, whose major source of income are the regular auctions held during conferences, was constituted to enable some delegates from financially weak countries and associations to attend the Federation's biennial meetings and Symposia.

CHILE

Social work colleagues from all over the world who met this summer in Stockholm with Chilean social workers are following with keen interest developments in Chile after its recent plebescite, not least how Chile's political prisoners will be affected.

Meanwhile, the Colegio de Asistentes Sociales will hold its 5th Congress in Santiago, December, 1-3, 1988 on "Professional Social Work and its Projected Image by the Year 2000" (*El Servicio Social Profesional y su Proyección al año 2000*) followed by a meeting of representatives of social work associations from the Southern Cone on December 5 - 6.

COLOMBIA

Luz Marina Villa de Yarce, President of the Colombian Federation of Social Workers, wrote a thoughtful letter to IFSW office holders containing fundamental questions which the Federation will have to face and answer. While the full text will be circulated to Officers and members of the Executive Committee as soon as translations are completed, we deem it useful to share some of the main questions with all members and friends of IFSW.

Is the Federation dominated by Western concepts, i.e. by professional perspectives of social work in industrialised countries without giving due consideration to knowledge bases in other parts of the world?

Is the Federation's self-bestowed role as advocate of human rights, democracy and peace, however valid, not one which fails to recognize other aspects and priorities in parts of the world without a democratic history or culture?

Luz Marina de Yarce is convinced that more thought input from developing countries is necessary to make the Federation truly international and pluralistic. In Colombia, where democracy is not operative and decisions are made by traditional political parties which do not represent either the poor or the middle classes, social workers have had to face up to grave challenges in order to make their voices heard. In their attempts to help people to exercise their rights to life, i.e. survival, social workers are aware that true change has to come from the people themselves and from substantial political reforms based on popular participation in the decision-making process. IFSW, she feels, does not offer information on valid professional experiences in this field. It could learn from social workers in countries where professional knowledge has been acquired under particularly difficult circumstances, political systems and governments.

"— Estará la FITS interesada de que surja una fuerza Latinoamericana que impulse el Trabajo social mundial desde otra concepción? . . . Estará en capacidad de abrirle paso a otra opción ideológica y a incorporarla en su debate como una alternativa de confrontación y de formación de nuevas políticas que contemplan una misma intencionalidad y una diversidad en sus medios? . . ."

— Estarán preparados los organismos de América Latina para participar de los beneficios de una organización como la FITS desde lo que comporta ser miembro de ella, no solo como miembro proveedor, sino también gestor de sus destinos? . . ."

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El 22 de octubre de 1988, los trabajadores sociales de Colombia y la Federación Colombiana de Trabajadores Sociales celebraron los logros de la profesión en sus 52 años de historia.

DENMARK

In Denmark, social policy is at a turning point, the options being radical change or serious cut-backs in the provision of social services.

This autumn witnessed an unprecedented and vigorous attack on the public sector stemming from the country's economic and political structure and choices.

Danish social workers feel responsible for the protection and maintenance of the principle of solidarity within the Danish social welfare system and for staving off Anglo-Saxon inspired trends towards social Darwinism and individualism.

The situation requires them to participate unsparingly in the process of change and development and, while operating within the present economic framework and facing up to the trends referred to above, to ensure the effective operation of the social service sector. This dual strategy of the profession has to be carried out in a manner in which neither element is emphasised to the detriment of the other.

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The IFSW Conference in Stockholm was a unique experience for the Danish delegates which provided them with a chance to meet old colleagues, make new friends and gain inspiration for their daily work.

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The Danish Association of Social Workers is participating in the efforts to revive the Danish National Committee for ICSW, the International Council on Social Welfare.

