

# ITF NEWSLETTER INFORMATIONS INFORMATIONEN INFORMATIONSBLAD

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## ABOUT THE ITF

INTERNATIONAL  
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### New agreements signed for flag-of-convenience vessels

Two new flag-of-convenience ships were brought under ITF agreements last month by unions in Finland and Sweden. They are the "Isla del Rey", a Spanish-owned Panamanian-flag ship of 3,050 d.w.t., and the "Tynshon", a 9,265 d.w.t. motor vessel owned by the Times Line of Hong Kong and also registered in Panama.

In the case of the "Isla del Rey", action was taken by the ITF-affiliated Finnish Seamen's Union. The "Tynshon" signed an agreement following the threat of boycott action by the Swedish Seamen's and Transport Workers' Unions (both ITF-affiliates). The latter ship is the first with an all-Chinese crew (including officers) to be covered by an ITF agreement. In both cases, the agreements are based on British National Maritime Board rates and conditions. All crew members have been enrolled in the ITF Special Seafarers' Section and contributions have been paid into the ITF International Seamen's Welfare Fund.

TRANSPORT WORKERS (GENERAL)

FRANCE  
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Public transport workers to strike against Government wage freeze

Workers employed in the public sector will call a series of strikes during the latter half of this month in order to protest against the Government's policy of placing a ceiling of five per cent on wage and salary increases during 1966. Among the strikers will be employees of the State Railways, and the Paris Métro and bus services. Railwaymen began their stoppage at midnight last night (16 March) and are due to continue it until 1600 hours on Friday. The Paris Métro and bus workers will take part in a 24-hour strike on 25 March.

All three of France's national centres are supporting the present strike movement.

GERMANY  
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Nine per cent increase demanded for public service workers

A claim for an increase of nine per cent in the wages and salaries of public service workers -- including employees and manual workers on the Federal Railways -- has been submitted by three German unions. They are the ITF-affiliated Railwaymen's and Transport & Public Service Workers' Unions, together with the Union of Post Office Workers.

The three unions have also asked for the 40-hour week to be introduced in stages by 1970.

GREAT BRITAIN  
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Increases in London Transport staff rates

Following the recent agreement covering British Railways staff, a further settlement covering staff employed by London Transport was reached last month. This provides for:

- (a) a 3½ per cent salary rise which was operative from 4 October 1965 has been converted into one of 5 per cent taking effect from 3 January last.
- (b) a further 3½ per cent increase in the pay of salaried and wages grade staff will apply from 5 September 1966.
- (c) a 38-hour week for salaried staff (other than clerical staff) and a 40-hour week for wages grade staff will take effect from 28 February 1966.

MALTA  
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Sick pay and injury scheme won by Maltese affiliate

The ITF-affiliated General Workers' Union has this month negotiated the introduction of a contributory joint sick pay and injury scheme for employees of Malta Drydocks. The scheme, for which employee contributions will be one-half of the basic hourly wage per week, comes into operation on 1 April. The employers will contribute approximately double the total amount of workers' payments.

Employees with at least six months' and up to five years' service will qualify for a maximum of 75 working days at normal time wages (less National Insurance sickness benefit) in any period of twelve months. This goes up to 130 working days in the case of employees with longer service. Payment for industrial injury starts from the first day of absence following the accident and is at the same rate as for sickness.

SWEDEN  
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Major conflict results from central wage negotiations

For the first time during the post-war period, a complete deadlock has been reached in national wage negotiations between the Swedish trade union centre (LO) and the Employers' Federation. The deadlock came after the employers had failed to make any reasonable counter-offer to the unions' claims for a general increase of 10 per cent in wages and salaries, together with rises of up to 20 per cent for lower-paid workers.

The negotiations began in November last and were throughout characterized by a negative attitude on the part of the employers. The talks finally collapsed on 3 March after a government-appointed mediation committee had failed to achieve any agreement on a compromise figure of approximately four per cent. This was followed by an LO decision to implement a general ban on overtime with effect from 11 March. The employers then gave notice of a general lock-out, to start on 18 March.

The latest development in the situation is that the arbitration committee has called the parties together for new talks, which began on 15 March. Both the overtime ban and the lock-out notice have been suspended to await the outcome of these.

RAILWAYMEN

BELGIUM  
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Belgian railwaymen protest against projected rail cuts

At a meeting held on 9 March, the National Council of the ITF-affiliated Railwaymen's Section of the Belgian Public Service Workers' Union made a strong protest against retro-grade measures being proposed for the railways by the Premier-designate, M. Vanden Boeynants.

