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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

SOUTH AFRICA

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ITF urges affiliates to join ICFTU Week of Protest against apartheid

The Executive Board of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions has decided to lend its full support to the UN International Year against Apartheid, which begins on 21 March, and is carrying out a continuous campaign throughout the rest of the year aimed at focusing public attention on the exploitation of black South African workers under the system of apartheid and at putting pressure on employers, especially with regard to the recognition of black unions.

The campaign is being heralded by a Week of Protest beginning on 13 March and ending on the 21st (the anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre), the main objectives of which are the lifting of the banning orders imposed on many South African trade unionists and those assisting them; the granting of recognition to black unions; and the establishment of full trade union and human rights for black workers.

The ITF is in complete sympathy with the overall aim of the campaign year and has accordingly contacted its affiliates throughout the world, urging those who belong to national centres affiliated with the ICFTU to play a full part in the contribution their centre is making towards the ICFTU campaign. Other affiliates have been asked to carry out a similar campaign of their own, where possible in co-ordination with other unions or centres at national level.

The Federation has also suggested the type of action that might be undertaken by affiliates during the Protest Week, in line with the guidance given by the Executive Board of the ICFTU. This includes:-

- national rallies and press conferences to coincide with the opening of the Week;
- pressure on companies (by means of workers' rallies and letters, representations and deputations to managements with subsidiaries in South Africa) to grant recognition to black trade unions (the strongest action to be taken against companies where there are existing disputes with African unions in South Africa);
- a renewed campaign among rank-and-file trade unionists aimed at discouraging white immigration (a ban on advertisements for jobs in South Africa is advocated) and putting pressure on companies to cease recruitment of white workers from outside South Africa in favour of the training and promotion of African labour;

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- renewed pressure on governments to withdraw credit guarantees and export licences, to comply with UN decisions against trade with South Africa, to refuse official recognition to the Bantustans, to end all cultural contacts, and, most importantly, to protest against South African government repression, keeping alive the issue of trade union bannings;
- a campaign of public information and action, including a refusal to handle goods going to and from South Africa during the Week.

The ICFTU Executive Board feels that the Week, if it is to have the desired impact, must involve workers at the shop-floor level and trade unions have therefore been urged to prepare their membership for the necessary action.

TUNISIA  
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ITF calls for immediate release of Abderrazak Ayoub

On Thursday 26 January, workers in Tunisia took part in a one-day general strike called by the national centre, the General Workers' Union (UGTT), following the collapse of central wage negotiations. The strike was violently repressed by the authorities, with many striking workers reported killed. Most of the leaders of the UGTT are now under arrest, as is ITF Executive Board member Abderrazak Ayoub, Assistant General Secretary of the Tunisian Railwaymen's Federation, a union which played a prominent part in the events of what has become known as "black Thursday".

On learning of Ayoub's arrest, ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis sent a protest cable to the Tunisian Prime Minister Hedi Nouira demanding that he be released immediately or that he be properly charged, in which case the ITF wished to be informed of his alleged offence and given details of how and when he would be brought to trial.

ZIMBABWE  
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ILO report urges rapid progression to majority rule

The International Labour Office has recently published a report entitled Labour Conditions and Discrimination in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) which provides detailed evidence that, since the illegal declaration of independence in 1965, the Rhodesian government has further extended an already rigid system of white domination over an increasingly impoverished and repressed black majority. A marked worsening in the status of Africans as citizens and workers is recorded.

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Labour legislation covering the industrial sector has become increasingly more restrictive as systematic amendments have been made to the 1959 Industrial Conciliation Act. Wage setting has become more dictatorial and less the subject of the bargaining process, and as a result adjustments to the wages of black workers, always cruelly low, are often made at a level lower than that of inflation, while the wages of white Rhodesian citizens have continued to rise rapidly and to support a very high standard of living. The right to strike has been curtailed to such an extent that strikes now take place in an atmosphere of "illegality" and it is a criminal offence to incite strikes in so-called "essential services", which include transport. Although the law applies without discrimination to black and white alike, its restrictions bear most heavily on African workers, who lack any other effective form of redress of their grievances.

