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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

SWEDEN

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Swedish Seamen's Union acts against substandard Panamanian ship

The m/v Capitaio Abreu, owned by the Companhia de Navegacao Baltir S.A.R.L. Panama, has been brought under an ITF custodian agreement by the ITF-affiliated Swedish Seamen's Union. The vessel was inspected by the union when it arrived at the port of Skoghall to discharge a cargo of flowers of sulphur and was found to have no Blue Certificate. During the visit, union officials also discovered that lifeboats and other safety equipment were in very poor condition and a report was made to the Swedish Board of Shipping and Navigation. As a result the Board refused to allow the ship to leave Sweden until these defects had been remedied. The Master was also made to take on an extra navigating officer.

UNITED STATES

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IAM in life-and-death struggle with National Airlines

The International Association of Machinists (IAM, an ITF affiliate) is fighting back hard in its seven-month-old struggle against National Airlines, which began on 20 January when National locked out more than 1,000 mechanics and other maintenance employees. Despite the fact that this is a lock-out, the dispute has been repeatedly falsely described as a strike in sections of the US Press and the union has had to take action on several occasions to set the record straight.

As an editorial in the IAM's own newspaper "The Machinist" puts it:

"These men are fighting a battle not only for themselves and their families, but for every member of the IAM. If an employer under IAM contract can ignore the union contract, evade Federal laws governing bargaining and escape without penalty, no IAM member is safe on his job."

National Airlines is proposing to inaugurate a new international service between London and Miami in the New Year and at the request of the IAM, the ITF has drawn the attention of British aviation unions to the dispute and to the fact that IAM members have been locked out by the company for nearly seven months. Other civil aviation affiliates in Europe are also being informed of the background to the dispute.

TRANSPORT

INTERNATIONAL

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Big increase in container capacity forecast this year

According to a report released by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the total container carrying capacity of the world's shipping industry is expected to go up by 40 per cent during 1969.

GREAT BRITAIN

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Far-reaching recommendations made on British trawler safety

The provision of a permanent Government fishery support ship, statutory conditions for the stability of trawlers, and stricter requirements for radio equipment and operators were among sweeping recommendations made by an official five-man committee on trawler safety when it issued its findings last month.

On radio communications, the committee proposed that the statutory Radio Rules should be extended to require trawlers which regularly operate beyond R/T range of UK coastal radio stations to carry W/T (morse) equipment of a specified standard together with a qualified W/T operator. In this connection, it pointed out that long-range trawlers fish in more dangerous waters than are visited by the majority of merchant ships. Statutory requirements for the carriage of R/T equipment should also be established for near- and middle-water trawlers, recommended the Committee, and the general standard of R/T discipline among skippers should be improved. The present examination for R/T operators should be made more rigorous and formal, it felt.

UNITED STATES

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US Congress urged to reduce rail hours of work

The AFL-CIO has joined the ITF-affiliated RLEA in pressing for a bill to be presented to Congress which would amend the 1907 Hours of Service Act and reduce the working day for train service employees from 16 to 12 hours. The proposal also has the support of the ITF-affiliated United Transportation Union.

In addition to reducing the maximum working day, the bill would require a 10-hour off-duty period after 12 consecutive hours of duty and at least 8 hours rest in any 24-hour period; change deadheading from off-duty to on-duty time; and increase fines for hours of service violations to \$500 for each violation. Exceptions would be allowed in the event of emergencies.

Excessive hours of work place employees under severe strain. Fatigue, Al H. Chesser, chairman of the RLEA committee on safety, maintains, is a factor contributing to the bad safety performance of the US railroads.

TRADE UNIONS

DENMARK

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Call for ten-year plan for industrial unionism

In a recent speech, Anker Jørgensen, President of the ITF-affiliated Danish Transport & General Workers' Union, has called for the introduction of a ten-year plan to bring about the general formation of industrial unions in the country.

