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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

GHANA

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Seminars for trade unionists

As part of its continuing programme of educational activities in Africa, the ITF joined with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation of Germany in organizing four seminars, each a week long, for its Ghanaian affiliates (the Maritime and Dock Workers' Union, the General Transport and Petroleum Workers' Union, the Private Road Transport Union and the Railway and Ports Workers' Union). The seminars took place in the period 9 January to 5 February and were attended in all by 140 participants, for the most part branch secretaries and chairmen.

The organization and coordination of the seminars were in the hands of the ITF's representative, Ben Udogwu, and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation's representative, Kurt Haasemeyer. The programmes included topics such as trade union organization, administration and leadership; basic economics; industrial relations and productivity; the rôle of cooperatives; national development and co-determination; grievance handling; the principles of good industrial relations; collective bargaining; the analysis of agreements; the rôle of trade unions in economic development; relevant Ghanaian legislation; and the history of the international trade union movement. The lecturers included the leaders of the unions themselves; the Principal and Tutor of the Ghana Labour College; the head of the Economic and Research Department of the TUC; and senior officials from the Labour Department and the Ghana Railways and Ports Authority.

GREAT BRITAIN

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Miners' strike over

By an overwhelming majority the British mine workers voted on 23 February to accept the recommendations of a Court Inquiry set up to consider their pay claim, together with further improvements negotiated directly between the National Union of Mineworkers and the Coal Board. The award represents a substantial improvement on the best offer made by the Coal Board in negotiations. Picketing was suspended after the Union decided to recommend the settlement to its members, and after the ballot result was announced the strike ended on 27th February. ITF-affiliated unions which had been asked to take solidarity action to prevent the movement and import of coal were kept informed of developments and the Miners' International Federation has expressed its appreciation of their invaluable support.

NAMIBIA (S. W. Africa)

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Trial of Ovambos for "incident"

Twelve Ovambo strikers are on trial in Windhoek on charges of intimidation and incitement following the massive strike of contract labourers in Namibia (see Newsletters 1 and 2 of 1972). Mr. William Booth, a black American judge, who is attending the trial as an observer for the International Commission of Jurists, has described the appalling conditions in which Ovambos are living in Katatura township, Windhoek, where there have been recurring disturbances since the trial opened. Despite the attempts of the South African government to play down the significance of the strike and its aftermath, it is clear that its implications reach far beyond the abuses of the contract labour system and represent widespread African rejection of the whole system of apartheid. The whole of Ovamboland has been put under stringent emergency regulations and freedom of movement in the area is severely restricted.

NORTHERN IRELAND

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ITF renews appeal to end internment

In a letter to the British Prime Minister on 8 March, ITF General Secretary Charles Blyth reiterated the Federation's appeal for an end to internment without trial in Northern Ireland, a policy which runs counter to the principles cherished by every freedom-loving citizen in a democratic country.

The General Secretary went on: "During the months which have passed since (the ITF's first appeal), events in Ulster and the reaction which they have provoked internationally have confirmed us in our view and in the belief that the continued practice of indefinite internment without trial in this part of the United Kingdom creates a major obstacle to the achievement of realistic discussions and the taking of political initiatives by all concerned which could lead to a peaceful solution to the problems of Northern Ireland.

"There can be no doubt, for example, that the efforts of trades unions to break the deadlock which currently exists between the two Ulster communities, and to create an atmosphere of reconciliation, mutual understanding and cooperation on which a new Ulster can be built, are being seriously hamstrung by the retention of the policy of internment."

RHODESIA

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UN says sanctions must continue

The United Nations Security Council has decided that economic sanctions against Rhodesia should remain fully in force until the rights of the majority of Rhodesians are achieved. The United Kingdom and United States abstained. The Council

declared that any legislation permitting the importation from Rhodesia of any embargoed commodity, including chrome ore, would undermine sanctions and be contrary to the obligations of States.

About 50,000 tons of chrome ore in two shipments are en route to the United States and are expected to arrive during March in Louisiana.

The Pearce Commission is expected to report its findings on the acceptability of the "settlement" proposals by the end of April. In Rhodesia, former Prime Minister Garfield Todd and his daughter Judith, African National Council leader Josiah Chinamano and his wife have been released from detention but placed under severe restrictions at home. Hundreds of other opponents of the settlement remain in detention.

