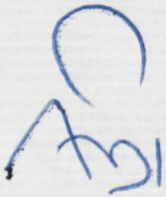


Our current effort is limited to a single Council officer working from the Embassy. In the light of our recent Chequers discussion, I cannot help feeling that this kind of activity should be greatly stepped up throughout Eastern Europe, wherever possibilities exist. This should go hand in hand with an expansion of the BBC foreign language broadcasts directed towards Eastern Europe, a subject which we also discussed at Chequers.



A.D. PARSONS
12 October 1983



10 DOWNING STREET

1. John Coler ✓ ^{24.}₁₀

I do not propose to put to the PM the question of a dinner for the British Council's anniversary until it is clearer whether we are likely to avoid a row over public expenditure. Could you let me know when that is resolved: I imagine that it may be clear at the PM's talk with the Foreign Secretary this week.

2. C.P. - Please B.F. on 8.11 to

remind

FEB 24.10



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

10 October, 1983.

I attach a copy of a letter which I have received from the Director General of the British Council asking whether the Prime Minister would be willing to give a dinner at No.10 to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the British Council. If she were to give such a dinner, I imagine that it would follow the pattern of dinners given for visiting Heads of Government, and that it would be possible to accommodate about 48 people, at 6 tables of 8.

Would your Secretary of State think it appropriate that the Prime Minister should give a dinner to mark the 50th Anniversary of the British Council if she were minded to do so?

E. E. R. BUTLER

Brian Fall, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.



b

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

10 October, 1983.

Many thanks for your letter about the British Council's 50th Anniversary.

I will consult the Prime Minister, and let you have a reply as soon as I can.

E. E. R. BUTLER

Sir John Burgh, KCMG, CB.

W/O

THE BRITISH COUNCIL

10 Spring Gardens London SW1A 2BN
telephone 01-930 8466

from The Director-General Sir John Burgh KCMG CB

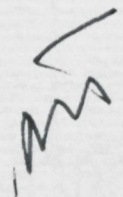
A J Coles Esq
Private Secretary
Prime Minister's Office
10 Downing Street
London
SW1

3 May 1983

Prime Minister

Do you want to go on seeing
this magazine - it is not very
exciting?

A.S.C. $\frac{5}{5}$.



Dear John,

I enclose a copy of the second issue of "The British Council News". The Prime Minister might be interested, particularly perhaps in the piece on the front page about Sri Lanka and another one on page 6 about a conference arranged by the British Council to try to increase industrial training in Britain.

Yours,

John

THE BRITISH COUNCIL

NEWS



Issue number 2 May 1983

New HMG line on foreign students stresses benefits

The extra £46 million made available by the Government to help more overseas students study in Britain has been welcomed by the British Council. Though the amount is small compared with the savings made when full cost fees for overseas students were introduced in 1980 the concession, which has been made in response to recommendations by the Overseas Student Trust, is seen as a fresh official acknowledgement of the educational, economic and foreign policy benefits of encouraging students to study in Britain.

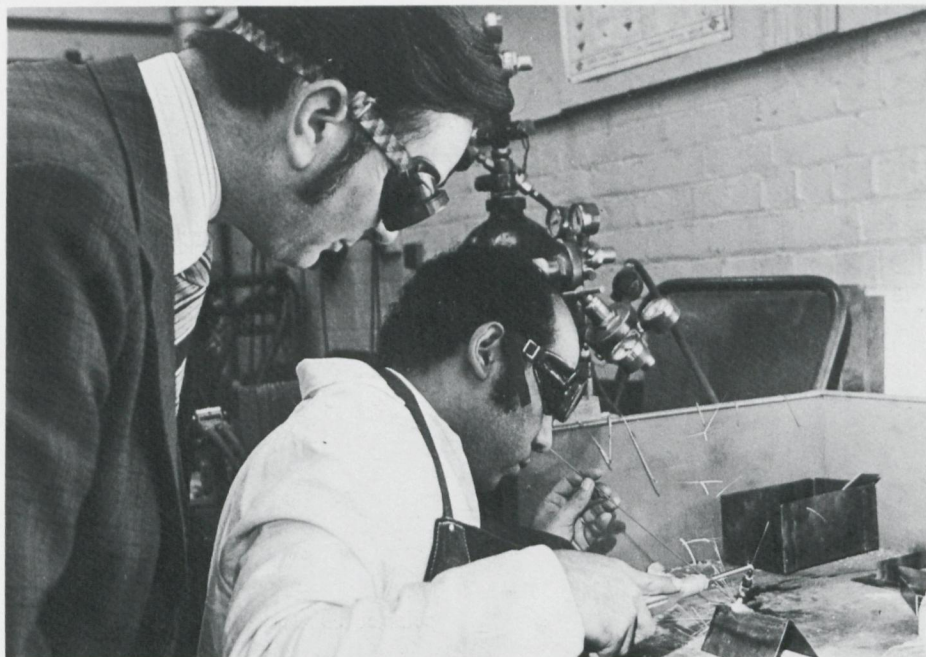
As a large part of the British Council's work is based on the precept that it is of benefit to Britain for people, especially those who are likely to rise to positions of authority and influence, to live and study in Britain during their formative years, this government nod at the importance of cultural diplomacy is seen as being in exactly the right direction.

The major portion of the new money has been earmarked for additional awards under existing programmes and also for fee-support schemes for those countries most heavily affected by the high costs of sending their students to Britain, especially Cyprus, Hong Kong and Malaysia.

