

ITF NEWSLETTER

INFORMATIONS

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INFORMATIONSBLAD

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NEWS ABOUT THE ITF

ASIA

ITF representative in Hong Kong

Following the resignation of Ewen Macdonald after a year as ITF Representative in Hong Kong, the ITF Asian Seamen's Committee met in London during February and decided that further representation in Hong Kong was essential. Charles Blyth (like Macdonald, an official of the British National Union of Seamen) has now been appointed to the post and began his work on 22 March. During his first two weeks he is accompanied by Bikas Majumder, General Secretary of the National Union of Seamen of India, who has already carried out three missions in Hong Kong on the ITF's behalf.

INTERNATIONAL - Asian seafarers

ITF meeting with International Shipping Federation

At the second informal meeting held in London recently between the ISF and the ITF to discuss problems arising out of the employment of Asian seamen on non-Asian ships, it was reported that an industrial agreement had just been reached in the country most largely concerned, namely, the United Kingdom. Under that agreement, the status quo was preserved, and any proposed extension of the employment of Asian seafarers on UK ships would be brought directly under the joint control of the Shipowners' and Seafarers' Organizations. It seemed to the Shipowners at the meeting that this was not only a long step forward, but, in fact, was the solution of the problem of the apprehension of European seafarers that they would become unemployed through the employment of more Asian seafarers.

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The ITF representatives said that some of their European members were feeling very restive about the employment of Asian seafarers with wages and conditions of employment substantially inferior to European standards, and, indeed, they had authority to take militant action if a solution were not found. The UK agreement did not deal with the question of working conditions of Asian seafarers, but the ITF did recognize that it was an important step forward and they welcomed it. They recognised that the UK agreement was not one which would be capable of uniform adoption in other countries, but they felt that the principle of control was one which should be generally adopted, and they asked that the ISF should recommend it to its members.

The ISF representatives said they were simply not in a position constitutionally to make recommendations, but they would certainly send out the UK agreement to ISF members and advise these members of the strong desire of the ITF that some form of control, suited to each country, should be operated as quickly as possible, otherwise the ITF feared serious consequences.

RAILWAYMEN

BELGIUM

Railwaymen's union presses claims

The ITF-affiliated Railwaymen's Section of the Belgian Public Service Workers' Union is protesting strongly against the manner in which railwaymen are being treated. Employees of the state railways, SNCB, are being denied proper social compensation for the adverse effects of technical change; they are suffering as a result of the policy of contraction and denationalization of railway operations and their pay is being held down to an unacceptably low level. Meanwhile, they see other employees making progress.

The SNCB is at the same time harrassing the union on a number of more minor issues, for instance by going back on promises given in joint discussions, by interpreting promotion regulations in a restrictive fashion, etc. However, the union is determined not to let these irritants be the cause of relaxing pressure on the three main claims which it is pressing: the revision of the pay structure; a sick pay scheme; and a cut in the working week. There is to be a National Committee meeting of the Railwaymen's Section on 23 April, which will decide on what action to take if these claims are not met satisfactorily by then.

CANADA

Canadian National Railways reveal "run-through" plans

Canadian National Railways have announced that fifteen stations which are at present terminals are likely to be converted into

"run-through" stations. Two further categories of terminals have been designated: those which are "not feasible" as run-through stations, and those which are "unlikely", at least for the next three to five years. CNR are claiming the right to create these run-through stations unilaterally, giving the unions concerned only the right to consultation.

GREAT BRITAIN

Sick pay scheme for salaried staff

With effect from 5 April, British Railways' salaried staff will benefit from an improved sick pay scheme. At present, after one year's service salaried staff get full pay for up to 13 weeks and half pay for up to a further 13 weeks. Under the new scheme, the period will be increased in stages, according to length of service, to a maximum of 26 weeks on full pay plus 26 weeks on half pay for staff with more than 10 years' service.

