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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

Executive Board Meets in London

The ITF Executive Board met in London on 21 January, with Fritz Prechtel, President, in the Chair.

Membership: A number of applications for affiliation were provisionally accepted, subject to the completion of any remaining formalities, from Dominica, India, Korea, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Ecuador, Paraguay and Uruguay.

In addition, the General Secretary was authorised to lift the suspension imposed on the Greek trade unions in 1968, provided that if the forthcoming trade union elections were found not to have been properly carried out, or the unions were not able to carry out their functions without interference or coercion, suspension would be immediately reimposed.

Indian Railwaymen's Dispute: The Board received a detailed report on the strike of Indian railway workers last year, during which the Indian government had used measures which were of extreme concern to the ITF. The Executive Board agreed that the ITF should continue to exert influence on the Indian government through international channels such as the ILO; to watch the situation closely; and to decide in the light of developments what further action should be taken.

Chile: The Board expressed their appreciation of the efforts made by affiliates during the two-day boycott of Chile on 18 and 19 September. On the question of further action following the attempted ITF mission to Chile in November (see ITF Newsletter No. 12, 1974, page 112), the General Secretary reported that, despite a reminder, no government report had yet been supplied on the list of detainees presented to General Diaz. It was clear that Chilean workers continued to suffer severe repression, and the Board agreed to consider the report of the ILO mission to Chile (which was to be available shortly) and that the General Secretary, in consultation with the President and Vice-Presidents should make proposals for further action in the light of that report. In addition it was agreed that if it was decided to send another mission, the ITF alone should decide when it should go and whom it should see and that its contact with the Junta should be confined to the practical minimum.

Presentations were made to Tim O'Leary who had recently retired as National Docks Secretary of the British Transport and General Workers' Union, and to Sidney Greene, shortly to retire from the General Secretaryship of the British National Union of Railwaymen and from the ITF Executive Board, in token of their many years of service to the Federation.

32nd ITF Congress: The Board agreed to accept in principle the invitation of the Irish affiliates to hold the 1977 ITF Congress in the Republic of Ireland.

The next meeting of the ITF Executive Board is to be held at Leangkollen, Norway, on 9 and 10 October 1975.

TRADE UNIONS

GREAT BRITAIN

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Some progress on closed shop for officers

Further talks on the demand by the ITF-affiliated Merchant Navy and Airline Officers' Association for compulsory trade union membership for officers in the merchant service (see last Newsletter page 2) have produced agreement with the shipowners on an extension of the existing agreement for compulsory union membership for officers and cadets entering or re-entering the industry to cover those who entered or re-entered after 1 April 1971; and also all officers who change their employer by moving from one company to another.

In addition, merchant navy officers not already covered by the existing National Maritime Board compulsory union membership agreement are to be circularised to discover whether they have any objections to joining a union and, if so, their reasons. Any further discussion of 100% union membership will now await the results of this inquiry.

SCANDINAVIA

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Employees will have right of representation in SAS management

Scandinavian Airlines System, a multinational company operating a common service for Norway, Sweden and Denmark, will in future have staff representatives elected to management bodies. After a lengthy campaign by the SAS employees' unions in all three countries this concession has been won on behalf of 10,500 employees. Three staff representatives will sit on the board and nine in the general assembly. These will be elected so as to provide representatives from each of the three occupational groups - hourly-paid workers, salaried staff and flying staff - and from each of the three countries. Elections are to be held within three months and although the staff representatives will not have a vote to begin with, SAS has undertaken to draw up proposals by 1 October for full or partial voting rights, and it has been agreed in principle that full voting rights will eventually be accorded.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

BELGIUM

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Reduced working week for busmen

The bus workers' section of the ITF-affiliated Public Service Workers' Union has negotiated the payment to employees in service on 1 December 1974 of a special bonus of 4,000 Fr. (also agreed for railwaymen, suburban transport service workers and tramwaymen). With effect from 1 January 1975 the working week is reduced from 41.30 hours to 40 hours, with a consequent rise in weekly pay rates of 3.75%.