"The industrial development to which our country is being subjected to an ever-increasing degree", said Jørgensen, "must of necessity also have consequences for the trade union movement but up to now these have furnished no more than a talking-point". "Everyone has agreed to the idea in principle, but nobody has put forward concrete proposals which could serve as a basis for realistic changes in our structure. I believe that, in recognition of the fact that the boundaries between crafts are shifting, it is vital to find out how we can secure closer cooperation between the trades in the various industries and branches of industry".

UNITED STATES

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Grape growers wriggle out of negotiations

The group of 10 prominent California grape growers who recently entered into negotiations with the AFL-CIO United Farm Workers' Organizing Committee -- the first real break-through in the three-year pickers' strike -- have now abandoned the talks and called upon the US President to set up a fact-finding committee to investigate the dispute. The walk-out came after UFWOC had rejected a completely unacceptable clause proposed by the growers in a new contract. This read that "the union agrees that it will not embark on any programme which will in any way harm the industry to which the employer is a member".

Commenting on this, the UFWOC's Director, Cesar Chavez, said "the clause would prevent us from lobbying in Sacramento or Washington for better laws on the regulation of pesticides, or even safety and sanitary laws."

In a progress report on the international boycott, Chavez draws attention to the support being given to this by ITF affiliates in Finland, Great Britain, Norway and Sweden, and states that the UFWOC is in touch with unions in Singapore and Manila to which ports major shipments of grapes are en route. Huge shipments, he stated, are

however still being despatched to Venezuela, mainly through the port of La Guaira.

US Right uses "law and order" as smokescreen, charges Meany

Speaking at the 1969 Convention of the ITF-affiliated Seafarers' International Union, AFL-CIO President George Meany warned that US Conservatives were using "law-and-order" slogans as a smoke-screen to defeat liberal candidates and capture control of the US Congress in 1970.

"The labor movement", said Meany, "is all in favour of law and order. We know that we need safe streets. We know that we need the security of people in their home". However, he went on, the radical right was using the law-and-order argument to attack all those who have any liberal viewpoint. "They are talking", he said, "against anything that is new ... that is progressive that is liberal".

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

AUSTRALIA
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Industry allowance granted to Australian maritime unions

Recently, the Australian unions catering for maritime workers had an application for an increase in wages pending before the Industrial Arbitration Commission. The claim was based on an award already made to workers in the Metal Trades group, which provides skilled workers in that group with an increase over and above basic rates, which was designated as a Work Value Industry Allowance.

The result of this application was that seafarers, following a Maritime Industry Work Value Inquiry, have been granted a similar form of allowance. These vary from \$3 a week for a deck boy through \$4.80 and \$6.00 for Ordinary Seamen and other adult seamen classifications respectively up to \$12 a week for Chief Engineers; all other officers, shipwrights, boatswains and donkeymen qualifying for an additional amount of \$8 per week.

In the case of stewards, rostered leave on container ships, bulk carriers, and roll-on, roll-off turn-round ships has, wherever possible, been adjusted to a ratio of 2 weeks on duty to one week off. Annual leave on such vessels is now approximately 140 days per year, based on 32 weeks on duty and 20 weeks' paid leave.

(£1 equals A\$ 2.14)

BELGIUM

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New Collective agreement for SABENA personnel

Improvements included in the new collective agreement for SABENA flying personnel include distribution among the union members concerned of a sum amounting to 0.3 per cent of the total amount paid out in salaries; an increase of 40 per cent in payments for work performed on Sundays and public holidays; payment of a lump sum amounting to 21 days' salary to personnel leaving the service of the Company; one day extra to be added to annual vacations in both 1969 and 1970. In addition, all emoluments have been increased by 2.5 per cent for 1969; this being independent of any increase based on the cost of living.

CHILE

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Big salary increase for Chilean merchant officers

Chilean merchant officers, who had been on strike for several weeks, went back to work on 10 July following the signing of a new two-year agreement providing for a 35 per cent salary increase.

DENMARK

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Six per cent increase for Danish navigating officers

Following several months of negotiations, the ITF-affiliated Danish Navigating Officers' Union concluded new agreements on 25 July covering some 1,500 deck officers. The agreements provide for a salary increase of 4 per cent this year plus a further increase of 2 per cent in 1970, together with improvements in a number of allowances and supplements.

