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TRADE UNIONS

GHANA
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Seminar for ITF-affiliated unions

A one-week basic trade union seminar was organized by ITF African Regional Representative, Ben Udogwu, at the Workers' College, Takoradi, Ghana, from 18 to 23 March 1974. There were forty participants from the following five (out of six) ITF affiliates in Ghana: Maritime and Dockworkers' Union (13 participants), Railway and Port Workers Union (9), General Transport and Petroleum Workers' Union (8), Railway Enginemen's Union (3) and National Union of Seamen (7).

The seminar was conducted under the supervision of C.R. Amartey, a tutor at the Ghana Labour College, with the assistance of officials of all the participating unions, with a special guest lecture being given by Ben Sharman of the US International Association of Machinists who was on a visit to the country at the time. Among the subjects covered were: Ghana's Industrial Relations Act (1965), with particular emphasis on conciliation, mediation and arbitration; strikes and lockouts; trade union finance; collective bargaining; grievance handling; functions of branch officers, trade union leadership; wage determination in Ghana; function and organization of credit unions; trade union communication; international trade union history and the work of the ITF.

The closing session was chaired by Mr. Darko, Regional Chief Labour Officer, who also distributed attendance certificates to all the participants.

NETHERLANDS
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Federation of transport unions established

With effect from the last week in May the ITF-affiliated Netherlands Transport Workers' Union (NVV) and the Federation of Maritime Workers' Unions have merged with the Catholic Transport Workers' Union (NKV) in a Federation of Transport Workers' Organizations. Within this Federation close cooperation will take place on organizational and contract matters, for the purpose of achieving greater efficiency and strength for the benefit of all the country's transport workers.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

AUSTRALIA
=====

Increased wages for dock workers

With effect from 6 May 1974, members of the ITF-affiliated Australian Waterside Workers' Federation receive pay increases ranging from \$22.50 to \$23.90 per week for permanent port workers and 75 cents per hour in the casual ports, with the guaranteed minimum wage for the latter going up by \$82 per four-week period. Other increases are also being applied to attendance money, meal money and annual leave pay. In addition, with effect from 23 May a national wage increase raising all wage rates by 2% plus \$250 per week goes into force. This gives weekly wage rates for the permanent ports of: \$112.70 for ordinary waterside workers; \$118.80 for mobile crane and fork-lift drivers and \$123.40 as the top terminal rate (Portainer driver, etc). The settlement has been approved by the membership.

BELGIUM
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Contract improvements for inland navigation workers

The ITF-affiliated Belgian Transport Workers' Union has obtained improvements for its members in inland navigation, in a new contract effective from 1 April 1974. The major achievements are: pay increases of 600 F. per month from 1.4.74 and a further 400 F. per month from 1.10.74; introduction of the five-day week from 1.10.74, the first three days being of 8 working hours and Thursday and Friday of 9 hours each; the end-of-year bonus is increased from 40 to 60%; agreement in principle to the payment of travelling costs by the employer; provision of free working clothes with effect from 1.1.75 and payment of 100 F. per month in lieu for the period from 1.4.74 until then; and the establishment of a special joint committee to look into the question of setting up a supplementary pension scheme.

FINLAND
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New agreement for ships' officers

Eleven hours before the planned strike on 6 May, the ITF-affiliated Finnish Ships' Officers' Association reached agreement with the shipowners on their claims for increased pay. The new agreement is effective from 1 May 1974 to 31 January 1976, and gives the following improvements for deck officers in the foreign trades:

Basic monthly pay is increased four times: by from 19.6% to 35.5% from 1.5.74; by 2.8% from 1.9.74; by 13.1% from 1.4.75; and by 2.1% from 1.9.75.

