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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

Crew of Greek vessel get half specified rates

The ITF-affiliated National Maritime Union of America (NMU), has advised us that they were recently contacted by the crew of the Greek-flag vessel M/S Arion who complained, amongst other things, that they were not receiving their wages. The crew members concerned had been engaged in Costa Rica and Guatemala at the rate of US \$70 a month per man as opposed to the rate of \$140 specified in the Greek collective agreement.

Thanks to the efforts of the NMU, the seamen aboard this ship received their wages and also the medical attention which some of them had been denied.

TRANSPORT

INTERNATIONAL

Moves to counteract hi-jacking

The sub-committee on unlawful seizure of aircraft established by the legal committee of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has agreed unanimously that hi-jacking should be an extraditable offence. The committee has drawn up a draft convention which may be ratified independently of the 1963 Tokyo Convention. The draft convention specifies that the offence shall be deemed to be included as an extradition offence in any extradition treaty existing or to be concluded between the various Contracting States; that Contracting States which do not make extradition conditional on the existence of a treaty or reciprocity shall recognize the offence as a case of extradition as between themselves; and that the offence shall be treated, for the purpose of extradition, as if it had been committed not only in the place in which it occurred but also in the territory of the State of registration of the aircraft.

Measures to prevent hi-jacking were also discussed at the March Annual Conference of the International Federation of Airline Pilots Associations (IFALPA), where it was decided that members could boycott any country which failed to punish a hi-jacker or which detained crew members of a hi-jacked plane. The meeting decided unanimously to call for the following measures if a state failed to act: a 12-24-hour world-wide pilot strike to focus public attention on the urgent problem of air safety, and cooperation with other organizations to restrict passenger and freight traffic by air and surface transport.

IFALPA, it was suggested, would count attacks from the ground on civil aircraft or passengers as acts of piracy. The conference called on governments to write provisions against air pirates into bilateral air agreements.

Meanwhile, Mexico has recently reached a reciprocal agreement with Cuba to ensure the extradition of those responsible for hi-jacking aircraft or other means of transportation into the territory of either country. The agreement will also guarantee the immediate return of crews, passengers and goods, and of the hi-jacked aircraft or other vehicle. (See also Newsletter No. 2, p. 10).

EUROPE

Container service links Eire and Continent

A new container service between Ireland and the Continent has been inaugurated by the George Bell Group. Their container ship Bell Combat made its first sailing from Rotterdam to Waterford early in March. The Irish-flag vessel will operate five to six sailings a month initially, but the frequency will be increased as traffic develops.

BELGIUM

Belgian Government recommends ratification of ILO Conventions concerning fishermen

The Belgian Government has recommended to Parliament the ratification of two ILO Conventions concerning fishermen, adopted at the International Labour Conference in 1966. The two Conventions are No. 125, concerning Fishermen's Certificates of Competency, and No. 126, concerning accommodation on Board Fishing Vessels. Commenting on Recommendation No. 126, concerning the Vocational Training of Fishermen, the Belgian Government points out that vocational training of fishermen in Belgium could be cited as an example for many countries, and that the ILO recommendation will involve no revision of present training programmes and methods in Belgium.

CAMBODIA

Cambodia joins ILO

Cambodia has now become a member of the International Labour Organization, bringing ILO membership to a total of 119 countries.

GERMANY

German Transport Minister plans weekend ban on heavy lorries

The German Ministry of Transport is at present drawing up regulations which would place further restrictions on transport by heavy lorries on certain weekends - from 15.00 on Friday to 9.00 on Monday - during the peak summer holiday season.

GREAT BRITAIN

Heavy goods vehicle driver licensing scheme in Britain

The British Minister of Transport has announced plans for the re-introduction of a scheme for licensing and testing drivers of heavy goods vehicles in February 1970. He also plans to operate the scheme on a voluntary basis for six months from August 1969. Draft regulations are shortly to be circulated to the industry.

A scheme for licensing and testing drivers of heavy goods vehicles was first introduced in 1935 but lapsed at the outbreak of World War II. The proposed scheme is similar to the pre-war one, but takes into account the considerable changes in traffic conditions and the increase in the complexity and size of modern goods vehicles.

SAUDI-ARABIA

Saudi-Arabia joins IMCO

The Saudi-Arabian Government has announced its intention to join IMCO. This brings the membership of IMCO to 69 countries.

