

2nd CONGRESS

975

participants

600

delegates

250

observers

100

guests

5

Congress days

34

resolutions adopted

dozens

of meetings

4

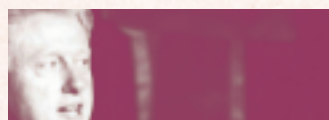
round tables

tons

of documents



In other words, Education International's
Second World Congress...



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2nd CONGRESS

Education must be measured by the needs of



Opening ceremony with EI's President, Mary Hatwood Futrell, and (from left to right) the ICFTU's Bill Jordan, the ILO's Katherine Hagen, UNESCO's Federico Mayor, the AFT's Sandra Feldman and the NEA's Robert Chase.

Education International's Second World Congress was opened on Saturday 25 July 1998 in the presence of UNESCO's Federico Mayor, the ILO's Katherine Hagen and the ICFTU's Bill Jordan.

"We must argue that investing in education is also investing in individual development and growth and in social cohesion and social stability", insisted EI President Mary Hatwood Futrell in her inaugural speech.

"We must teach the leaders of the world that trade unionism is not a barrier to economic progress, but a pathway to economic progress. We must deliver the message that every abridgement of workers' rights is an affront to human dignity", adding, "There is a danger in some countries that economic growth will be linked to diminishing freedoms".

Mary Hatwood Futrell stressed the need for teachers to take part when international bodies discuss issues such as school failure and globalisation. *"We need to be at the table to share our ideas about which standards should be used in education and how to better prepare teachers and other school employees to meet the educational needs of our increasingly diverse student populations. We should be discussing how to reconstitute schools that are failing, how to transform schools and education. And, yes, we should be helping our members understand the implications of privatization of education, how to use distance education as a teaching and learning tool, and the impact of globalization on societies. To state it more bluntly, we need to ensure that children are the beneficiaries and not the victims of these reforms", she said.*

Mary Hatwood Futrell spoke of teachers working for peace and tolerance in areas such as Rwanda, Bosnia and Northern Ireland, and she saw the nuclear race as risking a catastrophe. *"We do not need more guns", she said, "children need books, computers, food, health care and safe schools".*

EI President Futrell acknowledged that education remains a national and local matter. She stressed however that, in an age of globalization, education has increasingly become an international concern. *"If we ignore freedom in other countries, we will jeopardize our own freedom," she said. "No nation in the world can be free as long as one nation is engulfed by fear."*

"Our goal must be to educate citizens to successfully meet the challenges of the 21st century. To achieve this goal, the public and gov-

ernments must also realize that teachers and teaching are central to ensuring that nations are prepared to meet the challenges of today and in the new millennium. In other words, good teaching should be viewed as a matter of life and death", said Mary Futrell.

Sandra Feldman and Robert Chase, Presidents of the American Federation of Teachers and National Education Association respectively, gave complementary welcomes.



Federico Mayor, Director General of UNESCO, Sandra Feldman, President of the American Federation of Teachers and Robert Chase, President of the National Education Association.

In her speech, Sandra Feldman focused on her organization's actions for quality public education. *"Free public education", Feldman told delegates, "faces stark and formidable challenges right here in the United States". "I know you have this going on in many of your countries, they [members of the US Congress] want to put education on a market basis. They believe somehow that free market competition is going to improve our schools and we believe that it will do the opposite. That it will deepen the inequities that we already have and make schools, especially schools for the poorest children, schools of last resort instead of vehicles into the mainstream of American society."*

She advocated that the number of pupils in each class be lowered and that 100,000 new teachers be brought in, especially for children in the early grades. She spoke of the AFT's battle against the deterioration of school buildings. *"We are fighting to do something about the shamefully deteriorating school buildings in this country. We have children going to schools with leaky roofs, in over-crowded conditions, where they have to sometimes convert bathrooms or closets into classrooms, or have classes going on in hallways. And this, in the wealthiest nation in the world, is a disgrace."*

"In PSI we fully support a closer alliance between EI and PSI and both executives have signed a memorandum of understanding to that end. Both ITSs have the largest stake in the continuance of a strong and effective public sector. We agreed to pursue proactive and progressive policies towards the public sector rather than negative defenses of the status quo. There is a need to promote our common vision of public service delivery and to strengthen the capacity of the two internationals and their affiliates to lead developments to increase the power of their individual members and to seize the initiative in practical cooperation at world, regional, national and local levels."

Hans Engelberts, General Secretary, Public Services International (PSI)



children, not by the greed of nations

Bob Chase drew attention to child poverty in the richest country in the world - 21% of America's children live in poverty, the highest rate in the developed world.

He also reminded delegates of the dangers posed to education by guns. *"In 1995, it was estimated that every day in America, 15 children die from guns. 100,000 children are homeless. 135,000 children bring guns to school. And 1.2 million children come home everyday to a house where there is a gun. All of this affects our schools, and the work we do. And I'm aware that many of you from other countries face similar - or even worse - social problems. The tragedies of the world don't magically disappear at the doors of schools."*

Bill Jordan, General Secretary of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) said he believed that common sense and the work of the trade union movement were beginning to turn the tide in the fight against liberalisation, deregulation and privatisation: *"Political leaders, powerless to stop the crisis unfolding, devoid of answers to deal with its consequences, have been forced to listen to offers"*, he said.

EI, he said, is a potent mix of educational policies and trade unionism and he praised its work with the ICFTU and UNESCO and its efforts relating to child labour. EI had "led from the front" on the toughest issues. *"Education and training are at the heart not just of economic development, but the elimination of child labour, the struggle against discrimination in all its forms and ending poverty. World leaders are being told that cuts in education, imposition of barriers to access, will kill, not build, the future we all seek"*, he concluded.

Katherine Hagen, Deputy Director of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), stressed the work of that organisation in promoting democracy and collective bargaining and also in attacking poverty. She identified the areas of work involving close collaboration with EI, including the position of Indigenous peoples, child labour and co-operation with UNESCO.

"The ILO supports the constructive engagement of international trade union organizations, including EI, on major issues involving structural adjustment and education reform with the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization. EI and its affiliates bring to the debate the grassroots views of teaching professionals on what works and doesn't work to ensure quality education for children and adults. The ILO shares these and similar concerns on how the respect for core labour standards and greater dialogue with social partners can become lasting pillars of development policies", she said.

She emphasized that *"our common global concerns are to influence the social and economic policies of governments and international institutions in order to foster solidarity, human development for all and basic social justice, and to harness the benefits while mitigating the undesirable aspects of globalization. We assure*

you of our continued support to your own efforts to these ends, confident that together we will advance the cause of social justice in the new millennium".

The Director General of UNESCO, Federico Mayor, expressed his personal thanks to EI President Mary Futrell for her consistent support for the work of UNESCO and the support of EI for the principles of the Delors Report. He also paid tribute to the late Al Shanker.

