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*ITF Road Transport Workers' Section Conference -- London
4-6 November, 1970*

New standards for seafarers set by ILO Maritime Conference.

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

INTERNATIONAL

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ITF Road Transport Workers' Section Conference - London, 4-6
November 1970

A report on the conference appears as a supplement to this issue.

New standards for seafarers set by ILO Maritime Conference

A report on the maritime session of the International Labour Conference appears as a supplement to this issue.

TRANSPORT

INTERNATIONAL

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Soviet Union joins ICAO

The Soviet Union joined the International Civil Aviation Organization in October. ICAO now has 120 member states.

GREAT BRITAIN

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Pearson recommendations for seafarers come into operation next year

Following discussions at a meeting of the National Maritime Board agreement has been reached on the implementation of certain of the recommendations of the Pearson Committee of Inquiry into the Shipping Industry.

With effect from 1 January 1971, all British seafarers serving abroad will be entitled to repatriation at the owner's expense in the event of a serious illness of wife, child or parent. The prolonged service abroad allowance is revised to give 15% additional pay for periods of over 12 and under 18 months and 25% for periods over 18 months. Companies operating their own rates will pay the proportion of the allowance needed to bring the rates up to NMB rates plus the allowance. Time pay will begin when a seafarer signs articles and indicates that he is available for work or begins work. In cases where a seafarer signs off articles and resigns articles in the same

ship on the same day, and the ship sails on the same day, he will be entitled to a day's pay on each set of articles. A seafarer who terminates his agreement but is not able to leave his ship until after 10 p.m. will be entitled to a compensatory payment of one day's pay.

TRADE UNIONS

GREAT BRITAIN

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British transport unions to hold national conference

A national conference of British transport unions is due to be held this month under the auspices of the Trades Union Council (TUC). The conference, the first of its kind, will look at current developments in the transport industry. TGWU General Secretary Jack Jones has given as his reason for summoning such a conference the growth of containerization and the spread of ownership in transport, which call for a trade union movement capable of matching these developments with coordinated union action.

Jack Jones has said that he would like to see transport unions working together under the auspices of the TUC. He hopes that the conference will result in the forming by the TUC of a special transport committee. The conference will examine the links between the docks, shipping, road and rail haulage, and civil aviation.

GREECE

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ILO commission accuses Greece of violating international trade union laws

A three-man commission of the International Labour Organization, which was appointed to investigate the labour situation in Greece after complaints against the military regime had been put to the 1968 ILO Conference, published its report in the first week of November. The report finds that the Greek government, in taking measures to consolidate its position, has violated international laws guaranteeing trade union rights. It accuses the Greek colonels of systematically reorganizing Greek unions in contravention of ILO Conventions to secure themselves against political opponents. Unions with a strong left-wing bias have been dissolved to make way for a new union leadership; potential opponents among union leaders have been deported; officials who refused to help actively

to further government objectives have been removed. The commission has proof that the government has dissolved some 250 unions where there was no evidence of communist or political activity. It judges that the absence of strikes since the military coup three years ago attests to the reluctance of trade union leaders to act without government approval.

The commission notes the withdrawal of Greek cooperation from the inquiry in April of this year after the commission decided to hear a witness to whom the Greek government objected. It concludes by recommending changes in Greek labour laws and makes the suggestion that ILO experts be invited to help in the redrafting of such laws.

ITALY

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Italian unions discuss plans for unity

Trade unions representing six million Italian workers have agreed to work towards the creation of a new united trade union body which would speak for the country's entire labour force. This step was taken in Florence at the first meeting of the national assemblies of Italy's three large trade union federations in over twenty years.

UNITED STATES

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Farm workers' union seeks support for Salinas strikers

Cesar Chavez, Director of the AFL-CIO United Farm Workers' Organizing Committee (UFWOC) has asked us to convey to all ITF affiliates the sincere thanks of California grape workers for the international trade union support which they received from ITF-affiliated unions during the grape strike -- support which has helped the farm workers to win their battle for trade union recognition.

In his letter, Chavez requested us to draw the attention of trade unionists to the current strike organized by UFWOC against lettuce growers in the Salinas valley of California. UFWOC first approached the Salinas growers earlier this year to ask for union representation elections so that workers could choose their own union. It is to force these growers to capitulate that UFWOC has organized a nation-wide boycott of non-union lettuce from California and Arizona and is requesting support.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

AUSTRALIA

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Qantas ground engineers may strike soon

Members of the ITF-affiliated Australian Aircraft Engineers' Association employed by Qantas at Sydney airport staged a lighting stoppage on 20 October. A mass meeting of striking workers gave the airline two weeks in which to meet the union's wide-ranging claims or face an indefinite stoppage.

At the request of the Association, the ITF has contacted its civil aviation affiliates with a request for solidarity in the event of a strike. The Association fears that strike action may be crippled by the carrier's plans to use other operators if its engineering base at Sydney is strike-bound.

