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No. 1

January 1970

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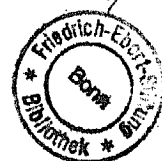
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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

CEYLON

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Dock strikes in Ceylon

Members of the ITF-affiliated Independent Harbour Workers' Union and six other unions organizing dockers have been on strike in ports throughout Ceylon since 12 December. The unions are demanding the introduction of a monthly wage for all dock workers and payment of arrears of overtime.

At the request of the union, the ITF has cabled the Prime Minister of Ceylon urging him to intervene in order to ensure a just settlement of the conflict. Early reports from Ceylon indicated that troops had been called in but later reports speak of efforts by the Prime Minister to bring about negotiations on the union proposals.

The ITF has issued a circular to its affiliated dockers' unions requesting them to cable messages of support to the striking dockers and to appeal to the Prime Minister to continue his conciliatory efforts.

TRADE UNIONS

ARGENTINA

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ILO supports ICFTU's demand for the restoration of trade union rights in Argentina

The Governing Body of the International Labour Organization has taken up ICFTU complaints of Argentinian government repression of the trade unions and has urged the government concerned to lift the suspension of trade union status and end the takeover of unions still affected. With respect to the restriction of collective bargaining and the imposition of compulsory arbitration by the Argentinian government, the ILO reaffirmed that the right to collective bargaining was a fundamental trade union right and drew the attention of the government to the importance of promoting effective consultation and cooperation between public authorities and workers' and employers' organizations.

GREAT BRITAIN

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Membership of TGWU reaches record level

Membership of the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union has reached a record total of 1,507,589. This is the highest total ever achieved by a union in Britain.

SPAIN

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Leading Spanish figures sign open letter to General Franco

Over a hundred prominent members of the Spanish democratic opposition have signed an open letter to General Franco calling for the restoration by the Spanish government of the democratic rights and freedoms enjoyed in other countries in Western Europe. The authors of the letter took as their starting point the recent statement by the Spanish government that Spain was determined to integrate itself fully into Europe. If this end is to be achieved, the signatories to the letter claim that it must be preceded by the restoration of complete trade union freedom and of the freedom of activity of political parties. They go on to ask for an amnesty for political and trade union detainees. The significance of the letter lies in the fact that it is the first public expression of the views of the three democratic opposition groups in Spain: the social democrats, the Catholic democrats and the liberal monarchists.

Following an appeal issued by the underground Spanish democratic trade union organization, the General Workers' Union of Spain (UGT), calling upon all Spanish workers to struggle for genuine democratic trade unions run by the workers themselves, a growing number of Spanish workers' organizations have staged protests against the bill on trade unions submitted to the Spanish Cortes in October 1969. Members of the UGT and other unions in the Asturias region of northern Spain recently formed a "Committee of Workers' Solidarity" with the aim of coordinating relief assistance to workers and their families persecuted by the dictatorial regime, as well as of organizing factory committees throughout the Asturias region to defend workers' interests. One of the Committee's first actions was to send a letter to the Cortes stressing that the new trade union law should be based on the principles of autonomy and workers' representation, that it should recognise the freedom of assembly and the right to strike.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

BELGIUM

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Belgian tram-men threaten strike

Members of the Tramway Sector of the ITF-affiliated Belgian Public Services Workers' Union may issue a strike warning expiring on 11 January if negotiations with the employers on a social programme for 1970 prove unsatisfactory. The present shortage of personnel might be alleviated, union representatives argue, if conditions of work and remuneration for tram-men were sufficiently improved to attract new entrants into the industry.

FRANCE  
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Flights again disrupted by French cabin attendants' strike

Flights operated by the three French airlines, UTA, Air France and Air Inter, were again disrupted on 11 December and 2 and 3 January when members of the ITF-affiliated French Cabin Attendants' Union (SNPNC) went on strike in protest against the French government proposal to replace state licensing of cabin attendants by an airline licensing system (see ITF Newsletter No. 12, 1969, p.105). A spokesman for the cabin attendants' union has stated that the union is prepared to accept a compromise solution, such as the establishment of either an independent or a joint body to control licensing.

French railwaymen to press for a forty-hour week in 1973

French unions organizing railwaymen are dissatisfied with the proposal of the French National Railways (SNCF) to cut working hours from 44 hours 30 minutes to 44 hours in 1970 and their assurance that they will look into possible measures for eventually reducing the working week to forty hours. At their next meeting with the management, union officials are expected to press for a reduction in working hours of one-and-a-half hours in 1970 and a programme which would give a forty-hour week by 1973.