JAPAN

Railway workers join "spring offensive"

The ITF-affiliated National Railway Workers' Union has accepted the offer of an average wage increase for its members of ¥7,500 per month (about £7 10s. or \$21) made by the management on 10 March.

Members of private railway workers' unions were among those who staged a short token strike on the morning of 17 March as part of the general "spring offensive" of the trade union movement in support claims for wage increases of from ¥6,000 to ¥8,000 per month, and ratification of ILO Convention 87 on freedom of association.

MALAYSIA

Railway work-to-rule called off

The ITF-affiliated Railwaymen's Union of Malaya has called off the work-to-rule put into operation recently to press the government to put into effect the Supreme Court decision that railwaymen are entitled to the same rights and privileges as other government servants. The government has given a firm assurance that action will be taken soon.

UNITED STATES

Big railway merger conditionally approved

Examiners of the Federal Interstate Commerce Commission have conditionally approved a merger of the Pennsylvania and the New York Central railway companies. The merger still requires the approval of the full Commission, which will take about another year. Together the two companies will form the biggest railway operation in the US.

INLAND NAVIGATION WORKERS

RHINE - GERMANY

Pay and conditions agreement

The ITF-affiliated German Union of Transport and Public Service Workers has obtained an increase of 5% on the basic pay of its members working in Rhine navigation. The working week in port or when laid up during a trip is cut from 45 to 44 hours without loss of pay; annual leave goes up to 17 days after 3 years' service, 18 days after 5 years, 20 days after 15 years and 21 days after 20 years; and there are a number of improvements in supplementary payments and allowances.

SEAFARERS

DENMARK

New manning regulations

With effect from 1 March 1965 to 28 February 1967, the following manning scales for deck crew shall operate on ships of more than 300 tons registered before 1 April 1964:

From 1 March to 30 November 1965

<u>Tons</u>	<u>Boatswains</u>	<u>ABs</u>	<u>Ord. seamen</u>	<u>Junior seamen</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Total</u>
300 to 400	0	0	1	1	1	3
400 to 500	0	1	1	1	1	4
500 to 1,000	0	2	2	2	0	6
1,000 to 1,500	0	3	2	1	0	6
1,500 to 2,000	0	3	2	1	1	7
2,000 to 3,500	1	3	2	1	1	8
3,500 to 5,000	1	5	1	1	1	9
5,000 to 8,000	1	6	1	2	1	11
8,000 to 9,500	1	7	2	1	1	12
9,500 to 10,000	1	7	2	2	1	13
10,000 to 11,000	1	8	2	2	1	14
11,000 to 15,500	1	9	2	2	1	15
15,500 to 20,000	1	12	2	1	1	17
over 20,000	1	12	2	2	1	18

From 1 December 1965 to 31 May 1966

<u>Tons</u>	<u>Boatswains</u>	<u>ABs</u>	<u>Ord. seamen</u>	<u>Junior seamen</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Total</u>
300 to 400	0	0	1	1	1	3
400 to 500	0	1	1	1	1	4
500 to 1,400	0	2	2	2	0	6
1,400 to 2,000	0	3	1	2	1	7
2,000 to 3,500	1	3	2	1	1	8
3,500 to 5,000	1	4	1	2	1	9
5,000 to 8,000	1	6	1	2	1	11
8,000 to 9,500	1	7	2	1	1	12
9,500 to 10,000	1	7	2	2	1	13
10,000 to 11,000	1	8	2	1	1	13
11,000 to 15,500	1	9	2	1	1	14
over 15,500	1	11	2	1	1	16

From 1 June 1966 to 28 February 1967

300 to 400	0	0	1	1	1	3
400 to 500	0	1	1	1	1	4
500 to 1,400	0	2	2	2	0	6
1,400 to 2,000	0	3	1	2	1	7
2,000 to 3,500	1	3	1	2	1	8
3,500 to 5,000	1	4	1	2	1	9
5,000 to 10,000	1	6	1	2	1	11
10,000 to 15,500	1	8	2	1	1	13
over 15,500	1	9	2	1	1	14

