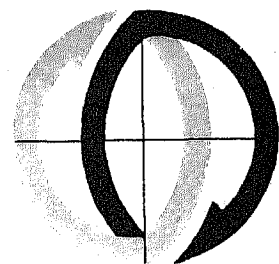


ITF

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We apologise to our readers who will receive this issue of the ITF Newsletter later than usual. The delay was due to the British postal strike.

No. 2

February 1977

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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

INTERNATIONAL

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ITF Fair Practices Committee meets in London

A meeting of the ITF Fair Practices Committee was held in London on 9 and 10 February. The meeting was chaired by D.S. Tennant, General Secretary of the British Merchant Navy and Airline Officers' Association and Co-chairman of the Committee and was attended by delegates from Belgium, Canada, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the USA, together with ITF General Secretary Charles Blyth and Assistant General Secretary Harold Lewis.

With regard to flag-of-convenience shipping, the ITF General Secretary Charles Blyth pointed out that the figures before the Committee indicated a continuing increase in flag-of-convenience tonnage and informed the Committee that there was a possibility that a Register might be opened in Aden, thereby creating another bolt-hole for fly-by-night shipowners. Representatives from Germany and the Netherlands also drew attention to the operation of shipping under the flags of Iran and the Netherlands Antilles on which wages, conditions and social benefits were below standard.

In the light of a situation in which flag-of-convenience fleets were constantly on the increase, it was decided to form a Policy Sub-Committee to prepare a report for the joint Seafarers and Dockers meeting at Congress, it being agreed that the Policy Sub-Committee should meet in Stockholm on 15 and 16 March. This Sub-Committee would comprise T. O'Leary (Transport and General Workers' Union, Great Britain), H. Ericson (Swedish Transport Workers' Union), G. Klang (Swedish Seamen's Union), W.Ch. van Zuylen (Dutch Seafarers' Federation), two representatives from the USA (one docker and one seafarer) and one representative from the German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV) (representing both the dockers and the seafarers).

The Committee also decided to approve the following grants to bodies active in the field of seafarers' welfare: \$10,000 (£4,166) to the United Seamen's Service; £3,000 to the Apostleship of the Sea to assist in the provision of a Seafarers' Club in the port of Southampton.

The meeting concluded by thanking its Chairman, Capt. Tennant (who is shortly retiring from his Association) for all the work he had done for the Fair Practices Committee and the ITF Seafarers' Section and wishing him a long and happy retirement.

Renewed ITF attention to the effects of competition in coastal and short sea trades shipping

A second meeting of ITF-affiliates affected by the problems arising from the keen competition among shipowners engaged in the European coastal and short sea trades shipping was held in London on 11 February. The meeting, under the chairmanship of D.S. Tennant, General Secretary of the British Merchant Navy & Airline Officers' Association and Chairman of the ITF Seafarers' Section, continued the discussion which had culminated at the previous meeting in tentative agreement on basic principles for co-ordinated action (see Newsletter No. 10, 1970). It was generally agreed that seafarers today should not be compelled to work longer hours than workers ashore in order to receive reasonable wages and that therefore speedy action was necessary to achieve a reduction in the weekly working hours of seafarers in line with the internationally recognized objectives for all workers. Hence it was felt that the relevant ILO Convention on wages, hours and manning was in need of considerable revision, particularly of its provisions concerning hours and tonnage limitation. A Draft Statement to this effect was adopted for consideration and approval at the Seafarers' Section Conference to be held in conjunction with the next ITF Congress (Vienna, July/August 1971).

GREECE
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Assembly expels Greece

The Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe has eliminated Greece from the nations having the right of representation in the Assembly. Membership of the Assembly now stands at 17 nations. It will be remembered that Greece announced her withdrawal from the Council of Europe in December 1969.

TRANSPORT

GREAT BRITAIN
=====

Britain will ratify the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft

The British government has announced that it will ratify the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft drawn up at an international diplomatic conference held in The Hague in December. The convention, which is intended to be truly universal, treats hijacking as an internationally recognised offence regardless of the motive for which it is committed and makes it the obligation of contracting states to prosecute offenders within their territory regardless of whether the actual hijacking took place within that territory.

TRADE UNIONS

GREAT BRITAIN

=====

Scottish Commercial Motormen's Union to merge with T&GWU

The ITF-affiliated Scottish Commercial Motormen's Union with its 20,000 members is to merge with the Transport and General Workers' Union (also an ITF affiliate). The aim of the merger, which has the unanimous backing of the union executive, is to create one strong union for Scottish commercial transport drivers. The motormen's union will be granted a large measure of autonomy within the larger union and will decide its own policies. If the amalgamation is approved by the union membership, the motormen's general secretary Alex Kitson will become a high-ranking officer of the T&GWU.

British dockers demand longer leave

Representatives of Britain's 50,000 dockers are meeting the National Association of Port Employers in the first week of March to press for four weeks' annual leave for dock workers. The present annual leave entitlement of three weeks was established in 1970.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

AUSTRALIA

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Strike of Qantas ground staff

Ground staff with Qantas Airways staged a three-week strike last month after the airline had dismissed a shop steward for allegedly intimidating an apprentice. The dispute now goes to arbitration.