CANADA

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Better pensions for Canadian railwaymen

Canadian National Railways have announced changes in their pensions regulations which will give Canadian railwaymen substantially improved pensions. The amended regulations allow railwaymen to retire voluntarily at 60 without loss of service or at 55 with the pension adjusted for a five year reduction in service. Pensioners now receiving the basic pension may choose to have their pension upgraded while continuing to draw the basic pension.

DENMARK

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Danish arbitration court rules in favour of fishermen

The arbitration court which has been investigating the dispute between the Esbjerg fishing vessel owners' association and the ITF-affiliated Danish Transport and General Workers' Union (DASF) published its findings on 20 October. The court conceded DASF the right to take strike action in support of its demands for a new agreement for Esbjerg fishermen and also considerably extended the right of the union to take sympathy actions in Denmark. It now appears that DASF will seek a peaceful settlement of the dispute. The Danish fishing associations have also decided to hold a ballot of their members who will be asked whether they agree to a resumption of negotiations with DASF.

It will be remembered that DASF engaged in strike action from 20 May to 11 June after the Esbjerg fishing vessel owners' association refused to enter into an agreement with the union concerning a wide range of improvements in fishermen's conditions. Further negotiations following the end of the strike resulted in agreement over most of the issues in dispute. When one of the Danish fishing organizations rejected a previously agreed conciliation formula, DASF gave notice of a further strike due to start on 25 August. This strike was postponed pending the ruling of the arbitration court.^x

^xSee ITF Newsletter Nos. 7, 8 and 9.

FRANCE

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French railwaymen win additional cost-of-living increase

After a series of meetings with railway management, the ITF-affiliated French Railwaymen's Union has reached agreement on a new cost-of-living clause in the collective agreement. The agreement, concluded earlier this year, provided for railwaymen to be paid an increase of 2.6 per cent with effect from 1 October to cover the anticipated rise in the cost-of-living. In the event, however, prices have risen faster than expected and the union side has pressed for an extra increase. As a result of the discussions, railwaymen will receive a one per cent salary increase on 1 October in addition to the 2.6 per cent previously agreed.

Before the close of the year, negotiations will be resumed with a view to improving the safeguard clause in the agreement which gives railwaymen a guaranteed purchasing power.

Paris public transport employees sign new agreement

Paris public transport employees are to receive an improved cost-of-living bonus following the signing of an agreement with the Paris public transport authority. The agreement, signed on 13 October, gives transport employees an additional 1% increase in the cost-of-living bonus backdated to the beginning of the month. It also includes a written guarantee that there will be a further cost-of-living increase at the beginning of 1971 if prices continue to rise.

GERMANY

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New collective agreement for German dockers

The ITF-affiliated German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV) has signed a new one-year collective agreement giving Germany's 35,000 dockers substantially improved rates of pay. Under the terms of the agreement:

- a) shift rates and bonuses are increased on 1 November 1970 by 11%, giving a new hourly rate of DM 6.16^{x)} (previous rate DM 5.55);
- b) the forty-hour week will be introduced on 1 September 1971;
- c) the introduction of 13 salary payments per year will be completed by 1972.

x) DM 9.54 = £1.

GREAT BRITAIN

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Aberdeen trawlermen now the best paid in Britain

The fishermen's section of the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) has negotiated pay increases for deck ratings on Aberdeen trawlers which will make them the highest paid trawlermen in Britain. The increases, which take effect from 19 October, give deckhands and cooks sea rates of £3 5s per day (an increase of 5s), with a further rise of 2s per day from 1 January 1971. Shore rates for these workers go up by 8s 3d to £2 15s per day. In addition, the fishermen are to receive bonus increases on poundage. These will go up by 2s 5d for every £100 grossed by the vessel.

Aberdeen trawlermen have been receiving a basic rate of £21 per week since the settlement last autumn of a major dispute with the Aberdeen Fishing Vessel Owners' Association (see ITF Newsletter No. 9, 1969, p. 78.).

Meanwhile, the TGWU is seeking a rise of £3 per week for North Shields' two hundred and fifty trawlermen who currently earn £18 4s per week. A union spokesman said that the claim had been submitted because of the difficult nature of the job. Trawlermen operating from the port were having to work up to 18 hours at a stretch in the most arduous conditions for considerably less than many shore workers.

Municipal busmen in Britain are offered eleven per cent pay rise

Union negotiators have accepted a 10.7 per cent pay offer on behalf of Britain's 64,000 municipal busmen. If it is accepted by the men, who are members of the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union, the increases will bring the basic rates for bus drivers to £17 10s per week and that of bus conductors to £17. Drivers of one-man buses will receive £21 per week on single decker buses and £21 17s 6d on double decker buses. The increases will take effect from January 1971.