From 1 March 1967 onwards

300 to 400	0	0	1	1	1	3
400 to 500	0	1	1	1	1	4
500 to 1,400	0	2	2	2	0	6
1,400 to 2,000	0	3	1	2	1	7
2,000 to 5,000	1	3	1	2	1	8
5,000 to 10,000	1	6	1	2	1	11
over 10,000	1	8	1	1	1	12

GREAT BRITAIN

NUS attitude to shipboard automation

The executive of the ITF-affiliated National Union of Seamen has approved an interim policy statement on automation which will be submitted to the annual conference in May. It proposes union cooperation with technological developments on four main conditions: a) Full prior and continuing joint consultation at all levels between the union and shipowners before and during any changes; b) Adequate training and retraining opportunities; c) The granting to the crews of the "new ships", whether fully or partly automated, of a major share of the saving from the changes in the form of higher pay, fringe benefits, longer paid leave and better accommodation; and d) No hardship for displaced crew members, to be attained by such means as suitable alternative employment (if necessary after training on adequate pay), earlier retirement opportunities on reasonable pensions, and satisfactory severance pay.

ITALY

Protest strikes over pensions

The two ITF-affiliated Italian seafarers' unions called upon their members to hold up all ships leaving Italian ports for 24 hours during the period from 20 to 30 March in protest against the government's failure to include seafarers among those benefiting from a pension increase, although they have been subject to increased contributions.

JAPAN

Strike threat

The ITF-affiliated All-Japan Seamen's Union decided on 24 March to call a nation-wide strike soon unless its demands for improved pay and conditions are met.

UNITED STATES

Manning dispute on automated vessels

Four ships of the Gulf and South American Steamship Co. have been held up in ports of the Gulf of Mexico in a dispute over manning scales of the company's new semi-automated vessels. The ITF-affiliated National Maritime Union has been demanding the addition of three men in the engine room and one steward to bring the crew up to conventional size. The additional men were demanded after the Gulf Trader had completed two voyages with a reduced crew, agreed provisionally on the basis of the automated equipment. This provisional manning scale provided for one electrician, one deck-engine mechanic, three enginemen and two wipers; an eight-man steward department; and a 12-man deck crew. However, the union feels that the expected improvement in efficiency did not work out in practice. "For all practical purposes these must still be regarded as conventional vessels."

FISHERMEN

INTERNATIONAL

Fishing limits agreement

Britain and Norway have ratified an agreement which allows Norwegian fishermen to catch certain fish within the six - to 12-mile limit until 1984 and between three to six miles off the northern parts of Britain for a shorter period.

CIVIL AVIATION WORKERS

GREAT BRITAIN

BUA dispute settled - BEA pilots may strike

The ground service staff strike against the independent British United Airways, which involved unions including the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union, ended on 24 March with the acceptance of a three-year agreement. The pay of these workers will now be roughly equivalent to that of employees of the state airline corporations, increasing by a total of about 30% over the three year period. For instance, a skilled fitter on a present basic of £12 19s. per week will now get £16 10s., rising to £17 10s. in 1966 and £18 10s. in 1967. In addition, the working week is to be reduced from 42 to 40 hours with effect from 17 May. In return, the unions have agreed to drop their insistence that their members shall remain under the regulations which gives them the right to full parity with state airline employees.

BEA pilots have voted to take strike action if they do not receive satisfaction on their pay claim and a number of outstanding disputes over administrative arrangements.

UNITED STATES

TWU calls for airline pension scheme

The ITF-affiliated Transport Workers' Union is campaigning for a pension scheme for all hourly-rated airline workers and other employees covered by union contracts, with full transferability within the industry. In this they are seeking comparable conditions to those enjoyed by railway workers who can move from one railway company to another without any loss of pension rights. (Both airline and railway workers come under the US Railway Labor Act.)

