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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

EUROPE

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ITF "Brussels Committee" concerned at delay in social harmonization in the transport industry

Fifteen years after the entry into force of the Treaty of Rome, there are still serious doubts about the real determination of the EEC governments to implement a common transport policy. This is the view of the ITF Committee of Transport Trade Unions in the Community (Brussels Committee), expressed at a meeting held in Brussels on 10 July under the chairmanship of Bro. Ph. Seibert.

Despite the many proposals of the Commission and decisions taken by the Council of Ministers, unregulated competition between the different means of transport and numerous other obstacles continue to impede the free flow of traffic within the Community and, as a result, to hold up the harmonization of social conditions of transport workers.

The Council of Ministers and the Commission are urged to act in order to ensure that the transport market is organized so as to serve the aims of the Community. The unions once more stress the prime importance of upward harmonization of social and working conditions in the European transport industry, especially in those sectors - roads, railways, inland navigation - already subject to the Common Transport Policy. Other sectors - ports, maritime and aviation - should be brought into the Policy as soon as possible, in accordance with a detailed programme and timetable which the Commission should draw up.

GREAT BRITAIN

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International solidarity call for British dockers

The ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union called a national dock strike beginning on 28 July following the rejection by the national docks' delegate conference the previous day of the interim proposals to help mitigate the effects of containerization made by a joint Committee headed by Jack Jones of the T & GWU and Lord Aldington, Chairman of the Port of London Authority. These proposals were to provide much higher voluntary severance pay for a limited period to unfit men and men over the age of 55, giving lump sums of between £2,000 and £4,000 - approximately double the present levels. In addition, all men on the temporary unattached register were to be reallocated to a registered employer by 4 September 1972; and joint discussions should be held on agreements for container groupage and other port work to be made available

to registered dock workers. In rejecting these proposals, the dockers' delegates felt that the assurances for stabilized employment were insufficiently firm. The Jones/Aldington Committee is currently meeting again in an attempt to find ways of making the report more acceptable to the dockers. Meanwhile, at the request of the T & GWU, the ITF has called upon its affiliated dockers' unions to refrain from handling any vessels or cargoes diverted from British ports. This appeal is already meeting with a positive response.

Additional factors which may have influenced the mood of the dockers' conference were the imprisonment of five London dock shop stewards for contempt of the National Industrial Relations Court in failing to comply with the Court's ruling that they should cease picketing at a container depot. The men were subsequently released after five days through the intervention of the Official Solicitor, but not until their imprisonment had caused widespread protest stoppages and the threat of a general one-day strike by the Trades Union Congress.

Finally, and perhaps the most serious development as far as the trade union movement generally is concerned, the Law Lords (the highest court of appeal) have confirmed the decision of the National Industrial Relations Court, in another case involving the Transport & General Workers' Union and its docker members (see Newsletters No. 4, p.51 No. 5 p. 65 and No. 6, p. 91), that the Union is to be held responsible for the actions of its shop stewards and must therefore now pay the £55,000 fine imposed by the NIRC. This judgment, which confirms the government's intention of forcing trade unions to "discipline" their members, will have serious implications for the future conduct of trade union activity. It is not expected to contribute to the improvement of industrial relations.

NAMIBIA
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UN denounces South African plans for Namibia

The UN Council for Namibia has denounced the recent decision of the government of South Africa to "grant self-rule" to Ovamboland. This, it said, was a further move to destroy the unity of the Territory in defiance of UN resolutions and the opinion of the International Court of Justice. The Council reaffirmed its opposition to the fragmentation of Namibia through the establishment of Bantustans, and requested South Africa to rescind all such measures.