In addition, as reported elsewhere in this issue, the British Council will receive £100,000 in each of the next three years to promote British higher education overseas.

The rest of the new money is being allocated to a scheme of discretionary awards to be funded and controlled by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the details of which have yet to be announced.

Perhaps of equal importance to these measures is the Government's decision to set up machinery to ensure that Britain has a coherent and flexible policy on the whole question of overseas students. The Government needs a framework within
continued on page 2 column 3.



Len Pearson a lecturer in metal-working at Oldham Technical College instructing Egyptian student Saad Mohamed Sultan. The British Council's work in Egypt is featured on pages 4-5.

Terry Moore

Sri Lanka raises status of English

President Junius Jayawardene of Sri Lanka announced on 9 February, in his address at the opening of Parliament, that English will become a national language of Sri Lanka alongside Sinhala and Tamil. He spoke of the need for youth to 'equip themselves with the knowledge of a world language' and stated that 'the elevation of English will enable it to act as a link between the Sinhalese and Tamil peoples and with the international world.'

The British Council Representative in Colombo reports that this is a dramatic and far-reaching reversal of the situation that has held since 1956, with Sinhala as the official language, Tamil recognised as a national language, but English relegated to a foreign language and increasingly neglected.

Since 1977 rather more attention has been paid to the teaching of English, but this new initiative of the President will herald a period when English will be recognised for what it is, a language in everyday use in Sri Lanka, even a first language for

some people, and a necessity for commercial and cultural contacts with the outside world.

The British Council and the British Government's Overseas Development Administration (ODA) have so far been very active in promoting English language teaching. The British Council has set up an English teaching operation in its own premises and a resource centre for local teachers of English. In the public education system there are seven English language advisers funded by the ODA.

Voluntary Service Overseas has also taken English language teaching very seriously and they have at present twelve volunteers in Sri Lanka and more to come.

The announcement of this move by President Jayawardene will entail an immense effort in the field of training and re-training and it is expected that the Government of Sri Lanka will be seeking help from USA, Canada and Australia as well as further help from Britain in this crucial period of language policy change.

Overseas student demand surveyed

It is in the national interest both in the short and the longer term to provide more help to enable overseas students to come to this country for their further and higher education: **Francis Pym, Foreign Secretary**

One of the measures listed when the Foreign Secretary announced to the House of Commons on 8 February increased Government support for overseas students was £100,000 to enable the British Council to help British institutions attract fee-paying students from abroad and strengthen academic links.

Because it is responsible for administering roughly one in ten overseas students, the British Council had been increasingly concerned about the effects of the full-cost fees and had been investigating with the universities and polytechnics what steps could be taken to ensure that the potential demand for higher education in Britain was being identified and met as efficiently as possible.

Many universities and polytechnics have already adapted to the changed circumstances by tailoring their courses to particular overseas requirements. A noteworthy example is the growth in the number of 'split degrees', where a postgraduate student divides his research between his home and a British institution.

A second measure has been the production by the Committee for Vice-Chancellors and Principals of a brochure aimed at postgraduate students, which emphasises the high quality of British courses, something of which cost comparisons alone do not take account.

Finally, the British Council is conducting market surveys in six countries, chosen because of their potential interest in higher education in Britain. The collection of data for these surveys has already been completed in Indonesia and Singapore. The other countries involved are Algeria, Jordan, Mexico and Nigeria.

However changes in the flow of students to Britain are not only caused by changes in Britain. In Mexico, for example, a financial crisis and a new Government have led to a re-appraisal of the need for postgraduate training overseas. Although there are gaps in the national system, it is nonetheless possible to obtain postgraduate qualifications in most disciplines in Mexico. To save foreign exchange, the new policy is to send people overseas as little as possible and rapidly to develop local courses.

The British Council Representative in Mexico is now advising British higher education institutions to support locally developed courses through offering consultancies and short courses in Mexico to help plug the gaps in local expertise. 'In this way', he says, 'a fruitful relationship is built up which leads to collaborative research and the exchange of graduate students'. It is also, he believes, the best

way in the medium term to ensure that a good proportion of the reduced number of postgraduate and postdoctoral students Mexico sends overseas will study in Britain. 'Increasingly overseas training will be linked to the specific requirements of research and development projects in Mexico', he says.

Several British universities, among them Aberdeen and Sheffield, have already successfully adopted this strategy.

UK study costs cheaper than USA

Many thousands of Malaysian students who have traditionally looked to Britain for their higher education are now turning elsewhere. Far the most popular alternative has been the USA and in 1981 3,850 Malaysians went there for further study, a remarkable increase of 73 per cent over the previous year.

A study published in Malaysia by the British Council on the real cost of higher education overseas says that, despite wide public interest in Malaysia in education overseas, there is a lack of detailed knowledge on the comparative costs.

Taking costs at November 1982, the study compares the four American universities which attracted most Malaysian students in 1981 with a representative group of British universities and polytechnics. The figures produced suggest that for Malaysians the cost of an arts degree would be slightly cheaper in the British institutions selected. Science courses in British universities would be slightly more expensive than most of the American group, but the 18 per cent reduction in the laboratory-based polytechnic fee introduced in 1982 makes science courses in British polytechnics extremely competitive.

In a comparison between institutions with exceptionally high academic standards—four Ivy League universities in the USA, and Oxford, Cambridge and the LSE in Britain—the Ivy League universities come out at between 15 per cent and 40 per cent more expensive.