The ANC, confident that the Commission will report a rejection of the settlement, has said that the British and Rhodesian governments should resume negotiations, this time with leaders of the African people.

TRANSPORT

INTERNATIONAL

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Chile joins IMCO

The Republic of Chile has deposited its acceptance of the Inter-governmental Maritime Consultative Organization convention with the UN and thus becomes IMCO's 74th member.

Hijacking Convention ratifications

The following countries have to date ratified the Hague Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft (Hijacking): Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Finland, Gabon, Hungary, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Trinidad and Tobago, USSR, United Kingdom, United States. The Convention entered into force on 14th October 1971.

Compensation Fund for oil pollution damage

A conference convened by the Inter-governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) agreed recently to establish an international fund to provide compensation to states and persons who suffer oil pollution damage. The fund will pay compensation in cases where this cannot be recovered from the owner of the ship from which the oil escaped, or where the compensation due from the owner is not sufficient to cover the damage suffered. (Shipowners' liability is limited under the 1969 Civil Liability Convention.) The fund will also give relief to shipowners for the financial burden imposed on them by the Liability Convention, subject to compliance with safety at sea and other conventions.

Increase in world tanker fleet

The world total of tanker tonnage grew by just over 14.2 million tons - a little over 8% - during the last six months of 1971. At the end of the year it stood at 190,453,238 tons dwt, against nearly 165 million tons dwt twelve months earlier. The leading fleets are: Liberia (26.25% of the world total); United Kingdom (13.60%); Norway (12.32%); and Japan (11.50%).

FINLAND

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Seamen's Welfare organization established

A joint committee set up by the Finnish government in October 1970 to seek ways of improving seamen's welfare has made recommendations for a comprehensive service based on ILO standards (Seafarers' Welfare Recommendation 1970). A Welfare Office is to be set up, composed of representatives of all interested parties including seafarers' unions, and the service will be jointly financed by seafarers, owners and the State. It will be responsible for providing facilities for youth and adult education, sport and leisure activities, seafarers' hostels in port, welfare centres in Finland and abroad, ships' libraries and improved communication facilities.

GREAT BRITAIN

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Tachograph introduction postponed

Agreement has been reached between the British government and the European Economic Community on the date by which tachographs will have to be fitted to goods and passenger vehicles. The date for compulsory fitment to new vehicles and to those carrying dangerous goods will now be 1 January 1976 (i.e. deferred one year) and for other affected vehicles 1 January 1978. A working party including both sides of the industry has been set up to look at the problems associated with the use of tachographs.

NORWAY

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Improvements planned for rail service

The forward plans of the Norwegian State Railways (NSB) show that by 1980 the number of staff required will be down to about 16,000 - a reduction of 3,700 over 1971. However, it is expected that natural wastage will account for a greater staff reduction than that occasioned by rationalization, so that active recruiting will have to be undertaken during the period.

NSB intends to implement a programme of improvements, particularly in its freight service, by increasing axle loads, providing express night services, extending container use and offering delivery to and from sidings.

Passenger transport is expected to continue to decline by about 0.5% per annum, up to 1976, and to remain static thereafter. Service improvements will offer higher speeds and better standards of comfort, catering and punctuality.

TRADE UNIONS

ARGENTINA

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General strike protest against violation of bargaining rights

The Argentine national centre, CGT, organized a 48-hour general strike on 29 February and 1 March. The action was in protest against government legislation extending existing collective agreements to 31 October 1973 and fixing an arbitrary - and completely unsatisfactory - wage increase.

The CGT has also submitted a complaint to the ILO on this violation of Convention 98 (Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining), which the ITF has supported.

JAPAN

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Railwaymen's complaint on freedom of association

The ITF-affiliated Japanese National Railway Workers' Union (KOKURO) and National Railway Motive Power Union (DORYOKUSHA), with the support of the ITF, have recently submitted to the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association a comprehensive complaint against serious and persistent interference with their members' rights to free association and participation in trade union activity.

The unions, which between them organize over 300,000 railway workers, in an extremely well documented presentation, show how, despite laws which are supposed to protect the right to organize and to guarantee the right to take legitimate industrial action, their members have been subjected to a sustained campaign of victimization and discrimination by the management of Japan National Railways, and how redress for grievances through court action is proving impracticable because of the large number of cases and the time taken to process them.

