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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

INTERNATIONAL

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ITF views successful at ICAO airline security conference

ITF representatives at the 17th Extraordinary Session of the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) Assembly, devoted to the problems of airline security arising from the ever-increasing wave of sabotage and hijackings of civil aircraft, were able to ensure that the Federation's policies on the combatting of such criminal activities were overwhelmingly reflected in the final decisions taken by the Session. The resolutions adopted by the Assembly gave satisfaction to almost every point which was contained in the comprehensive working papers which had been submitted by the ITF's Civil Aviation Section as the result of an emergency meeting of the Federation's Aviation Safety Committee held on 14 and 15 May last.

The resolutions adopted by the Assembly's Committee A, which was concerned with practical and technical measures to deter and safeguard against airline sabotage, followed very closely the lines set out in the ITF's submission, particularly as regards protection of aircraft on the ground and the processing of passengers, crew members, freight and mail. Support was also given to the ITF's demand for the establishment of airport security committees composed of all parties concerned in order to develop and implement security measures and procedures.

In Committee B, which was concerned with the legal aspects of airline security, resolutions were adopted calling on States which have not already done so to ratify the ICAO Tokyo Convention of 1963 concerning hijacking and other offences on board aircraft, and particularly Article 11 which deals with the freedom of crew members and passengers to continue their journey once a hijacked aircraft has landed, as well to overhaul and bring up to date legislative provisions relating to offences against civil aircraft. A further resolution calls for an examination of the manner in which ICAO Conventions are framed and welcomes proposals for the simplification of existing procedures.

Details of the technical security measures recommended by the ICAO Assembly have already been despatched by the Secretariat to civil aviation affiliates in order that no time is lost in pursuing their early implementation with national governments.

The ITF team at the ICAO Assembly, which met in Montreal from 16 to 30 June, consisted of: C.H. Blyth, General Secretary; J.K. Post, Chairman, ITF Civil Aviation Section; J. Wahle, Director Engineering and Safety, US Flight Engineers' International

Association; M.B. Martin, Airport Officer, UK Transport & General Workers' Union; J. Peterpaul, Airline Coordinator, US International Association of Machinists; and Capt. J. Soto-Reyes, External Affairs Secretary, Mexican Airline Pilots' Association.

Safety at work main theme at ITF Fishermen's Section meeting

The German fishing port of Bremerhaven was the venue of the ITF Fishermen's Section meeting held from 15-16 June this year under the chairmanship of R. Dekeyzer, Section Chairman and newly elected President of the EEC Joint Consultative Committee for the Fishing Industry (see also Personalia). A Press Statement on the proceedings was adopted by the delegates and distributed at a press conference held after the ITF meeting had ended and presided over by H. Wiemers, Vice Chairman of the ITF Fishermen's Section (see Supplement to this issue). Apart from the formal discussions, the delegates were also able to study the practical side of the German fishing industry, thanks to the excellent arrangements made by the host union, the German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (ÖTV), visiting on the second day of the meeting a fish auction, a fish processing factory and the Bremerhaven fishing port employers' association's facilities.

ITF and PSI discuss urban transport questions

A joint meeting of unions affiliated with the ITF and the Public Services' International (PSI) was held in London on 14 and 15 July to consider problems relating to working conditions in urban transport. The meeting, held under the chairmanship of J. Stappung, was attended by affiliates of the two Internationals from Austria, Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland.

The meeting decided to recommend that the future work of the two Internationals should be governed by the following principles:

1. Urban transport undertakings perform an important public service task for the benefit of the entire community. The principle of financial self-sufficiency is consequently not to be applied to urban transport undertakings. In so far as urban transport undertakings continue to pursue the aim of financial self-sufficiency, this should not be allowed to impair wages and working conditions in this sector. This implies that the Government or other appropriate authority should provide grants and subsidies for the maintenance of adequate public transport services to urban communities. The essential nature of these services and the benefits accruing to the community fully justify this type of public financing. Particular attention is to be given to the manifest advantages of such grants and subsidies being paid on a regular basis within the framework of a comprehensive planned forecast of the community's particular needs.

