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ABOUT THE ITF

INTERNATIONAL

ITF Executive Board meets in Utrecht

A meeting of the ITF Executive Board took place in Utrecht (Holland) from 25 to 27 May, with the Netherlands Transport Workers' Federation acting as host organization.

The following were present at the meeting: H. Düby (President, Switzerland); R. Dekeyzer (Belgium); Ph. Seibert and G. Kugoth (Germany); H. Nicholas (United Kingdom); D.S. Beattie and J. Elliott (United States); F.H. Hall and W. Smith (Canada); G.J.H. Alink (Netherlands); R. Degris (France); Z. Barash (Israel); R. Kamisawa (Japan); R.S. Oca (Philippines); H. Hernandez (Venezuela); E. Tolosa (Argentina); F. Prechtl (Austria); A.M'Baye (Senegal); and the General Secretary, Hans Imhof. Also in attendance were L. White (Assistant General Secretary) and J. Otero (Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean Area). Apologies for absence were received from H. Pettersson (Vice-President; Sweden); G. Hauge (Norway); and S.F. Greene (United Kingdom).

Much of the Executive Board's business was concerned with steps which should be taken, in pursuance of the decision of the 1965 Copenhagen Congress, to intensify the ITF's activities aimed at strengthening trade unions

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in the developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. The Board agreed that thirty per cent of the ITF's income from affiliation fees should be allocated to this purpose and it also decided that a Secretary with special responsibility for Regional Affairs should be appointed. It was decided that this post should be filled by Harold Lewis, who until now has acted as the General Secretary's Personal Assistant and in that capacity has been closely associated with the ITF's work in the regions for a number of years. The Board also instructed the Secretariat to draw up a programme of regional activities covering the next five years, which will be considered first by a special meeting of the Management Committee to be held in September and then at the Board's next meeting in November.

The Board also noted with great regret that Jack Otero is leaving his post as Director of the ITF's Lima Office this month in order to return to work with his own union in the United States. The Board endorsed a recommendation that his successor should be M. Medrano, until now Assistant Director, and that the vacancy left by this appointment should be filled by Medardo Gomeró. A third officer for the Lima Office will be appointed at a later stage. It was also noted that several affiliates in Latin America had undertaken to make officers available for special missions on behalf of the ITF.

Nominations for membership of a Latin American Advisory Committee, similar to that which already exists for the Asian Region, were approved by the Board. It was noted that the Argentine affiliates had offered to act as hosts to an ITF Latin American and Caribbean Region Transport Workers' Conference during the early part of next year, and it was agreed that the possibility of holding the first meeting of the new Advisory Committee in conjunction with this should be explored.

It was agreed in principle that a third meeting of the Asian Advisory Committee should take place in Seoul, the capital of the Republic of Korea, in September of this year.

The Board also considered reports on fact-finding missions to a number of African and Asian countries which have been undertaken by the General Secretary and other ITF representatives during recent months.

The Board further gave urgent attention to the situation of the Brazilian trade unions, whose freedom has been drastically curtailed by the present military régime. The Board heard, for example, that candidates for union office now have to be approved by the military intelligence service and that strikes in Brazilian ports are considered as crimes of military rebellion, punishable by courts martial. The Executive Board condemned such policies as hostile to the principles of democratic trade unionism and in violation

of international labour conventions on freedom of association signed by the Brazilian government. (The text of a resolution on this subject is given in a supplement to this Newsletter).

The strike called by the British National Union of Seamen was naturally one of the most urgent and important questions dealt with by the Board. The Federation had called upon seafarers' and dockers' affiliates to show international solidarity with the British seamen shortly before the strike began and the response to this appeal has been on a unprecedented scale. As a result, messages of support to the British seamen have poured in from ITF unions all over the world. In a unanimously-adopted resolution (see supplement to Newsletter), the Executive Board conveyed to the British union its wishes for a just and speedy settlement of the seamen's claims and assured it that the ITF will respond as fully as possible to any further request for assistance which may be made.

The Executive Board also adopted a resolution calling upon the International Labour Organization to take the initiative in convening a special tripartite conference to consider dock workers' conditions on a world-wide scale with the aim of drawing up an international instrument which would lay down minimum standards for the port industry (text given in supplement).

