

ITF NEWSLETTER

INFORMATIONS

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No. 19

29 September 1966

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ABOUT THE ITF

ASIA

Asian Advisory Committee meets in Seoul

This week the ITF Asian Advisory Committee has been meeting in Seoul, Korea, to discuss a wide range of questions of concern to Asian transport workers' organizations. Delegates will discuss an extensive report on the activities of the ITF and its affiliated unions in Asia, and will study the Secretariat's draft programme for Regional Activities which is to be submitted to the Executive Board at its next meeting in November. General Secretary Hans Imhof and Secretary for Regional Activities Harold Lewis are also attending the Committee's meeting. When the Committee has concluded its business, Imhof and Lewis will be visiting various Asian countries to contact ITF affiliates and discuss present problems with their leaders. From Seoul the General Secretary will travel to Tokyo (Japan), whence he will return to London, stopping off at Hong Kong, Manila (Philippines), Djakarta (Indonesia) and Delhi (India). The Secretary for Regional Activities will visit Japan, Singapore, Malaysia and Pakistan, before returning to London.

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LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

ITF training courses in three countries

The ITF has recently stepped up its educational activities in Latin America and the Caribbean. A number of trade union seminars and training courses tailored to the requirements of the ITF-affiliates concerned have been and are being conducted, or are to take place in the near future.

In Bolivia a programme of three seminars has been prepared by ITF Regional Assistant Medardo Gomero, in coordination with the American Institute for Free Labour Development (AIFLD). The first of the seminars took place from 29 August to 10 September in La Paz and was attended by participants coming from unions organizing railwaymen, civil aviation workers and road transport workers in the northern part of the country.

Another, for the benefit of unions in the central area, is scheduled for 26 September - 8 October, and the third will take place, again in La Paz, from 7 to 19 November.

In Curacao a training course was arranged for the ITF-affiliated Transport Workers' Federation. It took place, again under the direction of Medardo Gomero, from 12 to 16 September.

In Peru the ITF and the Peruvian Trade Union Confederation (CTP) together have planned a series of courses to take place during the coming months. This important programme, which has the backing of the Peruvian Centre for Labour Studies (CELP), is designed to strengthen the transport workers' organizations in Peru and to give them a better technical basis on which to fight their claims.

RAILWAYMEN

GERMANY

Pay structure reorganization and maintenance of earnings levels demanded

Negotiations began on 14 September between the ITF-affiliated German Railwaymen's Union (GdED) and the Federal Railway Board on a reorganization of the wage group structure on the Federal Railways and on the question of maintenance of wage levels for redeployed workers. The Union is demanding a reduction of the differentials between wage grades and the introduction for all

wage earning grades of provisions for maintenance of wages in the event of redeployment as a result of rationalization to lower-paid jobs.

Demand for salary reform

The GdED has demanded an early decision from the authorities concerned on the question of salary reform for officers of the German Federal Railways. The Union criticizes the Government's delaying tactics in the matter and says that the harmonization of conditions for advancement in railway careers with those existing in local and state government and a just integration of the railway officers into the civil service salary structure could not be the subject of any further delay.

GREAT BRITAIN

NUR backs pay standstill

A special Delegate Conference of the ITF-affiliated British National Union of Railwaymen has rejected militant action to force payment of a 3½ per cent wage increase scheduled to take effect on 5 September but frozen by the Government's pay and prices standstill. The Conference has thus endorsed the decision of the Union's Executive to support the standstill. The Prime Minister has now told the NUR and the other unions involved -- the ITF-affiliated Transport Salaried Staffs Association and the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen -- that the railwaymen's increase will be paid on 5 March 1967.

ROAD AND PASSENGER TRANSPORT WORKERS

BELGIUM

Tramwaymen to unite

Various organizations in Belgium representing tramwaymen are to merge to form one organization representing bus and tramway workers. Delegations of the unions involved in the proposed merger met recently in Brussels under the chairmanship of Louis Major, General Secretary of the Belgian Trade Union Federation (FGTB), and set 30 October as the date for the Constitutional Congress of the new united organization. The united union would later hold another Congress to decide on affiliation to the Belgian Public Service Workers' Federation (CGSP).

PORT WORKERS

JAMAICA

New agreement for Kingston dockers

A new agreement for dockers in the port of Kingston, Jamaica, provides for a guaranteed minimum wage ranging from £15 to £22 for a 37½-hour week. The new minimum rates represent a 15 per cent increase over old rates. Under the agreement, which is retroactive to 1 January 1966 and runs until 31 December 1967, regular dockers get a minimum of 4 weeks' paid leave per year, and are entitled to 3 weeks' sick leave per year on full pay and 4 weeks on half pay. The agreement also provides for a pension scheme which will entitle workers retiring at age 65 to pension rights representing 30 per cent of their earnings during the previous five years of employment, increasing to 40 per cent after 5 years on pension.