2. Earnings of employees in urban transport services should be comparable with those paid to other workers having the same status, responsibility and performing work of an equally exacting character. The wage level in urban transport services should also take full account of various characteristics peculiar to urban transport operations, namely inconvenient working hours. At the same time, every effort should be made to reduce the extent of irregular working hours and inconvenient shift-working, which make for unattractive working schedules and the deployment of staff specially recruited for this purpose.
3. The main improvements necessary in working conditions relate to the shortening of working hours, the general implementation of the principle of the 5-day week and the reduction of long spread-overs. The 5-day week should on no account be exceeded, and staff required to work at weekends and on Public Holidays to maintain essential services should be compensated by an equal number of days off plus further time off in compensation for actually working on these days.

The meeting requested the Secretariat to carry out further investigations of working conditions in urban transport services.

DENMARK

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Negotiations reaching final stage in Danish fishing dispute

Information available when this Newsletter was being prepared indicates that negotiations are still in progress concerning a final settlement of the dispute between the Esbjerg Fishing Shipmasters' Association and the Fishermen's Group of the ITF-affiliated Danish Transport & General Workers' Union. The dispute, which concerned the refusal of the Esbjerg Association to enter into an agreement with our affiliate concerning a wide range of improvements in fishermen's conditions, including the payment of a guaranteed minimum wage and the application to fishermen of the stipulations of the Danish Holidays with Pay Act of 1956 and subsequent amendments to this, resulted in strike action by the Danish union which lasted from 20 May until 11 June.

As a result of approaches from the Danish union, the ITF requested support for its strike from affiliated unions in the Faroe Islands, Germany, Great Britain, the Netherlands and Norway.

It is now reported that as the outcome of further negotiations held following the end of the strike, agreement has been reached on most of the issues in dispute. However, the question of annual leave with pay is still proving a stumbling block in the achievement of a final settlement.

GREAT BRITAIN

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ITF requests affiliates' support for British dockers' national strike

British dockers, the majority of whom are organized in the ITF-affiliated Transport & General Workers' Union, began official strike action throughout the country's ports on 14 July in support of their claim for an increase in the basic time rate from £11.1.8 -- which, the union points out, is far below the basic paid in most other British industries -- to £20 per week. The port employers have refused to offer any increase in the time rate, and have instead proposed to increase the minimum earnings guarantee to £20 a week -- a proposal which was rejected by a dockers' delegate conference. The stoppage now in progress is the first official national dock strike to take place in the United Kingdom since the General Strike of 1926.

The ITF has kept its dockers' affiliates in other countries in touch with the progress of the dispute and has now informed them that the Transport & General Workers' Union is requesting support in the form of a refusal to handle cargoes diverted from British ports as a result of the strike.

UNITED STATES

=====

IBT wins fight against US charter company

The US International Brotherhood of Teamsters ended a strike earlier this month against the US supplemental carrier World Airways. The Brotherhood reports big gains in the settlement which resulted in the strike being called off. The dispute concerned the failure of the company satisfactorily to renegotiate a contract covering flight crews and cabin attendants. At the request of the union, the ITF contacted aviation affiliates in a number of countries trafficked by World Airways for support to the striking airline employees.

In a letter received by the ITF's General Secretary from the IBT, its Vice-President wrote that "we were able to win substantial gains because you and a number of others demonstrated true trade union solidarity and cooperation."

TRANSPORT

INTERNATIONAL

=====

IMCO Sub-Committee on Life-Saving Appliances

The above Sub-Committee held its fourth session from 8-12 June 1970 in London. Among the subjects discussed were the following: Part B of the Code of Safety for Fishermen and Fishing Vessels (the section of the code which concern life-saving appliances),

life-saving appliances in passenger ships, instructions on certain aspects of survival at sea and fire-resisting lifeboats in tankers.

With regard to life-saving appliances for passenger vessels the sub-committee was of the opinion that a relationship between subdivision and life-saving appliances remained an important factor since the degree of subdivision was related to the time during which life-saving appliances could safely be launched.