UNITED STATES

Attack on tax avoidance by US foreign flag owners

At a hearing of the US House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee, O.W. Moody, administrator of the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, delivered a strong attack on the exemption from taxation which is derived from the operation of US owned ships under foreign flags, mainly the Liberian and Panamanian.

The operation of foreign flag ships to carry cargoes from a foreign subsidiary of a US corporation to the US parent company, Mr. Moody stated, had become "a major tax avoidance problem".

On June 30, 1968, he said, "there was more American-owned tonnage registered under foreign flags than was registered under our own, to be exact 16.06 million tons deadweight against 15.3 million," and 93 per cent of America's foreign seaborne trade was carried in foreign flag ships.

TRADE UNIONS

GREECE

ILO Commission of Inquiry to investigate complaints against Greek government

The Governing Body of the ILO has authorised the appointment of a Commission of Inquiry to investigate two complaints against the Greek Government made by five delegates to the 1968 International Labour Conference. The complaints concern the observance by Greece of the Conventions on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize (1948) and the Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining (1949), both of which were ratified by Greece in 1962. The complaint was lodged by workers' delegates from Germany, Canada, Denmark and Norway. A separate complaint was signed by the workers' delegate of Czechoslovakia.

UNITED STATES

Two major US rail unions merge

Two major US railway unions, the Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks (BRAC) and the Transportation-Communication Employees' Union (TCU), have now merged, it was announced by Presidents C.L. Dennis of BRAC and A.R. Lowry of the TCU. This creates a combined union with over 300,000 members. Under the merger agreement, the Transportation-Communications Division will function with a high measure of autonomy. Lowry will serve as President of this new BRAC division, and will, in addition, be an International Vice-President of the BRAC and a member of its executive council. Mergers with further North American unions are also being discussed.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

AUSTRALIA

Interim award ends Australian tally clerks' dispute

Return to a 1967 agreement on container handling, together with an interim compromise award to cover wages and working conditions for clerks at container depots were recommended by the Deputy President of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission after a 6-hour hearing involving employers and the ITF-affiliated Australian Federated Clerks' Union. Non-union

labour at the container terminal is to enter the union. Nearly 3000 clerks had refused to handle containers at major ports, accusing employers of breaking the agreement on the allocation of container tally work,

CANADA

Big increases for Canadian railway "non-ops"

ITF-affiliated Canadian railwaymen's unions, representing about 75,000 non-operating railway workers employed by seven companies, have signed a new 2-year master agreement giving the workers 6½% wage increases from January 1969, and a further 6½% (based on 1969 rates) in January 1970. The new agreement also specifies 3 weeks' annual vacation after 10 years' service, instead of 12 years, and 4 weeks after 18 years, instead of 22. The new agreement also brings improved welfare benefits, committing the companies to pay the full costs of the health and welfare plan.

Canadians seek parity with US dockers

The ITF-affiliated International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) is seeking parity with US longshoremen for dockers in Montreal. Their contract ended on 21 March. The ILA is seeking a 2-year contract with a basic wage increase of \$1.25 this year and a further 50 cents in 1970. Tentative agreement was reached in early April, but the details are not yet known.

CYPRUS

Cyprus Airways strike over

Following the 24-hour warning strike reported in Newsletter No. 2, page 13, members of the ITF-affiliated Cyprus Airways Employees' Union went on strike from mid-March to 2 April. The ITF informed affiliated civil aviation unions in countries served by the airline and wrote to the Cypriot Minister of Labour asking him to intervene personally in the dispute. Pay rises of up to 15% were agreed on by management and union representatives.

DENMARK

24-hour strike by Danish railwaymen

The ITF-affiliated Danish Locomotive's Union (Dansk Lokomotivmands Forening) staged a twenty-four hour token strike on 27 March in protest against the inadequacies of the graded pay scale operating in the industry.

FRANCE

Increase in guaranteed pay for French road transport workers

Agreement in principle has been reached between French road transport employers and union representatives on a 2-stage increase in guaranteed pay for road transport workers by 2% from 31 March and 2% from 6 October 1969.

