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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

ISRAEL

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ITF condemns callous attack on El Al staff coach

The ITF contacted the British Home Secretary following last month's attack on an El Al staff coach in central London, which resulted in the death of one Israeli stewardess and serious injury to at least one other female cabin attendant, to make known its horror at this callous act and to renew its appeal for tighter security measures which would afford innocent aviation personnel greater protection from terrorist attacks.

Earlier in the day, the ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis had sent a cable of sympathy to the ITF-affiliated Transport Workers' Division of Histadrut, whose members were among the dead and injured, expressing his sense of outrage and pledging to do everything possible to curb the terrorist menace.

TRANSPORT

INTERNATIONAL

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Oil pollution fund to be set up

Having now received the necessary number of ratifications, the International Convention on the Establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage enters into force on 16 October 1978. The new convention, which was adopted by the Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization in 1971, will supplement the 1969 Civil Liability Convention, which came into effect three years ago, by allowing compensation to be paid beyond the level of the shipowner's liability laid down in the earlier Convention to a maximum liability of \$16 million (total liability under both conventions not to exceed \$30 million) per incident under normal circumstances. The fund will be financed by companies and persons who import substantial quantities of oil after carriage by sea and will provide assistance to contracting states threatened or affected by oil pollution. It will also indemnify the shipowner or his insurer for a portion of his liability under the Civil Liability Convention.

To date the new convention has been ratified by 14 countries (in order of acceptance): Liberia, Syria, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Algeria, United Kingdom, Tunisia, Japan, Bahamas, Federal Republic of Germany, Yugoslavia, Ghana and France.

GREAT BRITAIN

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DoT noise code enters into force

The Department of Trade Code of Practice for Noise Levels in Ships, prepared by a working party on which the British maritime unions were represented, has now entered into force. The code applies to all United Kingdom-registered vessels and requires noise levels to be measured under operating conditions, with maximum dB(A) levels being specified for the various areas. Responsibility for taking those measurements would normally rest with the shipbuilder in the case of new vessels and with the owner for existing ships.

The code also suggests that a sound-reducing control room or other similar space should be provided in most machinery spaces to protect the operating and watchkeeping personnel. Where it is not technically feasible to limit noise in machinery spaces the Code suggests that warning signs should be posted at all entrances to such spaces instructing personnel to use ear protectors.

The working of the Code will be reviewed periodically by the Standing Committee on Noise in Ships. After four years, a comprehensive review will be undertaken and the introduction of mandatory requirements will be considered.

JAPAN

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Government adopts tough line on hijacking

A special committee of Japanese cabinet ministers has approved a policy document establishing the criteria to be adopted by the government when dealing with future hijacking incidents. According to the document, "every effort" will be made to preserve human life while such incidents are in progress, although it goes on to stress the importance of "standing firm" and "preserving law and order", implying that hijackers' demands might well be rejected, even at the cost of innocent lives. A final clause calls for public understanding and cooperation in the execution of these policies.

Japan has attracted criticism on a number of occasions in the past for its readiness to give in to hijackers in order to protect the lives of hostages. This attitude now seems to have been modified considerably and a first indication that the government might take a tough line with hijackers in future was given when the Prime Minister lent his signature to the Bonn hijacking agreement reached at the world economic summit earlier this year.^x

^xsee ITF Newsletter No. 7, 1978, page 88

SPAIN

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Lorry drivers fined for defying dangerous cargoes ban

The Spanish provincial authorities have fined 30 lorry drivers 50,000 pesetas (£350) each for defying the ban on the carriage of dangerous cargoes by road, which was imposed after a liquid gas tanker exploded killing 170 holidaymakers at the San Carlos de la Rapita camp site earlier this summer (see ITF Newsletter No. 8, 1978, page 101).

UNITED STATES

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Dockers' leader hits out at Federal Maritime Commission

Thomas Gleason, president of the ITF-affiliated International Longshoremen's Association and an ITF vice-president, has called for the abolition, or at least the severe curtailing, of the powers of the Federal Maritime Commission, whose activities are currently being scrutinized by the merchant marine sub-committee of the House of Representatives.

