

ITF NEWSLETTER INFORMATIONS INFORMATIONEN INFORMATIONSBLAD

No. 4

17 February 1966

IN THIS NUMBER: ITF General Secretary visits India (p. 27); ILO Conference on one-man loads (p. 27); British rail strike averted (p. 29); US rail "full crew" laws upheld (p. 31); Amsterdam taxi drivers strike (p. 31); Court attempt to bar NY transit agreement (p. 32); Dutch dockers vote on new agreement (p. 33); IMCO to discuss shipboard fire risks (p. 33); Danish seamen act on safety infringements (p. 34); Talks on British ratings' claims (p. 34); US AB's average earnings (p. 35); Sabena staff to strike? (p.36).

ABOUT THE ITF

Hans Imhof to visit Indian transport workers' unions

ITF General Secretary Hans Imhof is leaving London on 17 February to start a three-week visit to India in order to hold discussions with officials of ITF-affiliated organizations and to make contact with those of potential affiliates. His object will also be to assist Indian affiliates with their current problems wherever possible.

Hans Imhof's journey will take him to four main centres -- New Delhi, Calcutta, Madras and Bombay -- but it is also his intention to visit smaller cities and union branches wherever this is feasible. He also hopes to have talks with government officials and officers of the Indian trade union centres during the course of his trip. Appropriate programmes are being arranged by the ITF's affiliates. The Federation has ten member-organizations in India, catering for railwaymen, seafarers (both officers and ratings); port workers, transport workers and civil aviation staff.

During his trip, Imhof will also visit the ITF's Regional Office in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia).

TRANSPORT WORKERS (GENERAL)

INTERNATIONAL

Convention and Recommendation adopted on one-man loads

A Preparatory Technical Conference convened by the ILO to discuss the maximum permissible weight to be carried by one worker ended

on 4 February with the adoption of a draft Convention and a draft Recommendation.

The Convention provides that no worker should be required, authorized or permitted to engage in the manual transport of a load which, by reason of its weight, is likely to jeopardize his health or safety. It further calls upon ILO member States to take appropriate steps to ensure that workers assigned to regular manual transport of loads, other than light loads, shall receive prior and adequate training in working techniques designed to safeguard their health and prevent accidents. In applying the Convention, account should be taken of such conditions as climate, altitude and topography in which the work is to be performed.

The draft Recommendation states that where the maximum permissible weight to be carried by one adult worker is more than 50 kg., measures should be taken as soon as possible to reduce it to that level. Detailed provisions are also included on the questions of training, technical devices and packaging. The Recommendation calls for a medical examination for fitness before assignment to regular manual transport of loads, as far as practical and appropriate. Further medical examinations should be carried out from time to time as necessary.

So far as women and young workers are concerned, the draft Convention says that their assignment to the regular manual transport of loads, other than light loads, should be limited and that maximum loads required of them should be substantially lower than for adult males.

The draft Recommendation emphasizes that no woman should be assigned to manual transport of loads during a pregnancy which has been medically determined or during the ten weeks following confinement. It specifies that where the minimum age for assignment to the transport of loads is less than 16 years, measures should be taken as speedily as possible to raise it to that level. The minimum age for assignment to regular manual transport of loads should be raised with a view to attaining a minimum age of 18 years.

Both draft international instruments will now be submitted to the ILO Governing Body and it is likely that they will be placed on the agenda of the 1967 International Labour Conference for final adoption.

The Conference was attended by 30 countries, 19 of which sent full tripartite delegations. ITF-affiliated unions were well represented among the Workers' Group and played a leading rôle in its work. Officers of the Group included the Chairman of the ITF Dockers' Section, Tim O'Leary (UK), who acted as the Group's Chairman, and Roger Dekeyzer (Belgium), who served as Workers' Vice-President of the Conference. Secretary of the Group was Borek Zofka (ITS Liaison Officer in Geneva).

RAILWAYMEN

CANADA

"Non-ops" ask for conciliation board on claims

Seven Canadian unions catering for non-operating railwaymen have asked the Labour Minister to set up a conciliation board to inquire into their dispute with management over claims for wage increases and other contract improvements. The unions involved are the Maintenance of Way Employees, Railway Clerks, Railroad Signalmen, Transportation-Communication Union, Sleeping Car Porters, Commercial Telegraphers, and the Firemen & Oilers.

