



In case of reproduction, please mention source (ITF) · En cas de reproduction, veuillez mentionner la source (ITF) · Nachdruck bei Quellenangabe gestattet (ITF) · Var god ange källan vid eftertryck (ITF)

No. 2

February 1969

IN THIS ISSUE

Page

News and Views from the ITF

<i>Leaders of International Trade Secretariats meet</i>	8
<i>Release of Eustaquio Tolosa</i>	8
<i>ICFTU condemns state of emergency in Spain</i>	8
<i>Council of Europe call for Greece to withdraw</i>	9
<i>Boycott of California grapes</i>	9
<i>Swedish union arranges custodian agreement for Asian crew</i>	9

Transport

<i>IMCO Sub-Committee on Containers and Cargoes</i>	10
<i>ICAO discusses measures to prevent hijacking</i>	10
<i>French government exempts ex-military pilots from civilian tests</i>	11
<i>Major British ports to be nationalized</i>	11
<i>Sweden proposes higher taxes on heavy road vehicles</i>	11
<i>Altitude alerting device compulsory for US civil jets</i>	12

Trade Unions

<i>New Law on exercise of trade union rights in France</i>	12
<i>Two Guyana unions to merge</i>	13

Social and Industrial News

<i>Belgian tram-men accept offer of 2% rise</i>	13
<i>Cyprus Airways employees strike</i>	13
<i>Danish seafarers issue strike warning</i>	13
<i>Faroese fishermen strike for higher pay</i>	14
<i>Change in assessment of working hours for local railway workers in Germany</i>	14
<i>Investigation of facilities for drivers in Britain</i>	14
<i>3% rise for BOAC cabin crew</i>	14
<i>Icelandic seamen demand shipowners pay for crews' food</i>	15
<i>General strike for higher pensions in Italy</i>	15
<i>40-hour week and higher pay for KLM ground staff</i>	15
<i>Concern at number of foreign seamen in Dutch fleet</i>	15
<i>Hunger strike by Karachi tramway workers</i>	16
<i>Philippine transport and general workers strike</i>	16
<i>Swedish committee proposes 40-hour working week</i>	16

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

Leaders of International Trade Secretariats meet in Geneva

The ITF was represented by its General Secretary, Charles Blyth, and Assistant General Secretary, Harold Lewis, at the Annual General Conference of International Trade Secretariats which took place on 14 and 15 January in Geneva. The meeting heard a detailed exchange of views and experiences on the economic and social situation in a number of countries of Latin America, Africa and Asia, as well as on the present labour situation in Greece. The meeting also discussed methods of improving relations between the trade union movement and the ILO and of ensuring closer cooperation in this field between the ICFTU and the ITs.

Release of Eustaquio Tolosa - but trade union activities restricted

Eustaquio Tolosa, leader of the Argentinian Dockers' Union (SUPA), has been released from prison on parole and on condition that he does not take part in trade union or political activities. His release followed the issuing on 26 December 1968 of a Presidential Decree reducing to three years his original sentence of five years' imprisonment.

Tolosa was arrested on 18 December 1966, was released and then arrested again on 5 January 1967. He was held without trial until 24 March 1968 when he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment. The indictment charged him with having advocated the calling of a boycott by the ITF against Argentine ships and aircraft in protest against the Government's arbitrary imposition of new working conditions in Argentine ports, an offence alleged to have been committed at a meeting of the ITF Executive Board, of which Tolosa was a member, in November 1966.

The arrest and subsequent sentence brought strong protests from the ITF and its affiliated unions which were backed by the ICFTU and pursued through the ILO, to which the ITF submitted a formal complaint. The XXIXth Congress of the ITF (July 1968) made Tolosa an honorary member of the Executive Board as a token of the ITF's determination to seek justice for him.

In a cable to the President of the Republic of the Argentine, the General Secretary of the ITF has expressed his satisfaction that Tolosa should have been released and has asked that the restrictions of his parole should be lifted.

ICFTU condemns state of emergency in Spain

The Spanish Government has declared a three-month state of emergency. Hundreds of workers have been arrested, including many who belong to free and democratic Spanish

trade unions. One of them is a leader of the ICFTU-affiliated General Workers' Union (UGT), Ramon Rubial, who has a long history of suffering and persecution under the Franco regime.

The ICFTU and the World Confederation of Labour have issued the following joint statement condemning repression in Spain: "Once more the Franco regime shows its true face to world opinion ... Already, the repression is raging against workers, students and intellectuals, against the democratic opposition, against all those who want to turn Spain into a free and democratic country ... We call upon all our affiliated organizations to express their support for the workers and democrats of Spain and to let their governments and the Spanish authorities know the unanimous condemnation of Franco's totalitarian regime by the free trade union movement. The mask has dropped. The so-called policy of liberalization has merely been an attempt to open the doors of the European Community and other international bodies to a badly camouflaged dictatorship. The ICFTU and the WCL will continue to oppose these enemies of freedom with all their might and to assure the workers and people of Spain of their complete solidarity."