In a letter to the Congressman in charge of the investigation, Gleason accuses the Commission of interfering with free collective bargaining and of hindering and stifling the development of both the maritime and dock industries. Specifically, the ILA president criticizes the federal agency for outlawing the container-handling rules first introduced in the 1968/71 longshoremen's contract, which were designed to protect jobs by reserving some of the stuffing and stripping of containers for dockworkers; for ruling in favour of "minibrIDGE" (the system whereby when a ship docks the cargo is transferred directly from the vessels to the rails), which the union opposes on the grounds that it diverts cargo away from the docks; and for its efforts to require collective agreements to be submitted to the agency before they can be implemented.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

AUSTRALIA

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Officers' union seeks to protect jobs

The ITF-affiliated Merchant Service Guild of Australia is pressing Asia Australian Express, a three-company shipping consortium with two ships currently on order from Japan, to employ Australian officers on at least one of these container vessels when they enter into service later this year. The Guild already has manning agreements with a number of lines engaged in the East Asian trade and wants a share of the new jobs created when the ships join the trade.

Asia Australia Express would appear to be unwilling to enter into negotiations with the Guild and the possibility of industrial action cannot be ruled out if some progress on the issue is not made soon.

Layoffs lead to dock strike

Members of the ITF-affiliated Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia began a national strike earlier this month in protest against the mass layoff of Melbourne dockers following a month-long stoppage by maintenance workers and electricians in two of the port's container terminals. Earlier, Melbourne dockers had voted for an indefinite strike, shutting down the entire waterfront.

The fitters and electricians called off their strike on 13 September when the dispute was referred to arbitration, paving the way for a return to work by the dockers.

FRANCE

Improved pay for railwaymen

Following long and difficult negotiations, the ITF-affiliated French Railwaymen's Federation FO signed a new salary agreement on 11 July 1978. This provides for a one per cent cost-of-living increase from 1 July, with provision for further adjustments later in the year to protect purchasing power; a 3.6% increase in the metropolitan starting rate from 1 July; and a 1.2 per cent increase in the pensions of 450,000 retired railwaymen, effective 1 December 1978. 5,700 rail jobs will be reclassified on 1 October, as part of an exercise which is designed to make the railways a more attractive career prospect.

SWEDEN

Higher pay for tourist guides

Earlier this summer, the ITF-affiliated Swedish Commercial Employees' Union (HTF) signed an agreement for 25 seasonally-employed tourist guides who work for Tourist Sightseeing Ltd. of Stockholm. This agreement raises salaries by 1,000 kr to 3,500 kr per month as well as introducing premium rates for overtime and unsocial hours, both of which were previously unpaid.

UNITED STATES

Norfolk and Western Railways still strikebound

The Clerks' strike against Norfolk and Western Railways has now entered its tenth week without any sign of a break in the deadlock. Indeed, it would appear that the action is being prolonged because N&W, under a carriers' mutual aid pact similar to the one existing in the aviation industry, is able to underwrite operating losses resulting from the strike and is therefore in no hurry to resume negotiations, although leading officials of the ITF-affiliated Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks have held themselves in readiness ever since the strike began on 10 July.

X see ITF Newsletter No. 8, page 104 for earlier details

BRAC called the strike after Norfolk and Western abolished 1,700 jobs previously occupied by its members, laying these men off and replacing them by friends and relatives, the newly-created positions being subsequently re-classified as "non-union". The union contends that if other railroads were to act in this manner there would be no security of employment whatsoever for union members in the entire industry.

