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WE TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY
OF WISHING THE SEASON'S
GREETINGS TO ALL OUR
READERS

No. 12

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Workers' Problems, London, 18 to 20 November 1975.*

In Memoriam

PIETER DE VRIES

A tribute from Charles Blyth, ITF General Secretary

The news that Pieter de Vries had died came as a great shock. He had retired from the ITF some ten years ago after five years as General Secretary but had carried his years so lightly that we had reckoned on his being with us for many years yet. It is some little comfort to know that he died peacefully and in no pain, though his loving wife Riet -- no couple were ever closer -- must be almost inconsolable. Our hearts go out to her.

There was just time in the November issue of the Newsletter to report his passing and to give the bare facts of his trade union career. I want, however, to pay tribute to the man, rather than the trade union officer, for no-one who knew him well could doubt that it was his personal qualities which impressed themselves most on the memory. His charm was a by-word but to leave it at that would do him an injustice, for his ability to conciliate and calm ruffled feelings (a very necessary talent in an international organization!) was never calculated, as charm alone can often be. It sprang from a spontaneous and fundamental tolerance and friendliness which guided him naturally to the fair compromise. There were bound to be times, of course, when disputes would admit no compromise and then he could take his stand as firmly as the next man, but still somehow managing to do so with the minimum of offence so that no-one stayed aggrieved for long.

He lived through some difficult times with the ITF and carried a heavy burden when he had every right to be enjoying his retirement. At 68, he took his formal farewell but his interest in the ITF never flagged. He hugely enjoyed ITF Congresses and was in fine form in Stockholm last year renewing all his old acquaintances and making a host of new friends.

His passing is of course a matter for great sadness and he could rightly feel that he had little to regret in his life and even less to apologize for. If there is such a thing as "success" in life, then on that reckoning, he achieved it.

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

Executive Board meets

The Executive Board of the ITF met in London on 13 and 14 November 1975.

In the course of its customary review of the ITF's activities the Board were particularly concerned with the continuing suppression of trade union and civil liberties in Chile and Spain.

In a resolution on Spain, the Board recorded its thanks to all the affiliates who had responded so quickly and effectively to the ITF's call for a boycott of Spanish transport on 2 and 3 October. For all the inevitable haste with which the action had been arranged, the Board noted that the boycott had fully achieved its main objective, the registering of a resounding protest against the Franco régime and its travesty of a judicial procedure. The resolution expressed "the ITF's determination to continue to do all in its power to encourage the reinstatement of democratic government in Spain."

As for Chile, the Board concluded that despite international pressure the Junta had made no real effort at all to adopt a more civilized approach to its workers and their rights and, if anything, had tightened its control by arresting and detaining anyone suspected, even on hearsay, of dissent. The ITF's mission to Chile in November 1974 had been refused permission to carry out its investigation on the pretext that its presence would in some way interfere with the ILO Fact Finding and Conciliation Commission. The ITF had later set conditions on the sending of a further mission and an exchange of correspondence with the Junta served to convince the Board that those conditions would not be met. The Board went on to decide that affiliates should be encouraged to conduct a continuing programme of harassment of the Junta by any means open to them with effect from 1 January 1976. Finally, the Board authorized financial assistance to bodies within Chile that were giving succour to the Junta's victims. (See also next item, Peace Committee wound up.)

The curtailment of civil rights in India and the victimization of railwaymen who had taken part in the railway strike in 1974 had been unanimously condemned at the Conference of the ITF Railwaymen's Section held in August 1975. After considering a report on the present situation the Board endorsed the Section's views and agreed that the ITF should continue to exert its influence to secure the restoration of all those rights that the Government had extinguished by invoking emergency powers.

Since the ITF has member unions that organize fishermen in both countries, the Board felt it its duty to call upon the governments of both Iceland and Great Britain to resolve by negotiation any difference between them on the question of fishing limits. A resolution stated that only in this way could one avoid "the serious harmful effects on workers in the fishing industry that would inevitably flow from any attempt to impose a solution by force".

The Board welcomed the recent agreement between Egypt and Israel, particularly that part of the agreement relating to the Suez Canal. It adopted a resolution requesting the General Secretary "to convey to the Egyptian Government and to the Arab Federation of Transport Workers the ITF's earnest hope that these first steps might soon be the basis for further progress towards the restoration of complete freedom of navigation through the Suez Canal for the ships of all nations."