The study recognises that comparisons are not easy. Fees are determined differently in Britain and the USA. In Britain, the Government recommends minimum levels and the variations are not very great. In the USA fees are determined by the institutions themselves and vary enormously from one to another.

The study emphasises the importance of taking all costs into consideration, including living costs which tend to be higher in the USA. Particular attention, it says, should be paid to the duration of the course. Students should also make a detailed study of the syllabi, noting in particular how much of the course is devoted to the principal subject of study. Exchange rates are a key factor and the fall in the value of the pound against the dollar over the last year has helped to make British courses more competitive.

A psephologist in India

Professor David Butler, of Nuffield College, Oxford University, an authority on elections, reports on his recent British Council-sponsored visit to India.

Apart from two public lectures my main job was to help two very bright economists, Prannoy Roy and Ashok Lahiri, in their plans to produce a major work on the results of Indian elections. They had great statistical competence but less experience of handling election figures or of thinking in the language of political scientists.

As soon as I arrived, my hosts whisked me off for a hectic twenty-four hours in Hyderabad to see a polling day for the Andhra assembly elections. We drove a long distance north and south of the city to look at voting in small villages, far off the beaten track. In particular we saw the first large-scale experiment with electronic voting machines which was very impressive and I have already reported to the Home Office on the exciting possibilities of adapting this ingenious Indian invention to British circumstances.

On our return to Delhi we spent three days analysing the Andhra results as they came in, preparing data for a newspaper article my hosts were writing, but in the process, developing a large number of ideas about handling Indian election data. This proved of great value as in the final days of my stay we worked out a list of questions about Indian elections, which, with their computer, they could answer in the next few months as they prepare their book.

Since my return I have already despatched to them a large amount of bibliographical and other data. We have plans for them to send their draft chapters to Oxford over the coming months and, probably, for them to come to Nuffield College in mid-summer. As it happens they are both econometricians and spend most of their time preparing the only full scale econometric model of the Indian economy. They want to meet the distinguished group of economists at Nuffield. So a return visit here will yield a double bonus.

I have travelled abroad quite widely, usually at someone else's expense. The costs have not always been justified. But in this case I have no doubt that the whole enterprise was overwhelmingly worthwhile by any cost-benefit standards.

(Since this was written the British Council has agreed to help with the costs of a visit to Oxford by Dr Butler's Indian hosts. Ed.)

continued from page 1.

which to decide which students from which countries should be subsidised and to what extent. The British Council strongly supports this initiative and has responded quickly to the invitation from the FCO to second an experienced officer to its new Scholarships and Awards Unit set up for this purpose.

Botswana welcomes the newly qualified

The British Council will shortly be launching the third year of a teacher recruitment project for Botswana, one of very few which offer opportunities for newly qualified British teachers.

The project began in January 1981 with the recruitment of fifty teachers of mathematics, science and English for secondary schools. They were followed by a further twenty in January 1982 and this year's recruitment is aimed at bringing the total to 100. The Ministry of Education in Botswana had asked the British Council to make good a shortfall in local teachers while new teacher training programmes were being established.

New teachers seem to settle well into this land-locked country which is twice the size of Britain but has a population the size of Leeds. The Ministry of Education has taken a great deal of care to ensure that

the teachers are made welcome, have productive jobs to do and suitable living conditions.

The British teachers are on two-year contracts and work on local rates of pay which, with an expatriate's allowance, are roughly equivalent to the Burnham scales. Money from the British Government's Overseas Development Administration is helping with medical insurance, a briefing course at the Centre for International Briefing, Farnham Castle, and a settling-in allowance.

Many of the teachers work in the rural areas in junior community schools which were originally set up by the local community and now receive support from the Ministry of Education. These schools in particular provide a stimulating and challenging environment for the newly qualified teachers.

Anthony Benn, biology teacher at Swaneng Hill Secondary School, Serowe, Botswana, examining earthworms with pupils.



Friends in high places

A survey of those in positions of responsibility and influence overseas, who have at one time been helped to come to Britain by the British Council, is providing the Council with some measure of its success in identifying future leaders or in building relationships with those already in positions of leadership.

Replies have been received from fifty-seven of the eighty-one countries in which the Council is represented. The returns on people in government include President Shehu Shagari of Nigeria and President Siaka Stevens of Sierra Leone, Prime Minister Garcia Feraud of Ecuador, the Leader of the Turkish Cypriot Community in Cyprus and an Adviser to the President in Colombia. Also mentioned are one or more Government Ministers in Bahrain, Botswana, China, Colombia, Ecuador, Kuwait, Mexico, Oman, Spain, Sudan and Yemen.

At the head of department level in government the people who have studied under Council schemes are too many to

list, but among the more noteworthy are the Chief Secretary to the Government in Malaysia, the Head of the President's office in Finland and the Inspector General of Police and Customs in Oman. There is also a provincial governor in Finland, two senators in Italy, a Member of the House of Representatives in Japan and four Members of Parliament in Greece.

The returns on academic institutions are more predictable with a liberal sprinkling of university Presidents, Vice-Chancellors and Rectors and a large number of professors and heads of department. Given the Council's earlier concentration on the fields of government, science and scholarship, it is perhaps unsurprising that the figures for industry, commerce and the private sector are so far less impressive. But there are some interesting examples, including the Manager of the Cooperative Development Bank in Sierra Leone, the President of a National Life Insurance Company in Japan, a top fashion creator in Italy and the President of the Union of Journalists in Greece.