White workers take the most skilled - and hence the most highly paid - jobs and exert their not inconsiderable influence to ensure that the number of black indentured apprentices is kept at a very low level. Employers, too, often group their African workers in the lowest grades and are encouraged by government to form employers' associations, which have proved remarkably reluctant to recognize black unions. Many Africans are employed in agriculture and domestic service, where their situation is much worse than in the industrial sector. Conditions are regulated by the Masters and Servants Act of 1901 - its very title a reflection of white attitudes - whose discriminatory and coercive provisions remain intact. The Act does not provide for collective bargaining or minimum wage protections and has been used over the years to depress the standard of life in a sector which now employs one quarter of the total population.

Provision of social benefits is blatantly discriminatory in that Africans receive no unemployment benefits and have no statutory retirement pension entitlement. The official attitude is that black unemployment - now higher than ever - does not exist. Retired African workers also suffer great hardship as they often lose their right of residence in urban areas when they cease work or must continue to work well beyond the age of retirement in order to support themselves.

At a political level, the majority of Africans are unenfranchised. Other fundamental freedoms have been greatly infringed, notably freedom of expression, assembly, association and publication. Under the much-amended Emergency Powers Act, applied together with the less restrictive Law and Order (Maintenance) Act, pre-existing security laws have been strengthened and as a result of measures taken in terms of them, a number of trade unionists are in detention or restriction. The number of persons who may attend trade union meetings, as well as the time and place of such gatherings are also the subject of legal restrictions. These limitations have severely constrained the development of the emerging black trade unions.

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The report's principal recommendation is that there should be a rapid progression to majority rule. Most importantly, this would enable blacks to share in the governing of their own country. It would also provide a framework within which legislative measures could be taken to dismantle the wide range of repressive controls which currently deny civil liberties to Africans, particularly, although by no means exclusively, in the employment field. A new body of legislation could be built up on a new economic and social base, which would take full account of the needs and aspirations of the African population.

The report concludes:

"Zimbabwe is a country on the threshold of major transformation. It is vital that such change as does occur is conducive to the raising of the standards of living of the whole population and furthermore does not echo the past in the way in which previous policies have seriously damaged the interests of African workers and their families, who together constitute the vast majority of the country's citizens. International effort should ensure the implementation for Zimbabwe of the basic principle enunciated in Article 2 of ILO Convention No. 117 (Social Policy (Basic Aims and Standards) Convention, 1962), namely that 'the improvement of standards of living shall be regarded as the principal objective of the planning of economic development'."

TRANSPORT

INTERNATIONAL  
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Measures to cut oil pollution enter into force

New, stricter rules to prevent excessive pollution of the sea by oil were introduced in January. The regulations have international force and prohibit the discharge of oil and oily mixtures unless the vessel is proceeding en route; fix the maximum rate of discharge at 60 litres per mile travelled by the tanker; limit the total quantity of oil that may be discharged on a ballast voyage to 1/15,000 of the total cargo carrying capacity of the vessel; and stipulate that when oil is discharged at sea the vessel must be more than 150 miles from the nearest land.

The first international convention on oil pollution of the sea was adopted in 1954 and has been deposited with the Inter-governmental Maritime Consultative Organization since the UN agency was created in 1959. In 1962, the Maritime Safety Committee of IMCO adopted a series of amendments to the original Convention, extending the coastal zone in which the discharge of oil was prohibited and permitting discharges from new vessels of 20,000 grt and above only in exceptional circumstances. These amendments, which came into effect in 1967, were exploited by operators citing the lack of shore reception facilities and the discharge of oil at sea became a common practice. It was to close this loophole that a further set of amendments - those entering into force - was adopted by the IMCO Assembly in 1969.