CANADA

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Canadian seamen to receive more compensation

Canadian merchant seamen and their dependants will receive improved compensation benefits following amendments to the Canadian Merchant Seamen Compensation Act. The act has been amended to provide an increase in the allowance paid to widows of seamen who will receive a monthly allowance of \$100^x) (previously \$75); an improvement in the allowance for orphaned and dependent

x) Can. \$ 2.57 = £1

children, for whom monthly allowances of \$45 and \$35 respectively will be available; and rises in funeral and temporary disability allowances. The act covers 2,450 seamen employed by 37 companies.

FINLAND

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New agreement for Finnish seamen in the deep-sea trade

The ITF-affiliated Finnish Seamen's Union has signed a new collective agreement on behalf of Finnish seafarers in the deep-sea trade. The agreement came into effect on 1 February and its most important provisions are as follows:

- basic rates of all grades are increased by Fmk 74^x with effect from 1 February, with provision for a further increase of Fmk 42 on 1 September;
- the proficiency bonus is increased by Fmk 20 to Fmk 60 per month;
- stewards holding a certificate of proficiency receive a bonus of Fmk 75;
- the seniority bonus has been revised to give seamen a bonus of two per cent of the basic rate after three years' service, rising to five per cent after five years' service;
- junior officers on ships of at least 30,000 dwt receive an increase of 2.5% and those on vessels of 80,000 tons and over receive an extra five per cent;
- ships' crews will be paid an allowance for meals not taken on board ship during weekends spent aboard ship in port.

x) Fmk 10.05 = £1

FRANCE

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French airlines lock out flight crews

Pilots, radio operators, co-pilots and flight navigators with the three French airlines Air France, Air Inter and UTA staged a three-day strike earlier this month in support of their claim for a new contract governing pay and working conditions. In retaliation, the airlines have declared a lockout and have suspended all flights. The flight staff reported for duty as normal on the first day of the lockout and in a union statement called upon the airline companies to cancel the lockout, which they denounced as intimidation, and to resume flight operations.

The flight crews had originally intended to follow up the latest strike action -- they had already staged a similar stoppage in January -- with a series of short-duration strikes in protest against contract negotiations which have been dragging on for seven months (see ITF Newsletter No. 1 p.4).

GERMANY

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Lufthansa ground staff win wage increases

Ground staff with the German airline Lufthansa came out on strike on 29 January following the breakdown of talks with the company on the terms of a new collective agreement to replace the previous agreement which expired at the end of last year. The ground staff, who are members of the ITF-affiliated German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV) and include technical, administrative and catering grades, were seeking substantial increases in basic pay and retroactive compensation for increases in the cost-of-living during 1970. The stoppage lasted for ten days and grounded most of Lufthansa's domestic and international flights. It was called off when the striking workers were offered increases of up to 15 per cent backdated to 1 November 1970.

German seafarers win substantial improvements in pay

Following protracted negotiations, the German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV) has negotiated new collective and basic agreements for German seafarers. Under the terms of the agreements:

- junior grades, deckhands and ABs not holding an AB certificate receive an increase of 15 per cent on basic rates after two years' service;
- the basic rate for senior grades and comparable grades goes up by DM 180^x, calculated on the basis of DM 144 plus the rate for Saturday working;
- crew members who previously received a lump sum overtime payment will now receive separate payment for overtime at the appropriate rate;
- captains and ships' officers on fixed rates without separate payment for overtime receive an increase of 15 per cent in overall pay;
- officers who receive separate payment for overtime receive an increase of 15 per cent in overall pay with a minimum of DM 180 above the appropriate basic rate;
- officers on ships under 500 grt receive separate payment for overtime;

x) DM 8.83 = £1

- the annual leave allocation is incorporated in a new total leave allocation including leave granted as compensation for work performed on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays (captains and crews with up to three years' service receive ten calendar days' leave; seafarers with between six and ten years' service receive ten calendar days' leave; and those with over eleven years' service receive eleven days' calendar leave for each month served);
- compensation for time spent aboard while in port is extended to include foreign ports;
- all payments in kind provided for in the basic agreement are increased by fifteen per cent.

The collective agreement takes effect from 1 January 1971 and expires at the end of the year, while the basic agreement covers a two-year period commencing from the same date.

GREAT BRITAIN

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Airline workers return to work after BEA reinstates dismissed maintenance engineers

All flights operated by British European Airways were suspended for three days at the end of January after airline workers took sympathetic strike action in support of twenty-five maintenance men dismissed by the airline for allegedly failing to comply with the terms of their contracts. The dispute began when a maintenance electrician who refused to prepare an aircraft engine for dispatch to an outside contractor for overhaul was dismissed. A number of other electricians and fitters were subsequently dismissed for the same offence. The airline's two-thousand-strong engineering and maintenance staff came out on strike in sympathy with their dismissed colleagues and refused to undertake maintenance work on BEA aircraft, thus grounding all flights.