Members of the ITF-affiliated unions who have taken part in strikes during the past year have been subjected to dismissal, suspension, wage cuts, loss of increments and of promotion prospects. To compensate them for their losses, which have been sustained exclusively because of their trade union activities, the unions have paid out a total of nearly 5,000 million yen (approx £6½ m.) from special relief funds; this drain on their financial resources, together with the time spent dealing with individual grievances, has severely handicapped the unions in their everyday activities. In addition, the Railways management have been making strenuous efforts to "persuade" KOKURO and DORYOKUSHA members to give up their trade union allegiance, threatening them with discriminatory treatment if they failed to do so.

In supporting the unions' submission, the ITF has asked the ILO to treat the case under its emergency procedures.

NIGERIA

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Locomen's Conference

The Nigerian Association of Locomotive Drivers, Firemen, Yard Staff and Allied Workers (ALDFYSAWN) held its Biennial Delegates Conference in Lagos from 27 to 29 January. The main business concerned the laying of plans for an organizational drive to extend the union's membership and to reorganize those branches which had been badly affected during the Nigerian Civil War. Deji Oyayemi was returned unopposed as the union's General Secretary, as was P.C. Okolo, the union's President. The ITF was represented by Ben Udogwu, to whom the union conveyed its sincere appreciation of the ITF's support and encouragement.

JAPAN

=====

5-day work week is major target

One of the main targets in the national "spring offensive" of the Japanese trade union movement is the reduction of the working week to five days, with a commensurate reduction in the hours worked per week. It is estimated that only some 6% of firms in Japan currently work a five-day week.

UNITED STATES

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Joint action on job security by maritime unions

Unions including six ITF affiliates - the National Maritime Union, the Seafarers' International Union, the International Longshoremen's Association, the Masters, Mates and Pilots, the Marine Engineers and the American Radio Association - have

agreed on a joint campaign for job security and employment opportunities for their members by promoting stability in the industry. Priorities for continued discussion are:

- No strikes during contract negotiations;
- Three to five-year contracts for guaranteed continuity of operations;
- Uniform contract expiry dates;
- Provision for automatic annual wage adjustments;
- Establishment of a procedure for resolving disputes without stoppages.

A further campaign point is for federal legislation to promote the use of US-flag vessels, particularly for oil and gas imports and the carriage of government financed cargoes.

Non-ops strike in Florida ends after nine years.

Eleven non-operating unions voted at the end of January to end their strike against the Florida East Coast Railway which began on 23 January 1963. The settlement is subject to final approval by the US District Court in Florida. The men who have been on strike will have first choice of about 500 jobs which the company will need to fill initially.

The settlement gives non-operating employees wage increases of 25% from 10 January 1971 and three rises of 6% from the beginning of 1972, 1973 and 1974. A separate aspect of the agreement involves the payment by the FEC of \$1.5 million in damages to present and former employees, awarded because of violations of labour legislation, collective agreements and court orders during the strike.

The dispute first began when the FEC refused to pay a 10 cents-an-hour pay increase agreed by other US railroads in 1962. It was a bitter conflict - strike-breakers were brought in and the company rejected all forms of mediation and arbitration.

A further strike and damages suit against the company by the United Transportation Union has yet to be settled.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

AUSTRALIA

Dispute over cabin crew complement on B-747

The ITF-affiliated Flight Stewards' Association of Australia is in dispute with Qantas over the manning scales for flight attendants on board Boeing 747 aircraft.

Three separate manning scales have been agreed, depending on the number of passengers carried, i.e. 11 cabin crew for passenger load below 50%, 13 for 50-80% and 15 for 80-100%. So far, only the latter two manning scales have been applied but supervision and workload problems have arisen where passenger loads have been heavy, especially when more passengers than anticipated board at intermediate stops, and the Association is seeking to increase cabin crew complement by at least two senior stewards. The dispute is to go to arbitration during April, and meanwhile information on 747 manning scales in other companies is being sought from ITF affiliates.

New contract claims for dock workers

The ITF-affiliated Waterside Workers Federation of Australia is seeking a weekly pay increase of \$A30 per week in negotiations on a new contract to come into effect when the present five-year agreement expires in May. The Federation is also demanding an eight-hour reduction in the working week and more annual leave.