GERMANY

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Staff cut-backs no answer to railways' economic difficulties

The ITF-affiliated German Railwaymen's Union (GdED) issued a press statement last month pointing out that the policy of staff cut-backs on the railways is still not proving - and is most unlikely ever to prove - an effective answer to the industry's economic difficulties. The union warns that without an injection of "new blood" (a reference to the policy of nil recruitment introduced at the end of 1974) the railways are bound to suffer.

The figures for 1977, just published, reveal a total staff of 374,000 railwaymen, much the lowest figure since the end of the last war and a drop of 60,000 since the end of 1974.

SWEDEN

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Seamen's leaders ask Prime Minister to forbid flag transfers

Top officials of the ITF's three Swedish maritime affiliates (the Seamen's Union, the Engineer Officers' Union and the Ships' Officers' Association) met the Swedish Prime Minister, Thorbjörn Fälldin, on 14 December last to explain why they felt that the government should refuse to allow the Salén Shipping Company to transfer two of its vessels, the Atlantic Wasa and the Pacific Wasa, to a convenience registry. The Swedish Board of Trade has already heeded the seafarers' objections and vetoed the "flagging out" of ten Swedish vessels (see ITF Newsletter No. 9, 1977, page 83). Salén sought a final decision from the government on the two ships in question on 10 October.

In his remarks to the Prime Minister, Gunnar Karlsson, President of the Swedish Seamen's Union, stressed the importance of the merchant fleet to the Swedish economy and pointed to the already high level of unemployment among seafarers. (Approximately one hundred jobs would be lost if the two vessels were transferred to a convenience registry, with the possibility of thousands of jobs being lost for good as other shipowners sought to take advantage of the opportunity to flag out.) Karlsson warned that if the sale went ahead Swedish seafarers, and their national and international organizations, would regard the government decision as provocative. It was not out of the question that the Seamen's Union would have to resort to industrial action disrupting the flow of maritime trade to and from Sweden and that vessels of various flags and other forms of transport would be drawn into the action.

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TRADE UNIONS

SPAIN

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Spanish Transport Workers' Federation holds first Congress

The first Congress of the Spanish Transport Workers' Federation (FTTEE) of the General Workers' Union was held in Madrid from 9 to 11 December 1977. The delegations to the Congress came from mainland Spain, the Balearic Islands and the Canaries and were representative of workers in the following sectors: civil aviation, railways, road transport, shipping and ports. The event was marked by the presence of a substantial number of fraternal delegates from ITF transport workers' unions, including Vice-President Jack Jones and Board members S. Barendregt (Netherlands), L. Buonaccorsi (France) and P. Potoms (Belgium), taking advantage of this opportunity to demonstrate their solidarity with their Spanish colleagues, who had just emerged from a long and difficult period of "illegality". ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis represented the Federation at the Congress and delivered a message of fraternal greetings and support for our Spanish affiliate.

The Congress adopted a number of important resolutions, including one on international relations reaffirming the international character of the UGT and its affiliation to the ITF, expressing solidarity with the workers in those countries under fascist and authoritarian regimes in the third world and Latin America (with special reference to Chile) and calling for a strengthening of the UGT presence in international bodies. In the field of maritime transport, a resolution was adopted pledging that the FTTEE would work closely together with the ITF to solve the problems that arise from the special nature of the seafaring life, with workplaces spread around the world. The Congress also drew up a list of demands for Spanish seafarers. These included: a minimum salary; no overtime working except where absolutely necessary; two months' leave on full pay after five months at sea; compulsory retirement at age 55, with voluntary retirement at 50 or after 30 years' service; a decent pension, revised annually in line with rises in the cost-of-living; the repeal of legislation covering discipline in the merchant navy; and the setting up of a training school for seafarers.

The Congress elected the following to the Executive Board of the Transport Workers' Federation: Andres Asenjo (General Secretary); Violeta Fernandez (Organization); Luis Ma Tellaeche (Coordination); Juan Roldan (Education); Fernando Barros (Press and Information); Adolfo del Fuelleo (Administration); Emilio Marchena (Publicity); Alberto Periago (International Relations). Fernando González Vila, a Socialist Deputy in the new parliament, had previously decided not to stand for re-election.