Council of Europe calls for Greece to withdraw

At the end of January the Assembly of the Council of Europe took what has been described as the most important political decision of its life. It voted by 92 to 11, with 20 abstentions, for a resolution calling on Greece to withdraw from the Council of Europe. If the Colonels do not accept the invitation to withdraw, says the resolution, the Committee of Ministers, which is to meet at the end of April, should consider Greece's suspension. The Greek government have stated that they do not intend to withdraw.

Boycott of California grapes

The ITF is asking affiliates to give their full support to a consumer boycott of California table grapes in support of farm workers employed by Californian grape growers. The farm workers have been on strike for over three years in a struggle for trade union recognition and decent working conditions, but harassment of strikers and the employment of strikebreakers have reduced the effectiveness of the strike itself and have made consumer boycotts the most powerful weapon for these workers. In addition, other US unions and individual workers attempting to aid the grape pickers have been threatened with legal and other sanctions under Federal Labour legislation which prohibits secondary boycott action. A consumer boycott has already gained widespread support in the United States, and Canada and is supported by the AFL-CIO and the Canadian Labour Congress. The farm workers are now appealing for international solidarity.

In Sweden, the ITF-affiliated Transport Workers' Union is refusing to unload shipments of California grapes at the docks, and in Norway, following a meeting between the Transport Workers' Union and the Employers' Federation, it has been decided to boycott all cargoes of California grapes loaded after 31 January. The employers have agreed to warn California grape exporters not to send any more grapes to the country after this date.

Swedish union arranges custodian agreement for Asian crew

The ITF-affiliated Swedish Seamen's Union has arranged the signing of the ITF Custodian Collective Agreement for the crew of the Panama-registered "Marietta". The crew of 38, including the master, are of Chinese nationality. This is yet another example of successful Swedish action on behalf of Asian seamen.

TRANSPORT

INTERNATIONAL

IMCO Sub-Committee on Containers and Cargoes

The 8th Session of the IMCO Sub-Committee on Containers and Cargoes met in London from 28-31 January. The meeting devoted most of its time to considering the revision of Chapter VI-The Carriage of Grain-of the 1960 Solas Convention and improvements in the existing stability requirements for ships carrying grain. Under its future work programme, the Sub-Committee is to consider the identification of all safety aspects of containers in the maritime environment, and to compile and collate, with the assistance of the IMCO Secretariat, the results of existing studies and information on this subject. The next meeting of the Sub-Committee is in September, 1969.

ICAO discusses measures to prevent hi-jacking of aircraft

A special ICAO committee is meeting in Montreal in February to discuss measures to counteract the hi-jacking of aircraft.

Meanwhile, in Mexico, Congress has approved an additional paragraph to the Penal Code with the aim of protecting passengers, crews and airlines from the perils of hi-jacking. The new paragraph provides that "any person who causes an aircraft to change its destination or depart from its route by threats, violence, intimidation or other illegal means shall be liable to a term of imprisonment of 5 - 20 years ..."

Cuba is also reported to have introduced long terms of imprisonment for anyone who hi-jacks commercial aircraft and forces them to fly to Havana, except where they can prove that they are genuine political refugees. Where hi-jackers are found

to be criminals or people trying to escape from debts or marital difficulties they are prosecuted for illegal entry for which the minimum sentence is 5 years' hard labour. An ICAO representative, commenting on the report, considered that this was not enough to end these acts of air piracy. Both ICAO and IATA state that nothing would be so effective a deterrent as a clear statement that the offenders would be sent back to the country from which they had come.

FRANCE

French government exempts ex-military pilots from civilian tests

The ITF-affiliated French Airline Pilots' Union (SNPL) is protesting at the French Government's decision to exempt former military pilots from certain qualifying examinations for the professional pilot's licence valid in civil aviation. The SNPL points out that it has nothing against former military pilots going into civil aviation, provided that they take the decision at an age when they can go through the normal process of adaptation to a civilian career, and provided that they pass the same theoretical and practical examinations as other candidates for a civil air pilot's licence. The SNPL demands that the Government reverse its decision, and has threatened strike action if it fails to do so.