BELGIUM

Special bus services agreement

Members of the ITF-affiliated Belgian Transport Workers Union employed in the Special Bus Services will benefit from an agreement for 1972 signed recently. This provides, among other things, for:

- A reduction in the standard working week from 43 to 41½ hours;
- Pay for work on Sundays and Public holidays is increased from 11 Fr. to 20 Fr. per hour.
- hourly wages go up by 6.50 Fr. with effect from 1 January 1972, with a further rise of 1.50 Fr. from July 1972. This increase gives rates (after July) of 70 Fr. (starting rate); 71 Fr. (after six years); and 72.50 (after 11 years), and includes compensation for the reduced working week.

- With effect from 1 January 1973, wages will be linked to the cost of living index so that for every 2% index rise, pay will automatically be increased by 2%.

FINLAND

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Agreement on job security in foreign trades

With effect from 15 January 1972 Finnish seamen in the foreign trades benefit from a new job protection agreement which provides that:

- Reasons for contract termination have to be specified;
- If a seaman's contract is terminated without valid reason, he must be paid compensation at the rate of three months' basic pay and allowances if his contract was for up to 5 years, and four months if his contract was for over 5 years.

FRANCE

=====

Deadlock unbroken in railwaymen's dispute

Railwaymen demonstrated on 18 February in support of their pay claims - without causing any disruption of services - while their union representatives met a government minister in an attempt to break the deadlock by obtaining greater freedom for the French Railways to negotiate without being subject to government pressure.

Further demonstrations short of full-scale strike action are planned if negotiations are not reopened.

GERMANY

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Seamen stage 36-hour protest strike

Seafarer members of the IFF-affiliated German Union of Public Service and Transport Workers went on strike for 36 hours on 29 February and 1 March in support of their demand for a 10% wage increase, to which the shipowners have not yet made a satisfactory offer, despite two rounds of mediation talks. The union now regards mediation attempts as having failed and has challenged the owners to resume direct negotiations.

An attempt by the owners to obtain an injunction to prevent the strike was turned down by the labour court in Hamburg, which maintained in its decision that, since mediation had failed to produce a settlement, the seamen were free to take industrial action.

GREAT BRITAIN

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Railway unions reject pay offer

Representatives of the three ITF-affiliated British railway unions - the National Union of Railwaymen, the Locomotive Engineers and Firemen and the Salaried Staffs - have turned down an offer of just under 10% made by the British Railways Board in response to claims for substantial increases. The Board has been asked to reconsider its offer and further talks are expected shortly.

Arbitrator rejects flight engineers' salary structure case

The salary scales of BOAC flight engineers and their relationship to the pay of other flight crew members are to remain unchanged according to the ruling of an arbitration committee set up to settle a dispute between BOAC and the ITF-affiliated Merchant Navy and Airline Officers' Association. The Association claimed that over the years the gap between the salaries of engineer officer and senior first officers had widened, despite the fact that the range and responsibility of the flight engineers' duties had continued to grow, owing to the demands of bigger, faster and more sophisticated aircraft.

The arbitrator declined to make any adjustment, however, stating that the Association and the Airline had failed to pay sufficient attention to the differences between them in direct talks.

BOAC and the MNAOA are due to reopen negotiations on salaries to apply from 1 January 1972.

JAPAN

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Contract claims for seamen

The ITF-affiliated Japan Seamen's Union has lodged claims with owners for foreign-going and coastal shipowners for substantial improvements in pay and allowances to be applied when the current contracts run out in April. The union is seeking a basic pay rise averaging 20,000 yen. There has as yet been no positive response from the shipowners' side.

The Union's Okinawa Branch called off a threatened strike shortly before it was due to begin on 17 January when four maritime companies agreed to the seamen's demand that their wages be converted from US \$ to Japanese yen at the former exchange rate of 360 yen to the \$.

NORWAY

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War risk insurance agreement

A new agreement on compensation for injury sustained by Seafarers serving in areas of hostility was signed by ITF-affiliated seafarers' organizations and the Norwegian Shipping Employers Federation on 4 February 1972, which goes into effect from that date, for two years.

The agreement provides that:

- For injury which means that a seafarer is permanently disqualified from pursuing his profession, compensation of 100,000 kr is paid, plus 30,000 kr for each child under 18 years of age.
- In case of death from injuries, the above sums are paid to the seafarer's widow. If the seafarer does not leave a widow, but there are children under 13 years of age, each child receives 50,000 kr. If there are no children, 50,000 kr is paid to any other surviving dependants.