Arising from the discussion of the Chapter devoted to Life-Saving Appliances in Part B of the Draft Code of Safety, where it had been stated that the Code was intended for fishing vessels "operating in unlimited waters in weather of unlimited severity", the Sub-Committee expressed the view that provisions recommended through such a code might not be adequate for the safe operation of fishing vessels in such circumstances and that the Code should therefore be regarded as containing absolute minimum requirements for the guidance of national authorities and without prejudice to any existing national regulations or practices. Otherwise there was a serious risk that certain safety standards might be lowered. After proposing some substantial amendments to the Chapter on Life-Saving Appliances, e.g. concerning the number, capacity, construction and equipment of lifeboats and liferafts, the number and positioning of lifebuoys, the type of launching devices and the lighting arrangements in alleyways, stairways and exits, the Sub-Committee decided to recommend to the Maritime Safety Committee that the preparations for an International Conference on Safety of Fishing Vessels should be intensified in order that a draft International Convention might be produced soon for consideration at the Conference.

Finally, the Sub-Committee was informed of the usefulness of small hand-held radiotelephones in certain emergency situations, e.g. in communications between survival craft and parent vessel and in fire-fighting operations, and took note of the fact that some governments intended to raise with the Maritime Safety Committee the questions of safety of pilot ladders and of the inclusion of life-saving appliances for ships carrying dangerous chemicals in the Sub-Committee work programme.

ITF observers at the meeting were M.D. Neve, British Transport & General Workers' Union, and A.G. Selander, ITF Secretariat.

Hungary joins IMCO

Hungary has joined IMCO. This brings membership of IMCO to 72 countries.

SWEDEN
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New hijacking law to be introduced

The Swedish Government is proposing to submit a new Bill, dealing specifically with penalties for aircraft hijacking, to Parliament this autumn. At present, this offence is not specially covered by

any existing Swedish law. The new Act is understood to prescribe penalties up to a maximum of ten years' imprisonment.

TRADE UNIONS

INTERNATIONAL
=====

Disappointment at ILO Conference failure to condemn trade union
freedom violations in Greece and Spain

Bitter disappointment has been expressed by trade union representatives at the 1970 International Labour Conference with the failure of the Conference to condemn the continued suppression of trade union rights in Spain and Greece.

A resolution on Greece adopted by the Resolutions Committee was not accepted by the Conference for lack of a quorum. The Greek governmental delegation, however, had already walked out of the Conference following the Resolutions Committee decision. The resolution itself stated that ILO standards on freedom of association were no longer respected in Greece and that trade unionists had been imprisoned and deported, some of them without trial, for their trade union activity. It called upon the Greek government to grant them an amnesty and to amend existing law and practice to bring it into line with ILO Conventions on trade union rights.

A draft resolution on the labour and trade union situation in Spain was defeated in the Resolutions Committee as the result of opposition and abstentions by both employer and government representatives. The Chairman of the Workers' Group on the Resolutions Committee, in a statement made to the Conference afterwards, said:

"The Workers' Group strongly condemns the governments which have preferred to follow national, economic and other interests -- which are not at stake -- rather than respect the principles and standards of the ILO with regard to freedom of association. The Workers' Group also wishes to condemn the attitude of the Employers' Group which systematically opposed any kind of resolution, and all attempts to discuss amendments. The Workers' Group wonders whether they can be sincere when they call upon the trade unions to collaborate more closely with them. What type of trade unions are they thinking of when they allow themselves to be the accomplices of pseudo trade unions who enjoy no freedom".

GREAT BRITAIN
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British radio officers declare closed shop

The ITF-affiliated British Radio and Electronic Officers' Union (REOU) has announced that it is declaring a closed shop with effect from 1 January 1971, and will if necessary take industrial action to enforce this.

A resolution unanimously adopted by the union's Executive Council states: "As from January 1 1971, it will be obligatory for all marine and electronic officers in British ships to be members of the REOU. After that date industrial action will be taken as and when necessary to enforce the union's closed shop among radio officers in British ships".

The union already represents more than 70 per cent of the 3,000 radio officers serving in the British merchant marine.

UNITED STATES
=====

Transport Workers join US Congress of Railway Unions

The Transport Workers' Union of America (TWUA) last month became the sixth union to join the ITF-affiliated Congress of Railway Unions (CRU) when it affiliated its 15,000 rail members. The TWUA is already a member of the ITF on an overall basis.

