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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

Flag of convenience shipping and its alarming safety record
-- 'Corrupt and feeble' control over world shipping

The ITF welcomes the outspoken criticism of flag of convenience shipping contained in Lord Kennet's chairman's introduction to the 1973 report of the London-based Advisory Committee on Oil Pollution of the Sea (ACOPS). As the ITF has claimed for years, Lord Kennet says that the safety record of convenience flag shipping is alarming and claims that most major incidents resulting in oil pollution of the British coast in recent years have involved convenience flag tankers. He points out that over 20 per cent of world shipping and 30 per cent of tanker tonnage is now registered under flags of convenience. He wants to see pressure applied at the Caracas Law of the Sea Conference for the full implementation of the principle of the 'genuine link' between a ship and the state whose flag it flies. In calling for the principle of port state jurisdiction, Lord Kennet says "The port state has, by definition, an immediate opportunity to investigate, and act upon, complaints against a ship. The flag state, in the present corrupt and feeble regime for world shipping, may not even see the ship it is supposed to answer for in years, if ever."

TRANSPORT

EUROPE

Automatic couplings - still no decision on introduction date

The 39th Session of the ECMT Council of Ministers was held in Vienna during June. Current ECMT Chairman is the Austrian Minister of Transport and Communications Erwin Lanc. ITF railwaymen are disappointed at the outcome of the meeting. Important topics, such as automation and rationalization were barely touched on and the Chairman was asked to hold further talks with the railway managements of the Eastern bloc states on the introduction of automatic couplings in Europe. No firm decision was taken regarding the date of the introduction, as was demanded by the May meeting of the ITF Railwaymen's Section.

GERMANY

German railwaymen oppose further contraction of parcels service

The ITF-affiliated German Railwaymen's Union (GdED) has again spoken out against the German Railways' intention to restrict or even abandon the carriage of parcels by rail. A GdED press release on the subject emphasizes that the contraction of parcels traffic, in particular the reduction in the number of parcels offices from 3,200 to 1,000 in mid-1970, has not had the desired results, i.e.: it has not reduced costs or improved the speed of despatch.

The press release concludes: "It is the job of the politicians concerned to decide whether the railways should cease carrying parcels traffic. To do this would be to reduce competition between different modes of transport, with parcels traffic being transferred to the roads, which would then enjoy a monopoly position. Customers who previously used the railways will find it more difficult to despatch consignments; the service will be dearer and less efficient. Moreover, the jobs of thousands of railwaymen will be endangered without thought of the consequences. Railwaymen are following developments closely and will resist any action which does not at least allow the railways to continue carrying parcels traffic. They will not forget the way in which their industry and their jobs have been dealt with, whenever they are called on to make political statements."

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

BELGIUM

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New agreement for road transport workers

The ITF-affiliated transport section of the Belgian Public Service Workers' Union has recently signed a new agreement with the road transport employers, valid from 1 May 1974 to 30 April 1975.

Working hours are reduced with effect from 1 May from 41½ hours to 41 hours per week without loss of pay (92 hours to 91 hours per 15-day period in international transport).

Hourly Wages are increased as follows: Lorry driver (under 7 tons) - from 87.15 Fr. to 91.65 Fr.; Lorry driver (7 to 15 tons) - 91.10 Fr. to 95.90 Fr.; Lorry driver (over 15 tons) 94.85 Fr. to 100 Fr. These increases include cost-of-living adjustments and the adjustment made as a result of the reduced working week. Two further increases on minimum wages will be applied with effect from 1 July 1974 and 1 January 1975. The package represents a real increase (i.e. without taking account of cost-of-living adjustments) averaging 5.8%.

Subsistence allowance is increased from 380 Fr. to 410 Fr. per day overall, i.e. an increase of 8%.

End-of-year bonus for 1975 is raised from 1,500 Fr. to 1,700 Fr.

Sick pay: Overall supplementary sickness allowance is raised from 3,000 Fr. to 4,500 Fr., as follows:

After 60 days incapacity for work:	750 Fr.
" 120 "	" " 1,000 Fr.
" 180 "	" " 1,250 Fr.
" 240 "	" " 1,500 Fr.

Retirement bonus is introduced with effect from 1 May 1974; this amounts to 1,500 Fr. on retirement, provided the person concerned has five years' service in the industry.

Improvements have also been obtained for garage staff in the same agreement.

GERMANY

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New pay system for deep-sea fishermen

The ITF-affiliated German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union has successfully concluded negotiations with the Deep Sea Fishing Association on new wage agreements for factory ships and fresh fishing vessels and a new general agreement on conditions of service. These go into effect from 1 June 1974.