TRANSPORT

INTERNATIONAL

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Future maritime distress system and maritime satellites main topics at 10th Session of IMCO's Radiocommunications Sub-Committee

The Sub-Committee, which met in London from 5-8 July, continued its discussion of the vital question of the future maritime distress system, which to some degree is interlinked with the question of maritime satellites. ITF-affiliated radio officers' interests were represented by the following on their respective national delegations: S. Bøje Larsen (Denmark), A. Melin (Finland), E. Säfbom (Sweden) and M.H. Strichartz (United States). ITF observers were K.A. Murphy (REOU - United Kingdom) and A. Selander (ITF Secretariat). Captain C. Dorian (United States) - well known in ITF "radio" circles - retired as Chairman of the Sub-Committee after long and distinguished service in that capacity and was succeeded by Captain V.R.Y. Winkelman (Netherlands).

After having come to the conclusion that the term "future" in the context of the maritime distress system really consisted of two concepts, namely the "near future" and the "distant future", the Sub-Committee struck a concordant note on proposals to implement improvements to the existing distress system for the near future, including the maintenance and improvement of existing provisions of Chapter IV of the SOLAS Convention (500 kHz, 2182 kHz, HF and VHF), the fitting of 2 MHz R/T transmitters/receivers (also watch receivers on W/T vessels for linkage purposes, 156.8 MHz as a formal distress and calling frequency, the carriage of EPIRB's (2182 kHz and/or 121.5 MHz and/or 243 MHz), the improvement of equipment performance and reliability, the expansion of Radio Officer training, the encouragement of wider participation in vessel position-reporting systems, the fitting of maritime VHF facilities in all conventional vessels and the improvement of R/T coast station distress coverage as necessary. Administrations were asked to implement these measures, where possible, as a matter of urgency. Proposals with regard to the system in the more distant future will be examined further at the next session.

Other matters discussed by the Sub-Committee included selective calling equipment (test results), preparation for the World Administrative Radio Conference (ITU), and exemptions from radio requirements. Concerning the last-mentioned subject The Sub-Committee recommended that Administrations should inform IMCO on how they interpret Regulation 4 of Chapter I and Regulation 5 of Chapter IV of SOLAS in order that the Secretariat could summarize the information for consideration by the Sub-Committee.

A meeting of the Panel of Experts set up by the Sub-Committee to discuss the organization and implementation of a Maritime Satellite System was held in conjunction with the Sub-Committee meeting from 3 to 5 July. The long-term aspect of the work programme of this Panel was borne out by the fact that the Sub-Committee felt that a terrestrial distress system should be retained in the foreseeable future and that any satellite system should only be of a supplementary nature.

The Sub-Committee envisages to hold its next session early next year, whilst the Panel of Experts will meet again in November this year.

A full report on the above meetings has been sent out to our Radio Officer affiliates.

GERMANY

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Czech hijackers sentenced to seven years

Two Czechoslovak hijackers who forced a plane to fly to Nuremberg on 18 April, shooting and wounding the copilot in the process, have been sentenced to seven years' imprisonment each. This was the first hijacking case to be tried under a new German air piracy law which provides for sentences of between five years and life imprisonment.

ICELAND

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International court hearing case against 50-mile limit

The International Court of Justice at The Hague, beginning on 1 August, is hearing evidence on the request of the British government for an interim solution to its dispute with Iceland over the latter's plan to introduce a 50-mile limit with effect from 1 September this year. The British government applied for the hearing following the breakdown of direct talks in Reykjavik with the Iceland authorities.

TRADE UNIONS

GERMANY

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Shipowners seek to avoid collective negotiations

The German Shipowners' Federation has announced that in future only those of its members who choose to join a new negotiation committee will be bound by the collective agreements which the committee reaches. The ITF-affiliated German Transport and

Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV) has denounced this move as opening the way for widespread undercutting of agreed conditions; the unions will be obliged to negotiate separately with individual owners and this is seen as a return to the early days of capitalism and incompatible with the recognized practice of collective bargaining. The OeTV is appealing to the government to oppose the shipowners' decision, and is itself calling an extraordinary meeting to prepare counter-measures.

GREAT BRITAIN
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Seamen's union claim for closed shop upheld

The Commission on Industrial Relations has supported the claim of the ITF-affiliated National Union of Seamen for an approved closed shop under the Industrial Relations Act. The Commission states in its decision: "In our view the NUS and the closed shop agreement have been influences in favour of social stability and cohesion among crews. The fact that membership or non-membership of the union was not an issue meant that a possible focus of dissent was absent." The NUS has been suspended from membership of the Trades Union Congress for remaining registered and for making a joint application with the shipowners to maintain the closed shop, in violation of TUC policy which is not to use the machinery of the Industrial Relations Act except in self-defence.

