

News Line 14

February 2001

We thank members for their forbearance over the late production of this News Line, due to the sad demise on 4th December 2000 of our Secretary-General Marie-Thérèse Bianchi.

Obituary

Marie-Thérèse was our first elected Secretary-General, following our recognition as a constituted organisation in 1997. It was largely thanks to her that we met requirements for full membership of Liberal International in record time and were admitted in March 1999.

Marie- Thérèse had notable careers in academia, politics and voluntary work. Her most recent academic appointment was as Professor of Sociology in Mount St. Vincent University, Canada (1966-1973). Politically, her offices included serving as Deputy Mayor of Chantilly, France (1989-1995). In voluntary work, she served from 1984 to 1993 as President of the Chantilly branch of the Red Cross.

We were most fortunate that when she retired to Cambridge (U K) she was able to devote much of her time to INL W. She spoke several languages, which helped her to keep in touch with our worldwide membership. Her Spanish was especially helpful on our visit to Nicaragua in 1999. The Women's Day which followed the L.I. Executive Meeting there resulted in the establishment of the Central American Association of Liberal Women, led by Dr. Myriam Fonseca, now a member of the new INL W Management Board.

Marie-Thérèse and Elizabeth Sidney worked together for INL W for many years before 1997 and very closely thereafter. Marie- Thérèse had hoped to facilitate the transition from the 1997-2000 Management Board to the new Board, and was deeply disappointed when illness prevented her being with us in Ottawa. Those who knew her will mourn a friend and we shall all miss her administrative skills and knowledgeable counsel.

Other News of Members

1. **Belated Congratulations** to our Patron Annemie Neyts Uyttebraeck who was appointed Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Belgium, on 12 October 2000.
2. **Vice Presidents, Liberal International**
We remind INL W members that all Party Presidents are automatically appointed Vice Presidents of Liberal International. INL W accordingly has two Liberal International Vice Presidents: Beatrice Rangoni Machiavelli and Analia de Victoria Pereira, President of the Liberal Party of Angola.
3. **Get Well Messages**
To Janina Zukeine (Lithuania) who is recovering from a brain operation and Margaret Owen, Founder of Empowerment of Widows in Development, who suffered a fractured spine this autumn but somehow keeps on working.

INLW General Meeting 26 October 2000, Ottawa

A report of this meeting is at [Appendix 1](#).

INLW Elections

Our fourth Patron and the new Management Board were elected on 26 October 2000. We are honoured to have Annette Lu, Vice President of Taiwan, as our fourth Patron. The new Management Board, plus the tasks assigned to them at the first Board Meeting are at [Appendix 2](#).

Liberal International Congress 26-28 October 2000, Ottawa

1. **INLW Resolutions**
All our Resolutions to Congress 2000 were passed with minor amendments, which we accepted. Margaret Owen, Founder of Empowerment of Widows in Development, who

drafted our Resolution on Widows, has sent her organisation's special thanks.

2. **Gender Proportions in Liberal International Delegations**

Following the Liberal International Executive's decision to monitor gender proportions in Liberal International Delegations to Congress, the first list was issued for the Ottawa Congress. Of the delegations numbering over 3 people, 26% were women. Congratulations to those fifteen delegations which were over the critical mass (30%). AII INLW members are asked to promote gender equality in their delegations to Congress in Budapest 2002.

Fundraising and Donations

The accounts submitted to the INL W General Meeting on 26 October 2000 did not include donations received since August. We gratefully acknowledge a most generous donation from Ms. Annette Lu, Vice President of Taiwan.

We also received generous donations in connection with our fundraising dinner held in London on 21 st November 2000 (see below). Together with the sale of tickets for the dinner, these contributions added £ 1,054.65 to the INLW account. A similar sum was sent to the Medical Foundation for Victims of Torture, with a request that it be used in particular to help women victims.

Asma Jahangir Dinner 21 November 2000

INLW nominated Asma Jahangir, the international human rights lawyer practising in Lahore, for the Liberal International Prize for Freedom 2000. We were very pleased that she was chosen to receive the award, which she accepted at the closing dinner of the Liberal International Congress on 28th October.