GENERAL

AUSTRIA

Successful 24-hour atriike by public service workers

Railwaymen, air traffic control staff and communications workers in Austria staged a 24-hour "warning" strike on 23 March following the breakdown of negotiations with the government on union pay claims. Austria was virtually cut off from the outside world while the strike lasted, and the unions were planning to call a further indefinite strike with effect from 26 March if they did not get a satisfactory offer. However, on the day after the strike the parties agreed to a further offer - of a 6.5% increase in pay - by the government.

CANADA

National contributory pension scheme approved

The Canadian House of Commons has approved the first national contributory pension plan for Canada, which will come into effect in January 1966. After a ten-year "maturity" period there is maximum pension of about £34 per month at age 65. In addition, a flat-rate old age pension of about £25 per month, now available to everyone at age 70, will be available at age 65 in 1970. The plan will be compulsory, and employees will contribute 1.8 per cent of their pay.

GERMANY

Improved pensions for public employees

Employees of national, regional and local government in Germany will benefit from new retirement pension provisions agreed on 18 March after three years' negotiations. Under the new agreement pensions will range from 35% of the average annual income over the last three years after 5 years' insured employment, to 75% after 35 years' service; widows receive 60%. The new regulation comes into effect on 1 October 1965.

TRADE UNION RIGHTS

ADEN

Industrial Relations Ordinance to be repealed

The new Aden government has announced its intention to repeal the Industrial Relations Ordinance of 1960 which has been the subject of constant attack by the Aden trade union movement. The

Ordinance introduced long-winded conciliation and settlement procedures for industrial disputes which had the effect of making legal strike action virtually impossible.

BRAZIL

Assurance from Minister of Labour

In reply to a letter from Pieter de Vries, ITF General Secretary (see Newsletter No. 4 of 18 February), the Brazilian Minister of Labour, Dr. Arnaldo Sussekind, has cabled that he hopes to be able to release all unions from government control by June this year, and that a reform of the local offices of the Ministry of Labour and new regulations on labour inspection will mean that labour's rights will be fully respected.

PERSONALIA

F. P. A. Landskroon: We regret to report the death on 25 March of F. P. A. Landskroon, at the age of 80 years. He was Treasurer and executive member of the former Netherlands Transport Workers' Association until his retirement in 1951 after 28 years in the service of the union, and was a member of the Dutch ITF Management Committee in Amsterdam during the 1930s.

Philipp Seibert, President of the German Railwaymen's Union and ITF Executive Board member, celebrated his fiftieth birthday on 20 March.

N. J. N. Rooijens and A. M. Hopman have been elected 1st secretary and vice-president respectively of the KLM Purser's Association in succession to H. J. C. Mesman and J. J. Berdenis van Berlekom.

NEWS IN BRIEF

The Brazilian Confederation of Land Transport Workers has informed the Minister of Labour that it is not satisfied with proposals to increase national minimum wage rates; the cost of living has risen so considerably that the union considers a 90% increase is necessary.

An attempt by the unofficial Reform Movement within the British National Union of Seamen to call a strike against the new pay and hours agreement has met with minimal response. The NUS has issued a statement referring to reported threats of violence against seamen not joining the unofficial strike, and has stated that it will if necessary take strong action against any member committing an offence of this kind.

Indian seamen have been asked by the National Union of Seafarers of India, Bombay, to be ready for "powerful" agitation to secure their demands for an increase of Rs. 35 in the monthly wage and Rs. 5 food money per day.

Italy: A bill has been introduced which would do away with the need for taxis catering for communities of over 100,000 population to have a glass partition between driver and passenger.

United States railway companies have announced that they have already eliminated the jobs of more than 15,000 locomotive firemen, and that a further 6,000 of the 22,000 firemen's jobs which remain to be eliminated will go during 1965.