Applications for affiliation were accepted from:

Sindicato Gremio Unido de Alijadores de Tampico
y Ciudad Madero (Portworkers) (Mexico)

Workers' Syndicates Federation of Sea Transport in
the Lebanon

Jernbaneforening (Railwaymen) (Denmark)

Federated Cooks' and Stewards' Union of New Zealand

CHILE
=====

Peace Committee wound up

The ITF has sent a strong protest to the Chilean Junta denouncing its dissolution of the Chilean Interdenominational Cooperation Committee for Peace and the arrest of the Committee's leading members. This ruthless determination on the part of the Junta to stamp out a non-political movement offering humanitarian aid to victims of the regime would, the ITF pointed out, only strengthen the resolve of the Federation to do everything possible to weaken the military dictatorship. (See also Executive Board decision on Chile, previous item.)

INTERNATIONAL
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First-ITF Conference on Women Workers' Problems is a marked success

An ITF Conference on Women Workers' Problems, the first of its kind ever organized by the ITF, was held in London from 18 to 20 November 1975. Some thirty ITF unions in 19 countries sent a

total of 63 delegates to the meeting. Helga Cammell, Secretary for Women's Questions of the International Federation of Commercial, Clerical and Technical Employees (FIET), and Ethel Chipchase, representing the ICFTU, attended as observers and delivered fraternal messages. The Conference unanimously elected Marie Patterson, National Woman Officer of the British Transport and General Workers' Union, as Conference Chairman and Liselotte Raupp of the German Railwaymen's Union as Vice-Chairman.

Opening the Conference, the General Secretary Charles Blyth welcomed the participants on behalf of the ITF and said that the Conference had been called firstly to identify and then to seek ways in which to overcome the major problems women meet at work. There followed three days of plenary sessions during which the Conference delegates had many an opportunity to air points arising out of the discussion papers prepared by the Secretariat, and there were lively exchanges on subjects such as night work, pregnancy leave, the provision of child-care facilities, and equality of access to certain occupations.

Part of the second day of the Conference was set aside for the meeting of the two Working Group, each of six members, elected from among Conference delegates. The composition of Working Group A, which was mandated to draw up a trade union programme for achieving women's equality through collective bargaining, and of Working Group B, which was asked to suggest ways in which women might be encouraged to join unions in greater numbers and participate more fully in their activities, was as follows:

Working Group A

Ms. E. Pfaff (Norwegian Seamen's Union)
J. Thorstensson (Swedish Transport Workers' Union)
Ms. A. Smits-Maat (Dutch Transport Workers' Union)
Ms. G. Rabic (German Railwaymen's Union)
Ms. D.S.E. Tan (Singapore Air Transport Workers' Union) --
substitute for Ms. L. Cowley (Airline Stewards and Hostesses
of New Zealand Industrial Union of Workers)
Ms. I. Organ (British National Union of Seamen)

Working Group B

Ms. Y. Bassemayousse (French Railwaymen's Union)
Ms. M. Fuss (French Cabin Staff Union)
Ms. M.E. Echazarreta (Mexican Cabin Staff Association)
A. Guthrie (Nicaraguan Airline and Allied Workers' Union)
Ms. J. Kinney (British National Union of Railwaymen)
Ms. M. White (British Transport and General Workers' Union)

The conclusions of these two Working Groups were adopted by the Conference in the amended form reproduced in the annex to this issue of the Newsletter. Also annexed is the Conference statement regarding the contribution it was felt that the trade union movement could make towards creating the right legislative and social climate for achieving women's equality at work.

The Conference further voted overwhelmingly in favour of recommending that the ITF set up a Permanent Committee on Women's Affairs, consisting of male and female members. (This recommendation will be submitted to the next meeting of the ITF Executive Board for its consideration.) A resolution advocating that there should be an ongoing exchange of information on the problems of working women and that there should be greater representation of women on existing ITF bodies was also adopted by a large majority.

The delegates, for many of whom it was the first international conference they had attended, took away with them memories of a successful meeting and a feeling that they were not alone in their fight to achieve a better deal for women at work.

KSSU Group Meeting

A meeting was held on 7 November in London of representatives from unions within the KSSU group of airlines (Netherlands, Scandinavia, Switzerland and France (UTA)). The meeting heard from the Section Secretary, M.S. Hoda, that only Swissair had replied - negatively - to the ITF's request for joint consultations with KSSU Managements at group level. Replies were awaited from the other airlines, and the meeting agreed that the ITF should continue to press for the adoption of this proposal.

The meeting then continued with the work of preparing questionnaires concerning the pay and working conditions of the various categories of workers they represented. A finalised version of the questionnaire concerning cabin attendants was adopted, and guidelines were also agreed with respect to ground staff. Schreuder (Netherlands) was reported to be working on a draft questionnaire covering flight engineers. Once the questionnaires were completed and the data was assembled, work could proceed on the desired aim of presenting a common programme of claims as far as possible within the KSSU group.