Air traffic controllers merge with ITF affiliate

In a national referendum completed this month, members of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers' Association (PATCO) gave a 92 per cent majority to a plan to merge the organization with the ITF-affiliated Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association (MEBA). PATCO represents more than 7,000 US air traffic controllers. Its President, John Leyden, welcomed the decision and said that "the merger brings us new resources, including MEBA's very considerable experience in labour-management relations for professional people".

US affiliate calls for free fares and public ownership on transit systems

In testimony presented to the Congressional Banking and Currency Subcommittee last month, John M. Elliott, President of the ITF-affiliated Amalgamated Transit Union and a member of the ITF Executive Board, reiterated his union's call for the introduction of a tax-supported free fare system and public ownership of transit systems in the United States. He stressed that his organization would support public ownership provided that it gave adequate protection to the existing rights of transit employees to collective bargaining and other benefits.

Elliott said that a tax-supported free fare system represented the only way of spreading transit costs and benefits to all sections of the American community. Increasing fares, he emphasized, were a form of regressive taxation -- a tax imposed on the working people, the poor and the aged.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

AUSTRALIA

=====

Qantas air hostesses' successful strike for higher pay

Stewardesses employed by Qantas Airways ended a week-old strike on 7 July after they had won pay increases of up to 29 per cent as the result of talks held under the auspices of the Commonwealth Conciliation Commissioners. The stewardesses struck in support of a claim for an increase of 25 per cent, to bring them into line with their colleagues on Australia domestic airlines, who had recently received an increase of 26.4 per cent spread over three years following the threat of strike action.

Nation-wide strike affects container ship cargoes

A strike by clerks, storemen, packers and crane drivers has paralyzed movements at container terminals and depots in all of Australia's main ports. The strike, in support of a claim for standard shift work premiums at terminals and depots, has been called by the ITF-affiliated Federated Clerks' Union, together with the Storemen and Packers' Union and the Federated Engine Drivers' and Firemen's Association.

CHILE

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Agreement reached in Chilean docks dispute

A settlement was reported to have been reached earlier this month in a dockers' dispute which resulted in a 23-day boycott of copper shipments from Chilean ports during June. The dockers agreed to suspend their stoppage during the last week in June at the request of the Chilean President in order to enable further negotiations to take place. The settlement reached is understood to include provision for a 50 per cent increase in overtime rates applying to copper loading.

GERMANY

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German railwaymen to benefit from new duty time agreement

As the result of a new agreement between their organization, the ITF-affiliated German Railwaymen's Union, and the Federal Railways Board, German railwaymen are to benefit earlier than originally envisaged from improvements in duty time regulations.

Under an agreement reached in 1968, it had been stipulated that with effect from the beginning of 1973, interruptions of work of less than 40 minutes' duration would no longer be considered as so-called "stand-by" time, which qualifies for only 50 per cent of the normal pay rate. Now it has been decided that the effective date

will be brought forward to 1 January 1971, from which date all time spent at a railwaymen's place of work will be compensated for at the full rate.

Monthly pay sought for public service workers

The ITF-affiliated German Transport & Public Service Workers' Union has begun negotiations this month designed to establish the principle that all its members employed in Federal or local public service should be paid on a monthly basis.

GREAT BRITAIN
=====

Some progress on municipal busmen's claims

The employers have already conceded part of the claim put forward by the ITF-affiliated Transport & General Workers' Union on behalf of Britain's municipal bus employees. All busmen will now be entitled to three weeks' annual leave after one year's service and improvements have also been made in overtime rates.

However, on the major point -- an increase in minimum rates for drivers to £20 a week, with corresponding increases for conductors and garage hands -- the employers are not expected to reply until September. A similar pay claim bringing the basic rate of drivers up to £20 per week has been submitted this month by the union on behalf of company-employed bus workers.

Big pay increases sought by British railway workers

Substantial wage rises are to be demanded by two of Britain's railway unions. At its annual meeting in Inverness earlier this month, the ITF-affiliated National Union of Railwaymen voted in favour of a claim for an all-round increase of 25 per cent. At the same time, the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (also an ITF affiliate) submitted a claim for a "substantial increase" on behalf of its membership.