The union's claim for a pay increase of 25 per cent was rejected by the employers in September and industrial sanctions were started shortly afterwards.^{x)}

^{x)}See ITF Newsletter No. 9, p. 102.

News of the award should put pressure on company employers who have been presented with a similar claim.

Radio technicians stage series of strikes in support of pay claim

In October, radio technicians belonging to the ITF-affiliated Radio and Electronic Officers' Union (REOU) staged a series of guerrilla strikes and operated an overtime ban at major British ports in support of a pay claim. The strikes were called off when the men voted to accept a new one-year agreement providing for a 15 per cent increase in basic pay and improved overtime rates.

UNITED STATES
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Mediator named in Northwest Airlines dispute

The ITF-affiliated Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks (BRAC) has agreed to the appointment of a neutral mediator to help towards a settlement of its dispute with Northwest Airlines. The clerks have been on strike since 8 July (see Newsletter No. 7. p. 74).

Tentative settlement ends cabin attendants' strike against TWA

Cabin attendants with Trans World Airlines -- members of the ITF-affiliated Transport Workers' Union of America -- struck on 20 October following the failure of lengthy negotiations with the carrier on contract revisions. The strike disrupted international flights and all domestic services were cancelled. Work was resumed on 21 October when the strikers accepted a tentative settlement. The settlement will now be submitted to the union membership and the terms will not be released until the results of the ballot are known.

Prior to the strike, the ITF contacted its civil aviation unions requesting their support for the TWU.

US government intervenes and halts rail strike

President Nixon has named a five-man emergency board to recommend a settlement of the dispute between four US railroad unions representing some 400,000 railroad employees on all the major US carriers. The unions -- the United Transportation Union, the Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks, the Maintenance of Way Employees and the dining car section of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees -- are deadlocked in negotiations for a new three-year contract. They are seeking improvements which would bring railroad workers closer to the gains won by other transport workers in recent union settlements.

The four unions set a strike deadline for 10 September, but resumed talks with the management at the request of US government officials. When the extended strike deadline expired on 15 September, union members on three railroads stopped work and only returned when a federal court judge issued a temporary restraining order against the striking employees.

This order has been superseded by the inquiry panel which will hear both sides in the dispute and report its recommendations to the government within 30 days. During that period and for a further thirty days the unions may not strike over the issues in dispute and management may not engage in lockouts.

URUGUAY
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General strike in Uruguay

The Uruguayan National Workers' Federation (CNT) staged a twenty-four hour strike on 14 October in protest against the government's pay and prices policies. The confederation is calling for an end to the wages freeze which has been operating for two years and for the abolition of the prices and incomes board.

The stoppage paralysed road and rail communications and halted work in offices, factories and banks.

PERSONALIA

Adam Anderson, national organizer of the Scottish Commercial Motormen's Union has died.

J.B. Haines, a vice-president of the US Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks, retired at the end of September. He is succeeded by E.J. Neal, a member of the union's board of trustees.

Frank Cannon, has been elected to the new post of third assistant general secretary of the British National Union of Railwaymen.

Vernon Jirikovic, research director of the US International Association of Machinists, died on 29 October after an illness of several months. He was 46.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS
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- Inland Navigation Section Meeting - Basle, 25-27 November 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

LATE ITEMS

France reverts to state licensing of cabin attendants

The French supreme court has ruled against the French government's decision of November 1969 to replace the state licensing of cabin attendants by an airline licensing scheme. The issuing of licences now reverts to the Ministry of Transport.

The ITF-affiliated French Cabin Attendants' Union (SNPNC) has expressed its satisfaction with the decision. It had feared that the introduction of an airline licensing scheme would lead to a lowering of training standards and might induce other countries to abandon state licensing.

It will be remembered that the SNPNC staged a series of strikes against the three French airlines UTA, Air France and Air Inter in 1969 and again in the opening months of 1970 in protest against the proposed changes.^x

The SNPNC has asked us to thank all affiliates who gave solidarity to the cabin attendants during the dispute.

^xSee ITF Newsletter No. 12, 1969, p. 105 and No. 1, 1970, p.4.

Obituary

Georges De Crom, general secretary of the dockers' section of the Belgian Transport Workers' Union, died on 11 November of a heart attack. He was 63. Brother de Crom was an active member of the Section Committee of the ITF Dockers' Section.

ITF ROAD TRANSPORT WORKERS' SECTION CONFERENCE - LONDON, 4-6
NOVEMBER 1970

The ITF Road Transport Workers' Section Conference met in London from 4-6 November, 1970. It was attended by 46 delegates from 20 unions in the following 13 countries: Austria, Belgium, Eire, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Singapore and Switzerland. The British road transport affiliates: Scottish Commercial Motormen's Union, Transport and General Workers' Union, United Road Transport Union and the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers were the hosts. It gave particular attention to reports dealing with recent developments in the European Communities, the revision of the European Agreement concerning the Work of Crews of Vehicles engaged in International Road Transport (AETR), Vocational Training in Road Transport, Working Conditions in Urban Transport and proposals to revise the ILO Convention concerning the Regulation of Hours of Work and Rest Periods in Road Transport (Convention No. 67).

