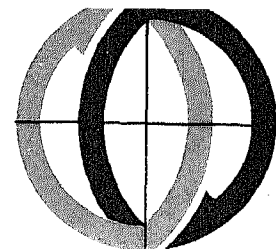


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ITF seafarers discuss container consortia implications

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

Seafarers from three countries discuss Atlantic Container Line

A meeting of ITF seafarers' affiliates concerned with the Atlantic Container Line (ACL) was held in Rotterdam on 24 February, and was attended by representatives from Great Britain, the Netherlands and Sweden, under the chairmanship of D.S. Tennant (MNAOA). The statement adopted by the meeting forms a supplement to this Newsletter.

ATLAS ground staff unions meet under ITF auspices

A first meeting of ITF-affiliated ground staff unions from member-countries of ATLAS, one of the sub-groupings of the Montparnasse Committee -- set up to facilitate joint operation, maintenance and training facilities for European airline companies utilizing the Boeing 747 high capacity aircraft -- was held in Paris on 19 February at the headquarters of the French Public Service and Transport Workers' Union. The meeting was attended by union representatives from Belgium, France and Germany, together with observers from flight engineer organizations in France and the United States. Mr. J.K. Post, Chairman of the ITF Civil Aviation Section, was in the Chair.

The meeting discussed some of the social implications of the protocol of agreement drawn up by the members of the ATLAS Group, with particular reference to the effect which the allocation of work on engine and airframe maintenance to Lufthansa and Air France respectively could have on the retention by ground engineers of their specialist qualifications. The meeting also took note of the possibility that the Belgian airline SABENA may be forced, as the result of an instruction by the Minister of Communications, to withdraw from ATLAS and join the KSS Group -- which now covers KLM, SAS and Swissair.

It was decided that a further meeting of the ground staff unions concerned should be held in London in June following further study by them of the ATLAS protocol of agreement. Problems affecting all unions within the Montparnasse Committee companies will then be discussed at an ITF Ground Staff Conference.

ITF Flight Engineers discuss B-747 problems

A meeting of the ITF Flight Engineers' Technical Committee took place in Paris on 20 and 21 February, attended by Committee members from Belgium, France, Germany, Netherlands, UK and USA. Mr. S. R. Smith of the British Merchant Navy & Airline Officers' Association (MNAOA) acted as Chairman.

The Committee reviewed recent developments concerning the Airbus A300B and the Concorde, as well as discussing the MADAR airborne malfunction detection system and fatigue and health hazards. It also considered flight engineer problems which could result from the future introduction of the B. 747, especially in the field of maintenance, pre-flight and turn-round checks; crew complement; and pay differentials applying to the new aircraft. Consideration was also given to the general question of higher standards of flight engineer training. It was decided that the next meeting of the Committee would be mainly devoted to a more detailed examination of questions concerned with utilization of the B. 747.

ITF condemns armed attack on civil aircraft

At its meeting on 20 February 1969 the Management Committee of the ITF considered the latest instance of an armed attack, for political ends, on a civil aircraft. Having a world-wide membership of unions organizing both ground and flying staff, the ITF has an obvious interest in the safety and well-being of civil aviation workers and their industry. It therefore deplores and condemns any act liable to endanger the lives of those who work in the industry and of the passengers who use its services.

In the case of hi-jacking the ITF has already demanded effective action at inter-governmental level. Armed attacks on aircraft clearly represent a new phase in an appalling tendency to use civil aviation as a battle ground on which to fight over essentially political issues.

Government representatives meet to consider revision of the AETR

The Sub-Committee on Road Transport of the UN Economic Commission for Europe met in Geneva from 17-21 February, 1969, to consider various proposed amendments of the AETR with a view to bringing it into line with the EEC regulations on Working Conditions in Road Transport. The ITF was represented by C. Iddon, who was accompanied by B. Jonckheere (Secretary of the ITF "Brussels" Committee). J. Moore (United Road Transport Union, United Kingdom) was a member of the British Government delegation.