ICELAND
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Government intervenes in merchant officers' dispute

A fortnight-old strike by Icelandic merchant marine officers for a 40 per cent increase was ended on 30 June by government intervention. The government issued a provisional law which made the strike illegal with effect from midnight of the same day. The law provides for an immediate increase of 15 per cent together with certain bonuses already given to other sections of Icelandic industry as the result of a general strike last month. A further agreement will be arrived at before 1 September under the auspices of a government-appointed commission.

INDIA

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Strikes hit Port of Calcutta

Dockers in the Port of Calcutta have now ended a strike which began on 2 July following assurances from the Government that amendments would be made in the scheme regulating their employment. The strikers had complained that many thousands of port workers had been maintained in the position of temporary labour -- some for as long as ten years. Agreement has now been reached that some 10,000 listed and casual workers will be immediately registered. No settlement, however, has yet been reached in a similar dispute concerning bargemen in the port which led to strike action at the end of May.

Increased baggage allowance for Indian seafarers

Seafarers belonging to the ITF-affiliated National Union of Seafarers of India ended a boycott of ships on 10 July, after the Government of India had agreed to grant an increased baggage allowance to seamen returning home after a voyage.

NETHERLANDS

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Better contract signed for Dutch coach drivers

A new agreement just signed on behalf of drivers of tour and group excursion coaches by the ITF-affiliated Netherlands Transport Workers' Federation provides for wage increases varying between 18 and 24 guilders^{x)} per week, together with further rises scheduled to take effect from 1 January 1971. Working hours will be 42½ per week with effect from the same date and annual leave entitlement will be increased by one day. The new contract will run until January 1972.

x) £1 equals 8.69 guilders.

SINGAPORE

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NTUC will organize transport cooperative

At a meeting held in June, some 600 taxi drivers in the Republic of Singapore agreed to become the pioneer members of the new transport workers' cooperative which the National Trade Union Council is proposing to establish.

The NTUC's Secretary General, Devan Nair, told them that the project would be feasible if it could have enough capital to put around 1,000 new taxis into service. The cooperative's taxis would have their own livery and member drivers would have special uniforms.

Once the cooperative had made a name for efficient and courteous service, he said, it would be simple commonsense for the Government to decide that all new taxi licences would be issued only to the transport cooperative.

The General Secretary of the Taxi-Drivers' Association, Choo Chong Fok, emphasized that Singapore taximen had been long waiting for such a cooperative. At present taxi drivers had to pay \$12 a shift to owners for the use of their taxis and stressed that even if drivers paid that amount for the next 20 years they would get nothing in return. At present, drivers also did not benefit from any gratuity or provident fund.

UNITED STATES
=====

Government gives in to railroads' blackmail

Members of the ITF-affiliated United Transportation Union were forced to end their strike against three railroads on its first day this month as the result of government intervention prompted by the railway companies' threat to close down all US railroads. The union had decided on a limited stoppage against the three rail undertakings - the Baltimore & Ohio, the Louisville & Nashville, and the Southern Pacific Railroad -- in an effort to secure meaningful direct negotiations on the long-standing safety issue of cab crewing. The union contends that the locomotive engineer should have a helper in the cab for safety reasons, but years of negotiation on the issue had failed to shift the railroads from their position of outright rejection. Bargaining talks under a federal mediator finally broke down on June 11 last.

US railway management has long campaigned for a prohibition on railway strikes and has repeatedly used threats to close down the entire system as a weapon to force government intervention and compulsory arbitration in strikes directed against segments of the industry.

BRAC calls strike against Northwest Airlines

Some 3,500 employees, including ticket agents and office personnel, of Northwest Airlines who are members of the ITF-affiliated Brotherhood of Railway & Airline Clerks went on strike on July 8 to enforce their demands that they should be given parity in wages and conditions with workers of other US airlines. Negotiations on the claim began last year and continued long after the existing contract expired on 1 November. The talks finally broke down completely after Northwest had refused to match wages and conditions for comparable jobs in the other airlines. The strike deadline was announced well in advance by President Dennis of the BRAC so as to avoid unnecessary inconvenience to the travelling public.

Big gains for rail firemen and oilers

The International Brotherhood of Firemen and Oilers has won large-scale pay improvements in a new contract negotiated last month on behalf of its 13,000 members throughout the United States.