CANADA

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Railway workers vote to accept agreement

Members of the 19 associated railway unions in Canada have voted to accept the proposed 1975 contract, signed provisionally on their behalf on 11 December. The new one-year agreement, which took effect on 1 January 1975, provides for a 15% wage increase, improved holidays, pensions and sickness benefits and an increase of 5 cents per hour in shift differentials. In addition, all employees received an end-of-year lump sum bonus of \$350 before Christmas 1974.

GERMANY

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Mediation in negotiations on seafarers' pay

Talks between the ITF-affiliated German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union and the shipowners on a new pay agreement for seafarers broke down on 15 January when the shipowners presented their offer which was immediately rejected by the union. Mediation of the dispute has now been called for.

GHANA

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Dispute over Black Star Officers' settlement

The ITF-affiliated Ghana Merchant Navy Officers' Association reports that the settlement obtained last October for the officers of the Black Star Line: (see Newsletter no. 10, 1974, page 94) was not implemented by the company, despite several reminders from the Association. Finally the officers concerned

held six Black Star Line ships in Ghanaian ports between 14 and 20 January 1975, with the result that full implementation of the contract has now been achieved.

GREAT BRITAIN
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Safety action promised following bus conductor's death

London busmen belonging to the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union staged a one-day stoppage on 29 January, the day of the funeral of one of their colleagues, Ronald Jones, a bus conductor who died as the result of an alleged assault by two passengers. London bus conductors and drivers have become increasingly concerned about violence and vandalism, particularly on late-night weekend runs, and a campaign was already in progress to secure the installation of warning devices aboard buses. Following a meeting between union representatives and the Home Secretary after the one-day demonstration, the latter announced new measures which would enable policemen to travel free on buses and underground trains both on and off duty and extend their power of arrest aboard public transport vehicles. The installation of two-way radio links by London Transport is to be speeded up and magistrates and judges are to be reminded of the maximum sentences which may be imposed for attacks.

INDIA
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Agreement ends four-day dock strike

Agreement was reached between dockers' unions belonging to the ITF-affiliated All-India Port and Dock Workers' Federation and the government on 20 January on an interim settlement of the wages dispute which brought about a national port strike affecting about 200 ships at eight major ports. The interim cost-of-living increases agreed provide dockers with Rs 300 per month living allowance for 1974 and Rs 50 for 1975. A committee is to recommend within one month how much of this interim payment will be in cash and how much will be held back under the government's anti-inflationary compulsory savings scheme. In addition, the results of a scheduled revision of the overall pay structure will be backdated to 1 January.

NEW ZEALAND
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New collective agreement for harbour vessel officers

Tug and dredge officers employed by New Zealand harbour boards are covered by a new collective agreement approved recently by the Industrial Commission. Under the terms of this contract, negotiated on their behalf by the ITF-affiliated New Zealand

Merchant Service Guild, officers work a standard 40 hour, five-day week, with a shift allowance payable for those who work afternoon or night shifts. Minimum wages range from \$99 to \$122 per week depending on grade and vessel concerned. Overtime rates are time-and-a-half for the first 3 hours and double time thereafter; double time between 10 pm and 7 am; work on Saturdays qualifies for time-and-a-half between 8 am and 11 am and double time after 1 pm. Work on Sundays and public holidays is paid at double time and subject to a minimum payment of four hours at that rate.

Annual paid leave is 3 weeks (4 weeks for shift workers, tug officers and dredge masters) rising to 4 and 5 weeks respectively after 10 years service. In addition, special holidays are awarded for long service (over 15 years).

UNITED STATES
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Railway unions reach agreement

Four railway unions have reached tentative agreement on new contracts which would increase wages and other benefits by a total of 41.6% over a three-year period. Two of the unions have approved the settlement at local officials' meetings (Signalmen and Maintenance of Way Employees) and the United Transportation Union and the Sheet Metal Workers are submitting the agreement for membership approval.

Meanwhile mediation has been requested by the Railway and Airline Clerks and the Machinists following breakdown of talks and is already in operation for the four shopcraft unions following a one-day strike against three rail companies.

The settlement for the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees - generally the same as those for the other three unions which have reached agreement - provides for wages and cost-of-living adjustments totalling 37.5%; additional health and welfare benefits, a dental insurance plan and an additional paid holiday make up the remainder of the package.