TRANSPORT

NORWAY

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New merchant seafarers' act comes into force

A major revision of the legislation covering merchant seafarers' conditions has recently been undertaken in Norway, the ITF-affiliated seafarers' unions having been represented with other interest groups at the drafting stages. The new Act resulting from the revision came into effect on 1 December. Besides many editorial changes designed to improve its comprehensibility,

the new Act contains material improvements from the seafarers' point of view. Among these are more detailed provisions concerning the rights and obligations of parties to shipowner service agreements; the elimination of certain disciplinary procedures such as "logging" and withholding of pay; and confirmation of what has already been in force by means of separate legislation since 1 January this year, i.e. the provision of a free trip home after 6 months' continuous service in the foreign trades either on board the same ship or in the service of the same owner - this being awarded also to Norwegian nationals living abroad.

SWITZERLAND

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Reduction of working hours for drivers turned down

The ITF-affiliated Swiss Transport and Commercial Workers' Federation has been campaigning for a considerable time for a reduction in the official maximum weekly working hours of drivers. Its first approach - dated 16 October 1973 - was turned down earlier this year but it was stated that an official review of the driving regulations was to take place, during which the matter of maximum hours would come up for discussion.

However, the union was concerned that any new provisions arising out of the review would not be implemented for a considerable time and it requested as a matter of urgency that the maximum working hours of drivers should be reduced from the present 50 per week to 48 (from 55 to 53 for taxi drivers) with effect from 1 January 1976 pending the results of the general review. This demand has once again been rejected by the responsible government department despite the fact that industrial hours of work are to be reduced from 46 to 45 hours per week.

TRADE UNIONS

JAPAN

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Public service stoppage for right to strike

A nine-day stoppage by workers in the public service-- notably railway, bus and postal workers - ended on 4 December. The action was the latest episode in the long-standing campaign by Japan's public employees to regain the right to strike for which they have been fighting for nearly thirty years. The Japanese

government has agreed to allow a parliamentary debate on the issue of the right to strike and the unions concerned - including the ITF-affiliated railway and transport unions - are prepared to renew their campaign of industrial action in conjunction with the spring wage demands if no progress is made on the issue of this fundamental trade union right. The ITF has repeatedly pronounced itself in support of the unions in their campaign.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

FRANCE

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Flight attendants' strike called off

A threatened strike by cabin attendants belonging to the ITF-affiliated French National Union of Commercial Flying Staff for two days in November was called off when agreement was reached on 10 November between the airlines and the union. The settlement concerned the renewal and improvement of the collective agreement for air hostesses and stewards which expired on 31 March this year. The new agreement, for three years, will commence from 1 January 1976.

It provides for an additional four paid holidays per annum in compensation for working on public holidays. It also guarantees promotion for 15 per cent of the staff each year, of which 25% will be selected on merit and the remainder on the basis of seniority.

Ground staff strikes

Meanwhile, sporadic strikes by Air France ground staff have continued for several weeks in protest against the refusal of the management to negotiate with the unions concerned on their demands, which concern pay increases in compensation for loss of purchasing power and the need to guarantee employment.

24-hour strike of public transport workers

Bus and underground workers in Paris belonging to unions including the ITF-affiliated FO Transport Workers' Federation struck for 24 hours on 5 November in support of claims for pay increases to compensate for the effects of inflation and for increases in staff to improve overall working conditions.

GREAT BRITAIN

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No redundancies demand by ships' officers

The ITF-affiliated Merchant Navy and Airline Officers' Association and the Radio and Electronic Officers' Union have put forward a claim that there should be no redundancies among ships' officers for the next twelve months. The owners have agreed to consider the suggestion, which arises out of the increasing quantity of tonnage being laid up and the fleet reductions being made by a number of companies. The officers' unions believe it would be shortsighted for the owners to dispense with the services of numbers of highly qualified and experienced officers who might then be lost to the industry for good while longer-term requirements might well be for more skilled manpower of this type.

NORWAY

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Bus drivers get pay rise

Agreement has been reached between the employers and the ITF-affiliated Norwegian Transport Workers' Union on the payment of a pay increase of 1.20 kr. per hour to bus drivers with the companies and on routes outside Oslo which have contracts to carry out local transport in the Greater Oslo area. The settlement averted a strike threatened for 1 December.

The increase is the same as that recently agreed for drivers in Oslo and went into effect on 1 December. The union now hopes to reach speedy agreement on similar lines for its members employed by companies outside the Norwegian Employers' Federation.