The conciliation request came as a result of the failure of railroad representatives to engage in serious negotiations, or even to make a counter-offer. The Chairman of the unions' joint negotiating committee said that "under the circumstances, recourse to conciliation, while no substitute for true collective bargaining, is the only avenue open to settlement".

GREAT BRITAIN

Last-minute settlement averts British rail strike

A settlement reached at 1 a.m. on 12 February following direct talks with the British Prime Minister averted the threatened national railway strike called by the ITF-affiliated National Union of Railwaymen (NUR) and due to begin at midnight on the following day.

The settlement came after the NUR Executive had earlier rejected an offer from the Government which was described as "final" and was made during discussions with Britain's Minister for Economic Affairs.

The terms of the settlement involve the bringing forward of a pay increase of 3½ per cent to September instead of October as had been originally offered; the introduction of the 40-hour week as from 28 February (the original date offered had been 1 April); three days' additional annual leave for railwaymen with more than 10 years' service; and the introduction of an improved pension scheme by the end of this year.

In addition, the Government gave an undertaking that an investigation would be carried out into the whole question of railway pay structure, with particular reference to lower-paid workers. Discussions on this subject are to begin on March 11 with spokesmen for all three ITF-affiliated railway unions: the NUR, the Transport Salaried Staffs' Association (TSSA), and the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers & Firemen (ASLEF). Representatives of all three unions were

present at the final talks with the Prime Minister which led to the strike being called off.

The agreement was formally approved by the railway unions on 15 February, but ASLEF made its acceptance conditional on the 3½ per cent pay rise being the subject of negotiation before its introduction in September.

ITALY

Concern over proposed legislation

During the course of a recent Press conference, Brother Costantini, General Secretary of the ITF-affiliated Italian railwaymen's union SAUFI, gave expression to grave concern on the part of the Union at what appeared to be attempts to water down or delay government legislation designed to confer powers on the railway administration to introduce structural and administrative reforms in the Italian State Railways. In particular he noted that a markedly negative attitude had been adopted in some quarters towards co-ordination in the field of transport generally and stressed that this was closely tied up with and inseparable from railway reform along desired lines.

SWITZERLAND

Swiss railwaymen criticize decision on working hour reductions

The ITF-affiliated Swiss Railwaymen's Union has expressed its keen disappointment at a recent decision taken by the Federal Council on reductions in working hours for Federal employees. In the case of Federal workers in general, this provides for the introduction of the 45-hour week with effect from 28 May 1967, with a further reduction to 44 hours two years later if the situation of the labour market makes this possible. At present, established employees (Beamte) of Federal enterprises, including the Federal Railways, have an official working week of 46 hours (in fact 46.5, if one takes account of overtime) while those employed in administrative offices work 44 hours.

However, in the case of operating staff employed by the Federal Railways and the Postal and Telegraph Administration, the Federal Council claims that it is not competent to take decisions on reduced working hours, despite legal opinion in previous years that it was so competent. It is therefore proposing that the 45-hour week for these personnel should be introduced from 28 May 1967 and that it should be authorized by the appropriate legislative chambers to apply the additional one hour's reduction only at some time in the future when this is justified by the country's economic circumstances.

Although the Swiss Railwaymen's Union welcomes the Federal Council's support in principle for the introduction of the 44-hour week, it considers that the present suggestion is a reversal of compromise proposals made a negotiating committee of the Council last November that the shorter work week should be applied from 1967. The decision to leave its implementation until some indefinite time in the future constitutes a further source of disappointment.

UNITED STATES

"Full crew" laws upheld by Supreme Court

US railway unions won a notable court victory earlier this month in their fight to maintain safe-crew legislation in a number of States. The US Supreme Court threw out a claim by rail management that "full crew" safety laws had been superseded and nullified by the compulsory arbitration law passed by the US Congress in 1963 and a subsequent arbitration award covering engine and train crews. As a result of the Supreme Court's ruling, safe crew laws in Arkansas, Wisconsin, Indiana, Ohio, New York, Washington and Massachusetts will remain in force.

House of Representatives approves RLEA-sponsored bill

The House of Representatives has unanimously approved a bill supported by the ITF-affiliated Railway Labor Executives' Association (RLEA) which is designed to cut down a huge backlog of claims submitted by rail operating employees. Voting on the measure was 379-0.