Our affiliate states that under the pretext of rationalization, new and severe cuts in railway services are being planned. These, it says, are obviously opposed to the national interest and run counter to unanimously-approved plans for revitalizing economically-depressed areas of the country.

Pointing out that there has been a considerable rise in productivity on the railways in recent years, coupled with rationalization measures more radical than those applied to any other industrial sector, our affiliate states that the only real solution to the current difficulties facing the State Railways is to be found in coordination of the means of transport and proper compensation for the obligations laid upon the railways by the State.

GREAT BRITAIN  
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Joint meeting on railway pay structure and industrial relations

A preliminary meeting on the subject of railway pay structure and labour relations was held on 11 March between the unions and British Railways. The meeting was held under the chairmanship of the British Labour Prime Minister, Mr. Harold Wilson.

It is understood that the Prime Minister suggested that urgent discussions should take place on three issues:

- (a) pay structure, including considerations to be taken into account when determining pay;
- (b) possibilities of increasing productivity and efficiency, together with problems arising in connection with measures taken in this field;
- (c) arrangements for negotiations on pay, and for consultation on matters of concern to both the unions and British Railways.

Further meetings are to take place in the near future under the chairmanship of the Minister of Labour.

It will be recalled that the present discussions were promised by the Prime Minister during talks which resulted in the calling-off of the threatened national rail strike last month.

#### New agreement for rail workshop employees

Representatives of 74,000 engineering workers employed in British Railways workshops have approved a new agreement covering wage increases, a shorter work-week and extra annual leave.

Rail workshop employees had already received an increase of 9s. (1s. equals approx 14 US cents); they will now get a further 9s.6d rise in September.

The 40-hour week will also be applied. This will be worked in five eight-hour shifts for day workers. Night workers will have the option -- in agreement with management -- of working either five eight-hour nights, or four nine-hour and one four-hour shift, or four 10-hour shifts.

Employees with five or more years' service will have their present annual leave of a fortnight increased by two days. About 50,000 workers will qualify.

NETHERLANDS  
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#### Speedy solution of Dutch railwaymen's pay dispute urged

The Netherlands State Railway Staff Council has written to the Management urging that negotiations on a new collective agreement should be resumed as soon as possible in order to reach a joint position on the lag in railwaymen's wages which was established by the Van der Dussen Committee.

As reported in Newsletter No. 5, the ITF-affiliated Transport Workers' Federation has submitted a claim for a straight wage increase of seven per cent, plus a further ten per cent to compensate for the disparity in wages between railwaymen and other industrial workers which was noted in the Committee's report. Negotiations on this claim reached deadlock following the fixing by management of a limit to the amount of compensation it was prepared to give. The Railway Staff Council emphasizes that this was done without any consultation with itself.

UNITED STATES  
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#### Big improvements in railwaymen's health benefits

Nearly half a million non-operating railwaymen employed by over 200 United States companies are to benefit from

an extension of hospital, surgical and medical benefits as a result of a new agreement. The improvements have to a large extent been made possible by the enactment of the Medicare Bill, providing federal health insurance and supplemental benefits for retired workers.

Among the new benefits, due to take effect from 1 July, are the following:

- (a) the major medical expense allowance, which is now fixed at \$5,000 over the period of a lifetime, may when exhausted be restored, at the rate of \$1,000 per year, up to a further maximum of \$5,000.
- (b) Maximum surgical benefits will rise from \$300 to \$420; anesthesia benefits from \$25 to \$84; and x-ray and laboratory fees to a maximum of \$100.
- (c) Benefits will cover radiation therapy for the first time;
- (d) Allowances for hospital charges other than bed and board above \$500 have been raised from 75 to 80 per cent of cost.

In fact, approximately one million people will be covered by the new benefits, since they apply both to railwaymen and their families. Also covered will be employees of more than 65 years of age, except to the extent that they benefit under the new Medicare programme.

ROAD AND PASSENGER TRANSPORT WORKERS
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BELGIUM  
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New rates for Belgian busmen negotiated

The ITF-affiliated Belgian Transport Workers' Union reports that the wages of bus crews have been increased with effect from 1 February. During the first year of service (after six months' probationary duty at Fr. 305.33\*), a busmen gets Fr. 306.83 for a 7½-hour day. After five years, the basic rate goes up to Fr. 314.40 and after 10 years to Fr. 329.48. The maximum of Fr. 339.15 per day is reached after 25 years' service.

