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Stop Press: German dockers launch national strike
(see page 12)

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

INTERNATIONAL

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Transport Policy Sub-Committee meets in Brussels

A meeting of the Sub-Committee on Transport Policy of the ITF Railwaymen's Section took place in Brussels on 21 December 1977. Discussions included the possible future effects of the Rhine-Main-Danube Canal on the railways. The Committee unanimously agreed that it would be wrong to enter into controversy about the construction of the canal but that there should be a stop to the construction work to give time for the negative effects of the canal on other transport modes to be investigated. It was suggested that, in the framework of the European Committee of the ITF, an inter-sectional meeting should be held to discuss this question, and that this meeting should take place in Nuremberg at the beginning of March 1978. This is in line with the request of the ITF Inland Navigation Section.

It was also decided that the ITF-affiliated railway unions should be asked to provide information on the development of their national railways, and that a survey should be produced by the Secretariat on the basis of the answers received.

ANTIGUA

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Port dispute worsens

The Antigua Workers' Union has informed us of a worsening of their long-standing dispute with the port employers^x. According to their cable, members in the port of St. John's have been locked out yet again by the shipping agents and the docks are now being worked by scab labour under the protection of armed police. The police have also forced the general secretary of the union off the docks.

The ITF has once more circulated its seafarer and docker affiliates suggesting that they approach their employers to the effect that, in the circumstances, it would be advisable to refrain from going to Antigua until the dispute is settled. They have also been urged to repeat their messages of support and solidarity to the union at this difficult time.

^x see ITF Newsletter No. 11, 1977, page 106 for earlier details

LIBERIA

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ITF calls for Immediate Inquiry into tanker collision

The ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis has cabled the Liberian maritime authorities in New York calling for an immediate formal investigation into last month's collision, 20 miles off the South African coast, between the two Liberian-registered supertankers Venoll and Venpet. The Venoll, which is owned by a US subsidiary of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation, was carrying a full load of 250,000 tons of crude oil and bound for Europe when she struck her sister ship, the Venpet, on course for the Gulf, in thick fog, in the early hours of 16 December. The two crews were picked up by ships in the immediate vicinity, which had been alerted to the disaster. 16 crew members from the Venoll had to be winched up from the burning vessel to the safety of an helicopter, which had flown from a neighbouring oil rig to assist. The evacuation was carried out under the constant threat that the two holed tankers might explode without warning. Two crew members from the Venoll lost their lives in the collision. Oil leaking from the holed supertankers is now threatening South African bathing beaches.

Among the questions which an inquiry would have to examine is how the two ships, both of 330,000 dwt tons, came to be on the same course sailing in opposite directions.

ITF comments on proposed crew life insurance plan

The news that the Liberian government -- in line with recent suggestions from the shipowners' council -- is likely shortly to enact legislation to provide insurance cover for all seafarers on Liberian-flag vessels has met with a mixed reception from the ITF. The move has been welcomed in that it is seen as a genuine effort on the part of the shipowners to further improve conditions on Liberian-flag vessels, which lag far behind those enjoyed by seafarers on the ships of the traditional maritime nations. However, the ITF points out that the proposed cover falls far short of that already provided under ITF agreements. The Federation hopes that the Liberian government will now take steps to ensure that seafarers serving on vessels under its flag are enabled to share in the many other benefits enjoyed by the majority of the world's seafarers, from which they have been excluded up to now.

The ITF assumes that most shipowners, including those operating under the Liberian flag, will already be providing insurance cover for their crews. But there are a number of bad operators who fail to keep their premium payments up to date, and these are often to be found among those using convenience flags.

TRANSPORT

DENMARK

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Inquiry into loss of LADY KAMILLA establishes that vessel was undermanned

An initial inquiry held at the Danish Embassy in London towards the end of December into the loss of the 500-ton Danish coaster Lady Kamilla off Cornwall in the early hours of Christmas Eve has established that the vessel was inadequately manned and that it had not undergone the necessary ship inspections. The 28-year-old coaster, which was carrying a cargo of bulk sulphur and was en route from Bayonne (France) to Manchester, sank only minutes after shipping a heavy sea, which flooded the hold. Two crew members were rescued after spending thirteen hours clinging to an overturned dinghy; their fellow crewmen went down with the vessel.