IMCO Maritime Safety Committee

The Committee held its nineteenth session in London from 24-28 February. Subjects of special interest to the ITF were a report of the IMCO Sub-Committee on Radio Communications (January 1969), a report on the Joint ILO/IMCO Meeting on Maritime Training (December 1968) and a report on the FAO/ILO/IMCO Meeting on the Safety of Fishermen and Fishing Vessels (October 1968). The ITF had participated in all three meetings, through the observer status of the ICFTU with IMCO, and in the preparation of the reports to the Maritime Safety Committee, which were all adopted without any changes of substance.

Other important questions on which decisions were taken included measures against marine pollution, amendments to the 1960 Safety of Life at Sea Convention, preparations for an International Conference on Tonnage Measurement, as well as the future work programme for the Maritime Safety Committee,

TRANSPORT

AUSTRALIA

Australia keeps left-hand driving

The Australian Transport Advisory Council has decided against changing to right-hand driving on the roads. It is of the opinion that a change to right-hand driving would not bring any real benefits in Australia,

FRANCE

French railwaymen criticise government plan for reform of SNCF

French railwaymen's unions, including the ITF-affiliated FAC and FO Railwaymen's Federation, have announced that they will resolutely oppose the systematic closing of secondary lines and the dismissal of 50,000 railwaymen, as proposed in the French government's plan for the reform of the French Railways (SNCF), shortly to be submitted to the Council of Ministers. While not opposed to the principle of granting greater financial and managerial autonomy to the SNCF to allow it to redress its financial situation by 1974, the unions unanimously reject the means which the government proposes for achieving this end. The unions stress instead the need for a rational, democratic and planned transport policy. They believe that it is misleading to argue that the reform of the SNCF can be achieved without an overall revision of transport policy in France, and even at a European level, now that the Six are trying to formulate more clearly their common transport policy.

TRADE UNIONS

PAKISTAN

West Pakistan unions unite in struggle for human rights

Pakistani trade unions are demanding the restoration in their country of human rights, including freedom of association and

assembly, freedom of speech and the press and the right to strike, as well as the release of arbitrarily-arrested trade union, student and political leaders and workers. A resolution to this effect was passed at a Joint Labour Convention held in Lahore at the end of January. The Convention was attended by over 70 delegates from all parts of West Pakistan, belonging to the West Pakistan Federation of Trade Unions, the Pakistan National Federation of Trade Unions and the West Pakistan Workers' Federation. The Convention was called at a time of growing unrest among workers over the government's failure to meet their demands for the repeal of repressive laws and for progressive legislation favouring the growth of an effective trade union movement.

To further these ends, the Convention decided that the three Federations should work together in a Joint Labour Council, consisting of 30 delegates from each of the Federations. A Joint Working Committee was set up to adopt a common policy on labour law reform and to work out a programme of trade union action such as publicity, demonstrations, protest weeks, strikes, etc,

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

COLOMBIA

Colombian bus drivers strike for 8-hour day and regular wages

The ITF-affiliated National Federation of Drivers and Transport Workers of Colombia is demanding the introduction of the 8-hour working day for bus drivers, and a regular monthly wage of 500 pesos (about US \$ 95,00). The union called token strikes of bus drivers in the Colombian capital on 2,22 and 23 January in support of these demands, and has threatened to call a national bus drivers' strike for an indefinite period if employers and government fail to meet its demands. The Union's General Secretary, Pedro Nel Maluendas, has stated that is quite unacceptable that drivers should continue to be deprived of the right to a regular wage and an 8-hour working day in a country which has signed all the relevant international labour conventions, and which, according to its leaders, is in the vanguard in matters of social legislation.

FAROE ISLANDS

Settlement of Faroese fishermen's strike

The strike of Faroese fishermen reported in Newsletter No. 2, p.14, ended in mid-February after the ITF-affiliated Faroese Fishermen's Union accepted a proposal from the official conciliator. The

fishermen were demanding a 20-25% increase in remuneration, guaranteed minimum pay and subsidies. They obtained an increase in subsidies and guaranteed minimum pay, but little change was made in the fishermen's share of the catch proceeds.