\*) £1 equals Fr. 140; Fr. 100 are about \$2.

GREAT BRITAIN  
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Bus workers will boycott Incomes Board pay claim inquiry

The ITF-affiliated Transport & General Workers' Union has announced that it will boycott the inquiry which is to be carried out by the Government's Prices and Incomes Board

into the 6.6 per cent pay claim submitted on behalf of London busmen. It will be recalled that the Government intervened in the union's negotiations with London Transport at a point when it was already clear that the latter was prepared to grant the pay rise.

Following a meeting of the union's Executive held on 8 March to discuss the situation, its Acting General Secretary, Harry Nicholas, made it clear that they would not give evidence or participate in any other way in the Board's investigation. "The Executive", he said, "has expressed its very strong objection to any interference with our agreements and negotiating practices". The union's stand will also apply to any future pay inquiry conducted by the Board. In this connection, it should be noted that a further union claim for a substantial increase in the pay of municipal bus workers has already been referred to the Board.

#### £2,000 a year for long-distance lorry drivers

The ITF-affiliated Scottish Commercial Motormen's Union has signed an agreement which it describes as "the biggest wages scoop in its 67-year-old history". Under the agreement -- with Scottish and Newcastle Breweries -- drivers operating over the trunk route between Edinburgh and London will receive a guaranteed contract wage of £41 (US\$ 114.80) for six nights shifts. The shifts will involve a run of about 300 miles at a maximum speed of 40 m.p.h. Including breaks and rest periods, the run will take about ten hours.

The union states that in most cases, the drivers will leave Edinburgh on Sunday night between 7 and 8 p.m. and finish their six shifts at home on the following Saturday at about 7 a.m. The new contract rate will mean an increase of about £9 (\$25) in weekly pay packets (the contract wage does not of course cover subsistence, for which a separate allowance of £1 6s (\$3.60) per night is payable).

An alternative set of shifts would involve five night runs, for which a contract rate of £32 (\$89.60) would be paid. Purely Scottish runs (Edinburgh to Aberdeen or Dundee) will be paid at the rate of £36 (\$100.80) for six nights, and £28 10s (\$79.80) for five nights.

The increases have been possible as the result of higher productivity. Two vehicles can now move 100 tons of beer in a five-day week. Under the old schedules, five lorries were needed for the same job.

JAPAN  
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#### Municipal transport workers to strike against revised legislation

The ITF-affiliated Japanese Federation of Municipal Transport Workers' Unions is to stage short stoppages on March 25 and April 14 in protest against plans to revise the Local Public Corporations Law. These amendments, proposed by the Central Government, would have the effect of putting local corporation transport on a self-supporting basis.

The strikes, which will last for periods of from one to six hours, will affect passenger transport in fourteen cities, including Tokyo, Yokohama, Nagoya, Kyoto and Kobe.

PORT WORKERS

ARGENTINA  
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Dockers in Buenos Aires strike for higher pay

Buenos Aires dockers, organized in the ITF-affiliated Argentine Port Workers' Union (SUPA), have been staging a series of stoppages (the latest of which was on 11 March) in support of their demands for higher pay in current contract negotiations. The union is claiming increases of up to 60 per cent, and has rejected an offer of 15 per cent made by the port employers.

GREAT BRITAIN  
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Proposals on decasualization scheme for British dock workers

At a meeting held on March 2, the National Modernization Committee for the Docks Industry accepted a report submitted by the sub-committee of the National Joint Council for the Port Industry which deals with the changes necessary in the National Dock Labour Scheme in order to apply the permanent employment scheme which has been worked out for all registered dockers. It is hoped that this scheme will be applied later this year. The proposals made by the dock industry will shortly be submitted to the Minister of Labour for publication as a draft Order.

The National Modernization Committee also considered the current position with regards to a pensions scheme for dockers as well as revised proposals for a docks sick pay scheme submitted by the employers. The latter have been referred to a four-man sub-committee.

Talks begun on dockers' pensions in N. Ireland

Discussions began last week in Belfast on the introduction of a pension scheme for dock workers employed in the principal ports of Northern Ireland. The talks are being held between the unions concerned -- which include the ITF-affiliated Transport & General Workers' Union --, the employers and members of the Joint Working Party.



SEAFARERS

FINLAND  
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Wage increases and improved leave for Finnish seafarers

New agreements covering Finnish seafarers employed on foreign trade vessels were signed on 22 February. The following unions, all of which are ITF affiliates, took part in the negotiations: the Seamen's Union, Navigating Officers, Engineer Officers and Radio Officers. Because of the unstable economic situation, our affiliates have signed agreements for only one year and not three as the owners wanted.