Unions claim "non consultation" over airways reorganization

The formation of a new British airways group to include BOAC and BEA, announced by the government recently, was not discussed with the employees, the trade union side of the National Joint Council for Civil Air Transport has complained. In a statement the unions "registered the strongest possible protest that the whole of this reorganization has been carried out completely over the heads of the 50,000 employees in the industry." Since no consultation took place over matters that were of vital interest to employees, the union side said it would not cooperate in future studies on the plans and would oppose any changes based on their findings.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

DENMARK
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Coastal shipping firms receive ultimatum

The ITF-affiliated Danish Seamen's Union has dispatched - on 1 August - the first notice of strike/blockade action against coastal shipowners which refuse to enter into agreement with the union on the pay and conditions of seafarers serving aboard their vessels. It is planned to send the second, final notice on 9th August, so that the action will become effective at midnight on 17th August. Notices of sympathy action by the

ITF-affiliated Danish Transport and General Workers' Union will follow one day later, and sympathy action will start at the beginning of normal working hours on 21 August. As reported in Newsletter No. 7, page 99, the ITF has already circularized its affiliated seafarers' and dockers' unions asking them to support the Danish union's campaign.

GREAT BRITAIN

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Officers' union reports on excessive hours

The ITF-affiliated Merchant Navy and Airline Officers' Association has produced a report, entitled "An abuse that must be ended", in support of its case that many officers at sea are overworked. The report gives a number of examples of working hours submitted by members, and cites many top shipping companies among those which require excessive hours of their officers. The report forms part of a campaign by the MNAOA to get the number of hours worked reduced to the point where the average working week for officers is brought into line with that for shore-based workers, i.e. to an average of 40 hours per week over the year.

This aim could be achieved, says the report, by adequate manning and efficient organization, for example: more officers on board, including relief officers in port; rearrangement of duties and responsibilities; reduction of paperwork; reorganization of repair and maintenance work so that less of it falls on deck and engine-room officers; more time in port for thorough overhauls.

Cabin staff reach agreement with BOAC

A strike by BOAC cabin staff was averted when members of the British Airline Stewards' and Stewardesses' Association (part of the ITF-affiliated Transport & General Workers' Union) voted to accept a new pay structure which would give increases of between £400 and £500 a year.

Bus pay claim for arbitration

A claim by the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union for the introduction of shift pay for 80,000 municipal busmen has been referred to arbitration following failure to agree in direct talks between the union and the Municipal Passenger Transport Employers' Federation. The claim was first put in towards the end of 1971. The arbitration award is expected to have an important influence on similar shift pay claims by 100,000 provincial busmen and 23,000 London Transport workers.

JAPAN

End of coastal shipping dispute

Shortly after the settlement of the dispute between the ITF-affiliated All-Japan Seamen's Union and the shipowners in the foreign trades (reported in Newsletter No. 7, page 101), agreement was also reached with owners in the coastal trades, again resulting in a victory for the union. The union's President, Bro. Koji Murakami, has written to the ITF expressing "heartfelt and deepest gratitude and thanks to the ITF and many affiliated seafarers' and dockers' organizations in the world which have cordially extended their full sympathy and support in various forms during our strike."

MEXICO

Homes for railwaymen

Agreement has been reached between the National Railways of Mexico and the ITF-affiliated Mexican Railway Workers' Union under which the company is to make available for railwaymen's housing projects over 5 million square metres of land suitable for the purpose, at an estimated value of 2,000 million pesos. The union now expects to sign similar agreements with the other railway undertakings for a further 7 million square metres, in order to make the programme nation-wide.