Allowances for ocean-going, vacations and subsistence are also increased, and the new rates give the following range of monthly salaries with effect from 1 May 1974:

| | <u>Minimum (under 4500 Dwt)</u> | <u>Maximum (over 80000 Dwt)</u> |
|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Chief Officer | 2,270 Fmk | 2,859 Fmk |
| 1st Officer | 1,874 | 2,309 |
| 2nd Officer | 1,761 | 2,159 |

Seniority bonus: Basic monthly pay increases by 5% after 2 and 4 years' service as a seagoing officer, and after 6, 8, 11 and 14 years as an officer with the same company.

Masters' minimum monthly pay is as follows (from 1.5.74):

| | |
|--------------------|-----------|
| Up to 4500 dwt | 3,640 Fmk |
| 4500 - 12999 dwt | 4,020 Fmk |
| 13000 - 29999 dwt | 4,070 Fmk |
| 30000 - 79999 dwt | 4,310 Fmk |
| 80000 dwt and over | 4,460 Fmk |

GREAT BRITAIN
=====

Cabin attendants end strike

Cabin crews employed by the overseas division of Britain Airways returned to work on 22 May after a two-week unofficial strike, following a settlement negotiated with the management by the British Airline Stewards' and Stewardesses' Association (part of the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union). The settlement gives pay increases backdated to 1 January and sets up a joint working party to investigate other grievances, in particular demands for shorter duty periods, which should report within three months.

Seamen accept revised pay offer

The ITF-affiliated National Union of Seamen's executive council has accepted a revised pay offer from the Shipping Federation which, subject to approval by the Pay Board, will go into effect on 2 July. The agreement provides an overall increase of 15% within the terms of Phase Three of the government's pay policy. Acceptance of this offer reverses the decision by the union's annual conference, reported in Newsletter no. 5, page 53, to reject the proposal.

INDIA
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Return to work by railwaymen

After a 20-day stoppage, members of the ITF-affiliated All-India Railwaymen's Federation returned to work on 28 May, following a decision by the strike action committee to call off their action. Government relation against the strikers included the arrest of many thousands of railway workers (some estimates put the numbers as high as 30,000) and many others were threatened with dismissal and eviction from their homes. Some union officials have been released since the strike ended, but there is no indication so far that the original causes of the dispute are to be resolved. These centred on the Railwaymen's Federation claims for improved pay and conditions and an end to the employment of casual labour.

IRISH REPUBLIC
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Ballot to be held of striking Dublin busmen

Dublin bus workers belonging to three unions, including the ITF-affiliated Irish Transport & General Workers' Union, are participating in a ballot to decide whether they wish to work a five-day or a six-day week. The men have been on strike for a month against new schedules linked to a five-day week and all attempts to negotiate a settlement have reached deadlock since the Labour Court's conciliation officers have failed to find any basis of agreement between the conflicting positions. One union, the National Busmen's Union, which is outside the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, has accepted the schedules and is not participating in the ballot.

JAPAN
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Settlement of foreign-going seamen's pay

On 15 April the ITF-affiliated All-Japan Seamen's Union secured an agreement with the shipowners on a new contract for its members in the foreign trades. This provides: basic pay increase of 41.5% (39,039 Yen per month); reduction in the working week from 44 to 42 hours this year and to 40 hours in 1975; compensatory leave of one day for each Saturday on articles and each holiday (except Sundays) at sea, plus $\frac{1}{4}$ day for each Sunday on articles and each holiday (except Sundays) in port from next year; paid leave may also be granted after 4 months service on board; hourly overtime rates for work on holidays to be 1.4/164ths this year and 1.5/164ths next year.

For its members working aboard large car ferries, the Union has secured similar improvements to those negotiated for seafarers in the home trades (see Newsletter no.5, page 47).

Cabin attendants' dispute referred to mediation

Japan Air Lines has unilaterally referred its dispute with the ITF-affiliated JAL Cabin Attendants' Union to mediation; under the contract, no industrial action may take place while a dispute is being mediated, so the union has had to call off its series of stoppages. It is assumed that the airline's tactic is to prolong the dispute with the hope of affecting the morale of the union members.

