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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

GREECE

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ITF to consider boycott of Greek transport

In a cable sent to the Greek Prime Minister, the ITF General Secretary has strongly protested on behalf of transport workers' unions throughout the world at the detention of the Greek seamen's leader Antonios Ambatielos and at the general resumption of political arrests. He demanded the release of Ambatielos and other unionists in the absence of specific and proven charges, failing which the ITF would be obliged to consider organizing a boycott of Greek transport. Boycott action has already been undertaken on a number of occasions against Greek vessels in Australian ports.

SOUTH AFRICA

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Report on British companies' employment terms for Africans

The Select Committee of the British parliament investigating the wages and conditions of African workers employed by British firms operating in South Africa has recommended that these companies should aim to pay their African workers not less than the Minimum Effective Level (MEL) and should establish a timetable to achieve this. The MEL is reckoned at 50% above subsistence level wages, but the committee found 63 major British firms which were paying wages to African workers below even this barest minimum required to support a family.

The Committee's report contains detailed guidelines on employment practices for British companies, and recommends that these companies should be asked to submit regular reports on the progress of wages and conditions of their African employees. Much evidence had been received indicating that press publicity had contributed to a significant improvement in conditions and the Committee considered that "the expectation that their employment practices will be subject to public scrutiny would seem to be a potent force for progress."

Among the recommended practices put forward by the Committee are: recognition of and negotiation with African trade unions, or the establishment of African works committees where there are no unions; pressure for the advancement of Africans into more qualified and better paid jobs and the reduction of the vast differentials between the average pay of white and African workers; furtherance by the companies of schemes for the education of African employees and their children and the use of their influence in easing restrictions on their freedom of movement, residence and employment; provision of medical services

in addition to those supplied by the State, together with other fringe benefits such as pension schemes which would help to redress the disadvantages encountered by Africans.

One thing which was very apparent from the evidence submitted to the Committee was the fact that very many British companies did not know in detail the terms of employment of Africans working for their South African subsidiaries. The recent publicity given to the matter, and the work of the Committee itself, have remedied this ignorance and continued pressure for such information to be supplied on a regular basis will undoubtedly help to keep the parent companies aware of their responsibilities.

It will be up to the British Department of Trade and Industry to circulate the recommended code of employment practice to British firms with South African interests, and to keep a continuing check on progress.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

BELGIUM  
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Claims for inland navigation workers

The ITF-affiliated Belgian Transport Workers' Union has drawn up its claims for an improved 1974-75 contract for its members employed in inland navigation. These include: the five-day week; increase in end-of-year bonus from 40% to 75%; pay increase of 1,500 fr. per month; introduction of an occupational pension scheme at the employer's expense. The new contract will run from 1 April 1974 to 31 March 1975.

CANADA  
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Settlement of non-ops' dispute

The arbitration award settling the lengthy dispute over the 1973-74 contract for Canadian non-operating railwaymen was announced on 16 January, and has since been ratified by the parties. It gives an average wage increase of 24% over the two-year period. This is made up of 15 cents an hour from 1 January 1973 in addition to the 34 cents granted by the government, and a further rise of 9% from 1 January 1974, based on the 1973 rates. The average non-op hourly rate thus goes up from \$3.54 to \$4.39.

The arbitration award also gives several major improvements in fringe benefits: shift differentials of 10 and 15 cents per hour for the evening and night shifts; substantial improvements in annual leave; time-and-a-half plus holiday pay for work on a national holiday. The report also outlines a job security plan based on the principle of attrition. Employers and unions are to negotiate on the basis of this and have until 30 June to reach agreement, after which the arbitrator may impose a scheme.

#### Strike of Great Lakes seafarers settled

Nearly 4,000 members of the ITF-affiliated Seafarers' International Union of Canada employed by seventeen Great Lakes shipping companies went on strike on 15 March in support of the Union's claims for substantial pay increases and a 40-hour week. The strike continued past the official opening day of the St. Lawrence Seaway, 26 March, but was settled on 1 April with a two-year contract giving pay increases and other benefits totalling about 38%.