Put forward as an amendment to the Railway Labor Act, the proposed legislation would make decisions of the National Railroad Adjustment Board on wages, hours and working rule disputes final and binding, except in case of fraud. In addition, it provides for the establishment of special adjustment boards to settle disputes if either party so requests. At present, both sides have to do this.

The bill still requires Senate approval before it becomes law.

ROAD AND PASSENGER TRANSPORT WORKERS

GREAT BRITAIN

Talks to be held on London bus cuts

Discussions are expected to be held this week between the ITF-affiliated Transport & General Workers' Union and London Transport in an attempt to reach a settlement of the three-week-old ban by London Central busmen on overtime and rest day working. The ban resulted from London Transport's decision to axe certain bus services because of staff shortages.

NETHERLANDS

Amsterdam taxi drivers take strike action

Taxi drivers in the Dutch capital went on strike with effect from 7 February in protest against the employers' rejection of their wage claims.

The taxi-men are demanding a weekly basic wage of 125 guilders for receipts of up to 275 guilders per week, plus a 20 per cent annual share of profits on takings over 275 guilders. They are also asking that tips should not be included in the fare tariff. On holidays, they want twelve consecutive days per year plus six occasional days. Payment during annual leave should be at the rate of 175 guilders per week, plus a holiday bonus of twice this amount. Payments in the case of sickness or accident benefit should be based on a rate of 125 guilders per week plus 20 per cent of average takings during the thirteen weeks preceding incapacity. The taxi drivers are also seeking a reduction in their present working week of 53 hours.

UNITED STATES

Court attempt to bar New York transit contract's implementation

Implementation of the new agreement which settled the recent New York transit strike is now threatened by a decision handed down by a Supreme Court judge. He ruled that under a New York State law prohibiting strikes by public employees, the city's Transit Authority was legally barred from granting any wage increases until January 1969. The law is the Condon-Wadlin Act, which has been strongly criticized by US trade unions. It was invoked against union officials during the dispute, leading to imprisonment for eight of them. The Act lays down that reinstated strikers must be refused any increases for three years following an "illegal" stoppage.

It is understood that the unions concerned -- the ITF-affiliated Transport Workers' Union (TWU) and Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) -- are to appeal against the judgment.

Additional details of the settlement for bus workers -- supplied by the ATU -- are now available to us, as follows:

- (a) a total increase in hourly rates of 51 cents spread over three years and involving successive rises of 13, 13½ and 24½ cents on 1 January 1966 and 1967 and 1 July 1967. This makes the present top rate \$3.35 per hour and the final top rate \$3.73.
- (b) all uniforms will be paid for by the Transit Authority, at no cost to the employees.
- (c) health and welfare benefits now in effect will continue for the next two years, with the Transit Authority bearing the cost of any necessary increase in premiums during that period.
- (d) an increase in existing pension benefits amounting to \$ 500 per year.
- (e) the introduction of a new pension clause (known as the "Death Gamble") under which the employee can choose between full pension until death and

a reduced pension until death, with the latter being continued after death for the benefit of wives.

(f) the contract covers a period of two years.

PORT WORKERS

NETHERLANDS

Amsterdam & Rotterdam dockers voting on new agreement

Members of the ITF-affiliated Netherlands Transport Workers' Federation who work in the ports of Amsterdam and Rotterdam are currently voting on a new collective agreement. Dockers in both ports rejected a previous agreement in January on the ground that the wage increase of 7 per cent contained in it did not compensate for increases in the cost of living (see Newsletter No. 2 of 20 January).

This was the maximum figure for wage increases laid down by the Dutch government, but the Transport Workers' Federation has now reached agreement with the employers that talks will be held later in the year to discuss the application of a special cost-of-living bonus for dockers.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Dublin's deep-sea dockers win 40-hour week

Some 2,000 Dublin dockers, employed in the deep-sea section of the port, went back to work on 7 February after their union, the Marine, Port & General Workers' Union, had accepted Labour Court recommendations for settling the month-old dispute which conceded their claim for the introduction of the five-day 40-hour week. It will be recalled that this had already been granted to dockers employed in the coaling and cross-Channel sections of the port.

SEAFARERS

INTERNATIONAL

IMCO to discuss fire safety in passenger vessels

A special five-day meeting of the Maritime Safety Committee of the Inter-governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) is to be held in May to discuss the need for stricter precautions against fire hazards in passenger vessels.