UNITED STATES

Future of railroad firemen assured

An historic agreement has been reached between the ITF-affiliated United Transportation Union and the National Railway Labor Conference (employers) to settle the 35-year old dispute over firemen's jobs on diesel locomotives. The agreement will ensure that all 18,000 present firemen keep their jobs and have the opportunity to become locomotive engineers. All future engineers will come from the ranks of the firemen.

The conflict over firemen, which began with the introduction of the first diesel locomotives in 1937, has led to five separate presidential emergency boards and two presidentially appointed panels.

Meteorologists obtain first contract with American Airlines

Meteorologists employed by American Airlines and belonging to the ITF-affiliated Transport Workers' Union have won significant improvements in their conditions in the first collective contract negotiated on their behalf. The pay agreement goes into effect retroactively to 12 June 1971, with a standard pay scale (replac-

ing individual rates of pay) of \$1500 per month. This rose on 12 June this year to \$1,665 for Upper Air Specialists and \$1,590 for other meteorologists. Other improvements incorporated in the contract include provisions on seniority, extra vacation, better pension arrangements, a group insurance scheme and severance pay provisions.

NEWS IN BRIEF

The British P & O shipping company has offered sole bargaining rights to the ITF-affiliated Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs for its 1300 shore-based employees in London, Liverpool and Southampton. In a ballot the P & O staff voted for joint representation by ASTMS and the ITF-affiliated Merchant Navy and Airline Officers' Association. The two unions, which are conducting a joint recruitment campaign in this field, are to have talks on the P & O offer.

Ground staff of Australia's domestic and international airlines are on strike over delays by the airlines in negotiating on claims for improved pay and conditions.

The ground handling company General Aviation Services, whose operations at London's Heathrow airport have caused industrial trouble for two years, is expected soon to leave. Unions at the airport have opposed GAS in favour of state-owned ground servicing facilities.

A strike by pilots of BEA was called off when a ballot showed acceptance of a pay offer by management. Senior captains, first class, receive a maximum of £8,295 from 1 January 1971 (an increase of £264), £8,850 from 1 January 1972 and £9,500 from 1 April 1973. No further pay claims will be made till 1 January 1974. Differential salary scales according to aircraft type are to be abandoned, leaving only the two scales for jet and turbo-prop pilots respectively.

Italian railwaymen are staging a 24-hour strike from 21,00 hours on 2 August in support of higher pay, the recruitment of some 16,000 more workers and government investment to expand and improve the railway service. Another strike may take place later in the month if their demands are not satisfied.

Australian dockers belonging to the ITF-affiliated Waterside Workers' Federation are continuing their boycott of French ships, cargo and mail in protest against the French nuclear tests in the Pacific. They have also organized short boycotts of a Spanish vessel in various ports in protest against the victimization of Spanish trade unionists.

The dockers' stoppage in the three Canadian ports of Montreal, Three Rivers and Quebec which began in mid-May ended on 10 July when the Federal government passed legislation ordering the strikers back to work. The men, including members of the ITF-affiliated International Longshoremen's Association, were in dispute over the effective date of job security provisions, which is the subject of arbitration proceedings.

PERSONALIA

Donald McDonald of the Canadian Labour Congress has been elected President of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, and Otto Kersten has been confirmed as General Secretary by the recent ICFTU Congress in London.

Ernst Ulbrich, General Secretary of the ITF-affiliated Austrian Railwaymen's Union, has been elected as new Chairman of the Central Employees' Committee of the Austrian State Railways.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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| ITF Management Committee | - Nuremberg, 16 September 1972 |
| International Cabin Attendants' Conference | - Dublin, 26-27 September 1972 |
| ITF Civil Aviation Section Conference | - Dublin, 28-29 September 1972 |
| Conference of ITF European Affiliates | - Salzburg, 9-10 October 1972 |
| ITF Road Transport Section Committee | - Stuttgart or Villingen (venue to be confirmed), 12-13 October 1972 |
| ITF Management Committee | - London, 30 October 1972 |
| ITF Executive Board | - London, 30-31 October 1972 |
| ITF Seafarers' Section Conference preparatory to ILO Joint Maritime Commission | - Geneva, 17-18 November 1972 |

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