FRANCE

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Improved air traffic control conditions demanded

Union representatives of those employed in French air navigation services met the Minister of Transport at the end of last month and urged the need for a general reform of such services and an improvement in the conditions of those responsible for their operation. A number of proposed immediate measures were submitted to the Minister for attention, including provisional steps to secure a better use of air space; the introduction of an interim responsibility allowance for air traffic control personnel; free air transport for air traffic controllers; and the lifting of sanctions taken against some fifty air traffic control staff who took part in the strike of 11 March last. The latter demand was granted immediately by the Minister and the remainder are being studied.

Some unions representing air traffic control staff organized a go-slow movement during the week-end of 2/3 August. Earlier, the Executive Secretary of the International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) had also stated that his organization would not hesitate to request its members to refuse to fly in a situation dangerous to both passengers and crews if the conditions existing in May 1968 were repeated. On that occasion, the military assumed control of air traffic control services during a strike by air traffic personnel.

Air France coach drivers carrying passengers to Orly and Le Bourget also went on strike for 48 hours on 30 July.

GREAT BRITAIN

=====

Lorry and bus drivers' hours to be reduced

New limits on bus and lorry drivers' hours of work are to come into force on 1 March 1970. This is stage 1 of the reduction in drivers' hours provided for in Part VI of the Transport Act 1968. Details of changes of hours are as follows: time at the wheel will be reduced from 11 to 10 hours; the interval between signing on and signing off will be reduced from 14 to 12½ hours (with extension to 14 hours for coach services); and the daily rest period will be increased from 10 to 11 hours. From the same date, drivers of buses on stage services must have at least one day off each fortnight and lorry drivers and other bus or coach drivers must have at least one day off each week. There is at present no legal requirement for a driver to take a day off.

Discussions between the Ministry of Transport and representatives of both sides of industry are to take place on record-keeping requirements.

Desertion by British merchant seamen no longer merits prison

Under the terms of the new British Merchant Shipping Bill published last month, desertion by merchant seamen will no longer be subject to a prison penalty and absence without leave can be dealt with as a breach of civil contract.

Should the Bill be passed in its existing form written crew agreements approved by the Board of Trade between every seaman employed in a UK-registered vessel and his employer would be required. If a ship were to go to sea in contravention of these requirements, the master or employer would be liable to a fine of up to £100 and, if the ship were in the UK, it could be detained.

Wages payable to a seaman under a crew agreement would have to be paid in full at the time of discharge unless they exceeded £20 and in any case not less than £20 could be paid. Any amount remaining unpaid after seven days would carry interest at the rate of 20 per cent per annum.

The Bill further provides that notwithstanding anything in any agreement, a seaman employed on a British ship may terminate his employment by leaving his vessel in furtherance of a trade dispute, after having given notice of his intention to do so to the master.

Increased leave and study leave won by MNAOA

As the result of lengthy negotiations by the ITF-affiliated British Merchant Navy & Airline Officers' Association, an agreement providing for additional leave and study leave for merchant marine officers came into effect on 1 July.

Under this, all Section A officers will continue to receive at least 40 days' extra leave a year. In addition, officers holding Masters' Certificates or First Class Certificates are to receive a further 20 days, making a total of sixty days. Chief refrigeration officers and only refrigeration officers, as well as Electrical engineer officers with certificates and pursers and catering officers in charge of a department will receive an additional 10 days, making a total of 50 days.

An MNAOA request for the existing minimum leave required by the agreement to be increased from 60 days to 72 days was agreed, but the owners retained the right to liquidate the additional leave of 20 days as well as the additional 10 days as listed above.

Study leave for officers studying for various certificates has also been increased under the agreement, and will now vary between 13 and 15 weeks' leave.

In the case of the Home Trade, the additional 20 days' Section A leave will apply to all officers on Section A regardless of rank or certificate held.

The 44 days extra leave for a foreign-going Section B senior officer has been increased by 20 days to 64 days regardless of the certificate held.

