

NOTES

CENTERPRISE IN CRISIS

Betsy Brewer writes: Centerprise is a community centre in Hackney, East London. Founded ten years ago, it is in acute financial crisis as a result of cuts in government grants. Most of the facilities we offer are of use primarily to the local community — the advice centre, coffee bar, bookshop and meeting rooms — but some are of value far

beyond the confines of the East End.

Since 1972 we have published over 40 books written by local working class people — these range from autobiographies of taxi drivers and accounts of the experience of childbirth, to booklets evolved from literacy schemes and poems by black school pupils. These books have been used in schools and colleges throughout the country, and have even been exported in bulk for use by WEAs in other countries.

If Centerprise closes, the first losers will be the local community, but a much wider public will also suffer the losses, notably, that which has found in the books we have published an affirmation of the strength and vitality of working class culture. You can help us to survive by sending donations and resolutions of support from TU branches, women's groups, tenants' associations, community groups and individuals to: Centerprise, 136 Kingsland High St, London E8.



THE FUTURE OF BRITISH AEROSPACE

Bill Niven writes: A new pamphlet published by TASS examines a vital area of industrial policy. The government is on the brink of two major decisions for the future of

British industry — whether or not to fund the next airbus project and the new combat aircraft designated P110.

Its decision will make or break British Aerospace and the thousands of subcontractors dependent upon it. The government has a choice. At a time when Japan is pouring millions into aircraft development, it could continue with its catastrophic laissez-faire policies, argue that BAe must be competitive in the market place — and refuse the money. Britain will then witness an American or Japanese takeover and the collapse of Britain's flourishing aerospace and avionics industries.

Alternatively, it could recognise that no major aircraft manufacturer can any longer 'go it alone', accept that aerospace is of a national and strategic importance, and give Britain's beleaguered industry a much needed fillip.

The pamphlet argues that government cannot stand back from supporting Britain's aerospace industry. It covers the dangers of BAe denationalisation, the effects of the Defence Review and the benefits of British involvement in the airbus industry. Its central recommendation is for a national aerospace strategy, uniting Britain's defence requirements, but also envisaging strong collaboration with Rolls Royce and British Airways on the civil side.

Priced at 50p, the pamphlet is available from: TASS, Onslow Hall, Little Green, Richmond, Surrey.

GOING PRIVATE. THE CASE AGAINST PRIVATE MEDICINE

Jane Salvage writes: New information about the growth of private medicine is revealed in *Going Private*, a report published recently by the Politics of Health Group and Fightback. It gives full details of the unprecedented expansion of the private sector — and includes a wealth of material never before collected in one volume, including information on insurance and

treatment costs, the invasion by American companies and a survey of recent hospital development.

The report examines why increasing numbers of people, and not just the middle classes, are turning to the private sector. And it explodes common myths perpetrated by commercial organisations and Harley Street — that fee-for-service payment ensures better care, and that private medicine is helping the NHS by reducing its workload.

The private sector, it argues, boosted by government policy, is trading off the deficiencies of the NHS — deficiencies which



are being exacerbated by cuts in public spending. The report puts the case for a different kind of publicly funded health service, which will take full account of radical prevention, attack the social causes of ill health and be built upon equal relationships between health workers and people using the service.

Going Private costs 70p and is available

from bookshops or by post from POHG, c/o 9 Poland Street, London W1 — postage and packing 30p extra.

WOMEN IN ENTERTAINMENT

Paula Brown writes: *Women in Entertainment* is a broadly-based group aimed at initiating and supporting activity which seeks to challenge the position of women working in the entertainment industry. On Sunday 15 November 1981 we held our third annual conference at the Lyric Theatre in London. The theme was *Women Live*, a national programme of women's cultural work which will take place in May of this year.

In the morning women visited the information desks for all the different regions and in the different fields of work — music, film, video, television, radio, new writing, dance and new projects. This informal exchange of information enabled us to develop a more coherent picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation so far. In the afternoon we met together for report backs, questions and discussion. Both the treasurer and national co-ordinator stressed the financial precariousness of the organisation, and the urgent need for funding initiatives if *Women Live* is to realise its potential. This cautionary note was offset by reports from regional organisers which indicated the enormous amount of interest engendered by *Woman Live* and the number and variety of events already planned, at both amateur and professional level.

The latter part of the day was devoted to discussion on questions of publicity, fund-raising and policy. Much remains to be done, but the conference illustrated the potential of *Women Live*.

For further information contact: Women in Entertainment, 11 Acklam Road, London W10 (Tel: 01-969 2292).

Contributions to *Notes* (brief please) are welcome. We need copy by the 1st of the month preceding publication.

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