

# NEWS OF THE PROFESSION

## I. Institutional News

### *The International Conference of Labour Historians (ITH)*

On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the International Working Men's Association (First International) the Austrian "Association for the Study of Labour History" organized an international historical conference in Vienna in 1964 on the theme "Austro-Hungary and the International". The conference participants suggested that such an international exchange of experiences should be staged at regular intervals. These historians considered Austria to be an ideal meeting place, because of the country's neutral status and the rich tradition of the Austrian labour movement. Rudolf Neck, later Head Keeper of the Austrian State Archives, and Herbert Steiner, who for many years directed the affairs of the Austrian Resistance Archives, founded the ITH (International Conference of Labour Historians) in 1964, thus creating the organizational structure necessary for the holding of international conferences.

The first ITH Conference took place in 1965 immediately after the International Historians' Conference in Vienna. It was decided to choose Linz, lying on the Danube in Upper Austria, as the meeting-place of the ITH. Since then conferences of labour historians from all over the world take place in Linz every September. The ITH has also organized three conferences on special occasions – the 100th anniversary of Karl Marx's death (1983) was the last of these.

It has been possible to arrange such conferences and to publish the proceedings thereof due to the generous help offered by various Austrian institutions: State Departments, sections of the Labour Movement, municipal bodies etc. The ITH receives regular subventions also from the Austrian Ministry for Science and Research. The former Minister of this Department, Dr. Hertha Firnberg, herself a honorary member of the ITH, supported the aims of the ITH in many ways, as did Alfred Ströer, also an honorary member of the ITH, who was Leading Secretary of the Federation of Austrian Trade Unions (ÖGB) until quite recently. The Government of Upper Austria, the City Council in Linz, the Upper Austrian Trade Union Federation, the Upper Austrian Chamber of Labour – with a special mention of Prof. Max Lotteraner, member of the Executive Committee of the ITH – and the municipal authorities in Vienna are among the most important sponsors of the ITH in Austria. Sometimes the ITH receives

subsidies also from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). This contribution enables the ITH to invite speakers from Asia, Africa and America to the Linz conferences and to pay them a portion of their expenses.

The member institutes of the ITH pay an annual subscription and send delegates to the Linz conference. Since the spring of 1987 the conference organizers have an office of their own (A-1010 Vienna, Wipplingerstr. 8/Stiege 1. Tel.: 53436 ext. 210). The intensive preparatory work in holding such large-scale yearly gatherings is carried out by voluntary helpers to a great degree, so that the administrative expenditure of the ITH is inordinately low. From the very beginning the regular visitors to Linz consisted in the main of well-known European historians and scholars from related disciplines. However, the ITH has succeeded in recent years in contacting private and political institutions which deal with labour history in all parts of the world. Links have also been forged with labour archives and universities. In this connection one should mention the "Japan-Committee" of the ITH, a parent organization with 80 members, who then relate their experiences of the Linz conferences even further afield. At 1988 117 organizations from 33 countries were affiliated to the ITH.

In 1981 the UNESCO conferred of the ITH "B Status", thus recognizing it as a world-wide "Non-governmental organization" (NGO). The 20th Linz Conference in 1984, devoted to the theme "Colonialism and the Labour Movement", set a milestone in the international expansion of the ITH: historians from five continents submitted papers, the Peoples Republic of China was represented for the first time.

The increasingly transcontinental scope of the ITH's activities is also mirrored in the organization's structure: during the 1970s the Executive Committee was enlarged by the creation of an International Advisory Council. Following the board elections held in 1986, the Executive Committee now consists of subscribing institutions of Algeria, Austria, China, Federal Republic of Germany, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, the Soviet Union, the USA and Zaire. The appointment of an ITH-delegate to the UNESCO also binds the historians' association closer to this world-wide section of the United Nations.

## **II. Announcements**

### *Linz Conference 1989*

The next International Conference of Labour Historians (ITH) will be held from 12 to 16 September 1989 at Linz (Austria). There will be two themes on the agenda: (i) The Second International in the History of the In-

ternational Labour Movement (1889-1914); (ii) Labour Movement and Technical Change in Historical Perspective. Requests for information should be addressed to ITH, Altes Rathaus, Wipplingerstrasse 8, 1010 Vienna, Austria.

### *Conference "History and Computing"*

The Second Annual Meeting of the British section of the Association for History and Computing will be held at the University of Durham on Friday 17 March and Saturday 18 March 1989. During the two days there will be a variety of formal and informal sessions; these will include lectures, papers, displays and demonstrations of computer software and hardware. Those wishing to attend should contact: Alan Heesom, AHC Conference Secretary, History Department, University of Durham, Durham DH1 3HP, Britain.

### *Birkshire Prizes*

The Berkshire Conference of Women Historians will award its annual prizes for the best book and the best article on any historical subject written by an American woman and published during 1988. Submissions for the book award should be sent to: Jean Christie, 34 Bellingham Lane, Great Neck, NY 11023, U.S.A., and for the article award to Toby L. Ditz, Department of History, The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD 21218, U.S.A.. Three copies of the book or two copies of the article are required. Final deadline for submission is February 1, 1989.

### *Clifford Prize*

The American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies awards the Clifford Prize, established in 1978 in memory of Professor James Lowry Clifford (1901-78), founder of the *Johnsonian News Letter*, and third president of the Society. The Society is a non-profit educational group founded to promote the study of all aspects of the eighteenth century. Details about the competition for the Prize may be obtained from ASECS, St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN 55057, U.S.A.

### *IEHA competition for recently completed doctoral theses*

Young scholars are invited to present summaries of their doctoral research at the Leuven Congress of the International Economic History Association in August 1990. Summaries of the theses will be published in a volume of the congress proceedings, and four prizes of \$ 1000 will be awarded.

To be eligible for these sessions candidates must have been awarded their doctorate or equivalent after 1 September 1984 and must have been less

than 40 years of age at the time when the degree was awarded.

The deadline for the submission of summaries is 1 February 1989. Those interested should write to Professor Joseph Goy, General Secretary, International Economic History Association, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Centre de Recherches Historiques, 54 Boulevard Raspail, 75270 Paris, France. They should specify in their letter the thesis's title, supervisor and assessors, and the institution which awarded the degree.