The contract provides the following increases:

- 2 per cent for all retroactive to 1 January 1969.
- 3 per cent for all retroactive to 1 July 1969, plus a 5 cents (5d) an hour increase for skilled mechanics.
- 5 cents an hour for all retroactive to 1 September 1969.
- 5 per cent for all retroactive to 1 January 1970, plus 5 cents an hour for skilled mechanics.
- 4 cents per hour for all retroactive to 1 April 1970 and an additional 4 cents an hour effective 1 August 1970.

Under the agreement, retroactive payments alone will total at least \$600 (£250) per member, whilst the new pay scales raise average rates to \$3.34 per hour.

Flight engineers agree new contract with American Airlines

The ITF-affiliated Flight Engineers' International Association (FEIA) has supplied details of its newly-won two-year contract with American Airlines, effective from 1 June. The contract includes two pay increases -- the first, of 10 per cent, retroactive to 1 December last; the second, effective from 1 June 1970, of 13 per cent. Vacation entitlement is now 5 weeks after 20 years, and sick leave accrument goes up from 134 to 150 days. Life insurance cover has also been increased by 40 per cent, to a maximum of \$70,000^{x)}:

On scheduling, where the normal monthly maximum of 75 flight hours is exceeded, a flight engineer is credited 1¼ minutes for each minute between 75 and 80 hours, and 1½ minutes between 80 and 85. If however the engineer has been re-assigned, all time between 75 and 85 hours is credited at two minutes for each minute flown.

The contract also includes new monthly pay rates for the 747 (based on 75 hours per month), effective from 1 January 1970 and, in brackets, from 1 January 1971. These range from 2nd year \$1,975 (1,994) to, in 12th year, \$2,803 (2,864) in domestic operations. The comparable international operations rates in the 12th year are \$3,075 (3,135). Guaranteed pay represents 83.3 per cent or 62.30 hours.

x) £1 equals \$2.40

New contracts follow end of National Airlines dispute

As a sequel to the end of the National Airlines dispute, which resulted from the locking-out by National of employees organized in the ITF-affiliated International Association of Machinists (IAM) and which led to the blacking at Heathrow Airport (London) of a National proving flight between London and Miami by British ITF affiliates, we can report that membership approval has been given to a new contract reached between the IAM and the company. In addition to the reinstatement with full rights and seniority of all IAM members dismissed or locked-out by National, the contract also includes pay increases which will raise a top mechanic's pay from \$4.14 to \$5.65^{x)} per hour by 1 May 1971.

A similar agreement has been finalized by the other union which struck National: the Air Line Employees' Association, representing station and ramp agents, reservations staff and clerical personnel. The ALEA's contract provides for wage increases of 11 per cent per year for the three-year duration, the introduction of a full union shop, and improved sick leave, pensions and vacation benefits.

x) £1 equals \$2.40.

PERSONALIA

G.J.H. Alink, President of the ITF-affiliated Netherlands Transport Workers' Federation and a member of the ITF Executive Board, celebrated his 60th birthday on 26 June.

Roger Dekeyzer, Belgian member of the ITF Executive Board and Chairman of the ITF Fishermen's Section, has been unanimously elected as first President of the EEC Joint Consultative Committee for the Fishing Industry. Dekeyzer was also recently awarded the Belgian "Laureat du Travail - palme d'or - honoris causa" for his international work in the field of fisheries and ports.

Giuseppe Lagorio has resigned from the General Secretaryship of the ITF-affiliated Italian Seafarers' Federation (FILM-CISL) on his appointment as Director of the Cassa Marittima Meridionale in Naples.

Mario Mascetti has been elected as his successor.

Fred D. Nicoll, Executive Vice-President of the ITF-affiliated Canadian Brotherhood of Railway, Transport & General Workers, has died in Ottawa at the age of 53.

Morris Paladino, Assistant General Secretary of the ICFTU, has resigned to return to work with the US AFL-CIO.