GERMANY

8.1% rise for German dockers

30,000 German dockers will be getting an 8.1% pay rise under a 12-month agreement negotiated by the ITF-affiliated Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV). The increase is effective from 1 February 1969. The basic rate for the first shift on weekdays has been raised from 31.--DM* to 33.50 DM. The union had originally asked for 35.--DM. Basic rates for the second and third shifts have also been increased (to 38.35 DM and 39.49 DM), as have allowances for work on Sundays and public holidays and for double shifts.

*9.61 DM = £1.

GREAT BRITAIN

British transport workers move to end violence on late buses

Alan Thomson, national bus secretary of the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union, has written to the Home Secretary asking for urgent talks to tackle the increasing menace of violence on late-night buses. The union wants employers - municipal, company and London Transport - at the talks. Bus crews have been threatening industrial action by terminating services during the early part of the evening, particularly at weekends.

JAPAN

Japanese railwaymen stage protest strike against fare increases

Two ITF-affiliated railwaymen's unions in Japan, Kokuro and Doryokusha, staged token strikes and go-slows on 18 March in protest at the Government's proposal to put up rail fares. The unions are opposed to the fare increase on the grounds that it would push up the prices of everyday commodities. Instead, they demand that railway deficits be covered by Government subsidies.

Another dispute was settled after railwaymen resorted to work-to-rule tactics and the threat of a strike over management's plan to divide the Tokyo railway operating division into three separate departments. The unions demanded that the division be postponed until union-management agreement was reached on the plan. Management initially insisted that the matter was purely management's concern, but later agreement was reached in time to avert the strike.

MEXICO

Substantial improvements for Mexican railwaymen

A new agreement between the ITF affiliated Mexican Railwaymen's Union and the United Railways of Yucatan gives the 3,541 railwaymen employed by the company increases of \$139.35* in basic monthly wages, and increases of \$190.00 including allowances. The agreement also gives workers 5 extra days' holiday, and one month's pay for funeral expenses. The union had previously renewed collective agreements with Mexican National Railways (55,427 employees) and Mexican Pacific Railways (7 million employees). Under these agreements, monthly pay, including allowances, was increased by not less than \$190 per employee. The sum of 1 million pesos is to be paid into the railwaymen's pensions fund, giving pensioners a minimum pension of \$715.00. Allowances for funeral expenses have also been increased by \$100, and holidays are increased to 30 days per year.

*Mexican \$30 = £1

NETHERLANDS

New agreement for Dutch coastal seamen

After a protracted period of difficult negotiations, employers and union representatives have arrived at a new collective agreement for Dutch coastal seamen. The agreement, which still has to be ratified by union membership, gives seamen a 4% wage increase, as well as improvements in a number of other benefits and allowances. The old agreement expired on 30 September last year, and the new one will be effective from January 1969 to May 1970.

PAKISTAN

Strike brings improvements for Karachi port workers

The ITF-affiliated Organization of Karachi Port Trust Workers has won a number of improvements for port employees in an agreement reached after a 5-day strike in early March. Under the agreement, pay scales for Port Trust employees are to be revised to give a differential over the pay scales of similarly placed government

employees - 10% for unskilled and 25% for skilled workers, effective from 1 January 1969. Overtime rates are to be doubled, and washing, rent and conveyance allowances increased. The Karachi Port Trust Administration has agreed to withdraw the case for derecognition of the Organization of Karachi Port Trust Workers which was pending in the Industrial Court. The Port Administration has also agreed to treat the period of the strike as a working period and to pay the staff accordingly, provided the workers resume duty immediately and do not go on strike again for a period of at least two years.

In reporting the successful conclusion of the dispute, the union paid tribute to the support received from the ITF and its affiliates.

Martial Law in Pakistan averts merchant navy officers' strike

Following the declaration of Martial Law in Pakistan, the ITF-affiliated Pakistan Merchant Navy Officers' Association has withdrawn the strike notice served on employers on 19 March. The union had called the strike, which was to have begun on 31 March, in support of their demands for the revision of their basic conditions of service. Strike notice was only served after strenuous efforts to find an amicable solution had failed to extract any response from shipowners or authorities.

UNITED STATES

Strike brings 25% rise for American Airlines mechanics

A 3-week strike by 13,500 members of the ITF-affiliated Transport Workers' Union (see Newsletter No. 3, p.24) has brought contract gains for American Airlines employees after 10 months of negotiations. The airline halted all flights when mechanics, inspectors, fleet and ground service crews and communications employees walked out on 27 February, and members of other AFL-CIO unions honoured TWU picket lines voluntarily.