NEWS IN BRIEF

British undergraduates in USSR

British undergraduates reading for degrees in Russian will have more opportunities to spend a year in the Soviet Union, following the signature in London on 3 March of the 1983-85 British Agreement on Relations in the Scientific Educational and Cultural Fields. The British Council, which flanked the Foreign Office at the negotiations, took soundings from academic committees concerned with Russian and Soviet studies to discover their needs. The new Agreement offers thirty-eight ten-month places at Soviet universities for British undergraduates in 1983/84 and 1984/85. The existing provision of ninety-six places for three months each continues.

LSO tour

A grant of over £50,000 from the British Council and a similar amount from Rank Xerox has made possible the current round-the-world tour of the London Symphony Orchestra. They will visit the USA, Australia, Japan, Hong Kong, Bangkok, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur giving twenty-two concerts in all. Elgar's Cello Concerto will be one of the main British works in the repertoire.

It will be the first visit ever of a British Symphony Orchestra to Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur and the first time for fifteen years that one has chartered a plane, a British Airways 707, for the whole trip. The last time was in 1968 when the Hallé Orchestra took a British Eagle Britannia on their Latin American tour.

English on video

The British Council and Macmillan Press have signed a contract for the production and distribution of a series of eight thirty-minute video cassettes under the title *Video English*. Some of the cassettes, which are being produced by Council staff, will be available later this year. Each cassette illustrates different uses of English and provides the basis for a number of hours of classroom activity. They are intended as resource material for teachers and have been extensively tested in the Council's own language schools.

Mrs Gatenby's legacy

The British Council has received with gratitude a legacy of £2,500 under the will of Mrs Lucy Gatenby, the widow of former Linguistics Adviser to the Council, Professor E V Gatenby CBE. During the 1940s Professor Gatenby held Chairs of English Language and Literature at universities in Japan and Turkey. It was Mrs Gatenby's wish that her gift should provide 'financial assistance for teachers of English from Japan and Turkey to enable them to study in England'. The Council is putting the money towards the cost of bringing three teachers from Japan and two from Turkey to British Council Summer Schools in Britain later this year.

In 1938, only four years after British reticence about self-advertisement finally gave way to acceptance of the need for an organisation to counter the efforts which other countries were devoting to promoting their language and culture, the first overseas office of the British Council was opened in Egypt.

Egypt was a natural choice. It stands at a strategic and cultural crossroads and its history, its size and its population gave it immense influence in the Middle East. Recent political events have made no appreciable difference to this. Every fourth Arab is an Egyptian and Egyptians occupy influential positions in many African and Middle East states. Many teachers in the Middle East are Egyptian. There are Egyptian engineers and administrators in the public services, universities and in industry all over the Arab world.

This brain drain is partly responsible for the acute shortage of technicians and skilled labour in Egypt, particularly in the priority areas of construction, industry and agriculture. It constitutes a serious obstacle to development and makes the manpower training projects, with which the British Council is associated, vital to the country's future.

The projects are funded, in some cases jointly, by the British Government's Overseas Development Administration (ODA), the World Bank and the Government of Egypt. In each case British Council staff are coordinating the British effort and tapping the resources of a great variety of institutions in Britain.

British funds for skills training

At Moharrem Bey in Alexandria, **Bradford and Ikley Community College** is helping to convert an industrial secondary school with three-year courses into a five-year technician school. Over the last ten years, £2.8 million from the ODA have completely re-equipped workshops, provided training in Britain for Egyptian staff and taken British staff to Egypt on short and long-term teaching assignments. The first graduates emerged in 1978 and courses in automobile, mechanical, electrical and electronic engineering now produce about 200 technicians a year and few of these have to look far for a job.

This has been a particularly successful project and the school has been adapted to provide in-service training for Egyptian technical teachers and six other technical schools are now linked to it, taking it as the model for their own development. Alec Gow, Head of the School of Science and Technology at Bradford College, stresses the value of the project approach. 'The staff who tutor the Egyptians in Bradford,' he says, 'are the same staff who worked with them out in Moharrem Bey. They know each other well.' Alec Gow also believes the challenge of operating in different circumstances in Egypt has sharpened up his own staff's attitude to problem solving. 'The Egyptians don't want advisers who are only good at high-lighting problems,' he says, 'they want



Kamelia Ekladios and Abdul Khattab from Egypt studying practical crafts at Oldham Technical College.

advisers who can produce solutions and ones that are sensitive to local conditions.'

A similar conversion has been carried out at El Zawia el Hamra in Cairo where an industrial secondary school has become a technical teacher training institute. Teachers of textile, metal and wood crafts are trained with help from **Oldham College of Technology**.

There is a good example of collaboration between donors at Dar el Salam, also in Cairo, where **Hull College of Higher Education** has been brought in to develop a new five-year practical teacher training course for the construction and building trades. From ODA has come £200,000 to provide consultancies and training, and, from the World Bank, a loan to cover the purchase of equipment.

Agriculture, so basic to Egypt's economy, has been assisted by the remodelling of the Agricultural Staff Training Centre at Sakha, where a traditionally theoretical education has been replaced with courses of largely practical training in such areas



Nagwa Agouz, from the Egyptian Electricity Authority, with Andrew Blanchard her course tutor from Horsley Towers College.

Matching British resources to Egyptian needs

as agricultural mechanisation, pest control, crop production and agricultural extension. **Wolverhampton Polytechnic** supplies most of the British expertise.