It will be recalled that US maritime unions, including the ITF-affiliated National Maritime and Seafarers' International Unions, have been conducting public campaigns for greater shipboard fire safety since the tragedy involving the Panamanian-registered "Yarmouth Castle".

DENMARK

Safety regulations neglected by company, says Seamen's Union

The ITF-affiliated Danish Seamen's Union is to bring an action against the Torm shipping company for its failure to carry out lifeboat and fire drills on board one of its vessels. The ship is the company's m.v. YUGALA and the case will be heard before the Danish Maritime and Commercial Court.

The State Shipping Inspectorate has established that safety regulations have not been implemented by the company on several occasions. Despite statements to the contrary by the YUGALA's first mate, the ship's inspection book shows that monthly lifeboat drills were not carried out in February, March, April, June, July, August and December of 1965, while three months went by without any fire drill. The Seamen's Union President, Sven From Andersen, in announcing the decision to take court action, said that the union took a very serious view of the position.

The Seamen's Union is also continuing its campaign to secure a ban on dispensations from the Manning Law, following its successful action against the tanker A.P. MØLLER. From Andersen stated recently that the union hopes to win a two-year moratorium on claims for dispensations from the ship-owners, and that the union is also pressing for monthly reports to be made on rationalized ships operating with reduced crews. These would refer particularly to the effects of the use of smaller crews on safety at sea.

GREAT BRITAIN

Talks continue on British ratings' claims

Negotiations began on 1 February on the renewed hours and wages claim submitted by the ITF-affiliated National Union of Seamen. The claim involves recognition of the 40-hour week at sea worked in five days out of seven, with work done on the two remaining days compensated for at overtime rates. The NUS is also asking that existing consolidated rates (which include compensation for weekend work at sea) should be retained, plus an additional amount of 12s 6d.

Result of the claims would be to bring the articles rate of an Able Seaman with full Efficiency Service Pay up to £60 a month.

The union negotiators are working on the basis of an NUS Executive Council resolution, which also recommended the use of strike action, if necessary, to achieve the union's aims.

A reply from the shipowners is expected on 9 March.

ITALY

FILM-CISL pressing for shipboard representatives

The introduction of a system of crew representation on board ship is being pressed by the ITF-affiliated Italian Seamen's Union (FILM-CISL) in present contract talks with the Private Shipowners' Federation. The present contract, covering some 30,000 Italian seamen serving on passenger and cargo vessels operated by the group of private shipowners, expired on 31st December last.

Prominent among other claims are: improved regulations governing recruitment and hiring, higher rates of pay and consolidation of the cost of living allowance and other incidental allowances in the basic wage.

The union is also very concerned with the legal position of its members in the event of a strike being called during service aboard. It points out that the right to strike is guaranteed by the Constitution but that the action of a district court in connection with the 1963 strike clearly calls for a re-examination of the legal position.

UNITED STATES

Average monthly earnings of American A.B.

According to an estimate made by the AFL-CIO Maritime Committee the average direct earnings of an American Able Seamen now amount to \$ 556.90 per month (£198 17s 10), made up as follows:

\$ 392.58	Monthly Base Pay
100.67	Overtime for 41.6 hours on Saturday & Sunday at \$ 2.42 per hour.
53.24	Overtime for 22 hours other than Saturday and Sunday hours. Overtime - 5 hours per week X 4 1/3 weeks at \$ 2.42.
10.41	For 4.3 hours penalty hours within work day at \$ 2.42.
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\$ 556.90	Average monthly direct earnings
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CIVIL AVIATION WORKERS

BELGIUM

Flying staff of SABENA to strike?

Flying staff employed by the Belgian national airline SABENA are expected to give notice of strike action in support of their salary claims. They are demanding a complete revision of their pay structure to bring this more into line with salaries paid by other airlines of the Common Market countries. The management has offered an average increase of 10.8 per cent, but the flying staff believe that their pay would have to be raised by some 55 per cent to achieve parity with foreign flying staff. The current collective agreement is due to expire in mid-March and a series of short stoppages of two or three days are anticipated if no satisfactory settlement is reached by that time.