The Conference agreed that the Sub-Committee would be regularly convened to review current developments in the EC affecting road transport inside and outside the EC. It was also agreed that other European affiliates not directly represented on the Sub-Committee might attend these meetings if they wished and that the Secretary of the ITF "Brussels" Committee should be a member, ex officio.

The Conference noted with satisfaction that representatives of Governments within the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) had now reached agreement on a revised draft of the European Agreement concerning the Work of Crews of Vehicles engaged in International Road Transport (AETR). The Conference noted the efforts of the Section Committee and the Sub-Committee in representing the workers' view-point in the negotiations leading to the revision of the Agreement. At the same time, the Conference regretted any attempts that might be made by recourse to the institutions of the EC to weaken the standards on driving hours and rest periods obtaining throughout the EC area by reason of the implementation of the Decision of the Council of Ministers (No. 543/69) of 25 March 1969 and emphasized the necessity for complementing these regulations at an early date by further regulations dealing with working hours based on the concept of social progress and the upward harmonisation of working conditions throughout the three inland transport sectors.

The Conference approved recommendations put forward by the Sub-Committee for the revision of ILO Convention No. 67 and agreed that the Secretariat should approach the International Labour Office at an early date with a view to instituting the necessary procedures within the ILO for the revision of this Convention.

The Conference reviewed current progress at national level with regard to vocational training in road transport and re-affirmed the conclusions on this subject adopted by the Section Conference held in Stuttgart in 1967. It was agreed that these recommendations would form the basis of the workers' representations at the Ninth Session of the ILO Inland Transport Committee.

The Conference noted, finally, the progress that had already been achieved in examining the various difficulties in securing a major improvement in working conditions of employees of urban transport undertakings and requested the Section Committee to continue this work as a matter of urgency.

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NEW STANDARDS FOR SEAFARERS SET BY ILO MARITIME CONFERENCE

Important new international instruments relating to seafarers' conditions, training, wages and welfare were adopted by the Eighth Maritime Session of the International Labour Conference, which was held in Geneva from 14 to 30 October, under the chairmanship of Dr. Nagendra Singh, Secretary of the President of India. The ILO Conference was preceded by a special meeting of the ITF Seafarers' Section on 9 and 10 October, also held in Geneva, at which the Conference agenda was discussed in detail.

Representatives of ITF-affiliated seafarers' organizations, attending the ILO Conference as Workers' Delegates and Advisers, played a dominant rôle at the Conference on the Seafarers' Side. They acted as Seafarers' Vice-Chairmen of all the technical Committees established by the Conference, whilst Heinz Wiemers of the German Transport & Public Workers' Union was elected as Seafarers' Vice-President of the Conference; Capt. Douglas Tennant of the UK Merchant Navy & Airline Officers' Association as Chairman of the Seafarers' Group; and the General Secretary, Charles Blyth, acted as Secretary to the Group.

A total of 534 delegates and technical advisers from 65 ILO member States took part in the work of the Conference.

From the seafarers' point of view, the Conference was a highly successful one, thanks to the hard work and unity of purpose displayed by the Group. Large numbers of new international standards were adopted during the Session, namely:

- A Resolution on the revision of minimum wages in the light of downward changes in the value of money which have occurred since the adoption of the 1958 ILO Recommendation (the recommended equivalent for the 1958 figures of £25 or \$70 as an AB's basic monthly minimum are £42 or \$100);
- A Convention on crew accommodation and two Recommendations on air conditioning and the control of harmful noise respectively;
- A Convention and Recommendation on accident prevention;
- A Recommendation on seafarers' welfare both at sea and in port;
- A Recommendation on employment problems arising from technical developments on board ship;
- A Recommendation on vocational training of seafarers aimed at, inter alia, the reduction of accident risks, the provision of retraining facilities and of opportunities for upgrading and promotion.

In addition, the Conference adopted a number of Resolutions requesting the International Labour Organization to study a wide variety of questions of importance to seafarers, including, for example, continuity of employment; industrial relations in the shipping industry; the revision of Convention 91 on paid vacations for seafarers as well as of other Conventions on seafarers' working and living conditions; compensatory leave; the improvement of sewage disposal methods on ships in port; the protection of young seafarers; flags of convenience (application of ILO standards to seafarers employed on foreign vessels); and the holding of regional maritime conferences, which were considered of particular importance to developing countries with merchant fleets.

A more detailed account of the work of the ILO Eighth Maritime Session will be given in a forthcoming issue of the ITF Journal.

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