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Labour Court backs right to reinstatement

At the beginning of this month, a Madrid Labour Court ruled that an employee who lost his job during the Franco régime as a consequence of his trade union activities is entitled to be reinstated. The decision gives effect to the Labour Amnesty Law, which was approved by the Cortes (Spanish parliament) in October 1977 and is one of a series of measures designed to help restore democracy by putting right injustices perpetrated under the previous dictatorial system of government. Between three and four thousand workers are likely to seek reinstatement under the new law.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

AUSTRALIA

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Dockers reach agreement on fitting of passenger lifts to container cranes

The ITF-affiliated Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia (WWF) has reached agreement with the port employers on the fitting of passenger lifts to all container cranes. Modifications are also to be made to the operator cabins which will permit the operator either to escape or be lowered by rescue services, no matter where the cabin is situated on the boom at any given time.

The agreement follows discussions over a long period and was given added impetus by a tragic accident recently when a crane operator suffered a heart attack and died in the hour that it took for emergency services to arrive and remove him from the cabin.

CANADA

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First agreement for cabin attendants with Nordair; settlement at Air Canada

Following difficult and protracted negotiations, including a strike threat, the ITF-affiliated Canadian Airline Flight Attendants' Association (CALFAA) has succeeded in signing its first collective agreement with Nordair. The two-year contract, which took effect on 1 January 1977 and expires on 31 December next, provides for a pay increase of 8 per cent from the beginning of the contract, followed by a further 6 per cent on 1 January 1978. Other provisions include: time and a half for all hours in excess of 80 per month; straight time credits for duty time in excess of 14 hours; longer holidays and the introduction of bereavement leave and leave for jury service; baggage/personal effects insurance, with replacement value paid by the company up to a maximum of \$300; and improved provisions with regard to maternity leave.

Meanwhile, the union has finally achieved an acceptable settlement for cabin attendants with the national carrier, Air Canada. After the membership had turned down two package deals<sup>+</sup> and again under the imminent threat of strike action, a new pact was negotiated by CALFAA and subsequently approved by the rank and file. It includes three major concessions by Air Canada, namely: the deletion of a penalty clause affecting in-charge employees who accept a base transfer and then change their mind about the posting; an undertaking to increase the statutory leave entitlement by three days to eleven calendar days; and a commitment on duty day consultation.

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<sup>+</sup> for details of these see ITF Newsletter Nos. 10, 1977, page 98 and 12, 1977, page 122.

#### Rail pay talks break down

The pay talks<sup>+</sup> being conducted by the Associated Railway Unions (ARU) on behalf of Canada's 100,000 railwaymen broke down at the beginning of this month when the employers refused either to raise railway pensions or to make significant improvements to existing fringe benefits. The ARU has since asked the Labour Minister to intervene to help reach a settlement.

Current contracts covering working conditions expired at the end of 1977.

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<sup>+</sup> see ITF Newsletter Nos. 11, 1977, page 110 and 1, 1978 page 7 for earlier details.

#### DENMARK

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#### Engineers' union reports shipowner for breach of manning regulations

The ITF-affiliated Danish Ships' Engineers' Union has reported the Danish shipowner Asger Lindinger to the maritime authorities for allegedly permitting a breach of the manning regulations on board the Lindinger Unique. The union claims that the vessel is sailing without a state-certificated donkeymen on board. Twelve other Lindinger vessels are believed to be in breach of the regulations on this point and if this is confirmed will also be reported. Indeed, the only vessel that would appear to be properly manned at the present time is the Lindinger Nimbus. It will be remembered that the union prevented the Lindinger Nimbus from leaving Copenhagen last December until a trained donkeyman was put on board (see ITF Newsletter No. 1, 1978, page 7).