A number of breaches of the Danish manning regulations were noted by the inquiry. The most serious of these concerned Lars Nielsen, who lost his life when the vessel foundered. Nielsen was sailing as mate, despite the fact that the owner had been refused a dispensation allowing him to sail in this capacity as he was considered to be insufficiently qualified. The Lady Kamilla should also have been carrying a complement of 4 ABs, one of them experienced (i.e. with over 3 years' seagoing service). According to the owner, the vessel was manned by 4 ABs (there is some dispute as to whether the captain's wife, who was also on board, should in fact have been classified as an AB), one of whom was "qualified". It emerged from the inquiry, however, that none of the ABs had the necessary experience to be regarded as such. Additionally, the owner had been granted a dispensation allowing the vessel to sail with two men aboard with a certificate in engine maintenance. But this dispensation had expired on 18 November and no attempt had been made to seek its renewal.

A major ship inspection should have taken place in September. This had not been done and the owner had taken no steps to have the Lady Kamilla exempted from this requirement.

GREAT BRITAIN

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Cut in bus and lorry drivers' hours

In December, the Commission of the European Communities formally granted Britain a three year phase-in period on bus and lorry drivers' hours. Effective 1 December 1978, the daily driving period will be reduced by 30 minutes to 9½ hours. By 1 January 1981, the UK will have to comply with the Common Market limit of 8 hours daily.

A similar concession has been granted to the Irish Republic, where the current daily limit is 11 hours.

Government to impose airport levy.

The British government last month published details of draft legislation under which it is proposed to impose a cash levy on air travellers. The levy will finance a £15 million fund out of which payments will be made to meet the cost of policing and otherwise protecting airports, aircraft and air navigation installations against acts of sabotage. These costs have been met until now from general taxation.

The bill also seeks to extend the borrowing powers of the Civil Aviation Authority to enable improvements to be carried out to air navigation services. It is further its intention to confer on airport authorities powers to regulate the noise, vibration and pollution caused by aircraft.

SINGAPORE
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Anti-hijacking bill to be presented to parliament

Singapore has drafted tough new anti-hijacking legislation, which will shortly be presented to parliament for its approval. Although no official details are available, it is understood that the bill will enable Singapore to ratify the Hague and Montreal Conventions and that local courts will be granted jurisdiction in hijacking cases, even for offences committed outside the country's airspace.

The legislation was prompted by the hijacking to Singapore last October of an Air Vietnam plane. Four hijackers seized control of the aircraft during a domestic flight over Vietnam after killing two crew members. Vietnam's request for the extradition of the hijackers was refused and they are expected to be put on trial shortly.

TRADE UNIONS

GREAT BRITAIN
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Unions to monitor safety situation in Lagos

Following the recent attacks on the Lindinger Ivory and other vessels while waiting to enter Lagos harbour, British maritime unions, the shipowners and Department of Trade officials agreed at a joint meeting held in London on 16 December that Nigerian anti-piracy measures and the safety situation in Lagos would be reviewed each week.

x see ITF Newsletter No. 11, 1977, page 107 and No. 12, 1977, page 119.

SOUTH AFRICA

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ICFTU gives employers' Code of Practice a cautious welcome

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions has expressed a guarded welcome for the proposals on remuneration and promotion of employees contained in the proposed Code of Employment Practice drawn up by South Africa's ten major employers' organizations, details of which were revealed in December. The ICFTU has also welcomed the Code's apparent recognition of the right to "the lawful withholding of labour". But it is concerned that the chairman of the employers' committee regards the Code as no more than a declaration of intent, to be negotiated within the context of existing legislation. For most South African legislation conflicts strongly with the Code's avowed commitment to remove discrimination based on race or colour from employment practices. It is also felt to be not without significance that no firm position is adopted on the question of the future recognition of black trade unions in South Africa.

The Code, which is being widely regarded as a home-grown response to international moves towards more liberal employment practices, notably on the part of US corporations and companies of EEC countries operating in South Africa^X, will rely on persuasion for its success rather than on any policy of positive enforcement.

^Xsee ITF Newsletter No. 3/4, 1977, page 22 and No. 10, 1977, page 96 for details

Unions express support for black workers

South African trade unions representing 350,000 workers voted at a special meeting held in Johannesburg on 11 December to support trade union rights for black South Africans and to oppose job reservation for whites. The meeting also decided that those unregistered unions which were refused official registration should have a right of appeal via specially-created industrial courts. However, it was felt that while all workers should have the right to belong to a registered trade union, unions should retain the right to decide on their racial composition.