"No education reform can succeed without the full involvement of the teaching profession from the outset", he said. *"Books and computers hold a treasure of information, but it is the teacher who first awakens the intellectual and creative capacities of the child which allow that information be converted into knowledge. Yes, education is much more than instruction, much more than information. Education gives to all human beings the capacity of having their own personal sovereignty. It is the teacher who helps the child develop points of reference, a sense of belonging, of self-worth."*

Federico Mayor also paid tribute to the particularly crucial role played by teachers in these troubled times: *"We must show greater recognition for the world's 57 million peace-teachers, on the front line of peace-building every day. I have seen them, I have met them, in Rwanda, in Burundi, in Nepal, in El Salvador, in Northern Ireland"*, he added. He concluded by saying that: *"The highest result of education is tolerance."*



"EI and the WCT will be partners with clearly defined aims, objectives and strategies - in a word, trusting partners who can bring added value to joint action."

Gaston De la Haye, General Secretary,
World Confederation of Teachers



Addressing the Congress on Wednesday 29 July, the President of the United States, Bill Clinton, said: *"The best way to strengthen democracy, to strengthen our nation and to do the best job of meeting the challenges of the 21st century is to guarantee universal, excellent education for every child on our planet"*.

EI's Key Campaigns

The EI General Secretary introducing the resolution or a global campaign to defend and enhance public education"



Two large-scale campaigns on public education and child labour will be at the centre of EI member organisations' priorities over the next three years. In November, the EI Officers will meet in order to implement these resolutions.

For an international campaign to defend and enhance free universal public education

The resolution which outlines this campaign reaffirms the values which underpin EI - *"Public education contributes to the reduction of inequality, supports social cohesion and national progress"*, reminds governments of their commitments - *"In 1990, Governments came together at the World Conference, Education For All, [...] and acknowledged the central role of education and adopted a charter of commitments designed to turn the aspirations of the title into a global reality"*, and, above all, implements a defined strategy for action.

"This is not a new campaign", recalled EI's General Secretary when introducing this resolution.

"It is a campaign which we have been building since the day we launched Education International; a campaign built from earlier decades of struggle".

Recognising that *"children's rights are a collective responsibility and public education sits at the heart of democratic public policy"*, but noting also that *"many Governments throughout the world have retreated from the universal provision of free public education (...)"*, EI and its member organisations must make the defence and enhancement of public education a main priority.

This campaign represents above all the commitment of EI, its secretariat, its member organisations and their members.

EI and its member organisations will defend public education in meetings with representatives of intergovernmental organisations such as UNESCO, the ILO, the OECD and the World Bank, in political and economic fora at both national and international levels, in order to bring as much influence as possible to bear on education policies.

The resolution also recalls that *"EI and its member organisations are willing to work with parents, students, the business world, organised labour and media"*.

EI and its member organisations will work to ensure *"the development of quality indicators or benchmarks to enable member organisations to monitor investment levels, human resource policies [...] in-service education, the democratic participation in and management of educational institutions, along with educational guarantees for students."*

With regard to teachers, the resolution stresses that *"the profession is willing to be a partner in a framework of consultations and negotiations in a process of education reform which ensures that public education is effective and efficient but rejects unfounded crit-*

icism and market-driven reforms sought by the corporate sector, politicians or others with a vested interest in privatisation".

Governments and international financial institutions will be the main targets of this campaign. EI reminds governments of the recommendation made in the Delors report that at least 6% of Gross National Product be devoted to education.

Lastly, EI will try to establish a network of internationally recognised personalities, who will provide their support to this campaign for the defence of public education. All suggestions are welcome. ♦

Child Labour

The child labour campaign is as much about action as it is about awareness-raising and lobbying. In one sense, it is a crucial arm of the campaign to defend public education. It highlights the importance of public education to the poorest and most disadvantaged in a way that nothing else does. It also demonstrates that EI members are genuinely committed to serving the interests of the world's children and not just their own.

The campaign will focus on six strategic areas:

- opposition to economic and social policies that cause child labour;
- comprehensive legislation and effective enforcement;
- mainstreaming child labour concerns into national education policies;
- comprehensive government education policy and the resources to provide for good quality, universal and free early childhood services and compulsory primary and secondary schooling, and encompassing transitional and special education services, as well as vocational and higher education
- improved training, status and working conditions for teachers and support staff;
- income support for families and employment opportunities for parents.

During the 1997 UNESCO General Conference, its Director General, Federico Mayor, called on all countries to set aside 4% of their military expenditure for education and housing in developing countries





EI member organisations are urged to take action to develop age-appropriate curriculum materials to be used in schools in both industrialised and developing countries. These materials should address the issues of child labour for students who are in danger of becoming child labourers and for those who are consumers of products made by child labour.

It is important to promote quality teacher-training and in-service development to enable teachers to meet the diverse and special needs of children, particularly the most disadvantaged, those at highest risk of becoming child labourers and those who have been child labourers.

School systems must become child labour monitors by actively surveying the extent of non-attendance at school and developing programmes and systems to

attract and keep children in school.

EI member organisations should consider extending union membership to paid educators working in the non-formal sector in recognition of the need to include transitional education as an integral part of the education system and in recognition that those working in the formal and non-formal sectors have common goals and much to learn from each other.

There is a role for campaigning and advocacy as well - lobbying for increased resources for basic education, for jobs and adequate income for adults, and for law and policy changes including ratification and implementation of the fundamental labour standards, particularly Convention 138 on the Minimum Age for Employment. ♦

Only public education provides all children with a sound foundation for lifelong learning by granting both sexes equal access to early childhood services and schools, irrespective of the economic, social and cultural background of their parents, and thus contributes to equal opportunity for all.

The Congress also adopted emergency resolutions, motivated by the dramatic events occurring in Afghanistan, Algeria and Kosovo, and by India and Pakistan's decision to carry out nuclear tests.

The resolution on Support to Afghan women presented by FEN France *"condemns without reservation the political regime imposed by the Taliban, an obscurantist and anti-democratic regime that no culture or religion could justify"* and *"salutes particularly the courage and self-sacrifice of Afghan women teachers who, at the risk of their own lives, secretly maintain education services premises for girls."*

The Taliban, who are Muslim fundamentalists, have imposed, since their sweep into power in Kabul in September 1996, an excessive interpretation of the Islamic law, forbidding women to continue their studies and to work outside the home.

The Congress asked its member organisations to exert direct and indirect pressure so that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is respected in Afghanistan and that women's rights and the right to education for all in particular are reaffirmed.

The situation in Algeria also prompted EI to adopt a resolution in support of the Algerian union SATEF. The Congress is *"alarmed at the conflict and widespread violence that prevails in Algeria and at the recent attack on the offices of SATEF. In recent years, this situation has claimed tens of thousands of victims, particularly among civilians, including women and children. Teachers and students, both male and female, have not been spared, schools having been targets of violence"*.