GERMANY  
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Hamburg port authorities detain sub-standard Cypriot-flag vessel

Towards the end of last year, the Hamburg "Morgenpost" and other local newspapers carried accounts of the detention, by the Hamburg port authorities, for several days in November, of the Greek-owned Cypriot-flag vessel "Thios Costas", a Liberty ship built in 1944. The action by the authorities followed complaints by German unions, including the ITF-affiliated Transport & Public Service Workers' Union, that conditions on board the vessel were sub-standard. Among defects in the vessel and its safety equipment, the following were alleged: lifeboats were not seaworthy and could never have been launched in an emergency owing to the fact that the davits were badly rusted; the ship, with its 30-man crew, carried no licensed radio operator; medical supplies, as well as crew provisions, were very old. Crew accommodation was also described as "shocking".

OeTV presents German federal authority with an ultimatum

The ITF-affiliated German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV) has turned down an offer to its public service members of an 8 per cent salary increase in 1970. The union has issued an ultimatum to the competent authority demanding that a new offer be made before 9 January, this to include certain minimum union demands: a monthly increase of at least DM 100<sup>x</sup> for all grades; the acceptance of a cost-of-living clause

<sup>x</sup>DM 8.40 = £1

which would permit contracts to be terminated prematurely when the pay and conditions of public service workers fell below those of workers in other sectors of the economy; and the implementation in the spring of 1970 of the first phase of the new salary structure as sanctioned by the federal authorities in 1969. The main negotiating committee of the OeTV has reaffirmed its demands that negotiations for a new salary structure be resumed immediately with a view to a positive conclusion to these negotiations before the end of 1970.

#### German stewardesses with BEA win 10% pay award

A 10 per cent salary increase has been won for German stewardesses employed by British European Airways. The rise, negotiated by the ITF-affiliated German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union, is included in the terms of a new one-year contract which took effect on 1 January, six months before the old contract was due to expire. All other German employees of the airline benefit from a revised salary scale, providing for increases of at least 10 per cent in all grades, together with improved promotion possibilities as the result of the creation of two new salary grades and increases in Sunday and night work rates. Union members have already received a lump-sum payment of DM 300 to cover cost-of-living increases for the last three months of 1969.

#### Negotiations for German flight safety employees soon

In talks with the German Ministry of Transport, concluded on 4 December, the ITF-affiliated German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV) has put forward proposals for improved conditions of work for air traffic control personnel. During the discussions, a large measure of agreement was reached with the Ministry on: earlier retirement for air traffic controllers; the introduction of an increased leave entitlement; the provision of refresher courses; and maintenance of earnings in case of reduced work demands. Negotiations on the basis of these demands are due to begin this month.

GHANA

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#### Settlement finally reached in the Tema port workers dispute

The ITF-affiliated Maritime and Dockworkers Union of TUC (Ghana) has reached a settlement with the Ghana Cargo Handling Corporation, thus ending the Tema port workers' dispute which has lasted for some 14 months. Dockers in the port of Tema went on strike on 7 October 1968 in protest against the re-instatement, after suspension, of the General Manager and the Personnel Manager of the Corporation. The dockers answered a call by the union's national leaders and the General Secretary of the Ghana TUC to return to work the following day, but when they tried to do so they were locked out and 2,000 of them were told that they were dismissed.

Under the terms of the settlement now reached: the lock-out instituted by the Corporation is revoked from 2 January 1970, all permanent and casual employees dismissed as a result of the lock-out being asked to report for work on that date; and an immediate payment of one month's salary was to be made to all permanent employees in order to tide them over the Christmas period. Permanent employees will also continue to have credited to them past service accrued up to the time of the lock-out.

GREAT BRITAIN

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BEA staff accept new pay deal

Ground staff of British European Airways, members of the ITF-affiliated British Transport and General Workers' Union, have accepted a new pay and productivity deal based on improved aircraft and cargo handling techniques (ramp handling). The deal provides in some cases for increases of up to £5 per week in the first year, with minimum increases of 70s over three years, including increases of 30s in the second and third years. An interim pay award of 38s per week is to be made until the new techniques of cargo handling are introduced. Those affected by the new pay system are loaders, porters, drivers, baggage masters and supervisors.

Seamen's union submits claim for significant increases in basic pay

At a meeting with the British Shipping Federation on 6 January, the ITF-affiliated British National Union of Seamen (NUS) submitted a claim for large increases in basic rates for its 54,000 members. Commenting on the reasons behind the claim, NUS General Secretary William Hogarth said after the meeting that the gap between his members' earnings and those in industry generally would have to be closed, "but we did not say that this should happen tomorrow." A further argument for a substantial increase is that the British seaman's pay compares unfavourably with international standards. An ILO report issued last year showed that the seafarers of 19 other countries received higher basic rates than the British.

NORWAY

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Norwegian seafarers to be paid war risk bonus for Nigeria and Biafra

Three ITF-affiliated Norwegian seafaring unions - the Seamen's Union, the Navigating Officers' Union and the Ships Engineers' Union -, together with the Ship Masters' Union, have reached agreement with the Shipowners' Association on the introduction of a war risk bonus for ships sailing to Nigeria and Biafra. Under the terms of the agreement, normal rates (including allowances and increments) are increased by 100% for the period during which the vessel is sailing within waters bounded by, and including, the rivers Benue and Calabar. The minimum amount payable for a period of three days is 200 kr<sup>x</sup>; for longer periods, the same minimum is payable for the first three days plus a minimum of 40 kr for each additional day. The new rates apply from 24 November 1969 until the cessation of hostilities.