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GERMANY

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Dock strike settled

German dockworkers resumed work on 30 January following a five-day national strike and subsequently agreed to accept an improved settlement negotiated on their behalf by the ITF-affiliated Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV). Under the agreement, the dockers will receive a seven per cent increase on basic rates with effect from 1 February 1978 and a lump sum payment of DM115 will be made in lieu of a pay increase for January. The seven per cent increase will also be applied to shift and dirty work allowances, as well as to minimum sick and leave pay.

During the strike, the ITF circulated a list of ships which were likely to be diverted as a result of the dockers' action and, at the request of the OeTV, affiliates were requested not to handle any ships which might put in at their ports.

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\* see ITF Newsletter No. 1, 1978, page 12 for earlier details.

GHANA

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Improved pay and allowances for merchant navy officers

The ITF-affiliated Ghana Merchant Navy Officers' Association recently signed a new collective agreement on behalf of its members which includes the following provisions:-

salaries: increased by an average of 42 per cent, with some salary ranges being extended;

monthly extra hours allowance of twice the daily wage, regardless of whether overtime is worked;

prolonged service abroad allowance of 10 per cent of basic monthly wage, payable when an officer serves in a vessel which does not return to Ghana for six months or more (previously 5% after 12 months);

subsistence allowance: increased from C2 to C6, also payable during sick leave;

rent allowance: increased to C130, C150 and C165 for junior officers, senior officers, and masters and chief engineers respectively;

leave transport allowance: raised from C100 to C200 for senior officers (C150 for all other officers).

The Ghana government has also agreed that, with effect from 14 November 1977, income tax will not be levied on 25 per cent of an officer's income. The concession is intended to compensate officers for long periods spent away from Ghana by substantially improving their take-home pay.

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## GREAT BRITAIN

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### Working party advocates equal pay for Asian seafarers

A Department of Trade Working Group<sup>+</sup> consisting of seafarers<sup>1</sup>, ship-owners<sup>1</sup> and government representatives has advocated in its recently published report that the pay of non-domiciled (principally Asian) seafarers employed in British ships should be brought up to the present level of their British counterparts by means of increases staged over a period of five years. It is proposed that the scheme, which it is estimated will cost a total of £29 million, should be introduced in April of this year (all subsequent payments being made in January of the year in question) and that it should be reviewed after the third instalment is paid in January 1980. The new rates of pay would take account of differences in manning levels where these exist. In the typical case of an Indian AB, parity would be achieved by increasing the basic rate of pay by £20 per month for the first three years and thereafter by two further increases of £16.

The group's conclusions constitute a major victory for the two ITF affiliates with officials represented on it, the National Union of Seamen and the Merchant Navy and Airline Officers' Association. Both have been campaigning for many years against the use by British ship-owners of Asian seafarers as a source of cheap labour. The views of seafarers' unions in the countries involved (many of them ITF affiliates) were also sought in the course of the group's work.

Interested groups have been invited by the Secretary of State for Trade to make their views known on the proposals before they are implemented as government policy.

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<sup>+</sup>The decision to set up the Working Group was reported in ITF Newsletter No. 5, 1976, page 46.

### Tanker drivers ban overtime working

Tanker drivers employed by the four major oil companies (Shell, Esso, BP and Texaco) have been operating a national overtime ban since 1 February after rejecting a pay offer. Shell, Esso and BP drivers have now voted to accept a revised pay deal and will resume normal working on 20 February. This gives them a basic rate of £75 (achieved by consolidating £6.15 in pay supplements and adding 10 per cent of current gross earnings) backdated to November 1977. The new rates will be used to calculate holiday and sick pay and will count for pension purposes but will not apply to overtime and shift payments until next November. Texaco drivers rejected these terms and are currently assessing an improved offer.

The deal has been welcomed by the men's union, the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union, as the best that could be reached under the circumstances.

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Union leader calls for urgent government action on trawlermen's jobs

At a rally held in the fishing port of Grimsby earlier this month, Jack Jones, general secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union and an ITF Vice-President, called on the British government to take urgent steps to secure the jobs of deep-sea trawlermen, who had been hard hit by the current recession in the fishing industry. What the fishermen need, Jones said, is an assurance of regular employment and the guarantee of adequate payment during periods spent ashore.