Crew members aboard factory ships now receive the greater part of their pay as guaranteed basic wages; previously they were more than 60% based on the size of the catch and thus were subject to wide variation. In addition a new leave system is introduced under which crew members in the deep sea fishing industry are entitled to three months' leave after nine months at sea (similar to what is provided for merchant seamen).

In detail, the following improvements for crews of fresh fishing vessels have been obtained: Increase of 13% in waiting pay, guaranteed pay, overtime compensation and insurance cover for personal effects; increase of 11% in trip pay; skippers basic salary increased to DM 2,200 per month, and leave compensation to DM 4,200 per month. Other allowances and special payments are also increased.

Crews of factory ships benefit from similar provisions, but their basic guaranteed wages are substantially increased while pay based on the share of the catch goes down.

General conditions relating to leave are improved as follows:

1. Maximum continuous leave period is increased from 24 to 30 days.
2. With effect from 1.6.75 new leave and time off provisions go into force, under which skippers and crew members are entitled to 2/7 of a day off for each trip day, in compensation for Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays spent at sea and including annual leave entitlement. In addition a further entitlement of 2 days for each year of employment completed after the 18th birthday is awarded, subject to a maximum of 20 days.
3. Holiday pay after one year's uninterrupted service with the same owner amounts to 20%, after three years 40% and after five years 50% of the monthly wage.
4. If a trip (fresh fishing vessel) lasts more than 20 days and the vessel reaches home port after 1500 hours, time off must include at least three nights.

GREAT BRITAIN

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Details of merchant navy officers' agreement

We are now able to give further details of the settlement between the ITF-affiliated Merchant Navy and Airline Officers' Association and the shipowners, reached on 9 May 1974; the major portion has

been approved by the Pay Board and the remainder, according to government assurances, will be implemented as agreed as soon as the Pay Board has been disbanded.

Pay: All officers will receive an increase in the consolidated basic rate of either £11.85 per month or 7 per cent, whichever is higher, effective 1 June 1974. A flexibility payment equivalent to 1% of the officers' wages bill will be available to companies to counter any anomalies in their wages structure, in agreement with the officers' unions.

A cost-of-living threshold payment of £4.95 per month is being paid from 1 June 1974 and further increases will become due as the index rises.

A special cash payment is also being made from that date of £203.40 per year of service. This latter payment is compensation for unsocial hours and will be made only when officers are on articles or standing by ships and not on holidays. This payment is increased to £300 per year served from 1 November 1974 for fourth engineer officers, third navigating officers, junior engineer officers and fourth navigating officers and other officers of passenger vessels on similar salaries. For senior and intermediate officers the payment goes up to £450 per year served from 1 November 1974; these are masters, first and second navigating officers, chief, second and third engineer officers, first or only electrical and refrigerator engineer officers, chief or only purser/chief steward/catering officers and other officers of passenger ships of corresponding ranks.

The leave and food allowance will be increased to 60p per day and consolidated into salaries at the rate of £6 per month for Section A officers and £4.20 per month for Section B officers with effect from 1 June 1974.

Leave: a guaranteed minimum leave entitlement of 169 days per year served may be introduced by owners with retroactive effect from October 1973.

The total package will give average earnings 20% higher by November 1974 by comparison with the pre-agreement figures.

Radio officers may take industrial action

The refusal of the governmental Pay Board to approve a pay agreement reached between the ITF-affiliated Radio and Electronic Officers' Union and the Marine Wireless Company has led the union to threaten industrial action by instructing its members to take all leave due to them immediately. The settlement, which the union wants implemented by the end of July, provided for pay increases of between £20 and £35 per month, bringing these radio officers in line with radio and other officers directly employed by ship-owners. The Pay Board has ruled that the agreement is outside the terms of Stage Three of the government's pay policy.

IRELAND

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Dublin bus strike continues

Members of the three unions involved in the Dublin bus dispute have rejected a compromise settlement proposed by the Labour Court to end the strike of bus drivers and conductors over the introduction of the five-day week. One of the unions involved is the ITF-affiliated Irish Transport and General Workers' Union. A fourth union, the National Busmen's Union, has accepted the five day week. The dispute has lasted for well over two months.