FRANCE  
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#### Pilots in protest action over new Paris airport

The ITF-affiliated National Air Line Pilots' Union (SNPL) is in dispute with Air France over the use of the new Paris airport at Roissy in combination with the existing Orly airport. The union ordered a boycott of flights commencing at one airport and terminating at the other with effect from 20 March until such time as the company agreed to provide proper compensation for transit between the two, which are approximately 50 km (30 miles) apart. A pilot who refused to land at Roissy in implementation of the SNPL policy on 23 March has been disciplined by the company, and this action has exacerbated the conflict. (After a strike of its air crews from 12 to 15 March on the same issue, Air Canada agreed to transit compensation.)

A separate dispute with Air France, this time involving both air crew (SNPL and other ITF-affiliated aviation unions) and ground staff, concerns the company's plans to cut back on staff as part of an economy campaign in the face of higher fuel costs. The unions called a 24-hour stoppage on 21 March in support of their demands for job security guarantees.

#### Railwaymen's union reaches agreement for 1974 pay

The ITF-affiliated FO French Railwaymen's Federation has reached agreement with the French National Railways (SNCF) on pay increases for the year 1974. In addition to the 2% which was granted on 1 February 1974, with effect from 1 April 1974 wages will be increased by a percentage equal to the rise in prices between 31.12.73 and 31.3.74, and from 1 July 1974

by a percentage equal to the rise in prices between 31.12.73 and 30.6.74. In addition a 1% real increase in purchasing power is guaranteed

A similar agreement has been reached for employees of the Paris underground and bus service.

#### GERMANY

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#### Seamen accept mediation proposals; agreement for pilotage service

Seafarer member of the ITF-affiliated German Union of Transport and Public Service Workers have accepted the mediation proposals put forward at the end of February to settle their pay dispute. The new agreement gives an increase of 11% subject to a minimum of 145 DM per month for qualified and 90 DM per month for unskilled crew members. Monetary fringe benefits are increased by 15%. The new rates apply retroactively from 1 January 1974, to union members only.

The union has also achieved a new agreement for its members in the pilotage service, which gives similar increases to those for seafarers. In addition, the contract provides that the 13th month's salary - paid for the first time last year - will become a regular annual payment in future. The most important improvement, however, is the introduction of the 40-hour week. Pilot vessel crews now get 113 free days a year in addition to annual leave of 20 working days.

#### Pan Am ground staff dispute settled

Following the failure of mediation talks in the dispute between the ITF-affiliated German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union and Pan American World Airways over pay claims for ground staff, the union conducted a ballot in which 96.6% voted in favour of strike action. Before the strike was called, however, Pan Am sought further talks which resulted in a settlement on 16 March, ratified by the membership.

The agreement provides for an increase of 5% plus 61 DM, the resulting salaries being rounded up to the next highest step in the salary scales. In addition, all employees receive a lump-sum payment of 200 DM; and allowances for night work, holiday work and shift work are also increased.

#### Agreement reached for Lufthansa air and ground staff

Negotiations between the ITF-affiliated German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union and the national airline Lufthansa ended in agreement on 2 March on new pay contracts for air crew and ground staff. These give increases of 10% for flight deck crew members; 10.5% for cabin staff; 15% on compensation for

excess flying hours; allowances for pursers on B-707 aircraft and in combined B-707/B727 service are increased to DM 150; ground staff pay is raised by between 11.5% and 12.5%. The agreement is effective from 1.1.74 for one year.

GREAT BRITAIN

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Strike planned by British overseas cabin staff

Cabin attendants employed by British Airways' overseas division have voted on strike action with effect from 7 May in support of their claim for higher pay, shorter hours and increased allowances for overseas duties. Their union, the British Airways Stewards' and Stewardesses' Association - part of the ITF-affiliated Transport & General Workers' Union - has been negotiating on the claims for a considerable time and the current agreement expired at the end of March.

Railway pay claim for arbitration

The ITF-affiliated Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen has rejected a pay offer made by British Rail, but has agreed to submit the dispute to arbitration. The offer - which has been accepted by the National Union of Railwaymen and the Transport Salaried Staffs' Association, also ITF affiliates - was weighted in favour of the lower paid grades and would give basic pay increases of up to £2.85 per week, together with two extra days' annual leave, a cost-of-living escalator clause and "unsocial hours" payments for Saturday working.