New contract for deep-sea tanker and dry cargo vessel crews

The ITF-affiliated National Maritime Union of America has signed a new three-year contract, effective 16 June 1978, for deep-sea tanker and dry cargo vessel crews. Under the agreement, a 7.5% increase in basic and overtime rates will be made on 16 June of each contract year plus a cost-of-living adjustment on 16 December 1979 and thereafter six-monthly, to 16 December 1980. Examples of the revised monthly rates (hourly overtime rate in brackets) are as follows:

TANKERS

Deck Department

	<u>16/6/78</u>	<u>16/6/79</u>	<u>16/6/80</u>
Bosun (25,500 dwt and above)	\$ 1,211.91 (10.49)	\$ 1,302.80 (11.28)	\$ 1,400.51 (12.12)
Carpenter	1,118.56 (9.68)	1,202.45 (10.41)	1,292.63 (11.19)
AB	874.95 (7.58)	940.57 (8.15)	1,011.11 (8.75)
OS	693.47 (6.00)	745.48 (6.45)	801.39 (6.93)

Engine Department

Electrician	\$ 1,337.58 (11.58)	\$ 1,437.90 (12.45)	\$ 1,545.74 (13.38)
Engineman	984.30 (8.52)	1,058.12 (9.17)	1,137.48 (9.84)
Fireman	854.63 (7.40)	918.73 (7.95)	987.63 (8.55)
Wiper	803.22 (6.95)	863.46 (7.47)	928.22 (8.04)

Stewards Department

Chief steward (25,500 dwt and above)	\$ 1,216.77 (10.53)	\$ 1,308.03 (11.33)	\$1,406.13 (12.17)
Chief cook	1,051.20 (9.11)	1,130.04 (9.78)	1,214.79 (10.52)
Messman	670.34 (5.81)	720.62 (6.24)	774.67 (6.71)

DRY CARGO VESSELS

Deck Department

Bosun (10,000 grt and above)	\$ 1,255.79 (10.88)	\$ 1,349.97 (11.69)	\$1,451.22 (12.56)
Carpenter (10,000 grt and above)	1,133.51 (9.81)	1,218.52 (10.55)	1,309.91 (11.34)
AB	864.78 (7.49)	929.64 (8.04)	999.36 (8.66)
OS	675.12 (5.85)	725.75 (6.29)	780.18 (6.75)

Engine Department

Electrician	\$ 1,337.12 (11.58)	1,437.40 (12.44)	1,545.21 (13.38)
Engineman	984.30 (8.52)	1,058.12 (9.17)	1,137.48 (9.84)
Fireman	864.78 (7.49)	929.64 (8.04)	999.36 (8.66)
Wiper	803.19 (6.95)	863.43 (7.47)	928.19 (8.04)

Stewards Department

Chief steward (10,000 grt and above)	\$ 1,255.79 (10.88)	1,349.97 (11.69)	1,451.22 (12.56)
Chief cook	1,009.87 (8.75)	1,085.61 (9.39)	1,167.03 (10.10)
Messman	670.36 (5.81)	720.64 (6.24)	774.69 (6.71)

Other monetary improvements include: vacation pay raised each contract year by \$15, \$25 and \$35 respectively for entry, middle and key ratings; and additional pay increases on vessels over 38,000

power tons according to a formula which, on large tankers, could produce real wages approximately 10 per cent higher than negotiated scales. Pensions of NMU ratings who retire during the life of the contract will be increased by \$20 per month for each year of service over 25, giving entry, skilled and key ratings aged 60 with 30 years' service a monthly pension entitlement of \$400, \$450 and \$500 respectively from 16 June of this year. For serving members, dental plan benefits have been virtually doubled and, effective 16 June 1980, life insurance and accidental death and dismemberment benefits will be increased from \$5000/10,000 to \$10/20,000.

Other improvements relate to: break in service rules; employer contributions to the pension fund and upgrading and retraining schools; and comparable time-off provisions for tanker and dry cargo crews.

Northwest pilots' strike ends

A strike by Northwest Airlines pilots has ended, after 109 days, with the signing, following marathon negotiating sessions, of a new three-year agreement, effective 1 July, providing for annual pay increases averaging approximately seven per cent, pensions credits for prior service with Northwest in the capacity of flight engineer, improved rules relating to the determining of final average earnings for the purposes of pension calculation, full pay and credit for deadheading (previously half-pay only was allowed) and a guaranteed monthly salary regardless of whether changes are made to flight schedules. Northwest pilots had been working without a contract for nearly 10 months before they struck the carrier on 29 April.