NETHERLANDS

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Pay rises negotiated for civil aviation staff

The ITF-affiliated Netherlands Transport Workers' Union has negotiated a new pay and conditions agreement on behalf of its members employed by KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, effective from 1 January to 31 December 1974. The agreement provides for pay rises, in accordance with the national incomes policy, of 30 Guilders per month from 1 January, rising to 45 Guilders per month from 1 April, plus 3% with effect from 1 July in compensation for cost-of-living increases. Further cost-of-living adjustments are provided for during the remaining life of the agreement. Holiday pay is also increased in the same proportions.

Other improvements in conditions have been gained, subject to the limits imposed by the incomes policy.

NORWAY

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Engineer Officers' strike averted by settlement

A threatened strike from 1 July by members of the ITF-affiliated Norwegian Engineer Officers' Union employed in coastal and ferry services was averted by a last-minute settlement reached with the assistance of a mediator.

The settlement gives engineers in coastal trades an extra allowance of 220 kr per month. This goes into effect in two stages: 100 kr this autumn and the remainder a year later.

Mediation proposal averts civil aviation strike threat

A mediation proposal accepted by both sides - Scandinavian Airlines System and the ITF-affiliated Norwegian Commercial and Office Workers' Union - averted the union's threat of strike action in its dispute over pay and conditions claims. The recommended settlement has been accepted by a membership vote; the staff concerned are mainly aviation booking and ticket staff, commercial staff and office personnel.

PORTUGAL

Merchant navy dispute settled

Following the breakdown of contract negotiations between the Portuguese Merchant Navy Officers and Crews Union and the ship-owners, the union issued orders to its members on 8 June 1974 to cease performing work in excess of 8 hours per day; to restrict loading and unloading operations to between 10.00 hours and 18.00 hours for cargo vessels, and between 08.00 hours and 17.00 hours for tankers; to permit vessels to leave port only between 08.00 hours and 18.00 hours; and to insist on stopovers in Lisbon, Leixoes and Setubal of at least three days (72 hours).

When these instructions began to take effect, in particular hampering tanker movement, the government served "mobilisation" orders on four tankers in the Persian gulf area, making the crews subject to military discipline.

The following cable of protest has been sent to the Portuguese government by the ITF General Secretary:

"INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION REPRESENTING SIX MILLION TRANSPORT WORKERS THROUGHOUT WORLD STRONGLY REGRETS ACTION OF PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT IN MOBILISING FOUR PORTUGUESE TANKERS IN PERSIAN GULF DURING RECENT OVERTIME BAN BY MEMBERS OF UNIAO DE SINDICATOS DA MARINHA MERCANTE IN SUPPORT CLAIM FOR IMPROVEMENTS IN SEAFARERS' CONDITIONS. BELIEVE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD HAVE FIRST CONSULTED UNIAO ON CONTEMPLATED ACTION, PARTICULARLY AS SEAFARERS HAD ALREADY DEMONSTRATED WILLINGNESS TO PERMIT EXEMPTIONS TO THEIR INDUSTRIAL ACTION IN INTERESTS NATIONAL WELL-BEING OR PERISHABLE CARGOES."

Following this action the dispute was settled towards the end of June; the agreement gives AB wages which now are approximately equivalent to the average European rate, having previously been about 50% of that level.

SINGAPORE

New pay agreement for R/T operators

The ITF-affiliated Singapore Maritime Officers' Union has negotiated a new agreement, effective for three years from 1 November 1973, giving improved salaries and conditions to radio/telephone operators employed by members of the Singapore Maritime Employers' Federation. Home trade operators will now have a salary scale of \$500 rising by two annual increments of \$25 to \$550; local trade operators' scale is \$420 rising to \$470 (previously both groups were on the same rates ranging from \$222 to \$280 over 6 years). Various allowances have also been agreed and other improvements include 27 days' annual leave (previously 21 days), annual wage supplement equivalent to one month's pay, medical benefits and redundancy scheme.

NEWS IN BRIEF

The ITF-affiliated Bermuda Industrial Union has published a statement strongly criticizing the speech on the country's employment situation made by the Minister of Immigration and Labour at this year's International Labour Conference in Geneva. The Minister had told the Conference that Bermuda still had over-employment, with non-Bermudians representing approximately one-third of the country's registered work force. The union statement points out that non-Bermudians are being offered employment although many native-born Bermudians are without jobs. It calls on the government to make full details available of the number of unemployed and to take positive steps to create more employment opportunities for its own citizens.

French railwaymen belonging to ITF-affiliated unions receive a cost-of-living increase of 3.25% with effect from 1 June; this covers increases in consumer prices since the beginning of April.