For many years Britain trained Egypt's doctors: now the needs are more basic. At the Medical Equipment Training Centre at Abbassia, the **West of Scotland Health Board** is helping to train craftsmen to repair and maintain basic and sophisticated medical equipment.

Training contracts from World Bank loans

Perhaps the most satisfying development for the British Council in recent years has been the securing of project contracts in open tender from the Egyptian Government. These contracts, which are usually funded through World Bank loans, enable the Council to recover its full costs and to extend its activities at a time when its own budget is declining. They have taken the Council out into the marketplace to sell British education and at the same time have heightened its own technical and managerial skills.

The most surprising example, for those who think of the Council as 'arty' and academic, is a project for the reorganisation of training at the Egyptian Electricity Authority. Seven British training advisers, from **British Electricity International**, the overseas consulting company of the British electricity supply industry, are now working on long-term contracts in Egypt and thirty-five Egyptian instructors will be trained in Britain. The programme is worth £1 million over two years and the project is running ahead of schedule in the urgent attempt to provide a rapidly expanding power generation industry with the trained engineers and technicians which are desperately needed. For the British advisers, faced with a static demand for electricity in Britain, the challenge of working in an expanding supply industry has proved very attractive.

In another project, four British technical colleges (**Bradford and Ikley Community College, Humberside College, Hull, Longlands College, Middlesbrough and Anniesland College, Glasgow**) are



David Hearle, British Adviser to the Ministry of Agriculture Staff Training Centre, Sakha, discussing crop growth with tutors.

developing with the Egyptian Ministry of Education four new training schools to supply technicians to the petro-chemical, shipbuilding, and mechanical and electrical engineering industries. This project has also led to substantial orders for British equipment for the laboratories and workshops in the new schools.

Other contracts now completed include training programmes for the Ministry of Industry and the Ministry of Housing. A far-reaching examination of Cairo University's Faculty of Agriculture is still in progress. The pattern of operation in all these projects is the same as for the Council's other work in Egypt—matching British resources to Egyptian needs.

English teaching made more relevant

Project training implies English language training particularly for those coming to Britain for study. For the Moharrem Bey and El Zawia el Hamra projects, the British Council has recruited English language specialists to design English syllabuses appropriate to the needs of technicians and technical teachers and to supervise the teaching of the courses in Egypt.

At Ain Shams University in Cairo, Dr Roger Bowers, a seconded British Council officer, holds the post of Visiting Professor in the Centre for the Development of English Language Teaching. He heads a team of six British teachers whose aim is to modernise the teaching of English at all levels of education in Egypt and make it more relevant to the needs of teachers and students. In a country where English teaching is still heavily literary, this means raising the status of English and effecting what amounts to a revolution in methodology, curricula and testing.

Links between universities

Egypt believes it has the oldest university in the world, the University of Al Azhar. Founded in 970, it makes Oxford and Cambridge look like new-comers. All the other universities in Egypt, however, date from this century and a major expansion did not take place until the 1970s.

The British Council is establishing links between British and Egyptian universities which provide for short-term exchanges of staff, joint supervision of postgraduate work and the development of specific research projects in which there is a shared interest. The emphasis is again on science and technology and, in support of an Egyptian Government policy of decentralisation, the Council is trying to build links with some of the newer universities in Upper Egypt and in the Delta area. Among the links already established or under consideration are those between the universities of Assiut and **Glasgow** in medicine, El Minia and **Newcastle** in agriculture and chemical engineering, and Ain Shams University and **Royal Holloway College** to train post-doctoral scientists.

A practical approach to teaching science

The universities however depend on a thorough grounding in science at the school level and in October 1979 the British Council began teaching science on its own premises. The intention was to



Egyptian visitors talking to an instructor in timbering at the Construction Industry Training Board, Bircham Newton, Norfolk.

provide training courses for laboratory assistants in universities, research institutes and scientific companies, and to teach science subjects and, more recently, mathematics and computer studies, to GCE 'O' level. The success of the GCE courses was never in doubt. There were more applicants than places and examination results have been well above average for the country. The laboratory training courses, which are seen as the core of the programme, have proved more difficult to establish. Courses have had to be redesigned and Egyptian teachers engaged for students whose science and English skills were low. It also became necessary to move much of the programme to the students' places of employment where they could work more confidently with familiar equipment and materials.

Recent developments have included teacher training courses and working with the Egyptian Government on a more practical approach to the teaching of school science. If the programme can succeed in these areas, even in a modest way, it will have made a significant contribution to a country where teaching has always been rooted in the textbook.

1938-1983

When Flux Dundas set up the first British Council office in Cairo in 1938, his energies were devoted to running a library and reading room, to teaching English and to helping the various British schools in Egypt. What, one wonders, would he make of the British Council in Egypt today?

English teaching remains important with the Council's two centres in Cairo and Alexandria serving the needs of some 4,000 students and employing over 90 teachers. Cairo still has the largest British Council library in the Middle East with a stock of 28,000 books and 100 periodicals and about 6,000 members. A recently established central information service handled more than 800 enquiries about education in Britain in its first three months, an average of 100 a day.

However, by far the greatest part of the Council's budget of nearly £3 million, of the energies of the eight British officers and of the sixty-eight local staff, on whom they rely so much, is now devoted to scientific and technological projects.