The following new affiliates were admitted to ITF membership:

The Drivers' and Car Workers' Union, Jordan
The Colombian National Port Workers' Federation
The Danish Ship Masters' Union
Tram Mazdoor Panchayet, India (Calcutta tramwaymen)
Turkish Road Transport Workers' Federation
Turkish Seafarers' Federation

The Executive Board also confirmed the affiliation of three additional organizations, previously accepted by the Management Committee, namely:

The Pan-Hellenic Road Transport Workers' Federation
The Danish Mates' Union
Congolese Transport Workers' Federation

The Executive Board also paid a very well-earned tribute to Lawrence White, Assistant General Secretary and Special Officer for the ITF's campaign against flag-of-convenience shipping since 1952, who was retiring from ITF service as of 1 June. To the good wishes and thanks of the Executive Board, we would like to add those of the whole ITF Secretariat and Lawrie's many friends among the ITF's affiliates.

Finally, the Board decided that the 1968 Congress should be held in Wiesbaden, Germany, beginning at the end of July (the exact dates have still to be fixed).

The next meeting of the Executive Board will be held in London from 7 to 9 November.

Resolutions adopted by the Executive Board are quoted in a supplement to this Newsletter.

EUROPE

The Committee of ITF Unions in the EEC calls for integration of European transport systems

The Committee of ITF Unions in the European Economic Community, meeting last week in Utrecht, Netherlands, under the chairmanship of Philipp Seibert, President of the German Railwaymen's Union (GdED), has renewed its call for the progressive integration of the transport systems of the EEC nations, as an essential condition for the sound and balanced development of European economic integration.

The Committee has emphasized once more that only a new political agreement at the ministerial level (and not fruitless continuation of the technical meetings which are being held at other levels) will enable European transport policy -- notably with regard to the proposals concerning tariff policy and harmonization of competitive conditions -- to emerge from the present impasse.

The EEC bodies concerned have been informed of the position the ITF Committee has taken with regard to the recent proposals of the Commission on marginal tariffs. The transport workers' unions fear that the eventual application of the proposals (of October 1965) may bring about a deterioration in the competitive positions of transport undertakings and may have a detrimental effect on the standard of living and working conditions of transport workers.

The ITF organizations, however, are prepared to approve the political compromise put forward by the Commission, depending on fulfilment of the following conditions:

1. The tariffs to be established should be competitive, but should also take account of the need for a total coverage of costs borne by transport undertakings;
2. Transport tariffs and conditions should be published and kept under surveillance, so as to ensure that the state of the market is adequately reflected;
3. The Community bodies concerned should exercise effective control over transport capacity, so as to ensure an even balance between supply and demand;

4. The different transport carriers should be operated efficiently and remuneratively, so as to contribute effectively to the improvement of the living standards and working conditions of those employed in this sector.

The considerable delay to which the work of the Commission on social harmonization in road transport has been subjected recently has been the cause of concern to the Committee. As in the past, the transport workers' organizations are willing to assist the EEC bodies concerned in working out the appropriate regulations. The joint committees to be set up by the Commission for the three branches of transport will provide a suitable framework within which the trade unions may participate in this work.

RAILWAYMEN

NORWAY

Compulsory arbitration on state employees' claims

The Norwegian Parliament has passed legislation providing for compulsory arbitration in the dispute between the state employees (including railwaymen) and the Government over wage claims. The Council of State Employees' Organizations (Statstjenestemannskartellet), which groups ITF-affiliated railwaymen's unions as well as other organizations in the public sector, had earlier rejected a mediation offer, which provided for increases of 9 per cent in 1966 and a further 1 per cent in 1967. The State Employees' Council, representing the majority of workers in the public sector, considered the offer to be inadequate, though other state employees' organizations accepted it.

UNITED STATES

'Non-ops' submit wage claims

Five unions representing 400,000 non-operating railwaymen in the United States have served the companies with an extensive schedule of wage demands, to take effect from 1 January 1967. Negotiations are expected to begin sometime in July this year.

Amongst the highlights of the unions' pay improvements programme are: an 18 per cent pay increase from 1 January 1967 plus a 3½ per cent 'improvement factor' on 1 July 1967 and each 1 July thereafter; a cost-of-living adjustment of one cent per hour for each three tenths of a point change in the consumer price index to be made on 1 May and 1 November each year; long-evity pay -- to consist of one cent per hour extra per year of

service, rising to a maximum of 20 cents extra pay for 20 years' service; and double time (instead of time and a half) for over-time and work done on rest days and holidays.

The unions concerned are: the Railway Clerks, Maintenance of Way Employees, Transport-Communication Employees, Railroad Signalmen and Hotel-Restaurant Employees (for dining car workers).

Railway can change rules during strike

The US Supreme Court has ruled that a strikebound railway company can make rules changes, so as to be able to continue operations during a strike.