GREAT BRITAIN

Major British ports to be nationalized

The British Government issued a plan at the end of January for the nationalization of all ports where more than 5 million tons of goods are handled per year, and of all ports now owned by the British Transport Docks Board. Most of the ports to be taken over are already publicly owned. A national ports authority is to be set up early in 1971 to control the ports, which together handle nine-tenths of British seaborne trade and employ over 95% of registered dock workers.

SWEDEN

Sweden proposes higher taxes on heavy road vehicles

The Swedish Finance Minister has proposed that taxes on long-distance trailers of over 40 tons be raised from 1,800 kr* to almost 10,000 kr from 1 January 1970. Introducing a bill to this effect, he argued that tax concessions for heavy vehicles had led to distortion of the terms of competition with other means of transport. The proposed scale of taxes for heavy vehicles ranges from 1,800 kr for 11-ton vehicles to 9,720 kr for 40-tonners. At present taxes are 1,320 Kr. for vehicles of 11 tons, and 1,800 for anything over 14 tons.

* 12,4 kr = £1

UNITED STATES

Altitude alerting device compulsory for U.S. civil jets

The FAA has ruled that all US civil jets operating after 28 February, 1971, must carry an approved altitude alerting device. The equipment must be capable of alerting the pilot by both aural and visual signals to a preselected altitude in sufficient time for him to establish level flight at that altitude. The device must function at all altitudes approved for the aircraft in which it is installed.

TRADE UNIONS

FRANCE

New law on exercise of trade union rights in France

An act recently approved by the French parliament guarantees to French workers the right to carry on trade union activities. Under the new law, which applies in all firms with over 50 employees, all unions affiliated to a national centre are considered to be represented in a firm, the unions are guaranteed the right to hold a meeting of members once a month and to collect union dues at the place of work (but not in working hours and not on the shop-floor), as well as the right to distribute leaflets at the place of work at times when staff are coming on and off duty, trade unions are to be provided with special premises in firms with over 200 employees, and shop-stewards are to be allowed 10 hours per month for trade union duties in firms with 150-300 employees, and 15 hours in firms with over 300 employees.

The French Trade Union Centre (Force Ouvrière) comments: The free exercise of trade union rights, which has been repeatedly demanded by the unions and as often rejected by employers' organizations, has now been embodied in the law of the land. It took the workers' action of May-June 1968 to wring this concession from government and employers. The new law does not fully meet our demands ... It will create better conditions for trade unionists to carry out their activities, but they will have to take up in collective agreements those sections of the law which are inadequate or restrictive.

GUYANA

Two Guyana unions to merge

The ITF-affiliated General Workers' Union of Guyana decided at its last Annual Conference to merge with the Clerical and Commercial Workers' Union of Guyana. Plans to this effect are now being finalized.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

BELGIUM

Belgian tram-men accept offer of 2% rise and 43-hour week

The ITF-affiliated Tramway Sector of the Belgian General Public Services Centre has accepted a proposal made in the joint board of management and employees' representatives for a 2% wage increase from 1 January 1969, a 700 franc end-of-year bonus, and a reduction of the work week to 43 hours from 1 April.

CYPRUS

Cyprus Airways employees strike for collective agreement

The ITF-affiliated Cyprus Airways Employees' Trade Union staged a 24-hour warning strike on 21 January and has warned that it will strike again in support of its claims for a collective agreement (the union has previously only had separate agreements on various subjects) and a 20% increase in pay back-dated to 1 January 1968. This increase is in line with the general trend in Cyprus. Negotiations and attempts at government mediation have broken down over management's refusal to recognize the union's right to represent the three highest grades of managerial and supervisory staff.

DENMARK

Danish seafarers issue strike warning

The ITF-affiliated Danish Seamen's Union has warned its members to be ready to strike from 1 March, negotiations for a new collective agreement having broken down. The seamen are demanding a 40-hour week and one month's holiday per year, and a minimum wage of 2,200 Kroner* per month. (See also Newsletter No. 1, 1969, p. 3.)

*17.93 Kroner = £1.

FAROE ISLANDS

Faroese fishermen strike for higher pay

The ITF-affiliated Faroese Fishermen's Union have called a strike which began on 30 January and affects some 3,200 fishermen. Negotiations between the union and shipowners deadlocked in December. The fishermen are claiming pay improvements of 20-25%.

GERMANY

Change in assessment of working hours for local railway workers

The ITF-affiliated German Railwaymen's Union (GdED) has negotiated an agreement with the German Federal Railways (DB) which will alter the conditions governing the hours of work of railwaymen working split duties at local railway stations. With effect from 1 January 1971, breaks between periods of duty of 40 minutes or more will be paid at 'on-call' rates; shorter breaks will be classed as working hours. From 1 January 1973 (if not earlier) all breaks between periods of duty will be classed as working hours and paid accordingly. Breaks of under 20 minutes have been classed as working hours since 1 November 1968. Prior to the introduction of these measures all breaks had been classed as 'on-call' duty and paid at lower rates.