These amounts are payable in addition to any other pension and insurance payments to which the seafarer or his dependants are entitled.

Central pay and conditions negotiations

Talks have begun between the Norwegian national trade union centre LO and the Employers' Federation on the national pattern for this year's collective agreements. The LO's main claims are: general pay increase of about 4%; special increases for low-paid workers; common fringe benefits for all grades of workers, i.e. sick pay, military service pay, leave of absence pay; and reduced hours for shift workers.

SWEDEN

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Milestone agreement on dockers' accident insurance

From 1 January 1972, Swedish dockers no longer have to prove that they are not responsible for accidents at work. A unique insurance scheme agreed between the ITF-affiliated Swedish Transport Workers' Union and the dock labour employers guarantees full economic compensation to anyone involved in an accident, as long as it was not caused by alcohol abuse or gross negligence. The scheme also eliminates the need for humiliating and long-drawn-out court actions.

SWITZERLAND

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Improvements for railwaymen

Legislation has been presented to the Swiss parliament providing for improvements in pay and allowances for public employees, including railwaymen. Pay rates are to be increased by 8.3% to compensate for rises in the cost of living; housing and children's allowances will also be increased, all these provisions taking effect from 1 January 1973. Improvements in real wages will be granted in the form of a thirteenth month's salary, the first to be paid in 1972.

UNITED STATES

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Agreement for Chicago transit workers

The ITF-affiliated Amalgamated Transit Union has recently negotiated a pay increase of 30 cents per hour for employees of the Chicago Transit Authority. This gives an hourly rate of \$5.27 for bus operators and \$5.236 for motormen, effective from 1 December 1971 to 30 November 1972. Improvements have also been achieved in sickness and hospital benefits.

Ballot to decide settlement of East and Gulf Coast contracts

Tentative agreement has now been reached by the ITF-affiliated International Longshoremen's Association on behalf of its members at South Atlantic and Gulf Coast ports, along the lines of that for North Atlantic and New York dockers reported in ITF Newsletter No. 1 of 1972. Ballotting on the contracts is to take place on 8th March.

West coast dockers (not ITF-affiliated) ended their strike on 22 February after voting to accept an agreement recommended by their union.

PERSONALIA

William Bass, South Africa representative of the British National Union of Seamen, died in Cape Town on 9 March from injuries received in a road accident.

A.H. Chesser, President of the ITF-affiliated United Transportation Union, has been elected as one of the AFL-CIO's thirty-three Vice-Presidents and as such has a seat on its Executive Council.

George P. Delaney former international affairs representative of the AFL-CIO and special assistant for international labour affairs in the US Labor Department, died on 9 February shortly before his 63rd birthday. After his retirement from government service, Bro. Delaney served as Washington representative of the International Longshoremen's Association.

Herbert M. Mutekwe, General Secretary of the National African Federation of Unions and Assistant General Secretary of the Rhodesian Transport Workers' Union, died after an illness in hospital on 5 February.

John Peterpaul has been appointed administrative assistant to the International Association of Machinists' Vice President William Winpisinger who is responsible for the union's activities in the transport industries. Bro. Peterpaul is succeeded as IAM airline coordinator by Frank Waldner.

Børge Petersen, Treasurer of the Danish Seamen's Union since 1956, celebrated his sixtieth birthday on 5 March.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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|--|---|
| International Trade Secretariats
General Conference | - London, 5-6 April 1972 |
| North Sea Ports Dockers Unions
Meeting | - Rotterdam, 10 April 1972 |
| ITF Dockers Section Committee
Meeting | - Rotterdam, 11-12 April 1972 |
| Preparatory Meeting of ITF
participants in 9th Session of
ILO Inland Transport Committee | - Geneva, 22-23 April 1972 |
| ITF Executive Board | - Valletta, 3-5 May 1972 |
| ITF Asian Airline Workers'
Conference | - Tokyo, August 1972
(dates to be confirmed) |

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

SPECIAL SEAFARERS' SECTION ACTIVITIES

New Agreements through Israel Seamen's Union's Action

The decisions taken at the meeting of the Fair Practices Committee, reported in the January Newsletter, have already made an impact in shipping circles. The Israeli Federal Seamen's Union's announcement that from 1 March its members would not handle any flag-of-convenience ship that was not covered by an ITF-approved agreement received wide publicity in the press. Shipowners and agents worried about possible delays have been asking for more information from the ITF Secretariat and agreements have already been concluded by the Israeli union for the Panamanian vessels CAP SARAY, CAP SERRAT and BRANCO, the Liberian flag CORONADO and ANNOULA and the Cyprus flag SAGEORGE & VICTOR, whilst an agreement covering the Liberian flag OCEAN BLUL was concluded directly with the ITF.