UNITED STATES

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AFL-CIO Convention backs Stevens workers

AFL-CIO President George Meany last month named the six members of an advisory task force of Federation Vice-Presidents, whose job it will be to enlist the greatest possible support of the US labour movement for the consumer boycott of the products of the textile multinational J.P. Stevens^X. They include ITF Vice-President Thomas Gleason of the International Longshoremen and Paul Hall, president of the ITF-affiliated Seafarers' International Union.

^Xsee ITF Newsletter No. 9, 1977, page 81 and No. 11, 1977, page 105

Earlier in the month, Paul Hall had told delegates attending the AFL-CIO Convention in Los Angeles that he considered the Stevens issue as "the single most important problem" facing the movement at the present time. Individual delegates came to the rostrum to applaud the courage of the Stevens workers and the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers' Union in the face of great difficulties. They subsequently adopted a resolution calling on all the Federation's affiliates to assist the workers in their efforts to win union representation and pledging continued support for the boycott of the company's products. The AFL-CIO has said that it is prepared to keep up its campaign for just as long as it takes to bring J.P. Stevens into the 20th century.

The campaign was given added emphasis when a rally was held during the rush-hour outside the corporation's headquarters in New York shortly before Christmas. Demonstrators carried banners asking for justice and dignity for Stevens employees and a company worker told how Stevens had closed down its plant in a small town in Georgia rather than accept an NLRB order to recognize the union as representative of the mill hands. She also said that the company had harassed workers wishing to join the union and described the conditions in the town where hundreds of workers had been left jobless after the decision to pull out.

In a virtually unprecedented move the National Labour Relations Board is to seek a nationwide injunction enjoining J.P. Stevens to desist from violating federally protected employee rights to organize in trade unions. Such an order would also restrain Stevens from discriminating against employees active in unionization drives. The NLRB feels that it has good reason to believe that the ACTWU's attempt to organize Stevens workers will continue to be met by unlawful conduct on the part of the company which will effectively stifle the statutory rights of the employees involved.

Flight engineers seek concerted international action against hijacking

A resolution calling for an effective international system of airline and airport policing and for a system of international trial and punishment of hijackers was adopted by delegates attending the 29th Annual Convention of the ITF-affiliated Flight Engineers' International Association in Kowloon, Hong Kong in December. The resolution further requested the ITF Civil Aviation Section, at its forthcoming meeting in Geneva (see supplement), to consider what immediate action should be taken by affiliates when the next serious hijacking incident occurred.

The Convention also amended the FEIA constitution to create two separate unions: one consisting of US chapters, the other made up of equal representation from the 15 countries in which the Association has members. It was agreed to retain the union's present headquarters in Washington.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

BELGIUM

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Shorter working week for dockworkers

Under the new national agreement negotiated by the ITF-affiliated Belgian Transport Workers' Union (BTB) and the port employers in Antwerp, the working hours of dockers, watchmen and shore crane drivers were reduced from 1 January by 15 minutes to 7 hours 15 minutes, with no reduction in pay. The shorter hours also apply to skilled warehouse workers, who are also organized by the BTB.

CANADA

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Railway contract talks continue

Negotiations with the employers on new working agreements for Canada's 100,000 railwaymen were resumed on 4 January^x. According to union sources, progress has been made on a number of side issues, notably seniority and work rules, although no settlement has been reached of the unions' salary and other monetary claims.

The talks are being conducted via the Associated Railway Unions, among whom are numbered several of the ITF's Canadian affiliates.

^xsee ITF Newsletter No. 11, 1977, page 110.

DENMARK

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Union puts engineer on board Lindinger Nimbus

The ITF-affiliated Danish Ships' Engineers' Union withdrew tug facilities from the Lindinger Nimbus when it attempted to leave the port of Copenhagen last month while not complying with the requirement of the Danish manning regulations to carry a trained motorman. Normal port services were restored to the vessel when the union was informed that one of its members had replaced the previous motorman, who did not possess the necessary formal training required by law.

FRANCE

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Railwaymen oppose cutback in operating staff

Railwaymen throughout France, including members of ITF affiliates, went on strike at 20.00 on 8 December in protest at the SNCF's announcement that it is to dispense with the second man in the

cab of goods trains, a move which the unions regard as the first step in a plan eventually to introduce one-man operation over the entire rail network. The unions claim that the SNCF's plans will lead to the loss of 10,000 jobs and to adverse effects on the safety of the remaining operating staff. The strike was called off at 06.00 on 12 December.

INDIA

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Big pay increases for foreign-going seafarers

India's 40,000 foreign-going seafarers have won increases in pay and benefits amounting to over 30 per cent in a new agreement negotiated by the ITF-affiliated National Union of Seafarers of India. The agreement, which takes effect from 1 January, provides for increases of Rs 100 per month on the basic rate and improvements in the allowances for overseas working and service on board tankers.