KOREA

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Pay increases agreed for Korean seamen

The ITF-affiliated Korean Seamen's Union has negotiated an agreement with the Korean Shipowners' Association, effective 1 March 1974, giving average increases of 28.5% - 34% for ratings and 21% for officers, serving aboard national flag vessels.

NORWAY

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National agreement reached for metalworkers

A strike of 57,000 metalworkers (members of the ITF-affiliated Norwegian Metal Workers' Union which has civil aviation engineers among its ranks) was avoided at the last minute when a recommended national agreement was accepted in a close-run ballot.

The agreement is valid for two years and provides an hourly wage rise of 1.25 kr. for the first year and 1.00 kr. for the second year. Considerable increases have additionally been granted to shift workers, and an improved cost-of-living escalator formula has been adopted. No agreement was reached on one of the crucial issues in the negotiations - payment of union dues by non-union members - and this question has been referred to talks at national level between the trade union federation (LO) and the Employers' Confederation.

Agreement for engineer officers in home trades

Negotiations between the ITF-affiliated Norwegian Ships' Engineers' Union and the shipowners have resulted in agreement on new pay and conditions for the home trades. This provides for a general increase in pay of kr. 160 per month plus 10% during the first year of the agreement and during the second year, i.e. from 1 April 1975, the rates then in force will be increased by kr. 150 plus 5%. Subsistence allowances are increased by 45 kr. per month and a further 30 kr. from 1.4.75, and improvements have also been agreed for overtime compensation and uniform allowances. Sick pay (90% of gross income less tax, pension contributions and national insurance) is granted for up to 9 months. Pay is also linked to the cost-of-living index so that an additional 10 øre per hour is paid for each one-point rise in the index between 15 March and 15 November 1974. The contract is subject to membership ratification.

Agreement has also been reached between the ITF-affiliated Mates' Union and the shipowners on new contracts for the home and coastal trades.

Bus drivers get pay rise

A nation-wide strike of bus drivers was averted when agreement was reached with the aid of the national mediation officer between the ITF-affiliated Norwegian Transport Workers' Union and the employers on new pay rates, effective 1 April 1974, which give an increase of 2.82 kr. per hour; a further increase of 2.12 kr. per hour is to be granted from 1 April 1975. The agreement also provides that drivers with 12 years' consecutive service with the same employer will receive an extra 15 kr. per week. A cost-of-living escalator clause has also been agreed.

SWEDEN
=====

Settlement of navigating officers' dispute

The dispute between the ITF-affiliated Swedish Ships' Officers' Association and the shipowners' association was resolved on 29 May, in time to avert a large-scale stoppage. (The ITF had alerted its affiliates to take maximum solidarity action should industrial action become necessary). Full details of the settlement are not yet available, but it has been described by the officers' Association as completely satisfactory. It includes provision for the reduction of the standard working week from 40 to 36 hours during the course of 1975 and 1976, and for a pay increase of approximately 400 kr. per month for navigating and radio officers and 6.5% for masters, to be effective on 1 February 1975. The agreement is provisional until a settlement is also reached for officers of ferry and tug vessels.

A similar agreement has been reached with the Engineer Officers' Union.

New contract for seamen

Following mediation, the ITF-affiliated Swedish Seamen's Union reached agreement with the shipowners on the terms of a new two-year contract. Strike action had been threatened but the settlement averted this. A two-stage pay increase has been obtained, the first stage on 1.2.74 and the second on 1.8.74, which together result in increases averaging about 240 kr. per month. Normal working hours are to be reduced from 40 to 38 hours a week from 1.2.75 and from 38 to 37 from 1.2.76. Considerable improvements have also been achieved in the conditions governing established service with a particular shipowner, notably with regard to notice periods.

UNITED STATES

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IAM dispute with Air France ends

The ITF-affiliated US International Association of Machinists has reported that a settlement has been reached with Air France in its long-standing dispute which began in January this year. No details of the settlement are yet available, but these will be reported as soon as possible. The IAM has asked that its deep appreciation and sincere thanks be conveyed to all ITF-affiliated civil aviation unions which lent their support during the strike.