All covered by the new contracts will receive a flat increase of 5.8 per cent. However, those who earn at least the AB's monthly rate -- (454 Marks\*) -- under the previous agreement -- qualify for a further increase of 21 Marks (approximately 4.5 per cent). This brings the AB's new basic rate up to 502.50 Marks, plus a further fifteen Marks as certification allowance. The same allowance is also payable to certificated cooks, to boatswains, carpenters, and pumpmen. The electrician's competency bonus goes up from 23.90 to 30 Marks per month.

Working hours are reduced from 45 to 44 per week as from 1 April next, followed by further reductions of one hour each year until the 40-hour week is achieved in 1970. Annual leave with pay goes up from 18 to 24 days after one year's service, and from 24 to 30 after five years.

\*) £1 equals 8.96 Marks; 100 Marks are about \$31

GREAT BRITAIN  
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British ratings reject offer by shipowners

The Executive Council of the ITF-affiliated National Union of Seamen has endorsed the action of their negotiating committee in rejecting a counter-offer made by the shipowners at a meeting held on 9 March in reply to the union's claim for a 40-hour week and an increase of 12s. 6d. in the monthly consolidated basic rate. It is understood that the owners' offer was for an increase of three per cent and some unspecified increases in fringe benefits.

NETHERLANDS  
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Dutch seafarers win their case on the employment of third mates

Last year, the ITF-affiliated Seafarers' and Fishermen's Federation took up the case of shipowners who were evading the provisions of Article 26 of the agreement covering merchant

officers serving aboard vessels of 500 g.r.t. and over. This states that "except in certain specified circumstances there must be sufficient officers on board at sea to operate a three-watch system".

The Federation interpreted this as meaning that, in addition to the Master, three certificated navigating officers had to be carried, without any further demand being made on a navigating officer signed on as Third Mate. A number of shipowners, however, were manning their ships with only a First and Second Mate, despite warnings by our affiliate.

In September, the Federation took legal action against these owners in the Rotterdam courts and this resulted in a decision that one of the vessels involved in the dispute, namely the m.s. "Pieter S", should have a Third Mate placed aboard her on the first occasion that she called at the Port of Rotterdam.

In the meantime, the President of the Court adjourned the case to give the parties an opportunity of settling their dispute by means of an Arbitration Committee. Our affiliate now reports that the decision reached within this Committee has upheld its contention that three navigating officers must be employed on vessels of 500 g.r.t. and over. The decision further makes it clear that lack of previous experience as officer of the watch on board such vessels is not a reason for refusing to employ an available officer as Third Mate, nor can this be used as a "specified circumstance" to justify the employment of less than three Navigating Officers.

The shipowners have since given an undertaking to our affiliate that they will abide by this decision in the future.

UNITED STATES  
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#### Maritime unions to maintain Vietnam ship boycott decision

Following talks with government officials in Washington, representatives of three ITF-affiliated maritime unions announced that they would still go ahead with their plans to introduce a boycott of ships trading with North Vietnam. The three unions are the Seafarers' International Union, the National Maritime Union and the International Longshoremen's Association.

President Gleason of the ILA said at a press conference afterwards that the threat of boycott action had already reduced shipments to North Vietnam.

The Greek Government has announced that it has banned all ships under the Greek flag from sailing to and from North Vietnam.

CIVIL AVIATION WORKERS

INTERNATIONAL  
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Pilots will disobey new separation rule

At its annual Conference last week in Auckland, New Zealand, the International Federation of Airline Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) decided to instruct its members to ignore new rules providing for narrower air corridors which were approved in January by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

The new rules would cut the lateral separation of aircraft from 120 to 90 miles and would permit more aircraft to fly over routes during peak periods at altitudes of more than 29,000 feet (the economic operating level for jet aircraft). IFALPA, however, believes that with present navigational aids, this reduction in lateral separation creates a danger to air safety.

UNITED STATES  
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TWA flight engineers win improved salaries and fringe benefits

In negotiations following the re-opening of certain clauses of its February 1965 agreement with Trans World Airlines, the ITF-affiliated Flight Engineers' International Association (FEIA) has won a number of improvements in fringe benefits as well as a salary increase of 4 per cent effective from 1 January 1967.