The Congress was *"especially concerned at the deterioration of teachers' living conditions and the quality of public schooling in these circumstances and deplores the constraints placed on trade union rights, in particular the right to strike"* and called *"upon the Algerian government: to take appropriate measures to effectively protect the people; to ensure the respect of union freedoms and to give priority status to the education sector."*

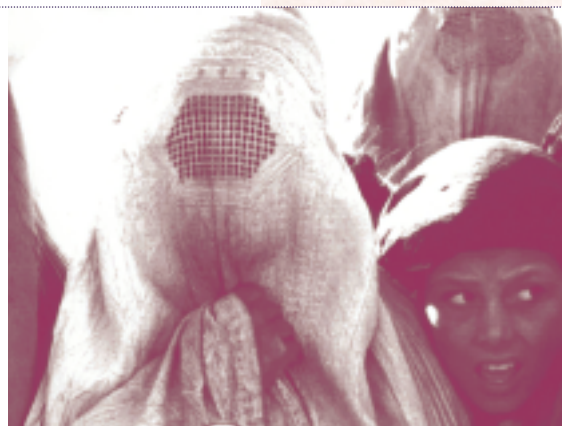
In the resolution presented by AEU Australia about the situation in Indonesia and East Timor, the Congress urged *"the Indonesian Government to implement reform needed to create political and economic stability in Indonesia, based on the full participation of the Indonesian people and respect for human rights"* and supported *"the Indonesian student movement's call for an independent referendum of the East Timorese people on independence."*

In October, EI General Secretary Fred van Leeuwen and Chief Regional Co-ordinator Aloysius Mathews went to Indonesia in order to evaluate teachers' human and union rights.

On 28th July, a family of more than 20 Albanians from Kosovo - mainly women and children - was murdered as they surrendered to the Serbian authorities. This prompted the EI General Secretary to present an emergency resolution on the Situation in Kosovo.

Stressing that *"the systematic violation of human rights in Kosovo and threats to stability and peace in the region are a legitimate concern of the international community and it cannot be declared an internal matter"*, Congress reiterated *"its demand for the instant and full restoration of education rights and full implementation of the education agreement signed in September 1996"* and appealed *"to the United Nations Security Council to do its utmost to stop the war in Kosovo and create conditions for a peaceful solution and resolve the Kosovo crisis by dialogue"*.

The Congress also adopted a resolution on The elimination of nuclear arms, introduced by JIU Japan and to which the Indian organisations AIFTO and AIFEA, SPTA from Pakistan and SNES from France contributed. It stressed that *"EI and its affiliates are determined to fight with the entire international community for the realisation of a "nuclear-free world", which calls for the foundation of a global nuclear non- proliferation and elimination framework."* ♦



In Afghanistan, particularly in the regions controlled by the Taleban, Afghan women do not have the right to the same levels of medical treatment as men, nor do they have the right to work or access to education. Forced to wear clothes which cover their entire bodies in public and deprived of all their basic rights, they become invisible, ghostly beings deprived of a proper existence and the right to choose.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

In July 1998, the EI Congress elected a new Executive Board, composed of 17 members in addition to the EI President and four Vice-Presidents and the General Secretary¹. Among the 23 members, 11 were re-elected², some to different posts from the ones they had previously held, while 12 were newly elected. This special Congress dossier therefore provides us with a unique opportunity to acquaint ourselves with the newly elected members of the Executive Board.

Carlos Augusto Abicalil, CNTE, Brazil



From a starting position as union representative at the grassroots level of public education, Carlos Augusto Abicalil rose through the ranks, becoming President of the Brazilian CNTE (National Confederation of Education Personnel) in 1995 (re-elected in 1997). Member of the EI Regional Committee for Latin America, he was elected to one of the Latin American Regional Seats on the EI Executive Board, where he intends to promote solidarity and an exchange of experience among EI's member organisations.

A professor of philosophy and history, he believes that improved access to knowledge is a key to reducing the socio-economic imbalances which co-exist with the phenomenal advances achieved by scientific and technological progress. As such, he believes that *"the public school is the key location for developing a new form of citizenship"*.

Bob Chase, NEA, USA



Having decided to become a teacher after having considered joining the priesthood, Bob Chase embarked on his professional and unionist career in Connecticut. Since 1996, he has guided the destiny of the American National Education Association, which represents some 2.4 million members. He also serves on the boards of several American foundations which work towards the improvement of quality in education. He was elected to the EI Executive Board as representative of the North American & Caribbean region.

As president of the NEA, Bob Chase is widely recognised as being a champion of quality teaching and quality public schools. His perception of this "new unionism" combines the principles of collaboration, cooperation, risk-taking, personal commitment and responsibility.

Jan Eastman, CTF/FCE, Canada



A secondary school teacher, Jan Eastman has been active in teacher organisation work since immigrating to Canada from Australia in 1969. She assumed executive and other committee positions at the local, provincial and national level. She is currently serving a two-year term as President of the Canadian Teachers' Federation. She has been elected to EI's Executive Board to represent the North American & Caribbean region. Jan stresses that *"my main role will be to work on behalf of teachers and educational workers all over the world"*

by helping to further the objectives of EI, in particular education for all". She believes EI is a strong and influential organisation capable of making a difference worldwide, a difference for children, for teachers and for public education.

Yuji Kawakami, JTU, Japan



A primary school teacher, Yuji Kawakami became involved in the teachers' trade union movement in 1981. He is President of the Japan Teachers' Union and of the EI Asia-Pacific Regional Committee. Elected to the EI Executive Board as a representative of the Asia-Pacific region, Yuji

Kawakami intends to strengthen solidarity among EI member organisations in this region through increased dialogue and discussions. The impact of the regional financial crisis on teachers and their students, in addition to the campaign for the elimination of child labour will be the main themes to which Yuji Kawakami will devote himself.

Marta Maffei, CTERA, Argentina



General Secretary of CTERA Argentina, since 1994, Marta Maffei is also a founding member and Deputy General Secretary of the Argentinian Workers' Confederation (CTA). She has over 40 years of professional experience as a teacher. As one of the representatives of the Latin American region on the EI

Executive Board, Marta Maffei believes that it is essential to bring all teachers and education personnel together in working for public education. *"Unity", she believes, "is essential for fighting the fragility and fragmentation of society, largely caused by neo-liberal policies"*.

Thembelani Nxesi, SADTU, South Africa



While a student in 1979 at Fort Hare University, which has produced many African leaders, Thembelani 'Thulas' Nxesi rapidly became confronted with South Africa's politicisation and reality. Member of a black students' association, Thulas's academic career was characterised by a succession of discriminatory expulsions imposed by the university authorities. *"I started teaching in 1984 at a time when the apartheid government expected 'normal' education in a highly abnormal society"*, he remembers. Banned from teaching by the authorities, he then held a part-time position within the NEUSA teachers' organisation, which was 'paralysed' by the authorities in 1987. Having been elected General Secretary of NEUSA in 1988, he then became Assistant General Secretary of the newly-created united teachers' organisation, the South African Democratic Teachers' Union, in 1990. He has been the General Secretary of SADTU since April 1994. As representative of the African region on the EI Executive Board,

Thulas Nxesi intends to promote closer links between African teachers' organisations.