IRISH REPUBLIC

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Move to create permanent Dublin dock labour force

Preliminary talks are being held between the unions and the Dublin Port and Docks Board aimed at creating a permanent labour force of deep-sea dockers earning a basic wage of £100 per week. In return, the dockers would be expected to agree to more flexible working methods and the stabilization of manning levels. As the proposed scheme will probably involve the loss of some two hundred jobs it is likely to be the subject of some hard bargaining between the two sides.

ISRAEL

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National strike hits merchant fleet

A strike of Israeli ratings and officers has been in progress since 19 January. The action was stepped up on 1 February when the unions involved (the ITF-affiliated Israeli Seamen's Union and the Sea Officers' Union) called a general strike against the entire merchant fleet to give added emphasis to their demands for improved pay and fringe benefits.

JAPAN

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Seamen's union to permit service on foreign-flag vessels

In a major change of policy, the ITF-affiliated All-Japan Seamen's Union has decided to allow its members to serve on foreign-flag vessels provided that pay and benefits are comparable with those on vessels flying the national flag. A Seamen's Employment Promotion Centre will be set up to retrain out-of-work seafarers for service aboard foreign ships.

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NORWAY

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Union concludes historic agreement for Brown and Root employees

Late last month, the Norwegian Oil and Petroleum Workers' Union (NOPEF) signed its first-ever collective contract for 1,000 Brown and Root employees working on the company's installations in the Norwegian sector of the North Sea. According to NOPEF, this is the first time that the company has concluded an agreement with a national union.

PORTUGAL

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Railwaymen seek early revision of collective contract

Portugal's 27,000 railwaymen staged a four-hour national strike on 2 February to back up demands for an early revision of their collective contract. The Portuguese Federation of Railwaymen's Unions had been attempting for some nine months without success to conclude a new agreement for its members with the railway management and had already sanctioned three work stoppages (on 27 July, 4 November and 30 November) -- each one longer than the last -- to draw attention to the lack of progress made by the talks.

Further stoppages scheduled for later in the month were called off when a settlement satisfactory to the union was reached with the railway management. The railwaymen's two main demands - for salary improvements and the retention of benefits gained in previous agreements - have been conceded.

SWITZERLAND

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Improvements for Swiss seafarers

The ITF-affiliated Swiss Transport and Commercial Workers' Union (VHTL) last month negotiated significant improvements in the pay and conditions of Swiss seafarers with the Association of Swiss Shipowners. Basic rates are increased by 1.3 per cent under a cost-of-living award; annual leave is increased by 2½ days on both 1 January 1978 and 1 January 1979 for all ranks; the conditions of seafarers in general service are brought into line with those of all other seafarers; restrictions on the types of illness covered by the sickness insurance scheme are removed and insurance cover is extended to days off and also to days off and leave spent ashore after signing off.

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ITF FLAG OF CONVENIENCE CAMPAIGN NEWS

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Seafarers serving in flag-of-convenience and crew-of-convenience ships benefited greatly last year from the efforts of ITF maritime affiliates and fraternal organizations on their behalf. A total of 8,908,600 US dollars in back pay was recovered over the twelve months and paid out directly to those concerned. In all, 175 ships were dealt with, some on several different occasions. A number of individual claims were also settled.

Portuguese dockers lend support to ITF Campaign

The ITF has been most impressed by the splendid support that it has received in recent months from the Portuguese Federation of Dockers' Unions, whose application for affiliation will be considered at the forthcoming meeting of the Executive Board. On two separate occasions, flag-of-convenience vessels putting in at Portuguese ports have been refused permission to leave until an agreement could be signed on behalf of the crew.

In the first instance, dockers in the port of Aveiro, where the Federation has approximately one hundred members, halted work on the 1,252 grt CARACAS BAY last October. This resulted in the signing of a new ITF agreement for the vessel. The rates of pay of the eleven Filipino crew were increased in accordance with the ITF Collective Agreement and the crew duly furnished with amended contracts verified by the National Seamen's Board in the Philippines.