Under the new contract, top mechanic rates go up from \$4.16 an hour to \$4.59 immediately, and to \$5.21 by 15 August, 1970, the last stage in the two-year agreement. All employees are assured wage increases totalling 25.2% in five 6-month steps, starting with 5% backdated to last May, and another 5% backdated to January 1969. Other improvements include wage premiums of 5 to 10 cents an hour for licensed mechanics, a new provision; shift differential increases of 10 cents an hour; five weeks' vacation after 20 years of service; and one more paid holiday, making a total of nine.

Court rules against airline in crew cutback

A US District Court has ruled that National Airlines is guilty of violating federal law in an incident which triggered a company lockout of more than 1,000 members of the International Association of Machinists throughout the United States. After management and the union had exchanged notices of intent to

bargain on new contract terms, the company ordered aircraft taxi crews to be reduced from 3 men to 2. The Court ruled that this was in violation of the Railway Labor Act, under which the company is required to maintain the status quo in working conditions after notices have been exchanged.

The Court has issued a preliminary injunction against the company. The lockout continues, and in the meantime there has been no bargaining between union and company. The National Mediation Board assigned a mediator to the dispute 72 days after the case was first docketed. This followed an IAM petition for a court order to force the NMB to assign a mediator.

Steps to avoid US seamen's strike

Three ITF-affiliated US maritime unions, the National Maritime Union, the Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association and the American Radio Association have indicated their readiness to extend their contracts beyond the scheduled deadline of midnight, 15 June, provided there is "substantial progress and real evidence of good faith" by the employers by that date. Both parties agreed that US-flag passenger ships will be kept sailing even if negotiations break down. The unions are bargaining for some 650 vessels operated by 83 companies, representing about 85% of the US merchant marine. The NMU is seeking a 25% across-the-board wage increase, plus other benefits based on a 1-year contract.

12.5% package for US railroad conductors

Railroad conductors represented by the United Transportation Union will receive a wage-benefits package valued at 12.5% over 18 months under the terms of a new agreement which settles a 20-month-old dispute involving more than 20,000 employees on US railroads. The settlement also includes improvements in vacations and paid holidays, plus increases in carrier-paid liability insurance.

PERSONALIA

John Conroy, General President of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, died in February at the age of 64. He had held the office of General President for 16 years and was due to retire this month.

Richard Eriksen, Vice-President of the Danish Transport & General Workers' Union (DASF), has died at the age of 68.

R. Degris, Secretary of the French Force Ouvrière (FO) Railwaymen's Federation, has been appointed a Secretary of the FO Confederation of Trade Unions. L. Buonaccorsi will become acting Secretary of the FO Railwaymen, and has also been elected a member of the Executive Committee of the FO Confederation of Trade Unions. Brother Degris will retain his seat on the ITF Executive Board until next Congress.

Roy Siemiller, International President of the International Association of Machinists, retires in June. He will be 65 in September. He has been IAM International President and a Vice President of the AFL-CIO since 1965. He is to be succeeded as International President by Floyd E. Smith, at present IAM Vice President.

Perry S. Heath, Grand Chief of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, retired on 1 April. He had headed the Brotherhood since 1964. First Assistant Grand Chief C.J. Coughlin will automatically move up to the top post.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

- Preliminary meeting of ITF affiliates
for ILO Technical Meeting on Dock
Labour - Rotterdam, 13 April 1969
- Conference of ITF Cabin Attendants'
Organizations and International Cabin
Attendants' Seminar - Paris, 15-18 April 1969
- Road Transport Workers' Section
Safety Sub-Committee - London, 28-29 April and
- Villingen, Germany 9-11
June 1969
- Executive Board - Paris, 27-30 May
- ITF meeting on Danube Navigation - Vienna, 12-13 June 1969

LATE ITEM: Strike of Japanese seamen

Members of the ITF-affiliated All Japan Seamen's Union went on strike on 10 April, after union negotiations with representatives of two shipowners associations operating coastal services had broken down. Some 44 major Japanese ports are affected by the stoppage. The union is demanding a pay rise of Y8,100* (a 22 per cent increase) and an additional 12 days' annual leave.

*Y870.25 = £1.

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