The decision upholds an earlier ruling of a District Court in a case involving a number of rail unions and the Florida East Coast Railway. The FEC's refusal to accept a settlement recommended by a presidential emergency board over three years ago, after all the procedures of the Railway Labour Act had been exhausted, precipitated the longest strike in US railway history starting on 23 January 1963. Once the strike had begun the FEC made a number of changes in the union contracts, so that strike breakers could be used. The unions charged that the company was acting illegally. A District Court approved some of the changes but refused others. The Supreme Court has now ruled that the company, with District Court permission, may deviate from its contracts to the extent necessary to continue operations.

ROAD AND PASSENGER TRANSPORT WORKERS

GREAT BRITAIN

Busmen's union rejects pay report

The ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union (T&GWU), which organizes the majority of Britain's bus workers, has stated that it will not be bound by a report of the National Prices and Incomes Board on busmen's pay.

The report recommends a pay increase of 6.6 per cent for 32,000 London Transport busmen, on condition that they agree to certain productivity measures, and of 3 to 3.5 per cent for provincial busmen. Any increase for busmen outside London over and above the 3 - 3.5 per cent norm must be justified by more efficient working, the report says.

The T&GWU has declared that it does not regard the conditions attached to the 6.6 per cent rise for London's busmen as binding, and will certainly demand more for the provincial sector. Negotiations for both groups open early this month.

UNITED STATES

Two new ATU busmen's agreements

The ITF-affiliated Amalgamated Transit Union has recently negotiated new collective agreements for bus workers in New Jersey and in St. Louis, Missouri.

The New Jersey contract covers members of 9 ATU Divisions in the State, employed by Public Service Coordinated Transport. To run from March this year to 28 February 1968, it provides for phased increases in hourly rates totalling 23 cents, so that as of 1 September 1967 the top rate for a bus driver will be \$3.24 per hour and that for a mechanic special \$3.49 per hour. Quarterly cost-of-living adjustments will be made as from the second year. Other improvements cover paid holidays, annual vacation and sick benefits.

The St. Louis agreement, to run from 1 March 1966 to 28 February 1969, covers employees of the Transit Services Corporation and provides for a total increase (in five stages) of 36 cents per hour, so that top rates on 1 September 1968 will be \$ 3.26 per hour for bus drivers and \$3.56 per hour for maintenance employees. Annual vacation, sick leave and pensions are improved and a provision has been included allowing early retirement for employees with long service.

Strike against Greyhound

Some 6,000 ATU members employed by Western Greyhound Bus Lines went on strike on 15 May over demands for substantial improvements in wages and working conditions and, in particular, for a more satisfactory pension plan. Drivers, maintenance employees and office and terminal staff in 11 states are involved in the dispute.

SEAFARERS

BELGIUM

New seafarers' agreement

The ITF-affiliated Belgian Transport Workers' Union (BTB) reports the conclusion of a new agreement covering officers and men of the Belgian merchant navy. It provides for a total

increase of 9 per cent, phased over two years, for the abolition of certain pay inequalities (deck officers now earn the same salaries as their engine room colleagues, and the 10 per cent difference between engine room officers aboard steam and motor vessels has been eliminated) and for improvements in seniority entitlements. Wages and salaries go up by 3 per cent on 16 June 1966, 16 July 1967 and 16 June 1968.

GREAT BRITAIN

British seamen's strike continues

A Court of Inquiry has been appointed to examine the issues involved in the British maritime conflict. Both sides have stated their willingness to cooperate with the Court's investigations, but will not be bound by its findings. The Court, which held its first meeting on 31 May, is expected to produce an interim report after about two weeks.

The seamen are holding fast to their original demands, though they have expressed willingness to consider an improved offer from the shipowners. Support for the strike, now in its third week, is widespread both in the British trade union movement and amongst the public as a whole. Latest information is that 729 ships are tied up and 20,758 NUS members are on strike. A resolution, reaffirming ITF support, adopted by the Executive Board at its meeting last week in Utrecht, appears in a supplement to this Newsletter.

NETHERLANDS

Pay increase for Dutch seafarers

The ITF-affiliated Dutch Union of Merchant Seafarers and Fishermen (CKV) has negotiated an overall increase in pay of 6.25 per cent for officers and men of the Dutch merchant navy. The new agreement, which is effective from 1 May 1966 and will run for one year, provides for a number of other improvements. Annual vacation, for example, is increased by two working days, and an additional vacation entitlement has been introduced for long service with the same company. The new agreement increases the minimum wage from Fl. 457.10 to Fl.485 (about £45 or \$126 to £48 or \$142).