GREAT BRITAIN

Investigation of accommodation and facilities for drivers

The Road Transport Catering and Accommodation Joint Committee, on which employers and unions are represented, has asked the British Ministry of Transport to convene a meeting to deal with the growing problem of parking space for commercial vehicles and sleeping accommodation for drivers. The Committee is investigating present facilities, and considers that much of the existing accommodation is too far away from what are now the main routes, including motorways, and that standards of comfort have not been improving in line with general standards. The Committee is also concerned at the likely increase in demand following the reduction in maximum drivers' hours proposed in the 1968 Transport Act.

3% rise for BOAC cabin crew

BOAC cabin staff are to receive a 3% pay increase backdated to 1 January under a productivity agreement negotiated by the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union. The 3% productivity increase comes on top of a 4-41/2% productivity increase applicable to all grades of staff. Cabin crew productivity is being stepped up by means of a cut-back in summer leave, integration of 707 and VC 10 cabin crews, scheduling of cabin crew to technical crew scheduling rules, etc.

ICELAND

Icelandic seamen demand shipowners pay for crews' food

The ITF-affiliated Icelandic Seamen's Union has called a strike of the country's 2000 seamen manning fishing vessels and the merchant fleet. The strike began on 16 January. The union is demanding that shipowners pay for crews' food to make up for the increased cost of living brought about by devaluation. The demand is equivalent to a pay rise of some 30%.

ITALY

General strike for higher pensions in Italy

Millions of industrial, port and other transport workers took part in a 24-hour nationwide general strike on 4-5 February. The strike was called by the three major trade union centres which are demanding a reform of pensions legislation. The unions want pensions, at present 50% of a worker's salary, to be raised to 74% immediately and 80% by 1973. They also want the minimum pension increased from the present 12,000 lire (£8) per month to 25,000 lire (about £16.13s). Similar strikes were staged in 1968 (see Newsletter No. 11, 1968, p. 79).

NETHERLANDS

40-hour week and higher pay for KLM ground staff

KLM management and unions representing ground staff have concluded a new two-year agreement running from 1 January 1969. The agreement provides a 6% pay rise from 1 January 1969, a 4% rise from 1 January 1970, and a further 1½% from 1 July 1970. An additional contribution amounting to 1% of labour costs is to be credited to the KLM ground staff pension fund. The holiday bonus is also increased. In addition, the new agreement envisages a revised salary structure and provides for the introduction by stages of a 40-hour, 5-day working week, or rather, because of the special conditions pertaining in civil aviation, a working week of 40 hours in the form of 5 shifts per period of 7 days.

Concern at number of foreign seamen in Dutch fleet

Dutch seamen's unions have called on Parliament to make the recruiting of foreigners to man Dutch merchant ships dependent on a permit system. The unions are not against the fact that Dutch ships are manned by foreigners, but are concerned at a number of possibilities that might arise. These include reduced employment prospects for Dutch nationals, the threat to safety, and the risk of unreliability in case of major international conflicts. The unions point out that the Dutch merchant navy at present employs some 14,000 foreigners, including 6,880 Asian seamen.

PAKISTAN

Hunger strike by Karachi tramway workers

A hunger strike by over 40 members of the ITF-affiliated Karachi Tramway Workers' Union was called off on 16 January when an agreement was reached with the management. The agreement regulates the contributions which the Management is to make to the union Provident Fund. It also states that the hunger strikers are to be considered to have been on duty for the period of the strike.

PHILIPPINES

Philippine transport and general workers strike against unfair practices

The ITF-affiliated Philippine Transport and General Workers' Union have called a strike against exporters of Del Monte and other Philippine Packing Products. They are on strike against unfair practices of the company concerned, which is charged with trying to wreck the unions and starve out strikers by intentionally delaying settlement of disputes.

SWEDEN

Swedish committee proposes 40-hour working week

A gradual reduction of the working week from the present 42.5 hours to 40 hours has been recommended by a Swedish state investigation committee. The committee proposes that the reduction be carried out in three stages of 50 minutes per week for three successive years beginning in 1970. No maximum number of working hours per day has been set. The reduction could also be achieved in other ways, if agreement is reached between employers and unions.

FORTHCOMING MEETING

Flight Engineers' Technical
Committee,

- Paris, 20-21 February 1969.

AFFILIATED UNIONS REQUIRING FURTHER
INFORMATION ON ANY ITEM IN THIS
NEWSLETTER MAY OBTAIN IT ON REQUEST
FROM THE SECRETARIAT OF THE ITF