Australian Unions step up action against flags of convenience

In Australia, Charles Fitzgibbon, General Secretary of the Waterside Workers' Federation and member of the Fair Practices Committee, has also given notice to shippers and charterers of the union's opposition to the use of flags and crews of convenience and has warned that his members will refuse to handle vessels that do not comply with internationally acceptable standards.

MARDI GRAS (ex LMPRESS OF CANADA) brought under agreement

The British National Union of Seamen acted with commendable speed in support of the terms of the Fair Practices Committee resolution on Crews of Convenience and the use of cheap labour on board ship when it was learnt that the LMPRESS OF CANADA (now re-named MARDI GRAS) lying at Tilbury had been sold to an American company, Carnival Cruise Lines Ltd of Miami, for operation under the Panamanian flag in the Caribbean cruise trade with a low-wage concessionaire catering department. The NUS's campaign of informational picketing began on 16 February under the energetic management of London office official Harry Bygate and quickly won the spontaneous support of members of other unions in the docks. Their refusal to handle the vessel effectively immobilized her until a satisfactory agreement was concluded a week later between the owners' representatives and the NUS and ITF. The agreement provided that all crew members should be engaged on wages and conditions equivalent to the Italian national contract, that Brother Ferdinando Giorgi of the ITF-affiliated Italian Seamen's Union FILM-CISL would have access to organize the Italian-manned dock and engine room departments, and that the members of the concessionaire catering department were enrolled into the ITF Special Seafarers' Section.

NMU aids crew of Panamanian flag VEDALIN

National Maritime Union officials in Baltimore came to the aid of the 20 or so Jamaican crew members of the Panamanian freighter VEDALIN when they finally walked off the ship on 15 February after allegedly spending several days without food, light or heat. A lien had been placed on the vessel by the owners of its cargo of baling twine. The crew, who had not been paid since signing aboard the ship on 8 January, had to leave hotel accommodation after only two nights when the ship's agents were told, apparently by the owners, that they were not to do anything for the men. Some of the men had to spend a night in a dock shed whilst arrangements were made with the Red Cross and US Immigration Service for alternative accommodation. The crew were to be represented by the NMU's legal counsel in their efforts to collect their back pay.

Swedish Seamen's Union obtains back pay for crew of Cyprus flag ARMAR

In the course of a routine check on the conditions on board the Cyprus flag ship ARMAR, at Gothenburg, Lars Jansson, Swedish Seamen's Union representative, discovered that the mainly Indonesian crew had been signed on for rates between £22 and £35 a month in complete disregard of the agreement concluded between the owners and the ITF Secretariat in December 1971. Under the British NMB rates which were specified as minima in the agreement an AB receives £77.40 consolidated basic monthly pay. With the cooperation of the Swedish Transport Workers' Union docker members the union stopped the working of the ship for a week until the owners honoured the agreement and paid out more than £3,000 in back pay and holiday money. At one stage in the negotiations 14 members of the crew walked off the ship as the Greek Master had refused medical attention to one man and said that he could not guarantee to continue to pay according to the agreement once the ship was at sea. The men claimed their lives would be in danger if they sailed with the Master again but finally returned on board when the problems over pay had been settled and their sick shipmate admitted to hospital for an appendix operation. The ARMAR sailed from Gothenburg on 7 March with a crew confident that their hard-earned cash was safe with the Swedish Union until they wanted it transferred home to their families.

Other New Agreements

The Swedish Seamen's Union has also recently concluded an agreement for the Somali flag vessel VAVAJO and renewed the agreement covering the Panamanian LOTUS; in the middle of February the Finnish Seamen's Union brought the Liberian flag MARIVIA under agreement.

BUSY SEASON FOR IMCO IN WAKE OF ASSEMBLY

The Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) has had a particularly heavy meetings schedule this winter resulting from the need to follow up a number of decisions adopted by its governing bodies during the last inter-Assembly period ending late in 1971. The ITP Secretariat and its affiliates have attended a number of meetings of Sub-Committees of IMCO's Maritime Safety Committee in London during the winter months. A summary of the more important proposals made and decisions taken at those meetings is given below.