Laures Park, NZEI, New Zealand



A Maori from the Ngati Pikiao and Te Hikutu tribes, Laures Park has been a teacher for 27 years and is currently principal of a large inner city school. A dedicated advocate for improving the status of primary education in particular and the teaching profession in general, she has been a leader and negotiator in the New Zealand Educational Institute/Te Riu Roa's campaign for pay parity between primary and secondary teachers. Laures Park is committed to improving the educational achievement of Maori children and Indigenous children everywhere through well-resourced, quality education that fully recognises and respects their languages and cultures. She says that EI is an important forum for Indigenous Peoples rights. As a representative of the Asian region she says that EI has a crucial role in ensuring that the children of Asia do not lose their right to education because of financial and economic crises for which they are not responsible.

Jean-Paul Roux, FEN, France



General Secretary of the Fédération de l'Education Nationale since 1997, Jean-Paul Roux is seconded from the administration of schools and universities in the Var region. Within the EI Executive Board, Jean-Paul Roux will continue to defend the unity of the world teachers' movement. He believes that *"EI must be the main provider of support for all those who wish to find a solution to current crises, who are seeking the true democratisation of education systems."* Jean-Paul Roux's concerns also focus on *"the effects of ultra-liberal policies on public services, particularly education services"* and on EI's role as an *"initiator in the field of co-operation"*.

Edgar Enrique Campbell-Carr, SEC, Costa Rica



First as a teacher, and then as headmaster of the Hone Creek school in Limón in Costa Rica, Edgar Enrique Campbell-Carr has held a number of union positions within the Costa Rican Education Workers' Union SEC, culminating in his election as President from 1996 onwards. *"Through my election to the EI Executive Board, I hope to contribute to the creation of a fairer world, to promoting quality public education, defending the right to education and the rights of education personnel, and to promoting dialogue and partnership with other sectors."* He explains: *"Our work must contribute to ensuring that EI becomes not only the single world teachers' organisation, but that it also becomes the world's point of reference as a social organisation"*.

Lee Dong-Jin, CHUNKYOJO, Korea



Lee, Dong-Jin is the Vice-President of the CHUNKYOJO (KTU) and Auditor of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions. Imprisoned several times because of his militant leadership in Chunkyojo, and dismissed from the Jam-sil High School in 1989, he has devoted himself to leading the struggle of the Korean teachers and workers since the 1970s. As a member of EI's Executive Board, he intends to act as a voice for teachers' civil and political rights and to implement education reform and promote teachers' unity and solidarity. He aims to try to secure a more humanistic approach to globalisation and to strengthen public education by constructing alliances to fight against structural adjustment and privatisation. He will also concentrate on the enhancement of international solidarity within EI and on campaigns for gender equality, against child labour and all other forms of exploitation.

Eva-Maria Stange, GEW, Germany



Born in 1957, Eva-Maria Stange has considerable experience as a mathematics and physics teacher in Dresden (ex-East Germany). In May 1997, she succeeded Dieter Wunder as President of the German GEW (Trade Union for Education and Science). Her commitment to the international level of the teachers' trade union movement first became evident when she participated in the first EI World Congress, held in 1995 in Harare. She will continue to encourage international relations between EI's member organisations.

Alpha Osman Timbo, SLTU, Sierra Leone



At 37 years of age, Alpha Osman Timbo is the youngest member of the EI Executive Board, following his election to an open seat. Having completed his Postgraduate Diploma in Education at the University of Sierra Leone, he began teaching in 1981. In 1990, he was elected General Secretary of the Sierra Leone Teachers' Union and experienced, alongside his union, the worst effects of several years of civil war. The SLTU played a primary role in resisting the putschist junta, supporting the return of democracy and the President in March 1998. Alpha Timbo is also Deputy General Secretary of the Sierra Leone Labour Congress (SLLC). As a member of the EI Executive Board, he intends to further promote South/South cooperation. ♦

Mary Hatwood Futrell and Fred van Leeuwen have been re-elected as President and General Secretary.

Among the four Vice-Presidents, two women, Georgina Baiden (GNAT, Ghana) and Sharan Burrow (AEU, Australia) have been re-elected. They are joined by Sandra Feldman (AFT, USA) and Charlie Lennon (ASTI, Ireland) who had already respectively held a regional seat and an open seat. Anni Herfort Andersen (DLF Denmark) and Assibi Napoe (FESEN, Togo) continue to occupy regional seats on the Executive Board. Agneta Anderlund (Lärarförbundet, Sweden), Marguerite Cummins-Williams (BSTU Barbados) and Nigel de Gruchy (NASUWT, United Kingdom) were re-elected to open seats.

The "Lifelong" Education International

"Learning throughout life implies a re-thinking of content to reflect such factors as age, gender equality, disability, language, culture and economic disparities."

Declaration from the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education, Hamburg, 18 July 1997

About 200 delegates took part in this Round Table chaired by Greg O'Keefe, who was then an EI Vice-President. Other panellists included Paul Bélanger, Director of the UNESCO Institute for Education, Hilde Borgir, Vice-President of the Norwegian trade union Laererforbundet, and Irene Duncan from GNAT, Ghana.

Paul Bélanger described how *"rapid expansion in the demand for adult education in Asia, the Pacific and Europe has been one of the most significant trends over the last twenty years"*, and Hilde Borgir and Irene Duncan stated that *"teachers have a key role to play"*; they must be the actors and driving force behind changes in the education system, and work in partnership with local authorities, parents and employers.

Some participants thought that funding was a key issue that should be the responsibility of the State, while others spoke of opportunities for financial partnerships with companies, particularly in the context of vocational training. However, some pointed out that investment in adult education was just as important as investment in educating the young: at a time of major political, economic and social change, the cost of illiteracy and the absence of vocational training could not be ignored.

Many agreed that lifelong education *"should not provide governments with an alibi for offloading their financial responsibilities for basic education."* In this context, one delegate stated that *"further education cannot and must not take the place of basic education."*

At all events, there was no doubt that those who had a good basic education would make better use of opportunities for further education.

Although much emphasis was placed on the role of teachers, a number of participants argued that educational systems

should be less compartmentalised and more open, particularly as far as adults were concerned. As one participant put it, we must have *"a multiple-entry learning system at all levels of the education system"*. The issue of accrediting courses and job experience is vital to the successful development of lifelong learning and the motivation of learners.