UNITED STATES

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Transport Workers' Union agreement with Pan Am

The ITF-affiliated Transport Workers' Union has reached agreement with Pan American World Airways on pay and other improvements in a series of new two-year contracts for its members employed in ground and air service occupations - mechanics, ground service workers, flight attendants, port stewards, flight dispatchers and commissary employees. The contracts run from 1 November 1975 and provide for pay increases of 4% on that date, further rises of 4% on 1 July 1976 and 1 January 1977 and 3% on 1 July 1977. In addition, pension and insurance arrangements have been substantially improved.

NEWS IN BRIEF

The United States Government has given two years' notice of its intended withdrawal from the International Labour Organization. The US gives as its reasons trends within the ILO leading to the erosion of tripartite representation; selectivity in its concern for human rights; the disregard of due process in examining complaints; and increasing politicisation.

The world merchant shipping fleet grew by almost 10% during the period from 1 July 1974 to 1 July 1975, an increase of nearly 31 million grt. This growth was again mainly in the oil tanker and bulk carrier classes; there was nil growth in container ships. Growth was greatest in the fleets of Liberia, Panama and France.

British private company busmen have voted to accept a pay rise of £6 per week with effect from 1 March 1976.

PERSONALIA

Herman Blomgren, former deputy president of the Swedish national trade union centre LO and a former president of the Railwaymen's Union, has died at the age of 70.

P.P. Narayanan, General Secretary of the Malaya National Union of Plantation Workers and Chairman of the Malaysia Trades Union Congress, has been elected President of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

Albert Terriego has been elected a vice-president of the US Transport Workers' Union and Director of the Union's railroad division.

Ingvar Ygeman has been appointed editor of "Statsanställd", the magazine of the Swedish State Employees' Association, in succession to Arne Andreasson whose death was reported in our last issue.

Dave Shenton, Northern Regional Secretary of the British Transport and General Workers' Union, died recently at the age of 52. Brother Shenton was the British member on the Section Committee of the ITF Fishermen's Section.

CORRIGENDA

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In our last issue, page 95, first line of text, the word "Aviation" should read "Mexican", i.e. Mexican Cabin Staff Association. On page 100 of that issue, second item, the "National Union of Seamen" should read "National Maritime Union". We apologise for these errors and hope that they did not cause any confusion to our readers.

FORTHCOMING MEETING

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Civil Aviation Section
Committee meeting

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Stuttgart, 20-22 January, 1976

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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CONCLUSIONS ADOPTED BY THE ITF CONFERENCE ON WOMEN WORKERS'
PROBLEMS, LONDON, 18 TO 20 NOVEMBER 1975

1. Equality of Women - Trade Union Contribution to the
General Legislative and Social Programme

The unions attending this ITF Conference on Women Workers' Problems, being of the view that the trade union movement has a significant contribution to make towards the promotion of women's equality at work, agree to use their influence, where appropriate:

- (a) to work for the immediate introduction of legislation in the area of equality of pay and other emoluments, equality of opportunity and employment conditions;
- (b) to work for the review of the protective legislation applying solely to women and the possibility of its replacement by objective criteria of optimum safety and desirable working conditions for all workers;
- (c) to bring about equality of social security provision for all men and women in employment, it being understood that this would involve equal insurance obligations on the part of working women;
- (d) to press for the setting up of a statutory independent body to deal with cases of alleged discrimination; and
- (e) to persuade the relevant authorities to provide adequate public child-care facilities for all working men and women with children.

The unions represented at this ITF Conference, held in London from 18 to 20 November 1975, further agree to use the information media at their disposal to promote a change in social attitudes towards women. In particular, they pledge themselves to work towards the elimination of the concept of 'traditional rôles' for men and women in education, career guidance and advice services, employment and the home and declare their support for the right of all women to freely available family planning facilities.

2. Programme of Action: Promotion of Women's Equality through Collective Bargaining

Trade unions are urged to adopt the following Programme of Action:

1. Equal pay

(a) Equal pay for equal work

Where the principle of equal remuneration has not yet been introduced measures appropriate in the national circumstances should be taken by unions to achieve:

- (i) the revision of collective agreements to provide for the introduction of equal pay; and/or
- (ii) the application of the same salary scale to men and women without discrimination.

Where the principle of equal remuneration already operates, measures appropriate in the national circumstances should be taken by unions to ensure the application of that principle (e.g. by pressing for the abolition of different job titles applying to the two sexes).

(b) Equal pay for work of equal value

Unions should be urged to press for and actively to collaborate in the conduct of work study exercises with a view to the eventual establishment of an objective system of job evaluation and classification based on an assesment of the effort, responsibility and level of qualification/skill required.

