

In Memoriam - Alan Leather - Former Deputy General Secretary PSI



(6 March 2019) Alan Leather, former PSI Deputy General Secretary, died at the age of 77 on Sunday, 3 March 2019, after a long illness. Known throughout the global labour movement, Alan was first active as education officer. He established a network of trainers and educators across the world. With PSI he fought the Apartheid regime in South Africa and worked with unions to support the South African trade unions. He led PSI's health sector in the fight against HIV-AIDS. Many unions used materials developed by Alan in the PSI so the workers' voice was heard. Other union colleagues will remember how he took up cases in the ILO. He will be remembered by many European unionists and especially in Central and Eastern Europe as the person who brought them in contact with other unions in Europe and beyond after the Berlin Wall fall and the Soviet Union broke up. So many affiliates in EPSU/PSI became members due to his work. He opened PSI offices in Bucharest, Kiev, Moscow and Prague. Alan helped and assisted, using all he had. As a young trade unionist working then in AbvaKabo in the Netherlands and later in EPSU, I

remember Alan with fondness and great respect. Marina, Vasily, Olga and Josef, the regional staff who all worked long with him, all are deeply moved by his departure, having many memories and all testify to his upbeat and sunny personality, his laughter, his dedication and energy.

Former EPSU General Secretary Carola Fischbach-Pyttel and a colleague of Alan when he started contributes “Alan loved to sing. He accompanied himself with a pair of spoons, as a sort of percussion instrument. This unusual musical arrangement became quite popular in PSI circles. Alan joined the PSI in the mid-1980ies as education officer. He was committed to the values of trade unionism, of solidarity and internationalism. International trade union education for him was a prime vehicle to contribute to these values amongst PSI affiliates.” (...) “We will miss Alan’s capacity to laugh, his sense of humour and his gentle character. It is very saddening that he had to leave us already.”

He made a lasting contribution to our European and global union work.

Alan joined PSI in 1987 as Education officer. Alan became PSI Assistant General Secretary in 1993 and Deputy General Secretary from 1995 until his retirement in 2006. He leaves grown up children Jack and Amy behind.

[For the PSI In Memoriam.](#)

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