Some delegates stressed the impact of new information and communication technology, and stated that it can be a valuable tool, particularly in the context of distance-learning. However, the point was made that competence in the use of such technology remains the prerogative of an educated minority, and that in turn could easily widen the gap between north and south.



Other delegates drew the meeting's attention to the specific needs of women and girls. An enormous effort is needed to enable girls to have access to basic education, as this will have a decisive influence on their futures; similarly, we must develop access to continuing education for the large numbers of women who find themselves with family responsibilities before they are even able to receive a basic education.

For the most part, they are *"the people the education system has forgotten"*.

In conclusion, Paul Bélanger appealed to teachers who *"have skills in basic education ... In far too many countries you are left out of the debate. Don't be shy. Say what you feel."* Teachers are ideally qualified to play a decisive role in the changes that are taking place at the present time. *"Become the Lifelong Education International."* ♦

Monique Fouilhoux



The Round Table on lifelong education



Speakers (from left to right) Irene Duncan from the Ghanaian trade union GNAT, Paul Bélanger, Director of the UNESCO Institute for Education, and Hilde Borgir, Vice-President of the Norwegian trade union Laererforbundet

ROUND TABLES

Education and the Economy



Constitutional requirements guaranteeing education the necessary allocations, a tax on international financial transactions, guidelines for pension funds and getting rid of corrupt politicians were among the pro-active alternatives for strengthening public education, which were discussed at the Round Table on "Education and the Economy".

"Studies show that education accounts for up to a quarter of economic growth". The tone of the debate was set by Roy Jones, from TUAC, the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD, and a Round Table panellist. He warned teacher unions not to consider economic questions in isolation and emphasised the need for teacher unions to find allies among other trade unions and NGO's. *"Identify where the power lies"*, he advised, mentioning the World Bank, the IMF, the OECD and the WTO as important actors on the international economic scene¹. Jean-Claude Barbarant from FEN France also underlined the importance of developing contacts with major international financial bodies, such as the World Bank.

Geared up by Siva Subramaniam, panellist from NUTP Malaysia, who depicted the present situation where privatisation becomes the rule and where companies are selling education as a product, many speakers described the cuts in educational expenditure that are affecting their countries. All described the problems and damage caused by market-oriented approaches in the education sector, and stressed the growing difficulties for the education sector in playing the important role it should play in order to contribute to the development of nations. *"Many governments prefer to spend money on the military instead of investing in education"*, said Siva Subramaniam, arguing for the need to get rid of corrupt politicians.

Pro-active strategies

One speaker urged the participants to spend more time on developing counter-arguments against privatisation and market approaches. He noted that markets are not a new concept in the education sector. There are several "market decisions", made by parents and teachers, which affect the education system.

Children go to different schools because their parents decide to buy houses or rent apartments in different neighbourhoods. Teachers decide to apply for jobs in different schools based on the information they have about the schools. He concluded that the task is not to get rid of market mechanisms, but to find a way of regulating the markets.

Several speakers tried to outline elements of a proactive strategy for combatting undesirable policies. The most frequent proposal was to allocate more money to education. Some proposed that governments be forced to make a sufficient allocation to education through some kind of constitutional requirement guaranteeing education the necessary resources.

Other proposals dealt with tax policies. The fact that governments have to get sufficient income from taxes was highlighted by several delegates from Latin America. In this context, it was noted that the international deregulation of finance markets has created a situation making it very difficult for governments to impose taxes, which are believed to be detrimental to big multinational companies. A way of dealing with this problem could be to introduce an international financial transaction tax, sometimes referred to as the Tobin tax. Such a tax might bring new money to education.

Roy Jones agreed that the proposal of a Tobin tax needed to be seriously discussed. However, he underlined that such a tax cannot at the same time stop international speculation and bring money to education and other sectors needing more resources. Jean-Claude Barbarant suggested bringing this issue into ongoing discussions on tax policies.

The growing importance of pension funds in international financial markets was also tackled. It was noted that these funds, which have been created by salary contributions from teachers and other employees to secure their pensions, are sometimes making investment decisions that undermine the interests of these same people they are supposed to serve. One way of dealing with this could be to encourage unions to play a more active role in determining investment guidelines and ethical principles for such pensions funds.

Georgina Baiden, Vice-President of EI and chairperson of the Round Table, concluded that EI has to establish international education standards and that it is unacceptable that education be organised for profit. ♦

Ulf Fredriksson

¹ International Monetary Fund, Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation, and the World Trade Organisation.

² Contributions were made to the discussion from several countries, among them the United Kingdom, Brazil, Spain, Haiti, France, Nigeria, Chile, Canada, Austria, Norway, Australia, Finland, Colombia, Argentina, Poland and the United States.

Educators - Rights and Responsibilities

In the Round Table on "*Educators - Rights and Responsibilities*", Congress delegates were challenged to identify what Education International and its member organisations could do

to ensure that the rights of teachers and other education personnel are fully respected; to improve the public perception of teachers; to attract talented young people to the profession and to promote high quality training for an ever more demanding job.

The three panellists opened the debate with contributions that were both constructive and provocative. Professor Errol Miller, a former President of the Jamaica Teachers' Union, argued that there is a constructive tension between rights and responsibilities. *"The maturity and effectiveness of teacher organisations, or teachers, can be judged",* he asserted, *"in relation to how successfully they can hold in constructive tension the balance between rights and responsibilities".*

Joanna Beresford, National Secretary of the New Zealand Educational Institute, drew on the experience of New Zealand teachers and support staff as they have organised, not only to resist and modify the changes which governments, intent on cutting public expenditure, privatising and deunionising, have tried to impose, but also to promote - and with some success - their own agenda and priorities. She listed a number of lessons to be learnt from the New Zealand experience including: *"Unions need to be honest about our weaknesses as well as our strengths - within education we must never defend the indefensible. We must actively promote trade unions as being at the very core of a democratic and participatory society. Our unions must be models of participation, run by members who have a strong sense of belonging".*

Shantha Sinha, a founder of the M.V. Foundation in India, vividly confirmed the value of engaging with parents and the wider community as she outlined the benefits to child labourers and teachers alike when teachers reach out beyond their classrooms to the children not in school. She described how overburdened teachers became when there was only one teacher to 200 children. She explained the background of illiteracy and parents' lack of experience of education and how this all contributes to sending children out to work rather than to school.

She then outlined a new approach which includes, among other features, teachers reaching out to parents and community; showing greater sensitivity in the classroom to the requirements of ex-working children; setting standards for a good school and assisting the community in evaluating the performance of schools. The approach has had, she reported, a tremendous response from teachers and as a result *"schools have now become the focus of overall development of*

Shantha Sinha, MV Foundation India; Dieter Wunder, then Vice-President of EI and chairperson of the Round Table; Errol Miller, Professor, West Indies University and Joanna Beresford, NZEI.



the village; the community has responded by treating the teachers as well as the schools with much greater respect...".