Improved consultation machinery for British Road Services staff

A new agreement has been reached within the British Road Services National Staff Council for revisions in the consultation machinery applying to lorrymen and ancillary staff.

Under this, the existing Divisional Joint Committees will be phased out as having no relation to the machinery of the Company and will be replaced by District/Area Committees consisting of appointed trade union and management representatives.

On the Local Joint Committees, the employees will now be represented by shop stewards or equivalent spokesmen. The Committees will be responsible for consultation on matters arising out of the terms and conditions of employment, including: working hours; breaks; time recording; duty schedules; shift rotas; overtime working; holiday arrangements; settlement of internal grievances; local productivity and bonus schemes; safety; and training.

New BOAC pilots must join union

A threatened refusal by BOAC members of the British Air Line Pilots' Association (BALPA) to fly with non-union pilots (of whom there are now only 31) was averted on 1 August after the Company had agreed that all new pilots taken on would have to become members of BALPA. The latter took its action because it feared that current negotiations concerning the Boeing 747 "Jumbo Jet" could be adversely affected by BOAC starting its 747 training programme with non-union members. The new agreement ensures that there will be no differentiation between members of BALPA and non-members in operating present aircraft or in posting to the 747 flight.

NETHERLANDS

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Collective agreement for all KLM employees

The ITF-affiliated Netherlands Transport Workers' Union reports that five years of work has been crowned with the negotiation of a single collective agreement which covers all personnel employed by KLM Royal Dutch Airlines and ends the situation in which separate contracts existed for individual categories of personnel, both ground and flying. Also negotiated has been an agreement on staff policy which represents a kind of basic statute for all personnel. This will be applied not only by the KLM management as at present constituted, but by succeeding managements as well.

It covers, for example, training and re-training, promotion and provides for maximum information to, and participation by, KLM staff in the taking of decisions. This applies not simply to the staff's own work environment but also to management plans in respect of work-places, departments and the whole range of KLM policy, including proposed changes in structure and adaptations to new techniques.

Most coach accidents due to fatigue, states Dutch union head

Interviewed by the Dutch daily "Vrije Volk" shortly after a tragic coach accident in Dinant had cost the lives of 21 people, Wim Kieboom, General Secretary of the ITF-affiliated Dutch Transport Workers' Union, gave as his opinion that the majority of accidents in this field are caused by driver fatigue.

Stressing the need for stricter controls over drivers' hours at the wheel, particularly in international tourist traffic, Kieboom stated that not for nothing did drivers refer to their control books as "lie books". Checks within the Netherlands were reasonably strict, but once drivers crossed a frontier they were left with a free hand. Kieboom said that he realized that keeping tightly to the limits sometimes created difficulties between drivers and their employers, but he emphasized that this was essential when human lives were at stake.

The position would probably be considerably improved once the new EEC regulations on drivers hours came into force within the Community countries.

NORWAY

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Inadequate manning cause of ship collisions, say Norwegian officers

In a recent statement, Bjørn Sivertsen, Secretary of the Norwegian Navigating Officers' Union (an ITF affiliate), said that there was reason to believe that a number of ship collisions and groundings were directly due to poor watch-keeping which, in turn, resulted from inadequate manning. In a number of cases lives had been lost and this was the most serious consequence of rationalization taking place in the Norwegian merchant fleet.

The union, he stated, was continually receiving representations from members who were concerned at how vital maintenance work could be carried out with reduced crews. There was reason to believe that attempts to do so would have adverse effects on safety, since they resulted in reduced look-out and watch-keeping.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

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15 per cent increase sought for Dublin port workers

The Irish Marine, Port & General Workers' Union has submitted a wage claim providing for increases of 15 per cent in compensation for rises in the cost of living. The claim covers dockers, checkers, foremen and some cranemen employed in the deep-sea section of the Port of Dublin.