GREAT BRITAIN

British dockers point to shortcomings in docks nationalization plan

After a dock delegates' conference of the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union on 12 February, Tim O'Leary, National Secretary of the Union's Docks Group, announced that employers and unions had reached basic agreement on a national severance pay scheme based on the already agreed London scheme (see Newsletter 8, 1968, p.55), a third week's holiday to come into force not later than 1970, and improved pensions and sick pay.

The conference also issued a statement on nationalization which criticised the government for leaving out of its nationalization proposals some of the smaller ports and specialized operations in all ports. It also criticised the government plan for the vagueness of its proposals for increased worker participation. The opportunity had not been taken to make a decisive advance in worker participation.

ITALY

Pension rise for Italian workers

Leaders of Italy's three major unions have agreed with the government on an increase in State pensions, settling a dispute over which there have been four national strikes in the last three months. Pensions are to be raised from 65 to 74% of last salary as from January 1969, and will be increased by stages to 80% by 1976.

MALTA

Port strike in Malta

The ITF-affiliated General Workers' Union of Malta called a strike on 8 February when officials of the Malta Landing Shipping Company, who operate the deep water quay, did work usually undertaken by members of the union. A boycott was imposed on all merchandise imported by the company. The strike ended on 12 February. Officials of the union have stated that it will be reimposed if necessary.

MEXICO

New agreement ends Mexican airline workers' strike

The signing of a new collective agreement has ended the dispute between the ITF-affiliated National Civil Aviation Workers' Union (SNTAS) and Eastern Airlines. Strike action by SNTAS members and solidarity from other ITF-affiliates forced Eastern Airlines to abandon its intransigent attitude, and SNTAS has now gained an immediate pay rise of 17%, longer holidays with pay, and other benefits.

NETHERLANDS

Dutch dockers to get a 7 per cent pay rise

As the result of a new collective labour agreement, Dutch dockers are to receive a 7 per cent pay rise and an additional day's annual leave. Initially the government had refused to go above a 6.5 per cent increase.

New agreement averts Dutch bus drivers' strike

A strike by 20,000 Dutch bus drivers was averted when union and employers' representatives accepted a new one-year collective agreement. Under the agreement, wages are increased by 6.8 per cent plus an additional 22 guilders.* The bonus awarded for irregular hours of work is increased by 11 guilders. Minimum holiday pay is to be 645 guilders.

The central issue, equal pay for rural and municipal bus drivers, remains to be solved. A commission has already been appointed to investigate this problem.

*8.65 guilders = £1.

SWEDEN

Swedish wage talks break down

Central wage negotiations between the Swedish Employers' Federation and the Confederation of Trade Unions broke down on 19 February, after talks for a new one-year agreement had been in progress for three months. The employers rejected a union demand for a general wage increase of between 6 and 7 per cent. The Government is expected to appoint an independent arbitration committee shortly.

Ships' officers in Sweden want a lower retirement age

The ITF-affiliated Swedish ships' officers' union (Sveriges Fartygsbefälsförening) is pressing for a reduction of the retirement age from 65 to 60. This would be achieved by stages. In 1970 the retirement age would be reduced by one year to 64, and this would continue yearly until, by 1974, the retirement age reached 60.

UNITED STATES

US Longshoremen return to work

In a referendum on 14 February, dockers in the port of New York voted 9,328-3,213 in favour of accepting the new three-year agreement negotiated by the ITF-affiliated International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) for 22,000 members in the port of New York (for the terms of the agreement, see Newsletter No. 1, 1969, p.5). The union had originally declined to put the agreement, approved in principle, to a membership vote until agreements were reached in other Gulf and Atlantic coast ports, but the National Labour Relations Board asked for a court injunction to end the strike under the provisions of the Taft-Hartley Law prohibiting secondary boycott action. Agreement has now been reached in many other ports, but longshoremen in West Gulf ports are still out on strike.