Ground staff organized by the ITF-affiliated Public Service Workers' Union have also decided to give notice of a 24-hour warning strike, to protest against the failure of the government to respond to claims submitted by the Common Front of public service workers' unions. Some 1300 workers would be involved in the strike, for which no date has yet been fixed.

UNITED STATES

Clerks Brotherhood wins new agreement from Avianca

A new contract signed by the Air Transport Division of the ITF-affiliated Brotherhood of Railway Clerks with Avianca Inc. is described by the union as "one of the best airline agreements of the past year".

The agreement provides a wage increase of 16 cents per hour (about 1s. 1d.) as from 1 January last, together with a further increase of 11 cents (approx. 9d.) an hour with effect from 1 January 1967. It also includes improvements in night differentials, overtime, annual vacations and sick leave. Avianca will also increase its share of payments for group hospital and life insurance benefits.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Brazilian ports have been declared national security zones under a recent Presidential Decree, and dock strikes and go-slow movements will be treated as crimes of military rebellion subject to military court jurisdiction.

British dockers in the Port of Liverpool are to benefit from an agreement on methods of incentive payment worked out between the ITF-affiliated Transport & General Workers' Union and the employers. Details of the new scheme, which will provide for bonus payments in addition to basic time rates, are now being negotiated to replace existing piecework rates.

Finnish seamen's and transport workers' unions have taken the initiative in uniting the entire trade union movement in favour of a concerted national drive against the import of goods from South Africa and Rhodesia. Approaches on the subject have already been made to the Government and pressure will also be brought to bear on commercial undertakings.

The new Israeli port of Ashdod is to be temporarily closed following a protracted slow-down by stevedores, claiming the same conditions as apply in Haifa. The port authority states that modern equipment in the port makes this unnecessary. Dismissal notices have been issued to 600 dockers; ships normally using Ashdod will be diverted to Haifa.

Japanese seamen serving on smaller coastal vessels were due to strike today (17 February) in support of claims for a wage increase of 7,500 yen per month. The strike will last one week. This particular dispute was not included in the settlement following the recent national strike by the All-Japan Seamen's Union, the owners having made a counter-offer of only 700 yen: (360 yen equal \$1, 1012 yen are £1).

Okinawa dockers went back to work on 29 January following a week-long strike for higher pay. Their union won rises of 4 cents an hour for men and three cents for women dockers.

United States engineer officers, members of the ITF-affiliated Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association (MEBA), are in dispute with Lykes Bros. Inc. over the manning of the company's new automated steamship ELIZABETH LYKES, delivered at the end of January

PERSONALIA

Robert Bratschi, President of the ITF from 1950 to 1954 and General Secretary of the ITF-affiliated Swiss Railwaymen's Union from 1920 until 1954, celebrated his 75th birthday on 6 February. In addition to his work within both the Swiss Railwaymen's Union and the ITF, Robert Bratschi also served as President of the Swiss Trade Union Federation and of the Federated Association of Swiss Public Service Employees -- of which organizations he is still Honorary President. In addition, he was for many years a Social-Democratic Member of Parliament. To Robert Bratschi, who has devoted so much of his life to the cause of the workers in both his own country and in the rest of the democratic world, we offer our heartiest congratulations on his three-quarters of a century and wish him continued happiness and health in retirement.

J. de Graaff, former President of the Dutch General Union of Airline Workers (ABL) and now Vice-President of the ITF-affiliated Netherlands Transport Workers' Federation, with which the ABL merged in 1961, was 60 years old on 9 February.

Friedrich Schneider, one of the pioneers of the Swiss transport workers' union movement, died in Basel on 30 January at the age of 79. He was appointed Assistant Secretary of the pre-World War I ITF affiliate, the Swiss Commercial and Transport Workers' Union, in 1912 and became its Central Secretary later the same year.

Kumazo Nakachi, President of the ITF-affiliated All-Japan Seamen's Union, was re-elected as President of the Japanese Confederation of Labour (DOMEI) at the Confederation's Convention in Tokyo last month.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

- Seafarers' Section Conference - Hamburg, 28 & 29 March 1966
- Dockers' Section Conference - Hamburg, 30 March 1966
- Joint Dockers' and Seafarers' Conference - Hamburg, 31 March 1966
- Railwaymen's Section Committee - London, 20 & 21 April 1966
- Railwaymen's Section Conference - Rome, 23-25 June 1966.

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