JAPAN

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Transport workers step up "spring offensive"; ITF railwaymen support campaign for union rights

Workers employed by private railways, underground and bus services joined a strike by over two million Japanese workers on 26 March in support of claims for higher wages, improved conditions, and the right to strike. Further, more extensive, union action also involving transport workers is being planned for 11 April if satisfaction is not obtained.

At their meeting in Basle on 20 and 21 March 1974, the ITF Railwaymen's Section Conference adopted a resolution reaffirming the ITF's support for the fundamental principle that all workers, whether employed in the public or the private sector, are entitled to full trade union rights and called upon the Japanese government immediately to restore to public employees the right to strike.

Cabin attendants' dispute

The ITF-affiliated Japan Air Lines Cabin Attendants' Union is conducting a strike ballot among its members as a result of the airline's uncompromising attitude towards its claims for improved conditions, in particular relating to time off and rest periods, flight and duty time limitations, reduction of stand-by times, on periods away from home base and increases in subsistence and flight allowances.

ITF aviation affiliates have been alerted to the possibility of a strike and asked to provide international support and solidarity action.

NORWAY

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Seamen's union wage claims

The ITF-affiliated Norwegian Seamen's Union has submitted wage claims on behalf of its 3,000 members in the home trades. The main demand is for a general 15% increase plus 400 kr. per month for a one-year period, together with a cost-of-living escalator agreement. The union argues that its members are a low-wage group compared with the level in industry as a whole, and the substantial claim is therefore justified.

TURKEY

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Aviation workers' dispute settled

A long-standing dispute between the ITF-affiliated Turkish Civil Aviation Workers' Union and Turkish Airlines was resolved towards the end of February with the conclusion of a new agreement, effective 1 July 1973 for two years. This gives a pay increase of 25% plus a flat-rate increase of 250 Liras for the first year, plus a further 150 Liras for the second year, effective 1 July 1974.

ITF FLAG-OF-CONVENIENCE CAMPAIGN

Among recent successful actions by ITF affiliated unions on behalf of the crews of flag-of-convenience vessels was an excellent settlement achieved by the Belgian Transport Workers' Union for 21 crew members aboard the Cyprus-flag CARMEN. Back pay of amounts ranging from DM 1,289.50 to DM 9,117.27 was obtained, together with a bonus of 8 days' ship wages and one month's ITF wages. The crew were repatriated after the vessel was sold to an owner in Dubai.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Seven nations have signed a Convention to protect the Baltic Sea from land-based, waterborne and airborne pollution. They are: Denmark, Finland, West and East Germany, Poland, Sweden and the Soviet Union.

A four-day general strike in Ethiopia ended on 10 March with agreement between the government and the trade union confederation on a settlement. Details are not known but the unions' claims included pay increases, improved social conditions and the right to organize in essential services.

ITF affiliates have been advised of the settlement of the British miners' strike and the calling-off of solidarity action on their behalf. The Miners' International Federation has expressed warm thanks for ITF assistance in the dispute.

Negotiations on new contracts for 90,000 Norwegian workers, including dock workers and road transport workers belonging to the Norwegian transport workers' union, have broken down and mediation is now awaited.

PERSONALIA

Francis Blanchard has been appointed Director General of the International Labour Organization; this follows his nomination as acting Director General in succession to the late Wilfred Jenks.

Franz Eichinger, former Vice-President of the German Railwaymen's Union, and now Chairman of German Federal Railways, has been awarded the silver medal of honour with star for services to the Austrian Republic, by the Austrian President.

Sir Sidney Greene, General Secretary of the British National Union of Railwaymen and member of the ITF Executive Board and Management Committee, has announced that he will retire at the end of this year.

Josef Probst has been elected President of the Transport Section of the Austrian Commercial and Transport Workers' Union in succession to Othmar Luczensky who did not stand for re-election. Raimund Gryc becomes Vice-President.