The CARACAS BAY, which flies the Netherlands Antilles flag, was also the subject of a successful action for the recovery of outstanding wages the previous month when the vessel entered the port of Cape Town (South Africa). On this occasion, the vessel was arrested by the master, Captain Bissa, and Filipino crew members after the ITF had lodged the necessary cash guarantee with their lawyers in Cape Town. The owners decided against taking the case to court and a substantial out-of-court settlement was reached on behalf of the captain and the crew. The owners also abandoned their claim for costs. Before the case was settled, the CARACAS BAY had already sailed, with a new crew, for Aveiro.

In December, dockers in the port of Lisbon detained the Pa AJAX II until the vessel's German owners agreed to sign an ITF Special Agreement and to pay ITF rates to the vessel's mixed nationality crew. The AJAX II then set sail for Scandinavia, only to be stopped once again in Holbaek by ITF Inspector Svend Fønsskov of the Danish Engine Crew Union, who ordered a blockade of the ship when he heard that three crew members had been turned off the vessel as it passed through the Kiel Canal without being paid the money that was due to them.

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The ship was held for two days until the captain agreed to pay out 30,000 kr to the seamen concerned and to sign employment contracts for the members of the crew. The ship set sail but on reaching Randers news reached Fønsskov once again of trouble on board. The captain had apparently been threatening the crew in an effort to make them pay back the moneys they had received. Again, the vessel was blockaded and eventually left the port on 18 January.

Her next port of call was the Hansa port of Bremen, where the crew went on strike. ITF officials from the German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV) went on board the vessel in an attempt to negotiate with the captain, who was refusing to pay several crew members who wished to sign off.

### Crews of Convenience

Dockers in Oporto took action in October, this time against the Greek flag vessel MARY LIS in support of three Indian members of the crew, who had been refused full payment of a bonus due to them on signing off. Settlement of the men's claim was eventually reached with the assistance of the ITF-affiliated Greek Seamen's Federation (PNO), which monitors the situation of non-Greek seafarers on vessels flying the national flag.

### NEWS IN BRIEF

On 1 February, Great Britain became a full member of AMVER (the Automated Mutual-Assistance Vessel Rescue System), which is operated by the US Coastguard. On the basis of the sailing plans and position reports which merchant vessels on offshore passages are encouraged to submit to co-operating radio stations, the AMVER centre in New York calculates by dead reckoning the position of reporting ships throughout their voyage. A computer-predicted list of ships in the vicinity of a vessel in distress can thus be made readily available to search and rescue organizations.

Workers in London's enclosed docks (including 3,000 members of the ITF-affiliated British Transport and General Workers' Union) have voted to accept a pay increase of ten per cent on basic rates plus improvements to existing bonus schemes. Similar increases have already been accepted by dockers in the ports of Bristol, Hull and Southampton.

Great Britain: Texaco tanker drivers have decided to return to normal working after accepting the company's revised pay offer (see item on page 23).

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The ITF-affiliated Pan-Hellenic Seamen's Federation (PNO) has submitted two separate lists of claims on behalf of its members on Greek passenger vessels and in the coastal trade. Negotiations have already begun and the eventual outcome will be reported in the Newsletter.

The ITF-affiliated Italian Maritime Workers' Union (UIM) has informed us that the collective agreement covering the entire merchant fleet expired at the end of 1977. Negotiations on the renewal of the contract have already begun and there is a possibility of strike action if a satisfactory settlement is not reached of the seafarers' claims.

The Nordic Council of Trade Unions (NFS), which represents over five and a half million workers throughout Scandinavia, has written to the Scandinavian Airlines System (SAS) urging the airline to cease its operations to South Africa in protest at the country's apartheid regime. The decision to approach SAS was taken at a recent meeting of the unions affiliated to the centre as their contribution to the ICFTU action year against apartheid (see item elsewhere in this Newsletter).

