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TRANSPORT

INTERNATIONAL

Developing countries press for own merchant fleets

A draft resolution, aimed at enabling developing countries to run their own competitive shipping lines, has been drawn up by 89 of the developing countries attending the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in New Delhi, and submitted to the UNCTAD shipping committee. The resolution, which envisages aid from the world's major maritime nations, proposes that new and suitable second-hand ships be sold to developing countries on deferred terms at a low rate of interest, and that international agencies and governments of the industrialised countries provide financial support to encourage shipbuilding industries in the non-industrialised countries. The resolution stresses that the establishment of their own merchant fleets could make a substantial contribution to the economies of the developing nations, and proposes that the United Nations arrange courses in shipping management and economics.

IMCO Safety Committee recommend routing for oil tankers

The safety committee of the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organisation (IMCO) at a meeting in London in March recommended that large oil tankers should be required to follow specific routes in certain waters, such as around Britain, in the Strait of Gibraltar, the Sound, and other busy shipping areas, and that they should avoid other areas altogether, e.g. the Bay of Biscay and the area north of Japan. The committee further recommended that all ships over 1,600 tons should carry full navigational equipment. These and other proposals, have been made to improve safety at sea and to avoid disasters on the scale of the Torrey Canyon. It is now for the governments of the 70 member countries of the International Safety of Life at Sea Convention of IMCO to approve these recommendations which could then come into force in about two years' time. A plan to separate shipping in the very busy and narrow Sound between Denmark and Sweden might, however, come into operation next year.

TRADE UNIONS

GREAT BRITAIN

British pilots rejoin national negotiating body

At a meeting on 6 March, the Central Board of the British Airline Pilots' Association (BALPA) decided in favour of rejoining the industry's national negotiating body, the National Joint Council (NJC). BALPA had walked out of the NJC before staging a 48-hour pilots' strike against BOAC last December. A Court of Inquiry, set up by the Minister of Labour, urged the Association to rejoin the Council. In February, 180 BALPA members went on strike for 3 days against British United Airways in protest against BUA's refusal to accept the principle of collective bargaining with BALPA. The backing given to the pilots by the 13 other airline unions on the NJC caused BUA to recognise BALPA and thus put an end to the dispute.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

INTERNATIONAL

ICFTU calls for centralized employment offices for dockers in Asian ports

The ICFTU has urged the Transport and Communications Committee of the UN Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) to ensure that centralized hiring offices for dock workers in Asian ports be established. This would help to eliminate the undesirable exploitation of dockers by middlemen and contractors, safeguard the dock workers' interests and ensure better terms for their safety and welfare. The proposal was made by Donald U'ren, representative of the ITF in Asia, when he addressed a recent session of the Committee in Bangkok, Thailand, on behalf of the ICFTU.

BELGIUM

Shorter working week for Belgian local transport workers

The ITF-affiliated Tram, Bus and Local Railways Section of the Belgian Public Service Workers' Union has negotiated new wage scales and working conditions for 1968. The normal working week is to be reduced from 45 hours to 44 hours from 15 May, without loss of pay. This is equivalent to an increase of 2.27% in hourly rates. Service increments are also

being modified: increments are to be added to salaries at two-yearly instead of five-yearly intervals, starting after twelve years of service. There will be improved holiday bonuses for all employees. The union have also succeeded in getting the 10% bonus for one-man operation extended to all tram and local railway undertakings.

CANADA

Wage boosts for Clerical Groups on Canadian Railways

Nation-wide standardization of classifications of clerical positions and rates for members of the ITF-affiliated Canadian Brotherhood of Railway, Transport and General Workers (CBRTGW) came into effect at the beginning of this year under a new agreement with Canadian National Railways. The new system, based on five years of study with comparisons of methods in the US and Europe, means better rates for 70%, unchanged rates for 10%, and downgrading for 20%. In case of downgrading, incumbency rates apply until the position is vacated.

DENMARK

Danish Seamen's Union wins manning case

The ITF-affiliated Danish Seamen's Union has won a case brought before the Danish manning commission concerning a 3,700 gross ton motor tanker. The commission, after inspecting the ship, ruled that the crew should include 2 men over and above the complement laid down by current national manning regulations. The Union argued that since the ship would be operating in very busy and narrow waters, it was necessary to have one additional man on duty in the wheel-house and one on look-out.

FINLAND

9% increase ends Finnish dock strike

The strike by over 3,500 Finnish dockers (see Newsletter No.2, 1968, page 10) ended on 10 March, when, after protracted talks, a compromise was reached providing a 9% wage increase for the dockers and an immediate return to work.