SWEDEN

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Large pay rises won for Swedish ratings

A new foreign trade agreement was signed on 10 July between the ITF-affiliated Swedish Seamen's Union and the Shipowners' Association, which provides very substantial increases for Swedish ratings. In the case of an Able Seaman, for example, his monthly rate will go up -- in three stages between 2 February 1969 and 2 February 1970 -- by 225 kr.^{x)} In addition, the Seamen's Union has also succeeded in ending an inequity in the application of the extra-European allowance (applicable when ships are trading between non-European ports). Deck and engine room ratings are now placed on the same footing as officers so far as this supplement is concerned. Here again, the increase is in stages, first a rise of 8 per cent, going up as from 2 February 1970 to 16 per cent. To take again the example of an AB, his total basic increase as from that date (including the extra-European allowance) amounts to 418 kr. With two years service this goes up to 426 kr., with five years to 431 kr., and with ten years' service to 436 kr. A boatswain receives 433 kr. basic increase, rising to 465 kr. after ten years' service.

x) £1 equals S.kr. 12.30

All supplements, including overtime rates, are adjusted to the new monthly wages. In addition, daily subsistence allowances go up by amounts varying between 2 and seven crowns per day.

UNITED STATES

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Deck officers end strike against tanker operators

The ITF-affiliated National Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots (MMP) announced on 1 July that it had achieved a tentative settlement of its strike against tanker operators. The settlement reached is on similar lines to that already reached by the MMP for freighter and passenger-freight officers (for details see Newsletter No. 7, p. 58). Some 40 tankers were released from the two-week old strike immediately and 70 others were due to be once the companies concerned had signed the interim memorandum of agreement. The union warned, however, that further talks on contract language could be lengthy and that a further strike could be called if disputes still remained unsettled as a result of these.

UNITED STATES

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Air traffic controllers threaten mass resignation

The US Air Traffic Controllers' Association has stated that more than 4,000 controllers will hand in their resignations if suspensions by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) against personnel who took part in a widespread "report sick" movement in June are not lifted. Basis of the unrest among traffic controllers is low pay, long hours and the employment of insufficient personnel.

PERSONALIA

Ole Bjerkestrand, London Representative of the ITF-affiliated Norwegian Seamen's Union, celebrates his 60th birthday on 11 August. In addition to war-time service for the Union in London, followed by three years back in Norway, he has been working for Norwegian seamen in London since 1949.

George Brassington, Assistant General Secretary of the British National Union of Railwaymen, took leave of his union at the recent NUR Annual General Meeting. He is retiring early next year.

Capt. W.H. ("Bill") Coombs, long-time champion of the British Merchant Navy and Merchant Navy Officers, as well as co-founder and first General Secretary of the Navigators' & Engineer Officers' Union (now the ITF-affiliated Merchant Navy & Airline Officers' Association), died at the end of June at the age of 75. In the words of the present MNAOA General Secretary, Capt. D.S. Tennant "the world is indeed the poorer by the passing of this great man. Merchant Navy Officers have lost an untiring and courageous champion and I a good friend and a man who taught me much"

Henk W. Koppens, Chairman of the ITF Road Transport Workers' Section, has been elected as Vice-President of the Dutch Transport Workers' Union to succeed J. de Graaff, who recently retired.

C. Jansen in de Wal, a veteran of the ITF-affiliated Dutch Transport Workers' Union and a well-known figure in the ITF during his period of active union service, died on 4 July at the age of 72. Our deepest sympathy goes to his union and his family.

Roy Siemiller, who recently retired as President of the ITF-affiliated US International Association of Machinists (IAM), has been appointed to the important post of AFL-CIO liaison representative on the Jobs Council of the National Council of Businessmen.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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Management Committee	-	London 7 September 1969
Seafarers' Section Conference	-	Genoa, 12-13 September 1969
Allied Section Committee Meeting-		London, 14-15 October 1969
Railwaymen's Section Conference-		Mexico, 11-14 November 1969
Executive Board	--	Mexico, 18-19 November 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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ICFTU MESSAGE TO CZECHOSLOVAK WORKERS ON INVASION ANNIVERSARY

Workers of Czechoslovakia !