TUNISIA

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Pay settlement averts rail strike

The ITF-affiliated Tunisian Railwaymen's Federation reached a satisfactory settlement with the railway management of its pay claims on 30 December, thus averting a threatened three-day strike of the country's 7,600 railwaymen from 2 January. The railwaymen had already staged a two-day strike at the beginning of December, followed by a twenty-four stoppage on the 19, in support of their demands.

Earlier in December, the ITF had sent a cable to the Prime Minister of Tunisia urging him to reconsider his attitude towards the union's claims. Railway affiliates were also contacted by circular and asked to send messages of support to their Tunisian colleagues in the event of strike action to press their demands.

TURKEY

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New collective agreement for railway workers

The ITF-affiliated Turkish Railway Workers' Trade Union Federation has reached agreement with the railway employers on a new collective agreement for its members. Assistance was provided by state mediators.

Negotiations had earlier reached deadlock and the union had served notice of strike action. The management had retaliated by threatening a lockout (see ITF Newsletter No. 9, 1977, page 87).

UNITED STATES

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New contract for air traffic controllers

A new three-year agreement on working conditions was reached by the US Professional Air Traffic Controllers' Organization^x with the Federal Aviation Administration on 14 December. The controllers had been working without a contract since the previous July. The new contract gives atcs with the requisite seniority the right to transfer to equal paying jobs at other, less busy airports and air traffic control centres, also the right to bid for similar but higher-paying jobs at other airports. Certain clauses from the previous two-year contract are retained: namely, automatic job release to represent the union during investigations into aircraft accidents and protection for atcs, who take part in the NASA aviation safety reporting system.

The new contract is subject to ratification by the rank and file.

^xPATCO forms part of the ITF-affiliated Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association

Supreme Court ruling protects seniority rights following maternity leave

The US Supreme Court has ruled unanimously that employers may not deprive a women of her accumulated seniority rights when she returns to work following maternity leave. The judgement is important in that loss of seniority could have serious effects on promotion rights and job security long after the period of maternity leave. The ruling would also appear to prevent employers from firing women who become pregnant and from refusing to hire, promote or grant women job security for the same reason.

At the same time, the court ruled that employers are not obliged to provide sick leave pay for their pregnant employees. However, this position could be overturned if the House of Representatives adopts a labour-backed bill which would require employers to include pregnancy benefits in their workers' disability plans.

NEWS IN BRIEF

The General Assembly of the United Nations has proclaimed an International Anti-Apartheid Year beginning on 21 March 1978.

Cabin attendants employed by Air France staged a 48-hour strike on 8-9 December in protest at poor working conditions, particularly on long-haul flights.

In a membership ballot, merchant seamen belonging to the ITF-affiliated British National Union of Seamen have voted in favour of accepting the pay package endorsed by the NUS executive in December (see ITF Newsletter No. 12, 1977, page 123 for details).

Britain's municipal and company busmen have agreed to accept pay rises of 10 per cent, in line with the latest phase of government pay policy.

The British government intends to introduce measures in the course of 1978 to ensure that women receive benefits equal to men in earnings-related schemes covering sickness, unemployment and retirement. The intention is to bring the UK into line with an EEC draft directive on equal treatment between the sexes in social security payments.

Cabin staff of the Greek airline Olympic Airways staged a 48-hour strike immediately before Christmas to draw attention to demands for improved pay and better pensions.

The government of Guinea-Bissau has deposited an instrument of acceptance of the IMCO Convention with the Secretary-General of the United Nations; IMCO now has one hundred and four full members and one associate member.

Italian railwaymen called off a six-day-old strike on 21 December after the government agreed to make them an immediate bonus payment of 80,000 lire in anticipation of a future bonus settlement.

Pilots with the Portuguese national airline TAP began an indefinite strike on 22 December -- their second in three months^x -- after the management failed to fulfil its pledge, made during the earlier stoppage, to improve pay and reduce workloads by the end of the year. The strike was called off on 30 December when a compromise solution was reached with the airline management. The pilots, who have received no pay increases for the past five years, are reputed to be among the worst-paid the world.