Seamen seek cost-of-living clause

The ITF-affiliated National Maritime Union is seeking increased wages, cost-of-living adjustments and improved pension benefits in a new three-year contract with the shipowners, negotiations on which started recently. The current contract does not expire until June, but the union wished to start talks early in order to avoid last-minute pressures. In addition to protection against erosion of purchasing power during the life of the coming contract, the union is seeking compensation for inflation losses in the real value of wages during the period since the current contract was signed in 1972.

FLAG OF CONVENIENCE CAMPAIGN

In 1974, more than £354,450 was recovered by ITF affiliates for crews of flag of convenience/crew of convenience vessels (including vessels without ITF agreements). The list of ships covered by agreements acceptable under ITF policy numbered 637 at the end of the year and 25 new vessels have been added to the list in the first five weeks of 1975. These include: the Sg FRANKENFELS and the Li ATTICA, brought under agreement by the Dutch Seafarers' Federation with the assistance of the other Dutch unions; the Panamanian-flag SUN BEGONIA, again signed by the FWZ; the So DAWN GRANDEUR (Philippino crew), for which an agreement was signed by the Seafarers' Section of the OeTV in Hamburg; and the Cyprus flag MARIAN, brought under agreement by the Belgian Transport Workers' Union. Meanwhile, the Swedish, Finnish, Australian and Israeli union effort is continuing and in Britain the seafarers' and dockers' unions have succeeded in signing five agreements.

NEWS IN BRIEF

The Canadian government is expected to propose soon a guaranteed annual income for the country's 20,000 self-employed fishermen, whose average income at present is only \$4,000 per year.

French railwaymen have been offered an agreement for 1975 which would give provisional increases of 1.25% on 1 January, 1% on 1 April, 0.75% on 1 July and 1 October, to be adjusted quarterly in the light of moves in the cost-of-living index. In addition, if prices increased more than 5% during the first five months of the year, there would be a further review at the end of June.

British merchant navy officers have submitted a claim for pay increases and other improvements totalling around 40%; one of the unions' main aims is the achievement of comparability with existing European rates.

British women cabin attendants will no longer be discriminated against in the fields of pay and promotion prospects, thanks to a new agreement negotiated by the Transport & General Workers' Union with British Airways. This abolishes the former 10-year contracts and the compulsory retirement at age 36, leaving the way open for women to apply for the senior cabin crew posts, and gives equal pay to men and women.

The Greek Seamen's Federation has commenced negotiations with the shipowners on claims for a new collective agreement for seamen on ocean-going vessels. The union is seeking a 30% increase on basic rates after incorporation of the current cost-of-living allowance, a reduction of the working week from 45 to 42 hours, together with increases in various allowances.

The Greek government has decided to take over operation of the national airline, Olympic Airways. The airline has been operated under contract to the government by Aristotle Onassis since 1956 and this arrangement was due to continue for fifty years. However, financial difficulties precipitated the government takeover and detailed plans for the future of the airline are to be announced later.

The Swedish-Seamen's Union has submitted to the shipowners its claims for improved pay, overtime rates and other conditions. In addition to the claim for substantial pay increases, the union is seeking improvements in the incremental scales and pay structure.

Turkish airline pilots went on strike for 24 hours following the crash of a Turkish airliner into the Sea of Marmara while on a flight from Izmir to Istanbul. The strike was in support of improved safety standards at state airports, especially Istanbul.

PERSONALIA

Heinz Kluncker, President of the German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union and a member of the ITF Executive Board, celebrates his 50th birthday on 20 February.

Karl Novak has been elected Deputy President of the Austrian Railwaymen's Union in succession to Karl Kirchner who has retired. Johann Schmölz has been elected General Secretary of the Union.

Daniel J. Sullivan, Secretary-Treasurer of the US Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks since 1969, died on 18 January. He was 59. The Union's executive has appointed D.A. Bobo to fulfil Sullivan's unexpired term of office.

FOURTHCOMING MEETINGS

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Flight Deck Technical Committee	-	London 19-20 February 1975
Cabin Attendants' Technical Committee	-	London 27-28 February 1975
Hair Practices Committee	-	London 19-20 March 1975
Travel Bureau Section Committee	-	London 8-9 April 1975
Ground Staff Committee	-	London 13-14 May 1975

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