

EDITOR'S NOTE / NOTE DE LA RÉDACTRICE

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We are pleased to present a Special Issue on *A Decade of Poverty Reform at the World Bank / Dix ans de réforme du projet de réduction de la pauvreté à la Banque mondiale* with the collaboration of Guest Editors Manfred Bienefeld and Arne Ruckert. These articles undertake a much needed analysis of what has now become the principle policy framework through which the World Bank, and by extension other multilateral and bilateral agencies, funnel their development assistance. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers have replaced Structural Adjustment Programmes but their impact is less well known. The following series of articles will fill that void through a series of case studies and research on the World Bank by these eminent scholars.

We see this as a crucial labour issue. As the guest editors argue, the World Bank influence extends beyond the reach of other development agencies and plays a significant role in shaping a global policy framework within which developing countries must operate. This includes the way employment and labour issues have become integrated within the current articulation of development as a component of poverty alleviation. Development models no longer emphasize growth and the need to strengthen the economy by making it more complex, creating sectors that would allow a country to produce the goods and services needed by its citizens, including the development of a manufacturing sector. Instead, World Bank development models have been reduced to a narrow set of poverty alleviation strategies within a neoliberal framework in which state regulation is reduced in favour of market liberalisation and export-led production.

A pro-poor development strategy articulates the need to enhance employment in order to reduce poverty and increase economic growth. Yet the preferred form of employment is linked to expanded livelihood strategies in rural areas and the informal sector in urban areas, or in sectors geared to export. Jobs will be created through increased entrepreneurial activity supported by greater access to micro-credit and the development of micro-enterprises. Criticism is often levelled at the absence of employment benefits for those most in need, including the unskilled and

the rural poor. Nor is there mention of the creation of jobs within a sectorally diversified economy capable of creating formal sector, permanent employment accompanied by jobs in which skills can be acquired and workers can organize and acquire rights.

We are pleased to enhance these strong articles on World Bank policies and poverty reduction with photos taken by Alexia Webster, a South African photographer. They portray the poignancy of unemployment in current day South Africa and the work of a South African organisation called Men on the Side of the Road.

We currently have two special issues in preparation: the soon to be published *Natural Resources, Workers and Communities*, and the upcoming *Colombia – the Continuity of Struggle* whose call for papers is announced in this issue. (The full version is found on our website.)

I would like to take this opportunity to announce an important change in the Editorial Committee. After many years as the journal's Book Review Editor, Maimire Mennasemay is stepping down though he will remain an active member of the Editorial Committee. I would like to extend our deep felt appreciation and gratitude for his hard work and contribution to the journal in what is generally considered to be a thankless task.

On an interim basis, Kristen Winters will coordinate the book reviews. She can be reached at the journal email address: journallcs-tcs@smu.ca. The list of books available for review can be found on our web page: www.lcs-tcs.com. Kristen will also oversee a new journal feature which will consist of adding book reviews to our web page immediately upon reception. In this way, we are hoping for a speedier turnaround and greater interest in the book review section by authors, publishers and reviewers as it will allow for a greater involvement in debates.