^xsee ITF Newsletter No. 9, 1977, page 90

TAP cabin staff came out on strike briefly on 6 January, for the second time in less than a month. The dispute was called off after three hours when the airline management agreed to stand by an initial pay offer made at the close of the December pilots' strike (see preceding item), which had been joined by the cabin crew, who belong to the same union. The money allotted to the cabin staff was later reduced because the airline said that it had made a mistake in its calculations and the breaking of this promise had prompted the staff to take industrial action.

PERSONALIA

ITF Vice-President Jack Jones, who retires as General Secretary of the British Transport and General Workers' Union in March, was made a Companion of Honour in the New Year Honours List. The award is conferred for "conspicuous service of national importance".

Marie Patterson, National Women's Officer of the British Transport and General Workers' Union, was awarded a CBE in the New Year Honours List.

Hans Ericson, president of the Swedish Transport Workers' Union, celebrates his 50th birthday on 21 January.

Knud Petersen, treasurer of the Danish Salaried Employees' Union, retired last year, after 27 years in the post.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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Executive Board - London, 13-14 March 1978

Fair Practices Committee - London, 15-16 March 1978

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

ERRATUM

ITF holds seminar for East, Central and Southern African transport workers (ITF Newsletter No. 12, 1977, page 118)

Due to a typing error, we left out Dr. Helen Kramer from the list of lecturers at the Seminar. We apologize for this omission.

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LATE ITEM
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DOMINICA
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New agreement for port workers

Dockers in Dominica have won a 25 per cent increase on basic rates as part of the new one-year agreement negotiated recently by the ITF-affiliated Waterfront and Allied Workers' Union. Also included in the deal is a 5 per cent vacation allowance (computed on total earnings from 1 January to 23 October 1977), which was due to be paid out in the period 15 to 23 December 1977. Under the agreement, the minimum number of hold workers will now be 10 men (reduced to 8 men where a forklift truck is in operation in the hold) and a hazardous cargo allowance of 25 per cent on the basic will apply to the loading and unloading of cement and lumber.

The union has agreed with the port employers that when the new deep-water port becomes operational some time in 1978 the pay and conditions of dock workers will be revised.

STOP PRESS

German dockers launch national strike

A national dockers' strike began in Germany with effect from the first shift on Wednesday 25 January. The strike follows the collapse of negotiations between the ITF-affiliated German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV), which represents the dockers, and the employers on the OeTV claim for a 9 per cent wage increase and improvements in shift and other allowances. The union balloted its members recently and received overwhelming support -- 91.9% -- for strike action in the absence of an acceptable offer from the employers.

The ITF has circularized its docker affiliates informing them of the situation and asking them to do their best to ensure that cargoes diverted from German ports as a result of the dockers' action are not handled by their members. The unions have also been requested to cable messages of support and solidarity to the OeTV.

ILO meeting takes important decisions on employment security and occupational health and safety in civil aviation

The ILO Tripartite Technical Meeting for Civil Aviation was held in Geneva from 7 to 15 December 1977. The three items on the agenda were: General Report; Occupational Health and Safety in Civil Aviation; and Employment Security in Civil Aviation. The ILO had submitted reports and documents on all the above items.

In order to consider the ILO report and prepare for the tripartite meeting, the ITF Civil Aviation Section held a Section Conference in Geneva on 5 - 6 December 1977, immediately prior to the ILO meeting. The Conference, which was chaired by the Section Chairman, William A. Gill (USA), was attended by 90 delegates and observers from 23 countries. It took decisions on the position to be taken by the ITF members during the ILO Conference as well as on the resolutions to be submitted to the meeting.

The official meeting of the ILO opened at 10 a.m. on 7 December 1977 and after the opening session it adjourned to enable the Workers' and Employers' Groups to meet separately to elect their officials. The ITF was extremely well represented on the Workers' Group: B.J. Kok (Dutch Transport Workers' Union NVV) was elected Vice-Chairman (Workers) of the full meeting; E. Mackenzie (Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs, Gt. Britain) was elected Chairman of the Workers' Group; and L. Shorter (Transport and General Workers' Union, Gt. Britain) was elected Vice-Chairman of the Steering Committee. Other key positions on the Steering Committee and on the two Sub-Committees on Safety and Health and Employment Security were also occupied by representatives of ITF affiliates. ITF Civil Aviation Secretary, M.S. Hoda, acted as Secretary of the Workers' Group. It must be added here that throughout the Conference the Workers' Group displayed exemplary unity and cohesion.