Special efforts should be made by unions to eliminate the outmoded division of occupations into "men's" and "women's" work.

(c) Equality in other elements of remuneration

Unions should press employers to extend to all women workers those allowances currently awarded exclusively to male employees, and to workers with dependants the various fringe allowances paid in certain countries to heads of families.

Employers should be urged by unions to accept the need for pensions contributions and benefits to be paid on the same basis for men and women employees.

2. Equal opportunity

(a) Equal access to job categories

Unions should make a positive effort to ensure that all jobs and all levels of all jobs in the transport industry which hitherto have been predominantly or exclusively reserved for members of one sex are opened up to both sexes. Unions should persuade employers of the need to apply non-discriminatory employment policies. The only acceptable criterion for the satisfactory performance of any job should be aptitude.

(b) Equal access to vocational training

Employers should be urged by unions to encourage the participation of women in pre- and in-service training schemes, particularly in male-dominated transport sectors and occupations.

3. Pregnancy and maternity leave

In cases of pregnancy, women workers should be protected against arbitrary dismissal, loss of job status or seniority (whether for promotion or pension purposes), as well as against reductions in normal pay and other emoluments (including any non-wage benefits such as free or concessionary tickets and passes). Provided that it is medically safe to do so, they should also be able to continue working during the early stages of pregnancy.

Unions should press for the introduction of a prescribed period of maternity leave with pay, the period following the actual confinement capable of being utilized by either parent as agreed between themselves.

4. Child-care provision

Unions should insist on the provision of free child-care facilities by the public authorities near the place of residence. In addition, where appropriate, they should press for the provision by the employer of such facilities at the place of work. They should also negotiate special leave with pay for either parent of a sick child.

5. Redundancy and other work-force reductions

In cases of redundancy or other reductions in the work force there must be no discrimination on grounds of sex.

6. Shorter and more flexible working hours

Unions should press for the more widespread introduction of shorter and more flexible working hours.

3. Women in the Trade Unions

1. Membership

Accepting that women have equal rights of admittance to membership of trade unions, as well as access to all sections of them, special efforts should be made to bring unorganized women workers, particularly those in the various branches of transport and its ancillary occupations, into union membership.

Unions should keep detailed records of the number of women organized in specific occupations so that a check can be kept on the range and status of jobs available to women and so that the areas of strength can be established from which to base campaigns for improved conditions for women trade union members.

2. Contributions and Benefits

Unions constitutions should set the same regulations for men and women regarding contributions and benefits.

3. Representational Voluntary Office

Unions should encourage women, to seek election to representational posts within the unions (e.g. shop stewards, branch secretaries and national executive committee members).

4. Full-time officials

Unions should encourage women to stand for election and to apply for positions as full-time officials.

5. Participation in union activities

Special efforts should be made to make both men and women more aware of the contribution that women can make to their union.

Trade unions should revise their procedures with a view to making it easier for women, particularly those with family responsibilities, to participate fully in union activities. In particular, it is suggested that:

- more attention should be paid to the timing, location and advance notice of union branch meetings and training courses;

- more encouragement should be given to women members to attend union meetings;
- training provided in union activity and procedures and in participation in union meetings should be available to all women members;
- child-care facilities should be provided, where necessary, at all union branch meetings, training courses etc.

6. Model Equal Opportunities Clause for Inclusion in Collective Agreements

Trade unions should press for the following, or a similar, equal opportunities clause to be incorporated into collective agreements:

"The parties to this collective agreement are committed to the development of positive policies to promote equal opportunity in employment regardless of workers' sex, marital status, creed, colour, race or ethnic origins. This principle will apply in respect of all conditions of work, including pay, hours of work, holiday entitlement, overtime and shiftwork, work allocation, guaranteed earnings, sick pay, pensions, recruitment, training, promotion and redundancy.

"The management undertake to draw opportunities for training and promotion to the attention of all eligible employees, and to inform all employees of this agreement on equal opportunity.

"The parties agree that they will review ^xannually and more frequently if necessary^x, through their joint machinery, the operation of this equal opportunity policy.

"If any employee considers that he or she is suffering from unequal treatment on the grounds of sex, marital status, creed, colour, race or ethnic origins he or she may make a complaint which will be dealt with through the agreed procedures for dealing with grievances."

7. Discrimination in favour of women (so-called "reverse discrimination")

Separate training facilities for women should be introduced to enable them to enter occupations previously occupied either exclusively or predominantly by men.

^xAmendment to the TUC Model Clause considered necessary by the Working Group.

8. Women's Conferences

The rôle of Women's Conferences should be to identify women workers' problems for discussion on an integrated union platform.