United States: the International Longshoremen's Association has announced that its members will refuse to work vessels of any flag carrying cargo to or from North Vietnam.

United States Pan American pilots went on strike on 1 April after negotiations on a new contract had broken down; the dispute mainly concerns flight time limitations.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

- Executive Board - Frankfurt, 24-26 May, 1965
- XXVIIIth Congress - Copenhagen, 28 July - 6 August 1965.

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DOCKERS' SECTION CONFERENCE AND NORTH SEA PORTS GROUP MEET

A Conference of the ITF Dockers' Section met in Bordeaux from 24 to 26 March 1965 (the conference had originally been planned for October last year, but had to be postponed). The Conference was attended by about forty delegates from Argentina, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Malaya, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Uruguay. Apologies were received from Denmark, Greece and Malta. The Chairman was Tim O'Leary of the British Transport and General Workers' Union, and Fernand Laurent, French ITF Executive Board member, attended the Conference as a special guest. Pieter de Vries, ITF General Secretary, acted as Secretary to the Conference, and Lawrence White, Assistant General Secretary, introduced the Report of the Special Seafarers' Section.

The main Conference discussion centred round a world-wide review of dockers' pay and conditions, which was examined in the light of the International Dockers' Programme approved by the ITF 1956 Congress. Other agenda items which evoked lively contributions included the question of the maximum permissible weight to be carried by one man - on which the Conference agreed that a maximum one-man load of 40 kg should be the aim; the transport of radio-active materials; mechanization of dock work; and vocational training for dock workers. The Conference was preceded by a meeting of representatives from the North Sea Ports, who reported on progress made towards harmonizing dockers' conditions in competing ports in the area.

Spokesmen for the French host union - the National Federation of Port, Dock and Allied Workers (Force Ouvrière) - explained the difficulties in which they found themselves as result of the joint opposition of the employers and the communist dockers' union to any attempts they made to improve dockers' conditions.

On the last day the Conference adopted a statement (see overleaf) expressing solidarity with the French union and setting out a list of the Section's objectives.

ITF Dockers' Section Conference, Bordeaux, 24-26 March 1965

STATEMENT ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE

This Conference of the Dockers' Section of the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), having concluded its work, expresses its sympathy with and support for the National Federation of Port, Dock and Allied Workers (Force Ouvrière), extending this sympathy and support to all employees of the French port industry.

The Conference also wishes to place on record the positive nature of its work and the complete mutual understanding between all delegates which emerged from its discussions.

This wide-ranging conference clearly indicated that the solidarity between the national organizations of dockers represented at Bordeaux would be strengthened in perfect coordination and unity of action in support of industrial demands initiated by ITF affiliates with a view to achieving the objectives set by the International Federation and endorsed by the Conference.

- For a genuine guaranteed basic wage;
- For the forty-hour, five-day week;
- For job security aimed at employment on a permanent basis;
- For representation of trade union organizations in all bodies set up to administer or control port labour;
- For a maximum weight limit on loads to be carried by one man;
- For a guaranteed wage equivalent to 70% of the daily or half-daily rate and to 80% of normal weekly earnings on full-time work;
- For an adequate retirement pension at age 60;
- For the establishment of bona fide joint committees for health and safety;
- For vocational training specially designed for dockers without discrimination between grades;
- For reservation of employment for professional dockers;
- For a period of annual leave paid at an enhanced rate.

Finally, this ITF Dockers' Conference, basing itself on past experience, is firmly convinced that the genuine interests of the workers can only be effectively represented by free and democratic trade union organizations.

The Conference likewise deplures the present division among French workers, resulting from Communist manipulation of a part of the trade union movement for political ends. Nevertheless, it expresses the hope that the great majority of workers will, as soon as possible, rally to the free democratic labour movement and, in the particular case of the French dockers, to the National Federation of Port, Dock and Allied Workers (Force Ouvrière).