The 21st of August has become a day to symbolise naked tyranny and oppression. A year ago, Soviet armies, accompanied by troops from Poland, East Germany, Bulgaria and Hungary, treacherously invaded Czechoslovakia, putting an end to people's aspirations for a little more freedom. On this anniversary, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions pledges once more its support for your cause; the free trade union movement throughout the whole world will remember this brutal act of imperialist aggression. This attack and the continued presence of the Soviet army units on Czechoslovak soil - settling down for a long stay - demonstrates the bankruptcy of the whole system of Soviet totalitarian and dogmatic communism which has to resort to force and repression to maintain its grip on a people striving for freedom and democracy. We condemn the continued occupation to which Czechoslovakia is subjected and all those regimes which approve or condone it. We denounce those so-called trade union organisations which give their blessing to the crushing of Czechoslovakia, thus proving once again that they are not workers' bodies but instruments of a totalitarian system.

Czechoslovak workers ! Your struggle for more freedom, for workers' rights and a more democratic trade union structure has shown that no people can be oppressed for ever. Your refusal to bow down to terror, hiding behind the mask of "normalisation", has evoked our unqualified admiration. We have watched your actions while in the shadow of Soviet tanks censorship was restored and tightened, and all tendencies for liberalisation were smashed, the trade union brought back into line as a transmission belt for party and management orders; and those not fully committed to the present hard-line policy are being purged at all levels.

The ICFTU, at its world congress last month, appealed to the United Nations, to governments and to world public opinion to exert every possible pressure to secure the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Czechoslovakia. It denounced the pernicious doctrine of "limited sovereignty" as an instrument of Soviet imperialism which flagrantly violates the universally recognised right of all peoples to self-determination. The millions of workers from all parts of the world, represented at congress, expressed their profound solidarity with the peoples of Czechoslovakia and pledged the ICFTU to champion their cause.

On this anniversary, the ICFTU calls on all democratic forces to join the struggle for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Czechoslovakia; for free elections organized under United Nations supervision; for trade union freedom including the

right for Czech and Slovak workers to form their own trade unions and choose their own leaders, the right to strike and to bargain collectively. Together with you, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions will continue its fight to achieve these aims.

Workers of Czechoslovakia!

The 1st of August has become a day to symbolize naked tyranny and oppression. A year ago, Soviet armies, accompanied by troops from Poland, East Germany, Bulgaria and Hungary, treacherously invaded Czechoslovakia, putting an end to people's aspirations for a little more freedom. On this anniversary, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions pledges once more its support for your cause; the free trade union movement throughout the world will remember the proud act of imperialist aggression. The world and the continent of Europe are settling down for a long stay - demonstrates the bankruptcy of the whole system of Soviet totalitarianism and domestic communism which has to resort to force and repression to maintain its grip on a people striving for freedom and democracy. We condemn the continued occupation to which Czechoslovakia is subjected and all those regimes which approve or condone it. We denounce those so-called trade union organizations which give their blessing to the creation of Czechoslovakia, thus proving once again that they are not workers' bodies but instruments of a totalitarian system.



Czechoslovak workers! Your struggle for more freedom, for workers' rights and a more democratic trade union structure has shown that no people can be oppressed for ever. Your refusal to bow down to terror, hiding behind the mask of "normalization", has evoked our unqualified admiration. We have watched your actions while in the shadow of Soviet tanks censorship was restored and tightened, and all tendencies for liberalization were smashed, the trade union program backing the as a transmission belt for party and management orders; and those not fully committed to the present hard-line policy are being purged at all levels.

The ICFTU, at its world congress last month, expressed to the United Nations, to governments and to world public opinion to exert every possible pressure to secure the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Czechoslovakia. It endorsed the resolutions drafted of "limited sovereignty" as an interim part of Soviet facilities which flagrantly violate the universally recognized right of all peoples to self-determination. The millions of workers from all parts of the world, represented at congress, expressed their profound solidarity with the people of Czechoslovakia and pledged the ICFTU to champion their cause.

On this anniversary, the ICFTU calls on all workers to join the struggle for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Czechoslovakia; for free elections organized under United Nations auspices; for trade union leaders including the