The Italian airline Alitalia cancelled all its flights on 29 June 1974 when employees staged a 14-hour strike in support of pay and conditions claims.

Following the arrest of the Secretary of the Northern Drivers Union in New Zealand when he refused to obey a court order to lift a union fuel ban on a private ferry service (action taken in support of the seamen's union), protest strikes spread throughout the country, but ended when he was later released.

Threats of a full-scale (unofficial) railway strike in Norway were called off when the national trade union centre stated that it was supporting the drivers' claim for extra pay increases on top of the nationally negotiated rise.

United States dockers in six North Atlantic coast ports are covered by a new three-year agreement signed on their behalf by the International Longshoremen's Association. Details of the settlement are being withheld pending notification to union members.

PERSONALIA

Alf Allen, General Secretary of the British Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers and this year's Chairman of the Trades Union Congress, has been created a life peer.

Anthony Archer, Assistant General Secretary of the British Radio and Electronic Officers' Union since the beginning of June this year, died on 15 June after a short illness. He was 47.

A. de Bruin has been appointed Secretary of the Netherlands Trade Union Confederation with effect from 31 May. His place as General Secretary of the Netherlands Transport Workers' Union is taken by J. de Vries.

Raymond Deseau has retired from the Presidency of the French Flight Engineers' Union. With effect from 1 June 1974 his place is taken by Claude Guerin. Deseau now becomes Assistant General Secretary of the union, with special responsibility for international affairs.

Trygve Kristiansen, former Vice-President of the Norwegian Railwaymen's Union, died on 1 June 1974, at the age of 76. He held his union post from 1953 to 1963 when he reached retirement age.

Halil Tunc has been elected as President of the Turkish Trade Union Confederation Turk-Is; he was formerly General Secretary. He succeeds S. Demirsoy, who died recently.

John Vanderveken has been appointed ICFTU Assistant General Secretary in succession to Heribert Maier.

ERRATUM

On page 57 of Newsletter No. 6, June 1974, in the item on Increased wages for Australian dock workers, the ninth line mentions an increase of 2% plus \$250 per week. This should of course read \$2.50 per week. We regret any misunderstanding which this mistake may have caused.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| ITF Executive Board | - Stockholm, 5-6 August 1974 |
| ITF 31st 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

SUCCESSFUL ITF MISSION TO PORTUGUESE TRANSPORT WORKERS' UNIONS

As part of a carefully-planned programme to give maximum assistance to the free Portuguese transport workers' unions which have been created following the overthrow of the Caetano régime on 25 April last, ITF representatives have been carrying out the initial stages of a mission designed to ensure direct contact between the Federation and the new transport workers' union and to discover in what ways the ITF and its affiliates can best help them.

The first stage of the mission was undertaken from 18 to 30 June by Ken Golding, Secretary of the ITF Research and Publications Department, during which talks were held with officials and members of the overwhelming majority of the main unions now operating or developing within the transport industry. The contacts made were with organizations representing railwaymen, road transport and public transport workers, seafarers, dockers, inland waterway workers, fishermen and civil aviation employees. In all, some 50 to 60 individual unions were represented at the various meetings which were held, most of which are now coming together in embryo national federations or unions covering major sectors of transport. The initial contacts made are now being followed up during the second part of the mission, which is being undertaken by Graham Brothers of the same ITF Department who, in addition to visiting Lisbon will also spend some time in Oporto and possibly other Portuguese cities.

In general, it can be said that the development of strong, democratic unions in our industry is proceeding at a very rapid pace, and the small nucleus of active trade unionists are doing a remarkable job under extremely difficult circumstances -- particularly when one remembers that within living memory there has been no tradition of democracy, free trade unionism or genuine collective bargaining in Portugal. A number of the unions have already negotiated new agreements with their employers, which represent a vast improvement on the conditions previously existing, and in a number of transport industries employee representatives are actively participating in the work of new boards of management.

The main purpose of the ITF mission, as already mentioned, has been to establish how the ITF and its member-unions can best show their practical solidarity with the transport workers of Portugal. At the present time, the main assistance needed is in the form of advice and help in organizing and running a union, in collective bargaining techniques, and more general aspects of trade union work and education. On-the-spot advice or, failing that, training in other democratic countries is particularly necessary, as well as information on transport trade union agreements and labour and social legislation in other countries (preferably in Portuguese, English, French or Spanish). Steps have already been taken by the ITF Secretariat to ensure that the most urgent needs in these fields are met, and proposals for further action will be submitted to the next meeting of the ITF Executive Board and to Congress.