FRANCE

Parmi ses nombreuses activités, l'Association Nationale des Assistants de Service Social (ANAS)

- *s'engage auprès du Ministère des Affaires Sociales pour obtenir la modification du statut des Assistant(e)s Sociaux (ales) chefs exerçant des fonctions d'encadrement, leur permettant d'intégrer le cadre A de l'administration;*

- *participe aux travaux menés par le Ministère de la Solidarité, de la Santé et de la Protection Sociale sur l'élaboration de nouveaux textes législatifs sur l'élaboration de nouveaux textes législatifs réglementant la formation et le statut des assistants sociaux du travail;*

- *a instauré, dans ses sections, une réflexion approfondie sur les divers aspects du revenu minimum garanti et de l'action optimale des assistants sociaux qui permette un suivi sérieux auprès des familles concernées. La synthèse des travaux entrepris et d'autres documents de réflexion sont à la disposition des personnes intéressées au secrétariat national de l'ANAS;*

- *met en rapport un groupe de travail SOS Chômage pour assistants sociaux au chômage, pour réfléchir au problème d'emploi et aux débouchés à trouver ou à créer;*

- *met en rapport des assistants sociaux qui s'intéressent aux nouvelles formes d'exercice de la profession à savoir: indépendant, cabinet de groupe et autres;*

- *appuie la création d'une organisation "Travailleurs sociaux sans frontière" dont la présentation par son fondateur Paul Vannier à la Conférence de la FIAS à Stockholm a suscité un vif intérêt;*

- *organise, à côté de ses diverses Journées de travail et autres, Forum 88, le 1er Forum des Professions Sociales, en cogestion avec les associations d'éducateurs, éducateurs de jeunes enfants et conseillers en économie sociale et familiale. Cette manifestation, qui remplace le congrès annuel de l'ANAS, a lieu à Versailles, du 21 au 23 novembre 1988 et a pour thème: "Précarité: un défi!"*

IRELAND

The Irish Combat Poverty Agency funded a major piece of research on Poverty in Ireland and the report has just been published. The links between poverty and unemployment feature highly in the report and there is now hard data which can be worked on and to which reaction can be made.

A long awaited reform of childcare law is welcomed. The Children (Care & Protection) Bill 1987 is currently being processed and the Association's Child Care Committee has worked on contributions to the discussion involved.

A proposal from the Department of Health to introduce statutory registration for social workers

is receiving much current attention within the Association. There is also a proposal to set up an Irish recognition body for social work courses in response to the planned withdrawal of the British Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work which has recognised Irish courses up to now.

The Association has set up a special sub-committee "Social work and A.I.D.S." which will devote time to a training input for social workers and be a resource for members.

The report of the Government's Working Party on Health & Welfare Services for the Elderly to which I.A.S.W. made a submission was published on October 14, 1988.

Following consultations between I.F.S.W. and W.H.O. Global Programme on A.I.D.S., member Derval Murray was appointed temporary consultant with W.H.O. / G.P.A. She has recently been involved in running training workshops in Zimbabwe, Geneva and Tanzania in relation to preventive counselling and H.I.V. / A.I.D.S.

Member Rolande Anderson has been given the honorary position of Co-Chairperson of the Social Work Section of The International Council on Alcohol and Addictions for a period of three years.

JAPAN

Ms. Aiko Yagi participated in a WHO training session for AIDS counsellors in Geneva in September 1988 and, on the day of her return to Tokyo, (after a strenuous session and a 15-hour flight), reported on the session to the Japanese Association of Social Workers' Executive Committee.

KOREA

Please note the new address of our Korean member:

Korean Association of Social Workers
Room 705 Social Welfare Building
427-5, Kongduk-dong, Mapo-ku
Seoul, Korea

Mr. Ki Yoon is Acting President.

MALAYSIA

The Malaysian Association of Professional Social Workers reports that the following social workers detained under the Internal Security Act have now been released albeit with restrictions and conditions: Brother Anthony Rogers, Theresa Lim Chin Chin and Sebyl John Joseet. The Association thanks the Federation and members who interceded and petitioned on their behalf.



The General Meeting



Engrossed audience in Stockholm



Closing session - Prof. Paulo Freire

The Malaysian and Australian association have agreed in principle to some twinning arrangement for which they are at present working out details.

NETHERLANDS

The Netherlands Association (Nederlandse organisatie van welzijnswerkers) split into three separate organisations, each representing one of the former professional components. Social workers are now on their own and their new address is:

Netherlands Association of Social Workers
Leidseweg 80
3500 GS Utrecht, Netherlands
Tel. (30) 94 86 03

NEW ZEALAND

Another amicable split took place in November 1987 in the New Zealand Association of Social Workers following the Tangata Whenua Caucus' decision to develop its own professional concepts and organisation.

This in no way meant a rejection of the goal of bi-culturalism on the part Maori social workers, but rather a deep conviction that true bi-culturalism requires equitable contributions from both partners, making it imperative for Maori social workers to build up their own.