FRANCE

French airline unions call for more air control recruits

French airline unions have issued a statement stressing the urgent need to recruit more air control staff to cope with increasing traffic. The unions point out that the situation is already critical, and will deteriorate still further unless immediate steps are taken. The past ten years have seen a tremendous growth of air traffic, but an increase of only 0.1% in the numbers of qualified air control staff. Automation alone is

not enough, and existing staff already have too much work. It is estimated that a further 1,500 men will be required by 1971, and since training takes 5 years, 400 - 450 should be recruited each year. Only 120 men were recruited in 1967.

French railwaymen call for shorter working week

French railwaymen's unions, including the ITF-affiliated FO Railwaymen's Federation and the Railway Salaried Staffs' Federation FAC, have protested at the inadequacy of wage increases planned for railwaymen in 1968, and have called for shorter working week. They have demanded an immediate hearing with the Minister of Transport.

GREAT BRITAIN *****

British railway unions reject pay offer

The pay and productivity offer made by the British Railways Board (BRB) last month (see Newsletter No.2, 1968, page 12) has been rejected by both the ITF-affiliated National Union of Railwaymen (NUR) and the ITF-affiliated Transport Salaried Staff Association (TSSA). The NUR does not accept the basic minimum rate of £12 10s per week, and has suggested a guaranteed earnings minimum of £16; it has declared its intention to go to arbitration. The TSSA in rejecting the plan pointed out that the BRB has disregarded even those recommendations upon which there had been apparent agreement at working party level, and had introduced features which had never even been discussed.

British Seamen's Union makes new pay demand

The ITF-affiliated British National Union of Seamen (NUS) has submitted to the National Maritime Board a claim for an increase of 5% in consolidated basic pay and for increased overtime rates.

Shorter working week for British road haulage workers

The negotiating body of British Road Services has agreed to reduce the working week from 41 hours to 40 hours without loss of pay, as of 4 March. The ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union, representing the workers' side, is also claiming an increase in basic wage rates. A complete schedule of new wage rates will be considered at a meeting at the end of March.

ICELAND *****

Settlement of 2-week general strike in Iceland

Agreement between employers and the Icelandic Federation of Labour has ended a general strike affecting 25,000 workers.

which began on 3rd March. Internal transport, gas, electricity and fuel supplies, hospitals, schools and agriculture, as well as the fishing industry, were almost totally paralysed. The Icelandic Federation of Labour had demanded a 5% general wage increase to offset the drastic rise in prices in Iceland since last year's devaluation.

JAPAN

Japanese railway workers fight jobs transfer

Two ITF-affiliated Japanese railway workers' unions, the Japanese National Railway Workers' Union (Kokuro) and the National Motive Power Union (Doro), have announced that they will resort to a half-day strike and work-to-rule tactics in opposition to management's modernization plan. The two unions, with a combined membership of 343,000, oppose a management plan involving the transfer of 50,000 union members to new jobs to be created under the Japanese Railways expansion programmes for commuter transport. The transfer affects existing maintenance workers and assistant drivers. Management argues that one operator is enough on trains equipped with an automatic train stop system, while the unions say that two are necessary for safety reasons. Management also proposes that maintenance work should be contracted out to private companies.

UNITED STATES

ILA seeks change in container rules

Dockers in New York and other ports in the United States no longer want to be compensated for the loss of jobs resulting from containerization, but rather to retain their jobs as part of a new programme that would extend dockers' control over ocean-going containers. This view was expressed by the Vice-President of the ITF-affiliated International Longshoremen's Association (ILA), when speaking to a gathering of 1,000 shipping officials in New York. He said that the present fund used in New York and other ports for compensating ILA members displaced by containerized cargo must be scrapped and replaced under the new programme, and warned that the ILA might insist on the right to refuse to handle ocean-going containers packed, away from the dock, by workers who are not members of the dockers' union.

Sex "not a bona fide occupation qualification" in US airlines

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has ruled that sex is "not a bona fide occupation qualification" for the job of airline flight attendant, and that any US airline refusing to hire and employ members of a particular sex for the job will be violating the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The decision

was hailed by airline unions in the United States as a victory in their fight to bar airlines from discriminating in this way. The ITF-affiliated Transport Workers' Union (TWU), which organizes stewards and stewardesses, is strongly opposed to attempts to discriminate against males (see Newsletter No. 9, 1967, page 85). The unions are also seeking to knock out the age limits for stewardesses (usually 32 or 35) imposed by airlines, and automatic dismissal when they marry (see Newsletter No. 6, 1967 page 60).