Flight engineers' pay during disability has been increased, with a new maximum of \$500 (£178,10s) per month for those aged between 56 and 60 at the time of disability. Retirement pay has also gone up; a new minimum of \$500 per month, excluding Social Security and other benefits, has been introduced. TWA's contributions to the Flight Engineer Trust Plan will also be increased from 3 per cent to 7 per cent. Other improvements relate to deadhead pay, training procedures and meal expenses.

In addition, the new agreement -- which runs until 31 December 1967 -- includes a voluntary arbitration agreement. Under this, all future negotiations on disputes will last no longer than 60 days, when mediation will be sought. If mediation fails, the parties will go to arbitration. The two parties have further agreed not to resort to lock-outs, strikes and work stoppages.

The original agreement of February 1965, of which the new provisions now form part, also provides for the introduction of new flight time limitations from 1 December next. These are 75 hours per month on domestic routes and 225 per quarter on international flights.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Negotiations began on 11 March on the Danish ship manning question. The ITF-affiliated Seamen's Union is proposing a two-year pause on dispensations from the manning regulations and an investigation into the effects of dispensations already granted.

Chilean dockers called a national strike on 28 February in support of their claims for higher pay. The strike ended on 2 March following an undertaking by the government that it would give proper consideration to the dockers' claims.

Finnish dockers, members of the ITF-affiliated Drivers' & Transport Workers' Union, have reached agreement with the employers on wage increases and other improvements without carrying out their earlier strike threat (see Newsletter No. 5, p.45). Finnish ports have, however, been paralyzed by a strike of dock foremen organized in the ITF-affiliated Dock Foremen's Union.

The German Railwaymen's Union (an ITF affiliate) has again scored an overwhelming success in elections for the Federal Railways staff representatives. Of the total votes cast, 67.45 per cent went to our affiliate, with the remainder being split among three other organizations. Nineteen of the 25 members of the Central Staff Council (Hauptpersonalrat) are GdED representatives.

The Israeli port of Ashdod is now working normally following an agreement reached between the dockers and Histadrut.

Japanese seafarers employed on coastal vessels have reached agreement with the employers following their strike which began on midnight of 17 February. The strike was called off at 11 a.m. on the same day. We hope to be able to give details of the settlement in a later issue.

PERSONALIA

G. J. H. Alink, President of the ITF-affiliated Netherlands Transport Workers' Federation and member of the ITF Executive Board, was appointed a Knight of the Order of Oranje-Nassau during the celebrations held at the end of last month to mark the 40th anniversary of the Netherlands Railway Staff Council. Our sincerest congratulations go to Bro. Alink on this recognition of his great services to railway trade unionism and the railway industry.

Walter Schevenels, Belgian-born General Secretary of the European Regional Organization of the ICFTU, died following a heart attack on 6 March. He was 71 years of age. Schevenels, who started work as a toolmaker, quickly became active in the Belgian Metal Workers' Federation, and was eventually elected as General Secretary for the metal workers of Antwerp Province. In 1929, he became General Secretary of the pre-war International Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU), a post which he was to fill until the creation of the WFTU in 1945. He was Assistant General Secretary of the WFTU covering the industrial field from 1946 to 1948. When the democratic unions left the WFTU because of its domination by the Communists and set up the ICFTU, Schevenels became General Secretary of the new body's European Regional Organization. He was due to leave for Turkey, where he was to represent the ICFTU at the Türk-İş Congress, on the very day that he died.

On behalf of all its affiliates, the ITF salutes the passing of a devoted trade unionist and a great international leader. Our sincerest condolences go to Bro. Schevenels' family and to his colleagues of the ICFTU, who have lost a good comrade and friend.

Ragnar Tuori, former General Secretary of the ITF-affiliated Finnish Railwaymen's Union (Rautatieläistenliitto) celebrated his 60th birthday on 3 March. Brother Tuori retired from his post with the Finnish Railwaymen's Union on 1 October 1965.

Ernst Ulbrich, Central Secretary of the ITF-affiliated Austrian Railwaymen's Union, was elected as a member of the National Council during the parliamentary election held earlier this month.

FORTHCOMING MEETING  
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- 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
- Management Committee - Utrecht, 23-24 May 1966
- Executive Board - Utrecht, 25-27 May 1966
- Railwaymen's Section Conference - Rome, 23-25 June 1966.

LATE ITEM

The Finnish Air Transport Workers' Union has informed the ITF that no progress has been made in the mediation of its dispute with Finnair (see Newsletter No. 5). The union's members are therefore taking strike action with effect from 1600 hours on 18 March. The union has requested all possible help from other ITF civil aviation affiliates to ensure the effectiveness of its strike.