B.L. Sorah has been appointed secretary-treasurer pro tem of the US Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees in succession to the late Frank Noakes.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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- Management Committee - London, 28 July 1970
- Meeting on conditions on ships
in coastal and short sea trades - London, 2-3 September
1970
- Civil Aviation Section
Conference - Miami Beach USA, 28 Sept. -
1 October 1970
- Seafarers' Section
Conference - Geneva, (revised date)
9-10 October 1970
- Executive Board Meeting - London, 27-28 November
1970

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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MEETING OF THE FISHERMEN'S SECTION

Bremerhaven, 15-16 June 1970

The Fishermen's Section of the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) met in Bremerhaven on Monday and Tuesday, 15-16 June 1970. It was attended by some twenty-five delegates from Belgium, Denmark, Federal Germany, Finland, Holland, Japan, Norway and the USA, as well as observers from the Agricultural and Fisheries Department of the EEC and the Brussels Committee of the ITF.

After the meeting had approved the Secretariat's Report on Activities and reviewed the effect given to six resolutions, which had been adopted at the ITF International Fishermen's Conference held in Hull in October 1967, the Section proceeded to deal with the question of safety on board fishing vessels.

Note was taken of the progress made with the International Safety Code for the Fishing Industry being drawn up jointly by the ILO, IMCO and FAO. Part A of the Code, intended primarily for skippers and crews, has been finalized, and work is now proceeding on Part B, which will be addressed to owners and builders of fishing vessels. ITF representatives played a substantial part on the ILO/IMCO/FAO Committee which prepared Part A, and it was agreed to seek similar ITF participation in connection with Part B. A Working Party was set up to make the necessary preparations for ITF participation.

In connection with safety, renewed attention was given to an idea, first put forward in a resolution adopted at the Hull Conference of October 1967, envisaging an internationally coordinated system of support vessels providing medical, repair and other facilities as well as weather information for vessels at fishing grounds. Information obtained from IMCO showed that in various countries throughout the world facilities of this kind exist, so the idea of an internationally conceived system was felt to be feasible, and it was agreed that the matter should be strongly pressed at IMCO.

Further ideas considered in connection with safety included the preparation of a practical manual, based on the ILO/IMCO/FAO Code, with a view to widespread distribution among fishing vessel crews, and the appointment of safety delegates or committees on board fishing vessels, trained at the owner's or authorities' expense with a view to ensuring maximum compliance with prescribed safety procedures.

Next the meeting dealt with working and living conditions on board fishing vessels, with special reference to hours of work, rest periods and manning scales. Stress was laid on satisfactory standards both from the social point of view and as a factor in enhancing safety. Some of the countries reported growing difficulty in recruiting suitable manpower for the fishing industry. Better working conditions and amenities, including in particular proper accommodation, adequate rest periods during fishing operations, annual holidays and leave between voyages were mentioned as a means of keeping men in the industry and attracting new entrants. These matters too will be pursued as strongly as possible through representations to the ILO and IMCO.

The remaining business of the meeting was concerned with the activities of the ILO and IMCO on behalf of fishermen, and with the developments taking place in the fisheries sector of the European Economic Community. The section noted the ratification status of the various international instruments adopted by the ILO of fishermen's questions and called upon the ILO and governments concerned to make further efforts to increase the number of ratifications. It also noted the ILO's plans for dealing with fishermen's questions in the coming years and considered the part which the ITF and its fishermen's affiliates could play in this connection, on the basis of the objectives formulated in the course of the discussions. These included the following:

- The fixed element of fishermen's earnings should be increased in relation to catch money, so as to ensure an adequate guaranteed wage.
- Working hours should not exceed eight a day during journeys to and from fishing grounds or during stays in ports.
- At fishing grounds, there should be an uninterrupted rest of at least eight hours in 24 and adequate breaks for meals.
- Adequate leave with pay should be provided, comprising an annual holiday and, at the end of a trip, compensatory leave to offset week-ends and Public Holidays spent at sea.
- Effective provision should be made for registration of fishermen and regularity of employment.
- Improved training schemes and upgrading of fishermen's certificates.
- Improvement of crew quarters and facilities in accordance with present day notions.

The meeting further noted the programme of meetings of IMCO and discussed ways and means of ensuring effective ITF participation in the activities of the organization.

Finally the meeting received a report on developments in the fishing sector of the EEC, particularly the progress made with the setting up of a Joint Advisory Council, composed of employers' and workers' members and specifically designed for advising the Community Authorities on the social problems of the fishing industry.

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