Airline workers increase productivity faster than any other US workers

Airline employees are increasing their work output faster than workers in any other industry according to a report published by the US Labor Department's Bureau of Labor statistics. Output per employee in the air transport industry has increased by almost 8% a year since 1947. The annual average rate for all other industries is 2.8%. This increase in productivity in the airline industry has not, however, brought a reduction in the work force. Increasing numbers of employees are still needed to meet booming demand.

Improved pay and benefits end Qantas strike

A new contract between the ITF-affiliated International Association of Machinists and Qantas Airlines has ended the 67-day strike which began after management tried to break the 25% differential - the higher rate established by the IAM on foreign airlines more than 20 years ago. The new contract gives total rises of 20% in four increments ending on 1st January 1970. Other benefits include improved insurance provisions, holidays, overtime rules etc. The IAM is pressing suits against Qantas and US immigration authorities for permitting Australian supervisors on temporary immigration visas to perform the work of strikers.

PERSONALIA

Einar Haugen

Einar Haugen, Vice-President of the Norwegian Seamen's Union, died on 13th March after a long illness at the age of 62. He went to sea at the age of 17, and later worked on whalers. In 1946 he became a full-time trade union official and was elected Vice-President of his union in 1958. At the ITF Congress in Berne in 1960, he became Chairman of the ITF Fishermen's Section. During the war he was in charge of the Norwegian Seamen's Union office in Halifax Canada. A far-seeing trade unionist and tough negotiator, Einar Haugen was

especially concerned about the safety and the working conditions of all men at sea. The ITF joins with all his colleagues and friends in mourning his death.

G. Lagorio

G. Lagorio has resigned as General Secretary of the ITF-affiliated Italian Seamen's Union (FILM-CISL) for personal and family reasons. Ferdinando Giorgi, former Assistant General Secretary, has been elected to replace him by the National Council of the Union.

SUPPLEMENT TO NEWSLETTER NO.3

DOCKERS' SECTION CONFERENCE

LONDON, 19 - 20 MARCH 1968

The ITF Dockers' Section Conference was held in London from 19-20 March, and was attended by delegates from Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Guiana, Holland, Italy, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States. T. O'Leary of the British Transport and General Workers' Union was chairman at the Conference.

Containerization

Much of the discussion was focused on containerization and its implications for dockers. Since the introduction of containers and other forms of unit loads, and improvements in handling techniques, mean drastic reductions in the number of employees required on the docks, the meeting was particularly concerned with measures to ensure that dockers are not hard hit. There was an agreement on the need for adequate provisions for early retirement, facilities for retraining redundant dockers, shorter working hours and higher pay etc. The discussion will continue in detail at the forth-coming ITF Inter-Section Conference.

Safety and health of dock work

The meeting agreed on the need for proper packing and precautions for dangerous and unhealthy cargoes. Particular attention was given to the risk of contracting anthrax from handling crushed bones and hides, following recent cases of anthrax among dockers.

Maximum permissible weight to be carried by one worker

The following resolution was adopted by the Conference:

THIS CONFERENCE of the ITF Dockers' Section, meeting in London on 19 and 20 March 1968.

NOTES with great satisfaction the adoption by the 1967 International Labour Conference of a Convention and Recommendation concerning the maximum permissible weight to be carried by one worker,

NOTES FURTHER that according to information available loads much in excess of the limits envisaged by the two ILO instruments are still permitted to be carried by one worker in a number of countries,

URGES governments to take speedy steps towards ratification of the Convention and towards the implementation of the standards laid down in this instrument as well as in the supplementary Recommendation,

CALLS upon dockers' unions in the different countries to apply appropriate pressure upon their governments and employers and keep the ITF and through it the ILO regularly informed of the progress made in this matter.

AND FURTHER REQUESTS dockers' unions by appropriate and systematic publicity campaigns, through their publications and otherwise, to draw the attention of other sections of transport to the hazards of carrying excessively heavy loads and to the importance of enforcing the standards set by the ILO Convention and Recommendation of the subject.

FAIR PRACTICES COMMITTEE

LONDON, 21-22 MARCH 1968

A Meeting of the ITF Fair Practices Committee was held in London from 21-22 March, and was attended by seafarers and dockers' representatives from Belgium, Canada, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United States. D. S. Tennant of the British Merchant Navy and Airline Officers' Association was in the chair.

Discussion covered a number of subjects including consideration of future action. The need for more effective action against Panlibhon ships was emphasized by a number of delegates, and suggestions as to how this could be accomplished were made. The meeting also expressed concern at the growing tendency of shipowners who are not traditional carriers of Asian seafarers, to replace their national seamen with Hong Kong Chinese. A resolution on the employment of these crews of convenience was adopted.

A report on the meeting will be sent to affiliates in the near future.