Strike of American Airlines Mechanics

After the break-down of contract talks, which opened in May 1968, the ITF-affiliated Transport Workers Union called a strike of mechanics and maintenance workers employed by American Airlines, starting on 27 February. The arbitration machinery imposed by the Railway Labor Act, which also applies to air carriers, has been exhausted, and the National Mediation Board is now holding talks with both parties independently in the hope of bringing them closer together.

PERSONALIA

Anker Jørgensen has been elected President of the ITF-affiliated Danish General Workers' Union (DASF), succeeding Viggo Wivel who has now reached retirement age. Jørgensen, who is 46, has held various posts in the trade union movement, and has been a Social Democrat Member of Parliament since 1964.

Hylton Lee, General Secretary of the ITF-affiliated Merchant Service Guild of Australia, passed away suddenly on 19 February.

Daniel Carmichael, Assistant General Secretary of the Merchant Navy and Airline Officers' Association, has died at the age of 66. He was to have retired later this year. Mr. Carmichael

served at the head office of the association from its foundation - as the Navigators' and Engineer Officers' Union - in 1936. He was appointed Assistant General Secretary in 1957 and was awarded the M.B.E. in the same year. For many years he was in charge of the legal department of the association and was responsible for obtaining compensation for members and their dependants.

Professor Guido Guida, the doctor who founded and ran the International Radio-Medical Centre (CIRM) which radioed free medical advice to vessels at sea, has died at the age of 71.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Preliminary meeting of ITF affiliates
for ILO Technical Meeting on Dock Labour - Rotterdam, 13 April '69

Conference of ITF Cabin Attendants'
Organizations and International
Cabin Attendants' Seminar - Paris, 15-18 April '69
(provisional)

Allied Industries and Services
Section Conference - end April-beginning May
(provisional)

Executive Board - Paris, 27-30 May 1969

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

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ITF SEAFARERS DISCUSS CONTAINER CONSORTIA IMPLICATIONS

A meeting of seafarers' trade union representatives from the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom took place at the headquarters of the Netherlands Seafarers' Federation in Rotterdam on 24 February 1969. The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Capt. D.S. Tennant, C.B.E., General Secretary of the British Merchant Navy & Airline Officers' Association.

The meeting was convened by the ITF in order to discuss the implications for seafarers' conditions of service of the formation of international container shipping consortia, with particular reference to the British, Dutch, French and Swedish consortium - Atlantic Container Line (ACL).

Following detailed discussion of the various aspects of container vessel operation, the meeting agreed that a number of points should be given close attention when negotiating national collective agreements with ACL:

1. It was unanimously agreed that there should be a special container ship bonus for service aboard ACL vessels, having regard inter alia to the far greater productivity of container vessels as against conventional merchant ships; the shorter periods spent in port; and the more intensive type of operation which the utilization of such vessels necessarily involves. It was further agreed that more detailed consideration should be given to these factors in the near future.

2. It was noted that manning levels in existing ACL agreements appeared to have a broad measure of uniformity, and it was agreed that the number of personnel at present carried should therefore be maintained. However, it was felt that these manning levels might require further investigation in the light of operational experience.

3. It was unanimously agreed that periods of leave aboard all container vessels should be related to the exigencies of service on such vessels, but that such leave should be at least on a ratio of two days in service to one on leave.

4. In order to maintain the physical and mental well-being of seafarers spending long periods aboard such ships, it was agreed that, in addition to such amenities as film shows, television, hobbies rooms, educational correspondence course facilities, libraries, etc., there should also be a gymnasium and swimming pool, particularly in view of the limited facilities for exercise available aboard ship, where space is severely limited. As a further contribution to the well-being of crew members, it was also agreed that facilities should be given to both officers and ratings enabling them to be accompanied on voyages by their wives at periodical intervals.