Despite this concentration on skills and technology the human element is not forgotten. As the Council's Director-General, Sir John Burgh, said in a speech at the opening of an Egyptian Electricity Authority training centre in November 1982, 'Through projects such as this we can cross frontiers that may be both physical and cultural. This project involves the British in Egypt and Egyptians in Britain, both working to a common purpose. It provides opportunities for mutual understanding which are perhaps as important in the long run as the technical and professional objectives that are before us.' Mr Dundas would have approved of that.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

BC gets go-ahead from industry

Some ninety training managers from group training schemes and industry attended a special conference on *Overseas Needs—British Resources* at the British Council's London headquarters on 17 February. The attendance was higher than expected and together the delegates represented the training interests of over 3,000 firms and industrial training organisations.

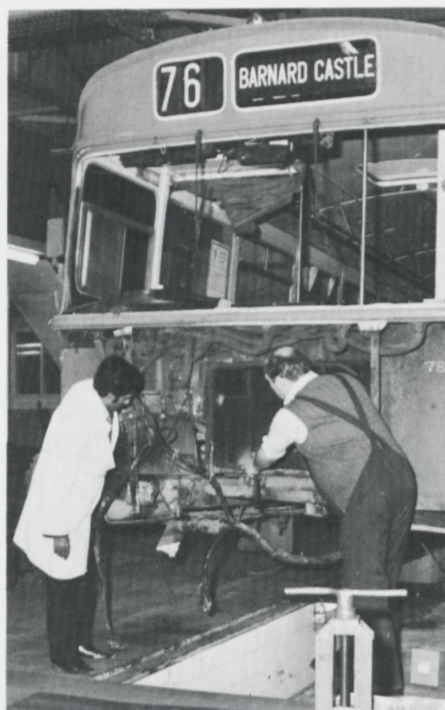
The conference was designed to illustrate the industrial training needs of developing countries and to highlight the opportunities for British industry and industrial training organisations in meeting these needs. The guest speakers from industry made a firm link between training and trade. For Roy Lester, Marketing Director of Marconi, training was a normal part of commercial activity and while it was often difficult to identify specific orders resulting from overseas training, Marconi had a constant stream of enquiries from past students.

For the British Council, intent on increasing Britain's share of industrial training on behalf of overseas governments, the European Development Fund and international aid agencies, the conference was a crucial test of whether it had the support and interest of training organisations in British industry.

The conference demonstrated that support as did subsequent contact with over 70 per cent of the delegates. While recognising that training overseas personnel could only be a subsidiary interest for them, the training organisations were prepared for the Council to act on their behalf and secure this type of business.

Further thought needed to be given, however, to forecasting demand and to the problems of student welfare. There was a feeling that the training managers did not know enough about each other's activities and that they should work out a more consistent approach to costings. A coordinating body linking training groups of a particular industry was perhaps needed and certainly a mechanism for more regular contact with the British Council would be welcome. Some delegates also expressed concern that the additional burden expected to result from increased sponsorship of training by the Manpower Services Commission might limit their capacity to accept more overseas trainees. They said that they would like to offer facilities for training but were not sure how long these facilities would be available.

In winding up, Brian Vale, the Conference Chairman and Controller of the British



Sumitha de Soya from the Sri Lankan Central Transport Board on a working attachment to United Automobile Services Limited, Darlington.

Council's Science, Technology and Education Division, said that Britain had a long way to go to match the promotion overseas of industrial training by its main competitors, France and Germany, which, he noted, also spend three times as much on industrial aid projects as Britain. However, Britain's industrial trainers do a first-class job and, with proper organisation and marketing, training overseas personnel could be a profitable and prestigious business.

Italy puts £1m into research with UK

The Italian Science Research Council has contributed about £1 million to collaborative research with Britain as a result of an agreement signed in 1978 with the British Council. Over 100 projects, largely funded by British and Italian research organisations, have been started. The British Council's contribution has been modest, at present some £20,000 a year.

Most of the joint research and exchange programmes have been concerned with the basic sciences and medicine. A typical example is a project now in its third year between the Universities of Bradford and Bologna where two of Europe's leading research groups are collaborating in a study of the spectroscopy of structurally important molecules in biological membranes.

The British Council is now encouraging collaboration in engineering and, so far, results in mechanical and aeronautical engineering have been good. One of the first projects to get under way was collaboration between staff in the Engineering Sciences Division of Harwell

and the University of Pisa on the fluid mechanics of droplet deposition.

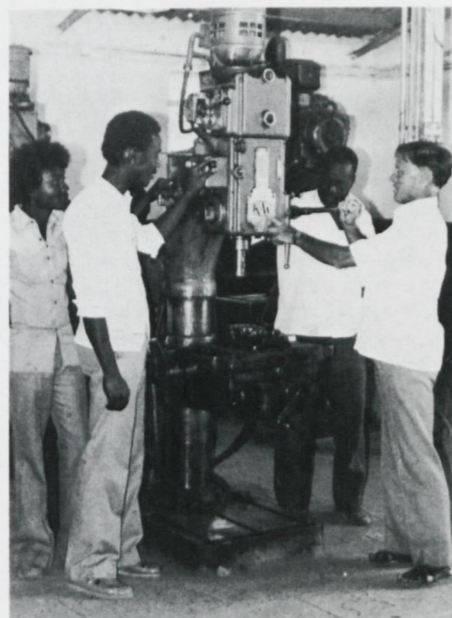
In order to establish a firmer basis for collaboration between British and Italian institutions, the British Council's Science Officer in Rome has written a detailed 'profile' of science activity and organisation in Italy. Copies can be obtained from the British Council in London.