During the first few sessions, both of the Sub-Committees and of the Conference, the employers took the position that the civil aviation industry had not yet come out of its economic difficulties and therefore was not in a position to meet any additional social costs. After a lengthy discussion, which spread over a number of sessions, the conference adopted two sets of conclusions on the technical items, viz. Employment Security in Civil Aviation and Occupational Health and Safety in Civil Aviation. The meeting further adopted four resolutions (the texts of which are attached to this issue of the Newsletter) despite strong opposition, at least initially, from the Employers' Group^x

^xAn extensive report on the ILO meeting, together with the relevant documents, will be circularized to Civil Aviation affiliates in due course

PORTUGUESE DOCKERS VOTE FOR ITF AFFILIATION

At an Extraordinary General Conference of the Portuguese National Federation of Port Workers' Unions, held in Funchal (Madeira) from 11 to 13 January, representatives of the unions forming part of the Federation voted overwhelmingly to affiliate with the ITF. This is the first decision on affiliation to be taken by a Portuguese union since this became possible following legislative changes which now permit membership of international trade union organizations.

The Federation, which has a total membership of some 11,000 port workers of all categories, is made up of seventeen unions throughout Portugal and the islands of Madeira and the Azores. It was formed in July 1975, and has from the beginning had a very close relationship with the ITF. The Federation has, for example, been particularly active in the ITF's campaign against flags of convenience, and has carried out several successful actions -- as has also its sister-organization, the Portuguese Federation of Seafarers' Unions, with which the ITF also has excellent relations. The ITF's first contacts with many of its constituent unions, however, date back to the initial visits made by ITF representatives to Portugal following the overthrow of the Caetano régime in April 1974.

The Federation aims at pursuing democratic and independent trade union policies for the benefit of all workers employed in the port transport industry. Since its creation, uniform collective agreements have been negotiated in major ports, and moves towards standardization of working conditions, wages and social conditions have also begun in smaller ports. Fall-back pay has also been negotiated in a number of ports, and is being fought for in others.

Unanimously re-elected as the Secretariat of the Federation were the following officers: Herculano Alexandre Freira Gonçalves (President); Paulo Barato Lima (Treasurer); João de Deus Pinheiro Silva (Secretary); Manuel dos Santos Gonçalves Paquete and Manuel dos Prazeres Fernandes (Representatives).

The ITF was represented at the Conference by Ken Golding of the ITF Secretariat, who was also responsible for making the first contacts with Portuguese dockers' unions in 1974.

A study of the conclusions and the resolutions adopted by the meeting reveals that the Workers' Group achieved a significant success in getting most of its points achieved. The resolution on a Convention for Civil Aviation, proposed by the ITF and the Workers' Group, failed to achieve the required number of votes for its adoption because the Employers' Group and the Government Group abstained from voting. An Employers' resolution on "optimising financial returns" also failed because the other two Groups abstained from voting on it.

ITF EUROPEAN SEAFARER AFFILIATES WELCOME INITIATIVE BY NORTH SEA COASTAL STATES DESIGNED TO SPEED UP IMPLEMENTATION AND RATIFICATION OF ILO SUB-STANDARD SHIPS CONVENTION

The first meeting of ITF-affiliated European seafarer organisations to be convened under the auspices of the ITF European Committee was held at Leangkollen (Oslo, Norway) on 19 and 20 December 1977 under the chairmanship of Henrik Aasarød, President of the Norwegian Seamen's Union and member of the ITF Executive Board. Aasarød is a Vice-President of the ITF European Committee. Some 30 delegates from 17 seafarer affiliates in 8 countries attended the meeting. Representatives of the Scandinavian Transport Workers' Federation (STF) and the Committee of Transport Workers' Unions in the EEC were also in attendance. The ITF Secretariat was represented by A.G. Selander, Assistant General Secretary and B. Laughton, Secretary, Special Seafarers' Section.

The meeting discussed matters arising following the adoption by the ILO of a Convention concerning Minimum Standards in Merchant Ships and exchanged views on European shipping policy matters.

With regard to the first subject matter, the delegates were favoured with the presence of Mr. Modolv Hareide, Norwegian Director-General of Shipping and Navigation and President of the 1976 Maritime Conference of the ILO which adopted the minimum standards in ships convention. Mr. Hareide gave an exhaustive account of his own government's thinking on the implementation and ratification of the convention and touched upon some of the problems which Norway and the other North Sea coastal states had experienced in this regard. Following a thorough discussion of this subject, during which it emerged that problems had been encountered at national level with regard to the definition of shipboard and employment conditions, manning, non-federated shipowners, government operated vessels and inspection procedures, the delegates embodied their views in the following statement:

