



For immediate release

Friday, June 25, 2010

Statement by Ken Georgetti on the Death of Shirley Carr PRESIDENT EMERITUS, CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS

We are saddened to learn of the death of Sister Shirley Carr, who served between 1974 and 1992 as Executive Vice-President and later President of the Canadian Labour Congress.

Shirley was the first woman in the world ever to be elected as leader of a national labour body, and she was a pioneer in many ways. She moved women's rights to the top of the labour agenda and she was also a fearless campaigner against apartheid in South Africa. In 1992, she was given the Order of Diego de Losada, First Class, one of Venezuela's most prestigious honours for her work against apartheid and in defending trade union rights around the world.

Shirley came from a family of Nova Scotians and was fiercely proud of her roots. She was a graduate of Stamford Collegiate Vocational Institute and the Niagara College of Applied Arts and Technology School of Labour Studies. She first became active in the labour movement in 1960 in the Canadian Union of Public Employees and served in various capacities at the local, provincial, regional and national levels.

Shirley was a member of the Governing Body of the International Labour Organization from 1980 to June, 1985 where she was Chairperson for the Workers' Group of the Governing Body Committee on Discrimination and the International Labour Conference Committee on apartheid. She returned as a member of the Governing Body in June, 1991 and in November, 1991 was elected as Chairperson of the Workers' Group and Vice-Chairperson of the Governing Body of the International Labour Organization. She also served as Vice-President of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, and Chairperson of the Commonwealth Trade Union Council.

.../2

Shirley was awarded Honorary Doctorates of Law from McMaster University, in Hamilton; Brock University in St. Catharines; Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia; and the University of Western Ontario, in Windsor, Ontario. She was also named Fellow of Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in recognition of her outstanding work in the Canadian and international labour movement. In 1980, she was named an Officer of the Order of Canada.

The Canadian Labour Congress, the national voice of the labour movement, represents 3.2 million Canadian workers. The CLC brings together Canada's national and international unions along with the provincial and territorial Federations of Labour and 130 district Labour Councils. Website: www.canadianlabour.ca

Contact: Dennis Gruending, CLC Communications, 613-878-6040.
Email: dgruending@clc-ctc.ca

am:cope*225