<sup>x</sup>£1 equals N. kr.17.15.

SWEDEN  
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Sweden to introduce 40-hour week by 1973

A proposal by the Ministry of Social Affairs provides that the working week in Sweden should be cut by 2½ hours to 40 hours in 1973. The reduction in working hours would be effected in two stages, on 1 January 1971 and 1 January 1973. The new hours will apply to all wage and salary earners. The maximum amount of overtime to be worked per annum would also be reduced from 200 to 150 hours.

UNITED STATES  
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New York transport strike called off

The threat of a complete shut-down of New York's bus and underground system, due to begin on 1 January, was averted when a new contract was reached for the 35,000 members of the ITF-affiliated US Transport Workers' Union. The previous contract expired on 31 December 1969. Under the terms of the agreement, employees will receive an increase of 18 per cent in hourly rates. The increase is to be spread over three years. Final acceptance of the settlement depends on a postal ballot of the membership.

Sheet metal workers reject new contract

A new two-year contract tentatively agreed on 4 December between representatives of four US rail shopcraft unions and US railroad management (see ITF Newsletter No. 12, 1969, p.107) has been rejected by members of the Sheet Metal Workers and will not now be put into effect. The Sheet Metal Workers' Vice President J.W.O'Brien has said that he believes his members turned the settlement down because revised rules covering the assignment of jobs which the settlement introduces would permit a limited crossing of craft lines.

IAM Vice President Winpisinger, spokesman for the four unions, has called upon the carriers to resume negotiations for a new agreement not later than 6 January, Winpisinger believes at this stage that a satisfactory settlement can still be reached without resort to strike action.

US machinists sign new three-year contract with Northwest Airlines

3,500 members of the ITF-affiliated US International Association of Machinists (IAM) working for Northwest Airlines have signed a new three-year contract. The terms of the agreement include: an immediate increase of 62 cents<sup>x</sup> an hour for top-rated mechanics (who now receive \$4.14 an hour) back-dated to 1 January 1969 and further increases which will give an hourly rate of \$5.62 by 1 May 1971; the same percentage increases for other classifications; a cost-of-living bonus equivalent to an extra 21 cents an hour; non-contributory pension scheme effective from 1 January 1970; improved health insurance benefits and life insurance valued at \$7,000; and an increase in shift premiums of 10 cents an hour.

<sup>x</sup>\$2.40 = £1

PERSONALIA

Sidney Greene, General Secretary of the ITF-affiliated British National Union of Railwaymen and chairman of the British Trades Union Congress, was awarded a knighthood in the New Year Honours List. Bro. Greene is chairman of the ITF Railwaymen's Section.

Emile Haudenschild, vice-president of the Swiss Railwaymen's Union (SEV), retired recently. Haudenschild is vice-chairman of the ITF Railwaymen's Section. He is succeeded as vice-president of the union by Louis Joye.

Eiler Jensen, president of the Danish Trade Union Federation (LO) from 1942 to 1967, died recently at the age of 75.

Hjalmar Bååw, secretary of the Swedish Ships Officers' Union, has retired after 29 years' service with the union.

Remi Van Cant, has been appointed Assistant Secretary of the Mercantile Marine Section of the ITF-affiliated Belgian Transport Workers' Union.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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Dockers' Section Committee Meeting	-	Bremen, 19-20 January 1970
Management Committee	-	London, 10-11 February 1970
Road Transport Workers' Section Safety Sub-Committee Meeting	-	London, 25-26 February 1970

ERRATUM

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The item on improved conditions of work for Swissair workers which appears on p.107 of Newsletter No. 12, 1969 should refer to: an increase in the monthly compensation for *irregular* hours of work to 45 francs (formerly 30 francs) and not an increase for "regular" hours.

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



LATE ITEM: British merchant navy officers to submit proposals for new salary scales

The ITF-affiliated Merchant Navy and Airline Officers' Association (MNAOA) is to submit a proposal to the National Maritime Board shortly that officers' salary scales should be reconstructed. The Association's General Secretary Douglas Tennant writes in the MNAOA "Telegraph" that the new scales should be woven round a maximum of 9 hours' duty per day for 34 weeks in a year, with leave of 18 weeks. The total number of hours of duty during the year would be reduced to an average 41 hours per week. There would be compensation in the form of consolidated payments for public holidays, weekends, annual leave and hours worked in excess of the above maxima. The new scales, developed from the minimum rate for junior officers, would cover all grades in the officers' career structure. Provision would also be made for cadets and apprentices. Additional factors such as absence from home, the availability of officers for 24 hours a day and the recognition of the professional qualifications and responsibilities of officers would also be taken into consideration in the salary scales.

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