Both associations will keep in close contact and work together where appropriate.

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The New Zealand Association brought out a new publication, *Social Work Review*, whose first issue appeared in July 1988. It replaces the former New Zealand Social Work Journal and News and Views in Social Work and also contains in its back section NZASW news, international news, book reviews and announcements of conferences, workshops and other events.

SRI LANKA

Mr. S.B. Aabeyakoon was one of the IFSW AIDS counsellors to attend the WHO September 1988 training session in Geneva. The World Health Organization is keen to hold a regional seminar/training session in Sri Lanka as soon as convenient, probably after the Sri Lankan elections early in 1989.

UNITED KINGDOM

The new Chair of the British Association of Social Workers, Gwen Swire, and the BASW Board completed the Association's internal restructuring arrangements and it is now clearly in a better position to cope with current financial restraints. While a deficit was still forecast for 1988/1989, finances would, according to Treasurer David Burchell, remain in reasonable shape thereafter.

UNITED STATES

The National Association of Social Workers has selected homelessness as the theme for its 1989 public service campaign with the theme, "There's No Place Like Home". There are an estimated 250,000 to 3 million homeless people in America today; the exact number is hard to determine because so many of the homeless are invisible. It is known, however, that families with children are the fastest growing segment of the homeless.

NASW is gearing up for its second annual conference, *Social Work '88*, to be held in Philadelphia, November 9 - 12. Under the theme of "Choices and Challenges", the conference will feature the impact of the presidential election which will have just concluded. Issues of international concern such as peace, the global impact of AIDS, nuclear disarmament, and apartheid in South Africa will also be covered.

IFSW OFFICERS AND REPRESENTATIVES

The Vice President for Europe, Paul Dolan (U.K.) sent greetings to Czech social work colleagues on the occasion of the November 25 - 26 meeting of the Czechoslovak Medical Society's Social Workers Section.

Elena Palaez (Spain) is the new President of the Liaison Committee for Social Workers in the European Community.

Lillian Lampkin is stepping down as Chair of the IFSW Team at U.N. Headquarters in New York and her position will be taken up by Celia Weisman.

A report from G. Winifred Kagwa, of the IFSW/U.N. team in New York, on the 17th General Assembly of the Conference of NGOS in Consultative Status with ECOSOC, 6 - 9 September, 1988, is available on request at the IFSW Secretariat. Stephen E. Torkelsen, another member of the team and current Chairperson of the NGO Executive Committee of Non-governmental Organizations Associated with the (U.N.) Department of Public Information, opened the Annual Conference of the DPI for NGO's which took place at U.N. Headquarters, 14 - 16 September, 1988. The keynote address was given by U.N. Secretary-General, Javier Perez de Cuellar. Winifred Kagwa and Celia Weisman reported on this event at which NGO's were asked to inform their constituencies about the critical financial situation of the United Nations and to urge Governments to give financial and political support to the U.N.

Marie-Françoise Charrier, IFSW's new Representative at the Council of Europe, reported on the

Council's 61st session of NGO's interested in Human Rights which took place on October 4, 1988 and focused on intolerance shown to foreigners in certain countries, a cause of great friction at work places.

Associations in the European Region will consider this matter in depth at the 9th IFSW European Seminar scheduled for 19 - 21 September, 1989 in Basle, Switzerland. The theme: "When People Become Foreigners" as well as a three-day Seminar for social workers from Southern European countries in Zurich to be held prior to the European Seminar, point to social workers' recognition of the necessity to reflect and act in order to come to grips with a growing and generalised problem in Europe.

A follow-up session to the April 1987 Mixed Council of Europe Meeting on Human Rights and Social Work for some IFSW and IASSW representatives and members of the Council's Human Rights Directorate, has been scheduled for February 16 and 17, 1989. The session will prepare the recommendation to be submitted to the Council's Committee of Ministers on the inclusion of courses on human rights in schools of social work curricula.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

HUMAN RIGHTS

According to news from the Committee for Chilean Inquiry, Chile's Lower Court sentenced social worker Fermin Montes Garcia to life plus 15 years instead of passing a death sentence on him as requested by the prosecution. He has reportedly lodged an appeal.