Sub-Committee on Fire Protection

This Sub-Committee met from 8 to 12 November, 1971 and its agenda included an item on fire safety measures for tankers. The Sub-Committee considered those sections of an Assembly recommendation concerning the construction and equipment of tankers from a fire safety point of view which contained requirements with regard to the location of crew accommodation and the type of fire-fighting system to be used on board. It decided that crude oil tankers over 100,000 d.w.t. and combination crude oil carriers over 50,000 d.w.t. should be fitted with both deck froth and inerting systems and revised its previous opinion, i.e. that all crew accommodation should be located aft, to permit accommodation forward of the cargo tank, provided that the associated life-saving appliances should also be similarly sited.

Under the other agenda items the Sub-Committee appointed a working group on fire protection of cargo ships and amended a draft of the relevant chapter on fire safety in Part B of the Code of Safety for Fishermen and Fishing Vessels. The next meeting of the Sub-Committee is scheduled for June, 1972.

Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications

A full report on this meeting, which was held from 17 to 21 January, has been distributed among the ITP's "radio" affiliates. In addition, an article on the subject is to be carried in ITP Journal No. 1, 1972. On the question of the future maritime distress system, a drafting group produced a provisional plan for discussion at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee (July, 1972), in which, inter alia, the following points were made: that the future distress system be evolved as a natural development of the present system (based on the present provisions for 500 kHz and 2,182 kHz, HF and VHF); that a satellite-based distress alerting and locating system be introduced; that additional training be given to radio officers; that a world-wide vessel radio reporting system be organized; and that any new system be more reliable than the system it is intended to replace.

The future maritime satellite system was scrutinized by a working group, which evolved a time-table on the basis of an organizational plan. It agreed that, initially, a panel of experts should be invited to consider the operational requirements, characteristics and cost of such a system.

Sub-Committee on Life-Saving Appliances

This Sub-Committee met again from 14 to 18 February after some considerable time had elapsed since its last meeting. In view of the need to finalize IMCO's contribution to Part B of the Code of Safety for Fishermen and Fishing Vessels, the Sub-Committee began its work by revising the chapter on life-saving appliances in the Code in the light of the Fishing Vessels Sub-Committee's classification of fishing vessels^{x)}.

Under the heading of possible amendments to the SOLAS Convention, the Sub-Committee stated that it remained of the opinion that there was a relationship between subdivision and stability and the provision of life-saving appliances.

Concerning the marking of life-saving appliances in general, the Sub-Committee felt that the SOLAS provisions were adequate but invited its members to consult at national level and submit their views concerning the marking of life-jackets in particular.

At the request of the Fire Protection Sub-Committee the Sub-Committee, with regard to the suggested permission for crew accommodation together with the relevant life-saving appliances to be located forward in new tankers, realized that such a proposal, if adopted, might prove impossible to put into effect in view of existing conventions on the subject.

The questions of survival craft in large ships, pilot ladders, and radar reflectors were to be discussed again at the next session.

x)

A proposal by Finland to introduce the use of retro-reflective tapes on life-saving appliances on board fishing vessels was narrowly defeated, mainly on the grounds that as this practice was not provided for generally in the SOLAS Convention, the Convention would have to be amended before any specific recommendations could be made to this effect.

Sub-Committee on Safety of Fishing Vessels

The Sub-Committee, which met from 21 to 25 February, considered Part B of the International Code of Safety for Fishermen and Fishing Vessels, in the light of comments received thereon, in particular from the Sub-Committees on Fire Protection and Life-Saving Appliances. Members were invited to submit comments on the fifth draft of the Code (the first consolidated IMCO draft) by 1 July, 1972 and the Sub-Committee decided to complete Part B in respect of all categories of fishing vessels of 24 m in length and over at its next session.

Another important subject on the agenda for this session of the Sub-Committee was the proposed convention on safety of fishing vessels. After some discussion on the scope and possible contents of such an instrument, which should also take into account the above-mentioned Code, the Sub-Committee agreed on a list of questions to which members should reply by 1 October, 1972.

The Sub-Committee will hold a further two or, possibly, three meetings before the Conference (scheduled for 1975) which will consider a draft instrument, the next meeting being planned for 22-26 January, 1973.

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