A very lively discussion followed. The delegate from El Salvador spoke movingly of emerging from a long period of civil war, of teachers trying to make a contribution to the building of social justice, and of their needs to be educated about the new political and economic realities. Some speakers, such as those from Cyprus and Dominica, dealt with the grave difficulties they faced. Others challenged the view that teachers had a responsibility to children beyond those in their classroom, others graphically described a situation where there were no rights and only responsibilities left.

The delegate from Chad asked: *"How can there be any respect when teachers have to beg for money to survive?"* He also highlighted the dangers faced by teachers in some countries when they try to promote human rights education in the classroom. If teachers sit children from different ethnic groups together, he explained, parents will take the children out of school and it is dangerous for teachers who try to discuss such issues. Representatives from France and Greece spoke of the impact of unemployment on their communities and in their schools where apathy and violence amongst students is on the increase.

Still others, like the New Caledonian delegate, spoke strongly in support of keeping the child at the centre of everything we do. Together with speakers from Nigeria, Canada and India, he emphasised the importance of effective organising and building networks with the wider community.

Just as the discussion started to focus on proposals for action, time ran out. A German delegate stressed the importance of an integrated approach - Education International, he suggested, appears to deal with neo-liberalism, child labour and public education as if they were all separate and distinct issues. From South Africa came a plea for the development by EI of effective, regionally co-ordinated programmes of action to achieve free, public education for all, up to Grade 12 at least, in every country. There was extensive support for education unions to participate in the development of policy and curricula at the national level.

An Australian urged "activism, collectivism and knowledge" as the key to effectively shaping our futures both industrially and professionally.

From Latin America came the suggestion that we should be collectively developing the profile of what is required to make an effective teacher for the 21st century. ♦

Rosslyn Noonan

ROUND TABLES

Successful reforms are shared reforms



If we had to summarise in a single sentence the main idea to emerge from the Round Table on *"Building coalitions for reform"*, we would have to go back to the position clearly articulated by Alan Ruby, a newly-appointed official at the World Bank: *"Successful reforms are shared reforms"*.

The Round Table was chaired by EI Vice-President Sharan Burrow. In addition to Alan Ruby, those taking part included Victor Ciorbéa, former Prime Minister of Romania; Marta Maffei, President of Education International's Regional Committee for Latin America; and Salimata Doumbia, the new General Secretary of the SNEPPCI (National Union of Public Primary Education), in Côte d'Ivoire.

All reported on work that had been carried out as part of their respective political, trade union and professional responsibilities, and which aimed at promoting dialogue and consultation between social actors to establish and implement reforms. However, all of them also pointed to difficulties and obstacles standing in the way of truly beneficial dialogue and consultation.

The very idea that trade unions in the education sector should be involved in a partnership was questioned by some participants; examples of this included: *"Partnership implies that everyone shares the same interests"*, *"Partnership is difficult to explain at the workplace; a lot of teachers have their doubts"*, and *"Why is the World Bank now trying to find a partnership with teachers, whom it has impoverished in the past?"*

However, some delegates suggested that partnership could be a working framework that developed consideration of, and proposals on, concrete issues. The setting up of partnerships could be both limited in time (i.e. limited to the time needed for a specific reform to be achieved) and in area (i.e. such a strategy does not mean that there should be partnerships on all issues). The trade union must maintain control of its strategy: partnership when a given practice takes an issue forward; opposition and action when that is what the situation demands for other issues.



Salimata Doumbia, General Secretary of SNEPPCI Côte d'Ivoire, Marta Maffei, President of Education International's Regional Committee for Latin America, Sharan Burrow, EI Vice-President and President of the Round Table, Victor Ciorbéa, former Prime Minister of Romania and Alan Ruby from the World Bank.

Other delegates saw real advantages in partnership practices. For example, they gave trade unions an opportunity to make their demands and proposals known beyond the confines of the labour movement and ensure that they were better understood by outside actors. Partnership also helps to understand the motivations of the actors and reach acceptable agreements.

Partnership strategies also bring all social actors together in establishing reforms that are understood and accepted, reduce waste and put a curb on corruption. The more partners are involved in the completion of projects (often with outside funding), the more people and groups have a chance to check that the project is properly carried out.

In many countries, education reforms are presently being imposed without any real consultation; therefore they all too often end in failure, misunderstandings on the part of employees, and hold-ups that make the parties (i.e. governments, employers and trade unions) distrustful of one another. Social relations are frequently based on distrust, which is sometimes justified, but nothing worthwhile can ever be achieved under duress. This idea is catching on in many settings, not only in the trade union movement.

Just as unions do not choose their governments and their employers, so employers cannot seriously expect to choose their trade union opposite numbers. Each must acknowledge the other's legitimacy and promote a climate of confidence, respect and respect for a person's solemn word.

It is certainly a way of improving the public image of trade unions. ♦

Elie Jouen

They may only have been presented twice, but the EI Awards have already become a tradition in their own right. For a single evening, the main conference room was turned into a ballroom, and the focus was then on the evening's main events: the presentation of the EI Awards to an Indian educator and two Ethiopian trade unionists; the thanks given to out-going members of the Executive Board and to Vice-Presidents Gregory O'Keefe and Dieter Wunder; and a tribute to Al Shanker (EI Founding President who died in 1997) in the presence of his widow, Eadie. Let us cast our minds back to that night....

The evening got under way with a splendid meal and speeches and ended with dancing. It was unanimously agreed that the Awards ceremony had been a success, perhaps because the evening had been an "exceptional" opportunity to bring our great trade union family together for a "gala event" that had nonetheless managed to remain informal.

As the event was taking place on American soil, it was only right that it should start off with a warm tribute to Albert Shanker, Founding President of EI, former

Eadie Shanker



President of the International Federation of Free Teachers' Unions (IFFTU) and leader of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). His successor at the AFT, Sandra Feldman, described him as her "long-time mentor and friend". A number of speakers had also referred to Albert Shanker's devotion to the cause of education and the trade union movement in the opening session of the Congress.

One of these tributes came from UNESCO Director General Federico Mayor, who said, *"I had the privilege of meeting Albert Shanker and I would like to add my tribute to him to those which have already been made at this Congress. The courage, conviction and vision of Al Shanker will continue to mark the world of education for many years to come. By a commitment to democratic ideals, he broadened the scope of unionism from a search for strategies to a search for wisdom."*

EI President Mary Hatwood Futrell also paid tribute to the EI Founding President in these words: *"He taught us to stand up not simply for the popular cause, but to stand up for what we believe."*

After a film that told the story of Al Shanker's career, his widow Eadie gave a moving speech. "He expressed his



Shantha Sinha of the Mamidipudi Venkatarangaiya Foundation in India, receiving her award from EI President Mary Hatwood Futrell

belief," she said, "that through political action with our sister and brother unionists, at local, national and international levels, we can work toward the elimination of poverty and for good education, true freedom and democracy. His message to all teachers and education workers was that like everyone else, we as professionals have the right to fight - to fight for decent working conditions and salaries as well as for the improvement of our schools and our teaching practices. His clarion call to educators everywhere was that our unity with trade unionists and the determination of our organization, are weapons in the many battles we will face as we presently work together against those who would destroy public education through privatization."