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

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An updated edition of "Spare Time at Sea" by Ronald Hope (foreword by ITF General Secretary Charles Blyth) has been prepared by the author and is now available. The book contains a host of practical suggestions to combat boredom on board ship, with a range of absorbing pursuits wide enough to provide everyone on board with something of interest. The book may be obtained from : The Secretary, Seafarers' Education Service, 207 Blaham High Road, London SW17 7BH, and costs £2.50.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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ITF Management Committee	-	London, 17-18 April 1974
Fair Practices Committee- Subcommittee on ITF Collective Agreement	-	London, 25-26 April 1974
ITF Inland Navigation Conference	-	Vienna, 7-9 May 1974
31st ITF Congress	-	Stockholm, 7-15 August 1974

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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ICFTU MAY DAY MANIFESTO 1974

The first of May has once again regained its old significance as a fighting day for millions of workers for whom in the last few years it was hardly more than a day of celebrations and historical reminiscences. The events of recent months, the energy crisis and the ever accelerating inflation have brought it home to all of us that there is no country in the world where the workers can still count on a secure job, a steady income and rising living standards.

True, the trade unions in most industrialised countries successfully protect their members from the effects of increased costs of living: by resisting one-sided income controls and by securing adequate wage increases they have seen to it that the burden of inflation is not exclusively borne by the working class. But they have to fight harder for it than in recent years and they have not been able to ward off mounting unemployment, while in the developing world the picture is even more depressing. In any case, it is one thing to avert the worst and most immediate consequences of a crisis, another to tackle the crisis itself. This is the greater and more difficult task for which we must all brace ourselves.

We are convinced that this is a crisis of international capitalism itself. The capitalist system may eventually overcome the energy shortage which is exclusively of its own making, but endemic inflation, the ever recurring threat of economic recessions and world poverty itself with the still growing gap between the rich and the poor, will not be mastered unless and until the workers can secure a juster distribution of wealth and an effective participation in decision making at all levels, from the shop floor right up to national and international bodies. It is in this sense that the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions has put to the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Raw Materials and Development an 8-point programme of long- and short-term measures.

However, the most important decisions these days are not taken by governments or intergovernmental organizations, but by giant international companies. Their transactions and investments affect the fate of whole nations: they play a big part in the inflationary spiral through their near monopoly control of prices in many sectors; they can turn a backward village into an industrial centre or ruin a flourishing region by transferring their production elsewhere; they can influence the policies of sovereign states and make or unmake governments as the horrifying events in Chile have demonstrated. Since these multinational companies are guided only by the profit motive, their enormous power is not matched by a corresponding sense of responsibility: with their power growing from day to day, it is desperately urgent that effective measures be taken to bring their activities under control.

The international trade union movement has started to grapple with the task of forging an effective counterforce to the multinationals. Building on the foundations which have been laid already in some industries by the setting up of international company councils, the International Trade Secretariats will be in a stronger position to protect the workers employed by such firms in different countries from being exploited and played off against each other; by organising worldwide campaigns and in appropriate cases by such means as consumer boycotts - as the recent Farah case has shown - multinationals can be forced to respect trade union rights and to guarantee their work force decent wages and job security. We have now the machinery - in the shape of the ICFTU/ITS Working Party on Multinationals - for coordinating maximum pressure on particular firms when necessary. But this is not enough. We have also to mobilise effective political pressure to persuade the governments to take appropriate concerted action. We therefore repeat our demand for a multilateral treaty under UN auspices which can oblige the giant corporations to recognise their social responsibilities and to use their power for the benefit of the countries they are working in, and indeed of the world community.

While resisting the multinational menace, the free trade union movement must not, however, lose sight of its multiple other tasks, nor of its older enemies. We cannot achieve our ideals of lasting world peace and a juster world order as long as dictatorships in many parts of the world deny the people their most elementary rights and as long as the forces of colonialism continue to suppress and exploit indigenous populations. At present, the Portuguese colonialist regime appears to be in the throes of a deep crisis, the outcome of which may be decisive not only for the African territories still under Portuguese domination, but even for Portugal itself - Western Europe's most underdeveloped country; yet the other two bastions of colonialism and racism in Southern Africa are fiercely resisting the free trade union movement's efforts to bring about decisive changes. However, things are moving even there, and moving in the right direction. It is up to us to strengthen everywhere the forces of freedom and democracy by proving our solidarity - as the ICFTU's largest European affiliate, the British TUC put it not long ago - "for the right of peoples to organize free trade unions, free speech and assembly, free and democratic elections". The International Confederation calls upon the workers of all countries to take an active part in this fight and to support at the same time all genuine moves towards a greater unity of free and democratic trade union forces in the world, for it is in this way, and in this way only, that we shall be able to achieve our great aims of Bread, Peace and Freedom for all people on earth.

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