A parliamentary committee has approved the extension from 12 to 200 miles of Spain's fishing limits.

The small but influential Spanish trade union centre USO (Unión Sindical Obrera) formally merged with the UGT Transport Workers' Federation at an Extraordinary Congress held in Madrid on 18 December 1977.

British West Indies Airways pilots in Trinidad and Tobago struck for eight days at the beginning of February, seeking reinstatement of a colleague sacked in July last year. The pilots returned to work after being given assurances by the BWIA management that they would be paid for the period of the strike and that no retaliatory measures would be taken against them.

The United States government is investigating the possibility of publicizing a list of international airports prone to terrorism.

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PERSONALIA

George Agius has been re-appointed General Secretary of the Malta General Workers' Union. Brother Agius was asked to return to Malta from his ambassador's post in West Germany in order to resume his leadership of the union. Vincent Esposito has been appointed GWU Deputy General Secretary and Carmel Consiglio Assistant General Secretary.

M. Anker Bakke, treasurer of the Norwegian Transport Workers' Union since 1955, celebrated his 65th birthday on 12 February. Brother Bakke has been a member of the Committee of the ITF Road Transport Workers' Section for many years. He will be remaining in his union post for the time being.

Dave Bowman has ended his three-year term as president of the British National Union of Railwaymen. He is succeeded by Alun Rees.

Edward (Ted) Brown, national secretary of the British National Union of Seamen, was awarded an MBE in the New Year Honours List.

Ezio Canonica, president of the Swiss Trade Union Confederation since 1973, died on 5 January 1978, aged 55.

C.S. Nair, who represented the Asian region on the ITF Executive Board from 1974 to 1977, died in London on 7 February, aged 55. Brother Nair was industrial relations adviser to two of our Singaporean affiliates, the Singapore Industrial Labour Organisation and the Singapore Organisation of Seamen. He was also active in the Singapore National Trades Union Congress.

John F. Peterpaul, Vice-President of the US International Association of Machinists, has been elected chairman of the Railway Labor Executives' Association (RLEA). Brother Peterpaul is a member of the ITF Executive Board. Fred J. Kroll, president of the US Brotherhood of Railway, Airline and Steamship Clerks, succeeds him as RLEA Vice-Chairman.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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Executive Board	- London, 13-14 March 1978
Fair Practices Committee	- London, 15-16 March 1978
Sub-Committee on Transport Policy	- Vienna, 22-23 March 1978

AFFILIATED UNIONS REQUIRING FURTHER  
INFORMATION ON ANY ITEM IN THIS  
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FROM THE SECRETARIAT OF THE ITF

MAY DAY MESSAGE

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions has launched an Employment Campaign for 1978 with the intention of drawing the attention of governments and public opinion to the international trade union movement's proposals for the revival of the world economy. These are included in the 1978 Review of the World Economic Situation, adopted by the ICFTU Executive Board in November 1977, which suggests various short-to-medium term measures that might be taken by governments in both the developing and the industrialized nations to revive their flagging economies and promote full employment.

As part of the campaign, trade unionists have been asked by the ICFTU to include the following May Day Message in their speeches made on that day.

"Unemployment is, of course, not only a problem in our country. In the industrialised nations alone 17 million people are out of work. In the developing countries, 300 million wonder where food is coming from for the next meal because they have little or no work.

"All of us belonging to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions have decided to intensify and coordinate during 1978 our campaign for the right to a job. This way we can help one another - the more jobs there are and the more workers earn, the more they can buy - both homeproduced goods and imports. Such purchases create more jobs everywhere. Today, throughout the world, we ask our governments with one voice: create employment by increasing public spending and better planning for the future, this will reactivate world trade. The poor countries must be helped to help themselves. We call on the leaders of the biggest industrialised countries - the US, Fed. Republic of Germany, Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan and Canada - to hold another summit meeting as soon as possible to pull the world out of stagnation by adopting the policies which the international trade union movement has demanded time and time again. Unless action is taken now, we will experience an economic disaster on the scale of the 1930s."