The Albert Shanker International Education Award, which the EI Executive Board named after Al Shanker, was presented to Shantha Sinha, Secretary Trustee of the Mamidipudi Venkatarangaiya Foundation (MVF) for her organisation's work in rescuing thousands of children from bonded labour and enabling them to go back to school.

The EI Award winner talked of her work in these terms : *"More than anything else it is this aspect which dominates my thoughts as I stand here before you, many of whom work in very different circumstances but all with the single objective of ensuring that every child has access to quality education through schools. Schools are extremely critical institutions for a variety of reasons. But perhaps the most important reason is the fact that in most countries it is the only institution that caters exclusively to children. It is for this reason that as we proceeded with our work on child labour we found that schools inevitably became a part of the program. In fact we found that the only alternative to sending a child to work was to send him to school."*

"State-run schools are also crucially important in that they ultimately reflect the State policy on education and give an indication of the commitment of the State to achieving its social objectives. While this is particularly significant in a country like India, which has the dubious distinction of having the largest number of working as well as illiterate children anywhere in the world, experience in most other countries has also shown that a pro-active State policy is absolutely essential for shaping the future of a child. Given all these factors it



Shimalis Zewdie, Acting General Secretary of ETA, was imprisoned for a month, soon after his return from Washington. This month of detention has led to a deterioration in his state of health.

becomes important to ensure that public schools are developed into institutions, which set standards rather than remain as poorer versions catering mainly to those segments of the population who cannot afford to go to private institutions. It is in this aspect that the work of the MVF draws on the example set by educationalists such as Albert Shanker and their uncompromising attitude towards quality education in public schools."

"In many other countries it has been seen that where there is a need to establish a link between the school and society, and where it is necessary for the school to extend its boundaries beyond the four walls of the school building, public schools play a vital role. Despite all their other advantages, private schools can at best play a fringe role when it comes to influencing society's behaviour at a macro level," she explained.

In conclusion, Shantha Sinha said, *"I would like to thank Education International for this award which has given all of us in the MVF a high level of confidence, a sense of satisfaction that we are on the right path and not alone in the work that we have set out for ourselves."*

Sadly, less optimism surrounded the presentation of the Education International Human and Trade Union Rights Award to Ethiopian trade union leaders Dr. Taye Woldesmiat and Assefa Maru (posthumously).

Neither of the joint recipients of the award were able to be in Washington to accept it. The Ethiopian Teachers' Association President Dr. Taye Woldesmiat was in prison in Addis Ababa and Assistant Secretary Assefa Maru received the Award posthumously as he had been shot dead by police in May 1997.

Acting General Secretary Shimalis Zewdie, ETA's delegate to Congress, spoke of their courage and strength, of the great loss that Assefa Maru's death had caused to his family and to the ETA, and he emphasised Dr. Taye's continuing commitment and determination. The Ethiopian Teachers' Association, he said, *"faces many difficulties, but we are still strong, we will remain steadfast and we will come through in the end"*.

A few days earlier, Ethiopian police and security forces had seized one of ETA's few

remaining assets: their offices in Addis Abeba. Later, on 17 September, Shimalis Zewdie and two other members of the ETA Executive Board were arrested for refusing to sign over their organisation's assets to a rival government-supported trade union. They were released on 15 October after one month of detention. Shimalis Zewdie is gravely ill with tuberculosis and the conditions in which he was detained have worsened his condition.

Out-going members of EI governing bodies



The Awards dinner was an opportunity to give sincere thanks to out-going members of the EI Executive Board (left to right: Osvaldo Verdugo Peña (CPC, Chile), Hanna Witkowska (NSZZ, Poland), Oumar Tall (SNEEL, Senegal), Keith Geiger (NEA, United States), Diana Jayasundera (ACUT, Sri Lanka), Perianan Ramanathan (NUTP, Malaysia) and Rafael Cuello (FECODE, Colombia) and to Vice-Presidents Dieter Wunder (GEW, Germany) and Gregory O'Keefe (CTF/FCE, Canada)).

Guy Le Neouannic (FEN, France) and Rangirai Masarira (ZIMTA, Zimbabwe), two more out-going members of the Executive Board, were not present at the Awards ceremony dinner; Ms Iraidia Marin (FETRA, Venezuela) was unable to attend the EI Congress.

"Thanks to the work you have put in," EI General Secretary Fred van Leeuwen told them, *"Education International has been able to carry out its tasks during its first three-year term."* Several out-going members of EI governing bodies had held high-ranking positions in the WCOTP and IFFTU, the two organisations that merged to form EI, and Greg O'Keefe and Dieter Wunder had played substantial roles in the merger process that brought EI into being. ♦

EI Women's Caucus

On 24 July 1998, over 200 women, delegates and observers to the second EI World Congress, met to review the work of EI on behalf of women in education since the Harare Congress in 1995. The Caucus also provided an opportunity for women to meet the women candidates for the new EI Executive Board, and to examine the resolutions, programme, budget and other issues to be presented to the Congress.

Mary Hatwood Futrell, EI President, chaired the opening session of the caucus and Kounka Damianova, chairperson of the EI Status of Women Committee presided over the second session of the Caucus. Assibi Napoe, EI Executive Board representative to the Status of Women Committee presented the Triennial Report on the "Situation of Women in Education, in Education Unions and in Society". This was followed by the report from the Status of Women Committee, presented by Kounka Damianova, chairperson of the EI Status of Women Committee. After providing a comprehensive report on the activities of the committee, Kounka explained why the Committee was opposed to the proposed change in the structure of the committee. The rationale for the proposed change was presented and extensive discussion followed.

Since the inception of EI, the Status of Women Committee consisted of ten women appointed by the Executive board. The Committee had representatives from all regions of the world and met once per year. The new proposal would have Round Tables in each region to involve more women in the process and to have representatives of the Executive Board meet immediately before the Executive Board as a Status of Women Committee. The Caucus endorsed the new proposal but outlined that they expected the Executive Board to name women members to the Committee and that they would review the revised structure at the next Congress.

Resolutions dealing with the Feminisation of the Teaching Profession and the Girl Child were discussed, and the attention of delegates was drawn to the resolution on the Global March for Women in the year 2000, as well as to the current situation of women and girls in Afghanistan.

Delegates from Nigeria, Liberia, and South Africa highlighted issues of concern to them. The impact of the Asian economic crisis on women and on education were also discussed. Colleagues from Latin America outlined the impact of changes in social security programmes for women as well as the need for improvement in funding education in their region.