"This Meeting of European Seafarer affiliates of the ITF, held under the auspices of the European Committee of the ITF on 19 and 20 December 1977 at Leangkollen, Oslo, Norway,

"HAVING DISCUSSED the situation with regard to the action taken so far by European governments with a view to ratifying the ILO Convention concerning Minimum Standards in Merchant Ships (No. 147),

"CONSIDERS that progress towards ratification of the Convention should be the subject of proper consultation of the parties concerned at national level and that governments should do their utmost to resolve any difficulties,

"WELCOMES the initiative taken by a group of North Sea coastal states in undertaking extensive mutual consultation with a view to implementing and ratifying the above Convention,

"URGES the ITF General Secretary and members of the ITF Executive Board to remind governments of the Resolution concerning Standards on Merchant Ships which was adopted in connection with Convention No. 147 and the accompanying Recommendation No. 155, which among other things, "urges governments to ratify the Convention and apply the Recommendation speedily in the interest of making the seas and shores of the world safe from mishap" and to impress upon those governments the importance which the ITF attaches to this matter,

"AGREES that any difficulties experienced at national level in connection with the contemplated ratification of the aforesaid Convention should be reported by affiliates forthwith to the ITF Secretariat,

"CONSIDERS that the ITF-affiliated unions have a major task to fulfil under the terms of the Convention, especially as regards Article 2(d) and Article 4(3),

"REQUESTS the ITF General Secretary in the meantime to attempt to evaluate the likely effects of the implementation of this Convention on the administrative and manpower resources of affiliated unions (and, indirectly, on the services provided by the ITF Secretariat), as a result of the assistance to be rendered in connection with the envisaged port state control procedures; to outline the methods to be applied in this connection with a view to achieving maximum uniformity; and to report on these matters to the appropriate ITF bodies."

In connection with the second subject matter, the meeting took note of developments within the framework of the EEC and STF in several areas of shipping policy and, during the ensuing discussion, the questions of harmonization of training standards and scrapping premiums attracted particular attention. At the end of the debate, the ITF Secretariat was asked to evaluate the effects of a number of international shipping policy decisions on the conditions of European seafarers.

FURTHER ACTION ON RADIO OFFICER EXEMPTIONS BY ITF AFFILIATES

A meeting of ITF-affiliated radio officer organisations was held at the headquarters of the British Radio and Electronic Officers' Union (REOU) on 26 November 1977. The REOU General Secretary and Treasurer, K.A. Murphy, acted as Chairman. Radio officer representatives from Finland, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom and United States attended the meeting. The ITF Secretariat was represented by A.G. Selander, Assistant General Secretary.

The delegates entered into detailed discussions on the agenda items dealing with exemptions and dispensations, and digital reception and transmission. In view of the deteriorating situation with regard to exemption vessels operating in the Baltic and North Seas, the ITF Secretariat was asked to bring the matter to the attention of the ITF Executive Board at its forthcoming session.

The meeting also proposed certain amendments to the ITF policy positions on radio, agreed that a paper on offshore radio safety communications be submitted to the appropriate international agencies and voted that more funds be allocated by the affiliates concerned towards increased representations by the ITF on behalf of radio officers.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

TRIPARTITE TECHNICAL MEETING FOR CIVIL AVIATION

(Geneva, December 1977)

Resolution concerning future ILO action in civil aviation

submitted by the Steering Committee

The Tripartite Technical Meeting for Civil Aviation,

Having been convened by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, and

Having met in Geneva from 7 to 15 December 1977,

Recalling the decision taken by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office at its 174th Session (March 1969) to reinforce the industrial activities of the ILO and to integrate them into a global ILO Programme of Industrial Activities; and

Considering the evolution of the civil aviation sector during the past years and the fundamental role which it is expected to play in the transport network of all countries,

Adopts, this day of December 1977, the following resolution:

The Tripartite Technical Meeting for Civil Aviation invites the Governing Body of the International Labour Office:

(a) Programme of activities in civil aviation

- to adopt all the necessary steps for obtaining from member States economic and statistical information and manpower data in civil aviation;
- to convene future tripartite technical meetings for civil aviation at sufficiently short intervals to ensure continuity.