CIVIL AVIATION WORKERS

BELGIUM

Sabena flying staff hold second strike

Flying staff of the Belgian airline, Sabena, went on strike for three days on 29 May. Sabena pilots and flight crews are demanding an 18 per cent increase in salaries, but following the company's flat refusal to meet their demands, began a campaign of 'unannounced strikes of unspecified duration.' This week's strike is the second action in the campaign, Sabena, however, chartered foreign aircraft and forced administrative personnel to do the jobs of flight crews. It has also suspended indefinitely the contracts of all pilots, stewards and hostesses who went on strike.

SCANDINAVIA

SAS pilots and navigators set strike date

Following a breakdown in negotiations on a renewal of their collective agreement with the Scandinavian Airlines System the pilots' and navigators' unions of Denmark, Norway and Sweden are calling their members out on strike on 6 June. Issues in dispute include the life of the agreement, which SAS wants to be three years. The unions want a one-year agreement. The Norwegians and, particularly, the Danes also have a grievance over the rate of exchange at which their salaries, calculated in Swedish kronor, are paid. In 1956 the rate was fixed at a level lower than the official bank rate. The Danish pilots are now demanding payment at the official rate.

Latest information is that a last attempt at mediation is to be made on 3 June.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Canadian dockers in Montreal, Quebec and Trois Rivières are still on strike. They turned down a federal mediation offer last week.

The German Union of Transport and Public Service Workers reports a six per cent wage increase for German inland navigation workers (Rhine, Weser and canals).

In Greece, striking railwaymen, who defied a mobilization order, have been arrested.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Railwaymen's Section Conference - Rome, 23 - 25 June 1966.

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RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AT ITS MEETING IN

UTRECHT, 25 - 27 MAY, 1966

1. THE SITUATION IN BRAZIL

WHEREAS the present military government of Brazil, through harsh and ill-advised economic and social measures is threatening the existence of free and democratic labour unions in the country;

WHEREAS basic civic and trade union freedoms have been arbitrarily curtailed in order to discourage legitimate trade union activity;

WHEREAS legal benefits enjoyed by Brazilian transport workers for more than twenty five years, including the right to vote and be voted to union office, have been either curtailed or eliminated by order of the government in an undemocratic manner;

GREATLY ALARMED by the continued anti-labour decrees of the Brazilian Government contradictory to established democratic practices, and also in violation of ILO Conventions and other international agreements signed and ratified by Brazil; and,

DEEPLY CONCERNED by the increased popular discontent spreading rapidly amidst the working class, thus enhancing dangerous communist influence at the very roots of labour ranks which threatens the vital economic and social development of Brazil;

The ITF Executive Board, at its meeting in Utrecht, Holland,
25 - 27 May, 1966

R E S O L V E S:

1. to declare the labour policies of the Brazilian Government hostile to the principles of free and democratic trade unionism;
2. to declare complete solidarity with its affiliated transport unions in Brazil, expressing preparedness to support them in full if requested;
3. to recommend to all ITF affiliates to join the Secretariat

in making known to the Brazilian Government the deep concern of transport workers throughout the world for the unjust sacrifices imposed upon Brazilian workers, in the name of economic policies allegedly designed to benefit the country as a whole, and the restrictive legislation which denies the trade unions of Brazil the right to represent their members in a constructive and effective manner; and

4. to officially notify the ILO of this resolution advising, likewise, all other international labour organizations and agencies active in Brazil.

2. THE BRITISH SEAMEN'S STRIKE *****

This meeting of the ITF Executive Board, held in Utrecht from 25 to 27 May 1966,

HAVING NOTED the steps already taken by the ITF to secure international support for the British National Union of Seamen (NUS) in its present strike,

CONVEYS to the NUS the Board's wishes for a just and speedy settlement of its claims, and

ASSURES the NUS that the ITF will respond as fully as possible to any further request for its assistance that the NUS might make.

3. DOCKERS' QUESTIONS *****

This meeting of the ITF Executive Board taking place in Utrecht from 25 to 27 May 1966,

HAVING NOTED the request of the ITF Dockers' Section Conference, which met in Hamburg on 31 March 1966, that the ITF Executive Board should recommend the ILO to take the initiative in convening a special conference to consider dock workers' conditions on a world-wide scale, with the object of drawing up an international convention laying down minimum standards,

INVITES the ILO to convene such a tripartite conference and to include amongst the items on the Agenda the following:

- A) Regularity of employment and wages
- B) Accident prevention facilities of the best possible type
- C) Sickness and Retirement pay
- D) Annual vacations, and
- E) Welfare arrangements (with particular reference to medical and hygiene facilities);

and FURTHER INVITES the ILO to seek ways and means of considering the problems of productivity of dock labour and training of dockworkers.

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