Machinists accept second proposed United contract

After initially voting to reject a tentative agreement reached between the ITF-affiliated International Association of Machinists and United Air Lines, members of the union have now accepted a second proposal which contains some improvements over the first. The new contract, retroactive to 1 September 1973, gives pay increases in five stages, giving an hourly rate of \$7.64 from 1 May 1975 compared with \$6.60 an hour when the contract expired. It also contains a cost-of-living escalator clause, giving an increase of one cent per hour for each rise of 0.3 points in the index. Further improvements cover pension provisions, disability insurance, cover for dental treatment, vacations and sick leave.

New York bus workers get new contracts

The ITF-affiliated US Transport Workers' Union has recently negotiated new two-year contracts for its members employed by the New York bus companies; these provide a 6% wage increase on 1 April 1974, a further 3% in 1 December 1974 and an additional 5% on 1 April 1975. Moreover, a 10% shift differential comes into effect on 1 April 1975 for all hours worked between 6 p.m. and 5.59 a.m. the following day and at weekends for all hours worked between 6 p.m. Friday and 5.59 a.m. Monday. There are also improvements in health insurance provisions, meal allowances and other benefits.

A cost-of-living clause provides that for every 0.4 points rise in the index, wages will be increased by 1 cent per hour; the first such payment comes into effect on 1 July 1975, based on the index movements during the preceding three months.

The contracts are subject to membership ratification.

NEWS IN BRIEF

An ITF plaque has been presented to the Austrian Transport and Commercial Workers' Union on the occasion of its 70th anniversary celebrations.

Members of the Australian Merchant Service Guild went on strike in the port of Melbourne from 22 to 31 May in support of claims for improved pay, a change of calculation of overtime, and improvements in shift work and leave provisions.

The Confederation of Ethiopian Labour Unions has threatened to call a general strike if the government makes any move to hamper its development or if any of its officers are arrested.

The normal retirement age for British railwaymen will be lowered from age 65 to age 62, with effect from 1 July this year. Other pension improvements include automatic cost-of-living adjustment.

An unofficial strike by dockers in the port of Cork, Ireland which was joined by a token one-day support strike at Dublin, ended after 11 days when the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union negotiated a settlement of the mens's grievances on manning and bonus payments on retirement.

Notice of strike action with effect from 17 June has been served on Aer Lingus, the Irish national airline, by the Irish Transport & General Workers' Union. This is in support of its claim for maintenance of relative pay rates for unskilled grades of airport ground staff following a rise granted to skilled grades.

Italian seamen's unions conducted a 24-hour stoppage on 7 June as part of a general union programme calling for reform of the transport system. Other transport unions struck for 4 hours that day.

The proposed new contracts for land and port transport workers in Norway (see Newsletter no. 5, page 49) has been accepted in a ballot of the union's members.

Norwegian locomotivemen are taking unofficial industrial action in support of claims for extra pay increases over and above what has been negotiated for them as part of the national package for state employees.

An 18-day strike for recognition and negotiating rights by members of the Swedish Port Workers' Union (a breakaway from the ITF-affiliated Swedish Transport Workers' Union) ended on 13 May without the claim being met.

Members of the United States International Association of Machinists have voted to reject a proposed new agreement between the union and Eastern Airlines.

PERSONALIA

Harry Jarlsnäs, former treasurer of the Swedish Seamen's Union, died on 18 May after a short illness, at the age of 65. He had been in union service for 47 years until his retirement early this year.

Werner Schneider, former finance officer of the Swiss Transport and Commercial Workers' Union died on 7 April. He had been a full-time officer with the union since 1933 until his retirement at age 62.

Wim van den Heuvel, secretary of the road transport section of the Netherlands Transport Workers' Union, died on 9 May 1974. He had served the union in many capacities during his career, but had been in poor health since October last year.

Heinz Oskar Vetter, Chairman of the German trade union centre DGB, has been elected to succeed Britain's Vic Feather as President of the European Trade Union Confederation.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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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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