Asma subsequently came to London, UK, to address a fundraising dinner in her honour, organised by INLW and members of Liberal International British Group. This proved a highly successful event (see above) and Asma's moving speech enlightened everyone regarding women's human rights in Pakistan. Her visit attracted useful media attention. INL W keeps in touch with our worldwide membership through personal contacts, surveys and questionnaires, whilst representing Liberal views at international level by regular attendance at the annual meetings of the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

It was a matter of congratulation that our nominated new Management Board continued to reflect our international range. Mobina Jaffer QC was Canadian, our Vice Chair was Spanish, other members were Belgian, Israeli, Nicaraguan and Swiss. Elizabeth was now joining our first Convener, Dr. Barbro Westerholm, of Sweden, and Monique de Vries MP of Belgium as an INLW Special Adviser.

In leaving the Chair, Elizabeth affirmed her continuing strong support for INLW. She concluded with warm thanks to the Canadian Liberal Women's Commission for its excellent administration and outstanding generosity in providing meals and receptions.

3. **Finance**

The accounts to 25 August 2000 were presented by the Treasurer, Eve de Roo van Alderwerelt Hoog, and accepted.

3i. Donations

INLW gratefully acknowledges some generous donations received since August 25th. Donors were: Mme. Annette Lu (Taiwan), Dr. Pamela Steiner (USA), Lord Avebury (UK) and Mrs. Joyce Rose (UK). The last three were in support of our dinner for Mrs. Asma Jahangir, 21 November 2000.

4. **Reports from Members**

Reports were given by Jeannine de Bocard, Switzerland, INL W representative on CONGO; Eileen Bell MNIA, Northern Ireland; Mrs. Marguerite Rukhoza, President, Burundi Section of Liberal International; Mme. Aminata Tall, Minister of the Family, Senegal; Rebeka Srbnovic, Vice-President, New Democracy Party, Yugoslavia; Mme. Analia Pereira MP, President, Partido Liberal Democratico, Angola. We also heard from a

representative from Andorra, where the next L. I. Executive will be held. Unfortunately, Dr. Myriam Fonseca, President of the Nicaraguan Liberal Women's Association, was unable to be with us.

5. **Elections**

5i. **Fourth Patron**

INLW members unanimously endorsed the Management Board's proposal that Mme. Annette Lu, Vice President of Taiwan, should become our fourth Patron. INL W expresses its grateful thanks to Mme. Lu for agreeing to this nomination. The Taiwanese delegations expressed their appreciation of the endorsement.

5ii. **New Management Board**

No election was held as no seat was contested. Elizabeth Sidney was not standing and was succeeded as Chair by Mobina Jaffer QC, President of the National Liberal Women's Commission, Canada. The offices of Secretary-General and Treasurer remained unchanged. Dr. Valve Kirsipuu was also not standing and was replaced as Vice Chair by Mme. Joaquina Alemany, MP on the Catalan Parliament. Emmi Weiss, Germany, stood down as Board

Member, and was replaced by Myriam Fonseca, Nicaragua. Dr. Dahlia Sommer remained on the Board for a second term and was joined by Mme. Jeannine de Bocard, Switzerland, who serves as INLW representative on CONGO. Elizabeth Sidney was co-opted to the Board and will join Dr. Barbro Westerholm and Monique de Vries MP as an INLW Special Adviser.

In handing over, Elizabeth Sidney thanked the outgoing Board and affirmed the great importance to INL W of an active Board and active members who would put forward ideas and respond to Officers' requests for information. She welcomed the better representation of the American continent on the new Board.

6. **Presentation to Elizabeth Sidney**

On behalf of INL W, INL W Patron Dr. Loma Marsden presented Elizabeth Sidney, the outgoing Chair, with a bouquet. She expressed deep and sincere thanks to Elizabeth in promoting INL W to its present remarkable status.

7. **INLW Future Activities**

Discussion focussed on the need to strengthen the INL W Network. To advance a network, Blossom Sanders, Director of the Canadian Liberal Women's Commission, agreed to establish an INLW Membership database complete with members' professional expertise and Regional affiliations.

Conclusion

The meeting was much enjoyed and was subsequently the subject of many congratulations from L.I. delegates. Several individual members were recruited and the Women's Group of the New Democracy Party, Yugoslavia, joined as a Group Member.