EDUCATION

Welsh institute helps Sudan

Technical teachers from Wales are to go on helping in the development of the Sudan through a project designed to increase the number of Sudanese technicians. For the last four years the staff of the North East Wales Institute of Higher Education (NEWI) have been deeply involved in the development of Khartoum Polytechnic. Now, following a review, the link between the two organisations has been extended for another three years.

Costing in all about £1.5 million, the project, which is financed by the Overseas Development Administration and administered by the British Council, has given rise to intense traffic between the two institutions. Over the last four years members of NEWI staff have been to Khartoum to advise or teach on seventy-six occasions and although they have found the arid Sudan very different from the hills of Wales they have found considerable similarity between their two institutions. The Khartoum Polytechnic, with 2,000 full-time students, is much larger than NEWI, but both were formed in 1975 from a number of very scattered colleges



Cyril Golding of North East Wales Institute with students in the machine shop at Khartoum Polytechnic.

and both provide technical diplomas and certificate programmes.

Cooperation between the two institutions took place in response to the six-year national plan for the Sudan, published in 1977, which pointed out that development was being hampered by a chronic shortage of technicians. As Khartoum Polytechnic was the major source of technical education and training, the key to progress clearly lay in increasing its output of technicians. When in 1978 the ODA decided to increase Britain's support of technical education in the Sudan it was agreed that the most effective way of doing this was to develop Khartoum Polytechnic by means of a link with a British institution and NEWI was chosen.

As with any aid programme there is always a danger of creating resentment against the more affluent partner. From the outset, therefore, the collaborative nature of the venture was emphasised to all concerned. An indication of the success of this approach is the many friendships which have grown up between the Welsh and the Sudanese partners. Both eagerly await the day when the first set of trainees complete the revised diploma programme.

Classroom trade aid

A high proportion of the business won by Britain's educational equipment and publishing firms is represented by export sales, 80 per cent for the equipment manufacturers and 36 per cent for publishers. The Industrial Council for Education and Training Technology (ICETT) estimates that exports of teaching equipment, materials and related services are worth over £100 million a year. If ancillary equipment, materials and services are added to this, the figure could be around £500 million. Latest estimates from the Publishers Association put the export of British books at around £360 million a year.

For many years the British Council has been helping British publishers with the promotion of their sales abroad by organising book exhibitions and also by offering useful information on the book trade overseas. Support for these and other educational exporters has been stepped up recently with market information, news about projects and business opportunities and information about the activities and practices of major international lending agencies like the World Bank. Contact is also established with overseas clients and help is given in the promotion of goods and services.

Consultants and other specialists travelling abroad for the British Council are now asked if they are willing to report back on any useful opportunities for British exporters. If so, the British Council then offers this information to companies through the trade associations. The contracts the British Council itself wins to provide training and consultancies for overseas governments can also make it easier for British companies to gain related export orders.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE & LITERATURE

HMG approves China ELT report

An increase in British support for English language teaching in China is expected to follow the recent submission of a report to the Prime Minister's office in March. The report was prepared by a British Council-led delegation which, as noted in the last issue of *British Council News*, visited Chinese universities and foreign language institutions in November 1982 at the invitation of the Chinese Government.

The delegation's brief was to assess the state of English language teaching in the People's Republic and to evaluate current activity funded by the British Government's Overseas Development Administration. Following her own visit to China in September 1982, Mrs Thatcher had expressed interest in seeing their conclusions.

The delegation was impressed by the commitment of both Chinese teachers and students to the study of English, by the care with which resources are allocated and by the great potential of educational TV. Working conditions are often spartan, but libraries are well stocked, language laboratories much in evidence and a number of video studios and main frame computers installed. The major problems are that purchasing British and other foreign books and software takes time and most institutions cannot afford multiple copies. The range of locally made audio and video materials is still inadequate.

The delegation was also impressed by the way the twenty British Council teachers were adapting to the often difficult conditions and contributing to the courses of special English and to the re-training of junior university teachers.

The report's recommendations include the concentration of aid on institutions of

Sandra Moulding, a lecturer recruited by the British Council, giving a class to Chinese teachers of English in Beijing.



professional strength and on various projects for in-service teacher training, for expanding the English course run by the Central Radio and Television University and for improving the English of Chinese students coming to Britain for study. Some training in Britain for Chinese teachers of English was also recommended.

The Chinese Ministry of Education has approved the recommendations in principle and the go-ahead has recently been given by ODA to make a start on implementation this year.

Recognition scheme on target

A report on the first year of a new recognition scheme for private English language schools is expected soon. The scheme, which is run by the British Council, replaced a Department of Education and Science scheme withdrawn in April 1982 as a result of manpower cuts.

All members of the Association of Recognised English Language Schools (ARELS) and of the Federation of English Language Course Organisations (FELCO) were granted recognition from the first day, the 119 ARELS members on the strength of DES recognition, the 70 FELCO members on their own inspection system. The report is expected to show the new scheme on target for reinspecting all these institutions in the first three years.

A team of forty inspectors works to guidelines prepared by the British Council, who are helped by an advisory committee chaired by Professor A (Sam) Spicer, of the University of Essex. Of thirteen new applications for recognition, seven passed the inspection and have since joined the appropriate professional association.

Colonel Ray Arthur of ARELS, interviewed on a BBC World Service programme, said that the new recognition scheme was working very well. 'My impressions are that the inspection system is very thorough, perhaps better than it has ever been,' he said, 'and that the system has got off to a very good start.'

At present there are about 200 schools and courses recognised under the scheme and some 400 which are outside the scheme and members of no professional association.