Three new EI training documents were introduced: Women and Human Rights, Women and the Economy and the Girl Child.

Regarding EI's activities, the Caucus insisted on the need to provide a gender analysis in the planning and implementation of all activities.

The commitment by all participants to ensure that the voices of women were heard on all matters and that the

The Waiapi people of the Amazonian rainforest were decimated during the 1970s when they came into contact with Westerners who brought with them previously unknown diseases and illnesses, such as the common cold and measles.

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issues brought to the agenda by women became issues for all members of Education International, was later witnessed at the Congress. The fact that EI is presided by a woman, Mary Futrell, and by three women Vice-Presidents out of four, was also highlighted as a step in the right direction. ♦

Sheena Hanley

EI Indigenous Educators Forum

The first International Indigenous Educators Forum and the first Indigenous educator elected to EI's Executive Board were both evidence of the increased visibility of Indigenous delegates and issues at the 2nd EI Congress.

The morning before Congress opened, the small group of Indigenous delegates and observers, from amongst the one thousand Congress participants, were joined by observers from every region. The host peoples, North American Indians, led by Gwen Shunatona and Juanita Contreras, welcomed us to their lands, introducing us to the power and warmth of the circle which brought us together as one.

Jillian Miller, an Aboriginal member of the Australian AEU, provided continuity with the Harare Congress where, three years earlier, she had moved EI's first policy resolution on Indigenous Peoples rights. She invited participants to highlight issues of concern and to share their experiences of working through the education unions of which they are members. Many of the issues were shared: languages continue to die out at a greater rate than plants and animals; dominant culture education systems continue to fail Indigenous children and young people; governments continue to disregard and break treaties signed with Indigenous Peoples; land continues to be alienated.

Yet there were also examples of Indigenous education initiatives that were flourishing, with Indigenous children experiencing success as culture and language were nurtured within them. Discussions also touched on how to increase the participation of Indigenous union members and ensure their voices are heard within EI and its member organisations.

The closing circle confirmed how much had been shared and learnt in the brief time together. ♦

Rosslyn Noonan

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Relaxation and "petits fours"

A Congress is made up of more than just plenary sessions and precisely prepared speeches. During the five days, a number of social activities were held for the greater pleasure of delegates, providing a further occasion to get to know each other and exchange ideas.

The first day of the Congress, Saturday 25 July, ended at the NEA's superb headquarter premises, totally renovated a few years ago, where the patio and meeting room hosted hundreds of Congress delegates to the strains of a jazz band and classical music.

On Sunday 26 July, good weather was on hand for the Scandinavian evening, organised by the Nordic Teachers' Council and attended by a large crowd at the edge of the Hilton swimming pool. The full range of Scandinavian culinary specialities – from salmon to herring – were featured for everyone's delectation.

In addition to enjoying an excellent buffet, guests had the opportunity of wandering around the galleries of this superb museum to the accompaniment of various orchestras. The evening continued with a night-time visit of the city, revealing Washington's most beautiful monuments, resplendent in their night attire (here the Lincoln Memorial).



The EI Awards Dinner, held in the evening of Tuesday 28 July, is described at length on pages 20 and 21.



Representatives of the Nordic Teachers' Council's member organisations greeting their guests. You will note in particular the presence of Agneta Anderlund (Lärarförbundet Sweden), member of the EI Executive Board, in traditional costume.

More than 1300 people attended the North American evening, organised on Monday 27 July by the two US teachers' federations, AFT and NEA, together with the Canadian Teachers' Federation (FCE/CTF), the Centrale de l'enseignement du Québec, (CEQ) and the Quebec Federation of University Teachers (FQPPU), in the magnificent National Museum of American History at the Smithsonian Institute.



The opening speeches were followed by a cultural presentation provided by the pupils of the Thomas Pullen Magnet School for Performing and Creative Arts. Sketches illustrating the cultural traditions of every continent were presented to delegates.

DOSSIER

The Congress "Fringe"

A vast concourse close to the Congress rooms housed the delegate registration area, the information desk, the Second EI Congress souvenir shop, the document distribution centre, and the exhibition hall.

"Our Congress delegates received some 2.5 tons of EI publications." Patrice Vézina, EI's information Coordinator and exhibition hall manager, had reason to be proud of these figures, provided a few hours after the closure of the congress.

The EI documentation stand featured more than 75 publications in three languages. New items included the EI flyer, the Barometer on human and trade union rights in the education sector, the new newsletter on development co-operation, the brochure on higher education, and the latest joint EI/UNESCO publications. Also on offer was the most recent edition of 'Trade Union World', the monthly magazine of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, with a feature article on EI.

UNESCO, the International Labour Organisation, the World Health Organisation, Amnesty International and



The Ghandi Medal was presented by Mr. Mayor to Mark Rosenthal of the MTV Network. In introducing the item after a short video presentation, Dr. Noel Brown, President of the Friends of the United Nations, spoke of the dangers of racial and religious conflict and praised the work of MTV in working for tolerance and non-violence through the entertainment industry. A written message of congratulation from Hilary Rodham Clinton was read.

In receiving the award, Mark Rosenthal spoke of the role of the largest television network in the World, whose Nickelodeon Channel is seen by children in over 70 countries. The programmes seek to help children to respect racial, religious and sexual differences, he said, and also to work in their communities. To represent the first company to receive the award was a great honour.



On the eve of the congress, the EI President and General Secretary, with other EI representatives, including NEA President Bob Chase, met members of the American and foreign press corps at a press conference held in Washington DC's National Press Building. Journalists' questions focused mainly on attempts to privatise schools. *"The idea that private schools out-perform public schools is just a myth, an internationally disseminated myth, unfortunately"*, EI General Secretary Fred van Leeuwen explained.

several trade unions were also present to distribute their material.

UNESCO proposed a wide range of high-quality, eye-catching publications on topical subjects. The ILO presented an exhibition of photos and training material on child labour. The WHO offered documents on school health. Amnesty International's documentation focused on its campaign to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights.

Many EI member organisations also exhibited their publications, training material, and in certain cases, their co-operation and development projects. Nikkyoso, Japan displayed photographs of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, together with a petition against nuclear arms.

The EI exhibition stand featured showings of the EI/UNESCO videos produced for the 1997 and 1998 World Teachers' Days, and an ILO video on child labour.

The EI souvenir shop was literally submerged and the goods on sale (sweaters, T-shirts, caps, mugs, notepads) literally went like hot cakes. By the third day of the congress, certain items were already out of stock.

One floor up, in the cyberspace sponsored by the NEA, specialists and novices in new communication technologies crowded round ten computers fitted with permanent Internet connections. Many delegates visited daily to check their e-mail and several dozens followed the Internet initiation sessions which were offered in three languages. Another innovation at this Congress was the special EI Congress site (<http://www.congress.ei-ie.org>), which was updated daily in order to follow the plenary activities as closely as possible. ♦