The strikers resumed work when BEA agreed to reinstate the dismissed men. In return, the engineers have agreed to call off the overtime ban and work-to-rule which they have been operating since December to back up their demands for improvement pay. BOAC workers, who have also been working to rule, have likewise agreed to call off all industrial action in support of their pay claim (see ITF Newsletter No. 12, 1970, p. 134 and No. 1 1971, p.6).

Cabin staff lift ban on training for B 747

Stewards and stewardesses with BOAC are to lift their ban on training for the B 747. The cabin staff -- members of the Air Line Stewards' and Stewardesses' Association, which forms part of the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union -- have agreed to accept the BOAC offer of salary increases ranging from

£79 to £160 per year as a basis for further negotiations leading to an improved settlement. However, the stewards continue to operate their flying ban (see ITF Newsletter No. 1, p. 4).

Merchant navy officers reject pay offer

The ITF-affiliated British Merchant Navy and Airline Officers' Association (MNAOA) has rejected an offer of an 8.5 per cent pay rise and improvements in the annual leave and study leave entitlements of officers put forward by the shipowners at a meeting of the National Maritime Board at the beginning of February. The proposals, which were made in reply to an MNAOA call for a radical rethinking of the pay and leave structure of British merchant navy officers and cadets; were dismissed by the Association as "inadequate and unacceptable". However, the Association has undertaken to study the proposals and to give its reply in due course.

Lowestoft trawlermen to be paid loyalty bonus

The ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) has successfully negotiated a loyalty bonus for the 800 trawlermen operating from the port of Lowestoft^{x)}. The bonus, the purpose of which is to encourage stability of employment in the trawling industry, provides for an annual bonus of £75 to be paid to trawlermen who remain with the same employer for a full year, with a further £4 to £5 for each additional year of service. Fishermen will receive a first payment of £35 for six months' continuous service, followed by £40 for the second six months. The bonus operates from the beginning of February and allows trawlermen to claim for up to ten years' back service.

x) See ITF Newsletter No. 12, 1970, p. 133

Grimsby trawlermen may strike soon

Grimsby trawlermen may come out on strike following the breakdown of talks with the fishing vessel owners. The ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union, which represents the men, has given the owners until 5 March to reply to the union claim for higher rates of pay. If this demand is not met, the union will call the trawlermen out on strike.

ITALY
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Strike of Italian flight technicians

Flight technicians with the Italian airline Alitalia staged a forty-eight hour strike on 21 and 22 January to back up their demands for improved pay and working conditions.

NETHERLANDS

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Rotterdam tugmen may strike soon

A strike of tugmen could close the port of Rotterdam. A cooling-off period imposed by the Rotterdam Municipal Court on the ports section of the ITF-affiliated Dutch Transport Workers' Union (NBV) following a four-day strike of Rotterdam tugmen at the beginning of February has not led to a solution of the dispute over a demand for higher wages. A union spokesman said that if strike action was resumed it would not be limited to the 700 tugmen at the port.

NIGERIA

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Lagos dock workers demand payment of interim award to low-paid workers

Several thousand Lagos dock workers -- members of the ITF-affiliated Amalgamated Dockworkers', Transport and General Workers' Union -- staged a two-day strike on 8 and 9 February in protest against the failure of their employers, private contractors at the port, to pay a living allowance to low-paid workers as recommended by a wages commission in December. The recommendation, which provides for an interim monthly rise of two Nigerian pounds^x for workers earning an annual wage of less than 500 Nigerian pounds, has the approval of the Nigerian federal government. The dock workers resumed work when the private contractors agreed to pay the allowance.

^xNigerian pounds £0.86 = £1

UNITED STATES

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US railway clerks accept new three-year contract

The deadlock in the protracted contract dispute involving four US railroad unions -- the Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks, the United Transportation Union, the Maintenance of Way Employees and the dining car section of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees -- was breached earlier this month when one of the unions, the ITF-affiliated Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks (BRAC), accepted a carrier proposal for a new three-year labour contract and called off its threat of a nationwide rail strike scheduled for 1 March. The contract is backdated to January 1970 and provides for salary increases of almost 44% over three and a half years in exchange for concessions on work-rules.

The ITF-affiliated United Transportation Union (UTU) has not yet reached agreement with the carriers and is currently continuing negotiations.

For details of the dispute see ITF Newsletter Nos. 11 and 12, 1970

PERSONALIA

Jack Wayne Hall, vice president of the US International Longshoremen's Association, died on 2 January at the age of 55.

W.J. Wright, Assistant Grand Chief Engineer of the US Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, died on 4 December after an illness of several months. He was 55.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS
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- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Management Committee Meeting | - London, 6-7 April 1971 |
| Executive Board Meeting | - Vienna, 26-27 July 1971 |
| ITF Congress | - Vienna 28 July - 6 August 1971 |

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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