.../

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

TRIPARTITE TECHNICAL MEETING FOR CIVIL AVIATION

(Geneva, December 1977)

Resolution concerning the Meeting of Experts on
Problems concerning Air Traffic Controllers

submitted by the Steering Committee

The Tripartite Technical Meeting for Civil Aviation,

Having been convened by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, and

Having met in Geneva from 7 to 15 December 1977,

Recognising that air traffic control has a direct effect upon the economy of civil aviation and hence on the well-being of all civil aviation workers; and

Noting with satisfaction the decision taken by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office to convene in the 1978-79 biennium a Meeting of Experts on Problems concerning Air Traffic Controllers,

Adopts, this day of December 1977, the following resolution:

The Tripartite Technical Meeting for Civil Aviation conveys to the Governing Body of the International Labour Office its earnest hope that, in spite of the present financial difficulties of the International Labour Organisation, the above-mentioned Meeting of Experts will take place as planned during the 1978-79 biennium.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

TRIPARTITE TECHNICAL MEETING FOR CIVIL AVIATION

(Geneva, December 1977)

Resolution concerning trade union rights in civil aviation

submitted by the Steering Committee

The Tripartite Technical Meeting for Civil Aviation,

Having been convened by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, and

Having met in Geneva from 7 to 15 December 1977,

Considering the necessity of ensuring that civil aviation workers fully exercise trade union rights and freedom of association, according to the provisions in the ILO's Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (no. 87), the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (no. 98), and the Workers' Representatives Convention, 1971 (No. 135);

Concerned over the fact that in some countries limitations are being imposed on workers in exercising their trade union rights, particularly in the public sector;

Realising that the ILO has performed a great deal of work in the field of trade union rights by adopting relevant Conventions and monitoring their application, in particular through the Committee on Freedom of Association; and

Considering that many States have not ratified Conventions Nos. 87, 98 and 135,

Adopts, this day of December 1977, the following resolution:

The Tripartite Technical Meeting for Civil Aviation invites the Governing Body of the International Labour Office:

- (1) to urge rapid ratification by member States of Conventions Nos. 87, 98 and 135;
- (2) further to urge that measures be taken by the international community to ensure that the obligations inherent in these Conventions are fully complied with;
- (3) to request the Director-General to take every possible step to ensure their application.

(b) Agenda of a next tripartite technical meeting for civil aviation

- to convene a tripartite preparatory meeting to propose a suitable agenda, and specifically to advise the Governing Body of the International Labour Office of the desirability of establishing a permanent tripartite machinery for civil aviation.

(c) Meetings of experts

- to make provisions for meetings of experts on special subjects which require international consideration.

(d) Research and studies

- to request the Director-General of the ILO to carry out research and studies on the following subjects in civil aviation:

- (1) Occupational hazards and diseases.
- (2) Working environment.

(e) Regional meetings

- to convene meetings of experts or tripartite meetings at the regional level.

(f) to allocate the financial resources required for accomplishing the above-mentioned programme of activities.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

TRIPARTITE TECHNICAL MEETING FOR CIVIL AVIATION

(Geneva, December 1977)

Resolution concerning hijacking

submitted by the Steering Committee

The Tripartite Technical Meeting for Civil Aviation,

Having been convened by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, and

Having met in Geneva from 7 to 15 December 1977,

Considering that the recent upsurge in incidents of unlawful interference indicates that considerable efforts still have to be made by governments and/or other appropriate authorities to improve security at airports;

Considering that civil aviation remains a particularly vulnerable target for those engaged in the taking of hostages and other acts not only endangering the life and security of the travelling public but also having very serious effects on conditions of work and safety of civil aviation workers;

Considering that it is the duty of States to provide for the safety of nationals and aliens within their jurisdiction;

Considering that acts of terrorism against civil aviation continue to be a menace and that governments of the world should assist and support each other in action against air piracy and terrorism;

Expressing its concern and regret that the Conventions of Tokyo (1963) on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft, of The Hague (1970) for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure on Aircraft, and of Montreal (1971) for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation, have not yet been ratified by all States; and

Recognising that efficient security measures at all airports can contribute very substantially to the prevention of further acts of violence against aircraft, passengers and crews,

.../

Adopts, this day of December 1977, the following resolution:

The Tripartite Technical Meeting for Civil Aviation invites the Governing Body of the International Labour Office:

- (a) to affirm the support of the ILO to the measures already taken by the UN and ICAO against air piracy, including the Resolution adopted on 3 November 1977 by the UN General Assembly on the subject and the relevant provisions in the ICAO Manual;
 - (b) to request the Director-General to follow closely the developments of discussions at the international level on every instrument aiming at putting a stop to acts of air piracy, in order to ensure that the ILO could contribute to the social and security aspects of any instrument finally adopted by the international community;
 - (c) to communicate this resolution to all ILO member States as well as to the UN and ICAO.
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