INLAND NAVIGATION WORKERS

NETHERLANDS

Pay increases for Dutch Rhine boatmen

New pay rates for crews of Dutch towing craft and motor cargo vessels in international tramp trade on the Rhine come into force on 2 October 1966. The new basic weekly rates (e.g.) on towing boats range from 54.50 Guilders (for a boy/apprentice engineer) to 172.90 Guilders (for a skipper with full seniority aboard a vessel in the highest powered category). As an example: a boatman-motorman over 21 with a minimum of 3 years' experience gets 104.30 Guilders per week. In addition he gets a fixed irregular hours supplement of 15 Guilders; compensation for work on a day off is 20 Guilders; overtime is 2.40 Guilders on a weekday and 4 Guilders on a Sunday.

(There are approximately 10 Guilders to £1 and 3.5 to \$1).

SEAFARERS

CANADA

Major gains in new dredging contract

After lengthy and protracted negotiations the ITF-affiliated Seafarers' International Union of North America recently signed a new three-year contract for members aboard dredging vessels, which provides for some impressive improvements. The salient features are a 24 per cent wage increase and a pension plan -- the first to be negotiated in the dredging industry. The new agreement is effective from 1 June 1966, but the SIU also won a 5 per cent retroactive increase for the period 1 September 1965 - 1 June 1966 (Talks on a new contract began in July 1965).

GREECE

Seamen call off strike

Greek sailors and stewards, whose unions belong to the ITF-affiliated Panhellenic Seafarers' Federation, called off their strike last weekend (17-18 Sept.) following the mobilization by the Government of Royal Navy personnel to keep ships in operation. The unions have decided to postpone further action and to await the results of fresh talks with the owners.

NORWAY

Seamen demand 40-hour week

The National Assembly of the ITF-affiliated Norwegian Seamen's Union has called for the introduction of the 40-hour week in the Norwegian merchant navy. (At present the seamen work a 45-hour week -- in practice 56 hours with compensation in the form of cash or extra leave for 11 hours in the deep sea trades and for 8 hours in the coastal trades). The Union wants a 40-hour week and an 8-hour day on all ships-- this being its main demand in the Committee which is preparing a revision of the Law on working hours at sea -- and will fight, if necessary, to obtain it.

Election of new officials

Gunvald Hauge and Thor Sønsteby have retired after 42 and 36 years respectively in the service of the Norwegian Seamen's Union. Olaf Karling takes over from Hauge as President and Erling Tollerud from Sønsteby as Chief Treasurer. In an address to the National Assembly of the Union Hans Imhof, ITF General Secretary, paid special tribute to these two veterans of the Norwegian seamen's trade union movement. On behalf of the ITF he presented them each with a small gift.

CIVIL AVIATION WORKERS

GREAT BRITAIN

Airport workers ban new shifts after frozen pay rises

3,000 London Airport maintenance workers, including members of the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union, have withdrawn their cooperation from changes in working conditions and shift patterns which are part of a productivity agreement negotiated in 1964 with British European Airways and the British Overseas Airways Corporation. The agreement provided for a series of wage increases in return for the men's cooperation in making working methods more flexible. They have now refused to carry out the programme because of a decision by BEA and BOAC not to pay the increases, in conformity with the Government's standstill on pay and prices.

UNITED STATES

Strike postponed at last minute

12,000 members of the ITF-affiliated Transport Workers' Union of America employed by American Airlines were due to come out on strike on 28 September. The strike was postponed at the last minute, however, owing to last-minute progress in negotiations.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Australia : The basic wage on Australian railways has been increased by \$2 (16s. or US \$1.80) by a Federal Arbitration award.

Danish railwaymen on 1 October 1966 get an automatic 3 per cent wage increase, owing to the recent rise in the cost of living.

Germany: A claim for a 50 per cent pay increase for German seafarers has been rejected outright by the employers.

Italy: 150,000 municipal and local transport workers have staged a two-day strike in support of pay claims. Workers on the buses, underground railways and lake steamers are involved.

Switzerland: The Council of States has adopted a decision to reduce the working week of federal employees (including railwaymen) from 46 to 45 hours in 1967 and to 44 hours in 1969. This is in conflict with the decision of the other legislative assembly, the National Council, which adopted a reduction to 44 hours in 1968. Unions representing the federal personnel had demanded the 44-hour week in 1967.

Uruguay: 300,000 workers -- more than half the labour force -- staged a general strike on 15 September for higher pay. Most transport services were halted.

PERSONALIA

Inche Yahaya bin Mohamed Ali has been reelected as President of the ITF-affiliated Railwaymen's Union of Malaya (RUM). Also reelected were S. Apputhurai as Vice President and S. Packirisamy as General Secretary.

FORTHCOMING MEETING

Executive Board

- London, 14-16 November 1966

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