The Committee also called the Federation's attention to the case of social worker Janet Small of South Africa. The Organisation for Appropriate Social Services in South Africa OASSSA, had informed it of the release, in September 1988, of this 26 - year - old staff member of Black Sash, a civil rights organisation in the Cape Province. Ms. Small's three months detention without trial or charges appears to have been a preventive rather than punitive measure, the authorities having clearly feared that she would contribute towards the disruption of the municipal elections which took place in October. A restriction order served on this (white) social worker following her release, bans her from taking place in any activities of the Black Sash and confines her to her parents' home between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m.

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A new publication of the United Nations Centre for Human Rights, the Human Rights Newsletter, has just been issued. It provides information mainly on U.N. activities and some coverage of NGO contributions to those activities as well as samples of NGO's own human rights activities.

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

IFSW member associations who at the 1988 General Meeting adopted the 1986 (U.N. General Assembly) Declaration on Social and Legal Principles relating to the Protection and Welfare of Children, with Special Reference to Foster Placement and Adoption Nationally and Internationally, will be happy to support the alternative text for Article 11 proposed by the Geneva-based NGO Ad Hoc Group on the Drafting of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The proposal will be submitted to the U.N. Working Group on a Draft Convention on the Rights of the Child meeting in Geneva in November / Decembre 1988. The two main aims of this proposal are to take account of States in which adoption is not a recognised procedure and to bring the present text of Article 11 in line with the 1986 Declaration.

Paragraph 1a) of the proposal sets out the overriding concern of NGO's (and States), which is to ensure that adoptions are meant to provide a child with substitute parents **BASED ON THE NEEDS OF THE CHILD**, rather than respond to parents who **WISH TO ADOPT A CHILD**. It reads as follows:

"States Parties to the present Convention recognise that the sole aim of adoption is to provide a child, who cannot be cared for by his/her natural parent(s), with a permanent family, in circumstances where alternative legal and customary solutions do not exist".

The matter of improper financial gain in connection with the adoption process is likewise addressed.

It is hoped that the Convention will be adopted by the Commission on Human Rights in 1989.

A. I. D. S.

The V International Conference on AIDS scheduled to take place in Montreal, Canada, June 4 - 9, 1989, will, for the first time, include a social component to which social workers must contribute. While their main input will come within the framework of the section on "AIDS, society and behaviour", they could also be involved in other sections, viz. "AIDS and the individual", "Ethics and law" and "International issues".

IFSW member association will hear more on the subject from the Secretary General.

The World Health Organization is organising the first World Day on AIDS for December 1, 1988. This will be an worldwide occasion for the promotion of competent information and education in the global struggle against this deadly, though avoidable, pandemic.

WOMEN

IFSW member associations who set up Committees on Women as recommended, might be interested in emulating the Committee on Women's Rights and Crimes Against Women, a standing committee of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. It organised a one-day seminar on the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, at which two case studies were introduced and considered in the light of the Convention. IFSW's own strategy document "Towards Implementing the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women", could likewise serve as a valuable background paper for such a seminar.

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The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women meeting in Vienna in March 1988, decided to give top priority to violence against women in the family and society, the problems of rural women and the role of women in peace education.

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There are still some copies of the IFSW publication "INTERNATIONAL POLICY PAPERS" AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE FROM THE IFSW SECRETARIAT IN GENEVA (33, RUE DE L'ATHENEE, 1206 GENEVA) AND THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR EUROPE, PAUL DOLAN (15 AMHERST AVENUE, HANDWORTH WOOD, BIRMINGHAM B20 2LH, U.K.)

The global population of women aged 50 and over will double between the years 1955 and 1990 from 250 to 500 million. In a further 35 years, the number will reach nearly 1.1 billion. . . The NGO Committee on Aging in Vienna drew attention to the special plight of older women in rural societies and to the physical and psychological violence suffered by elderly women within the family.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

On 7 July, 1988, the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) commemorated the twenty-fifth anniversary of its creation. The mandate of this autonomous UN body based in Geneva is to "conduct research into problems and policies of social development and relationships among various types of social development during different phases of economic growth".

United Nations resolutions and declarations over the last two decades stressed two main aims: the universal attainment of decent livelihood and participatory development and power structures, which have been widely reflected in the Institute's research approach.

The four principal ongoing research activities of the Institute include programmes in the area of food systems and society, popular participation, social processes of refugee integration, and measurement and analysis of socioeconomic development.