Library training for Pakistan

In common with many other developing countries Pakistan is working hard to improve its university libraries. Other calls on limited funds and a shortage of foreign exchange pose problems.

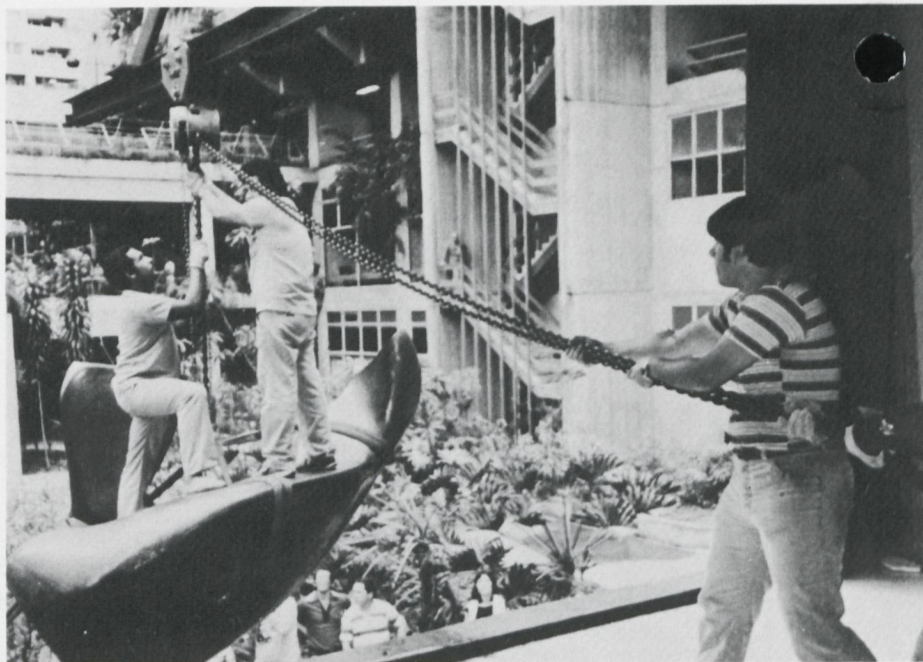
A further problem is the shortage of experienced librarians and a British scheme for training university librarians, worked out between the Pakistan University Grants Commission and the British Council, entered its second phase in March with the visit to Pakistan by John Feather and Inese Smith of Loughborough University. They went to run a three-week course for seventeen librarians and two teachers of library science. They were assisted by one of the seven university librarians who in April 1982 had taken part in the first phase of the scheme, a three-month tailor-made course in library management at Loughborough.

Both phases have been financed by the Overseas Development Administration and it is expected that five or six librarians on the course in Pakistan will be selected for a third phase of further training at Loughborough later this year.

Mexicans consider UK library design

Godfrey Thompson, a leading British authority on library planning and design, and Harry Faulkner-Brown, one of the best-known British library architects, visited Mexico in March to conduct a seminar on *Planning Library Buildings*. It was the first seminar on this theme to be arranged overseas by the British Council. A number of leading Mexican librarians contributed to the seminar, which attracted thirty-three paying participants and ten students from the Masters Programme in Librarianship at the National University.

The participants visited six local libraries during the seminar, including the University Library at Azcapotzalco the design of which had been influenced by Harry Faulkner-Brown's work on the University of Nottingham Library. Participants compared Mexican and British ideas on library design and heard Harry Faulkner-Brown on the later development of his Nottingham ideas. An exhibition of British books on architecture and town planning was also on display.



THE ARTS

Henry Moore's giant sculptures being installed in the Museum of Contemporary Arts, Caracas.

Britain salutes Simon Bolivar

When, in 1981, Venezuela began planning a large international arts festival to mark the bicentenary of the birth of Simon Bolivar, Britain was invited and readily agreed to take a leading role. The Falklands crisis then intervened and political relations became severely strained. Planning continued, however, and the festival has in the event presented an excellent opportunity for fence-mending.

The first major British event, a large Henry Moore exhibition of 140 sculptures and 94 drawings, seen to splendid advantage in the new Museum of Contemporary Arts in Caracas, was opened by the President of Venezuela with the maximum possible publicity. This exhibition is complemented by a smaller Moore touring exhibition which opened, again attracting wide publicity in Maracaibo, the oil capital in the south of the country.

The second major British contribution will be a tour by the London Festival Ballet in July, the performance on 5 July being a gala event to commemorate the Venezuelan National Day. The President and senior members of the government will be present.

To enable these important events to take place, and also a very successful curtain-

raiser by the choir of Chetham School Manchester, a major commercial sponsorship drive has been undertaken both in London and Caracas, without which this ambitious programme might not have been financially viable.

Chinese to see Sleeping Beauty

The Royal Ballet will pay its first ever visit to the People's Republic of China from 22 May to 11 June. By special request the repertoire will include a Royal Ballet set-piece classic *The Sleeping Beauty*, never before performed in China.

This visit has been a long cherished dream of both the Royal Ballet and the British Council and is part of the Council's long-term strategy of forging artistic links with China following the devastation of the Cultural Revolution. It has been made possible by a joint sponsorship venture between the Council and Barclays Bank International by which the two dance companies of the Royal Opera House have toured and will tour extensively over a four-year period to 1984.

The visit to China is part of a Far East Tour which will include Japan, Korea and Hong Kong and will be preceded by a special one-week season at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, as part of the *Britain Salutes New York* festival. Merle Park and Antony Dowall will be guest artists for the tour.