The US Air Line Pilots' Association, which represents the Northwest flight deck crews, has alleged that a speedy settlement of the dispute was frustrated by the airline industry's mutual aid pact, which enabled Northwest to escape the financial penalties that are normally incurred from a protracted strike.

NEWS IN BRIEF

A strike by Air Canada's 1,700 pilots was averted late last month when tentative agreement was reached on the provisions of a new contract to replace the one which expired on 31 January. Previously, the two sides had failed to agree the level of salaries and the length of the contract. Their union was also angered by Air Canada's refusal to agree a combined pilots' seniority list when it takes over Nordair, a private airline.

Air Canada's 1,500 ground service workers came out on strike for a second time last month^x after rejecting another proposed settlement of their contract dispute. Negotiations on a new contract were re-opened between the carrier and representatives of the Canadian division of the ITF-affiliated International Association of Machinists and an acceptable settlement, which enabled the workers to resume normal operations, was reached ten days later.

^x see ITF Newsletter No. 8, 1978, page 103 for earlier details

French air traffic controllers have now completed an eleven-day work to rule, the fifth time that they have taken such action during recent months^x. In August, the ITF-affiliated French Airline Pilots' Union (SNPL) gave its full backing to the controllers' demands for improved air safety and offered to mediate between the two parties to help promote a satisfactory settlement of the controllers' grievances.

^x see ITF Newsletter Nos. 7, page 96 and 8, page 106 for further details

Great Britain has ratified a Council of Europe convention, aimed at suppressing terrorism, which obliges signatory states to extradite persons who have engaged in kidnappings, hijacking or the taking of hostages. The convention comes into force for Austria, West Germany and Sweden on 4 August, for Denmark on 28 September and for the United Kingdom on 25 October.

British Caledonian Airways engineers have received a 5 per cent increase in basic pay under a self-financing productivity deal involving major modifications of working practices that came into effect last month.

Alitalia cabin crews have staged two separate twenty-four hour strikes this month in support of demands for higher pay and shorter working hours.

Air traffic controllers in Jamaica began to "report sick" at the beginning of this month, in action which is aimed at achieving salary increases, additional fringe benefits and improved working conditions.

Diplomatic pressure is being exerted on the Kuwaiti government to join in the proposed boycott by countries which signed the Bonn agreement of airlines belonging to states which harbour hijackers (see also ITF Newsletter No. 7, page 88).

The Norwegian Oil and Petroleum Workers' Union (NOPEF) has condemned the dismissal by Brown and Root of an unknown number of Spanish workers on the Staffjord A platform on the grounds that they had used up the annual work quota of 1,773 hours. A spokesman for the union said that the company's action was totally unacceptable in that it had agreed with NOPEF to approach the union before any dismissals took place.

PERSONALIA

Michael Cox has been elected General Secretary of the Irish National Association of Transport Employees in succession to Frank Smyth who retired earlier this year.

Kåre Kristoffersen, vice-president of the Norwegian Seamen's Union, celebrates his 60th birthday on 15 September. Brother Kristoffersen is vice-president of the Scandinavian Transport Workers' Federation and is also vice-chairman of the ITF Fishermen's Section.

Risto Kuisma has succeeded Martti Veirto as chairman of the Finnish Road Transport Workers' Union. Brother Kuisma takes over his predecessor's position on the Road Transport Workers' Section Committee and also becomes a substitute member of the Dockers' Section Committee.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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| Fishermen's Section Sub-Committee | - Faroe Islands, 9-11 Oct. 1978 |
| Executive Board | - Vienna, 17-18 October 1978 |
| Road Transport Workers' Section Steering Committee | - Vienna, 19 October 1978 |
| Sub-Committee on Working Conditions of Railway Staff | - Stockholm, 26-27 October 1978 |
| Travel Bureau Section Committee | - London, 31 October - 1 November 1978 |

AFFILIATED UNIONS REQUIRING FURTHER INFORMATION ON ANY ITEM IN THIS NEWSLETTER MAY OBTAIN IT ON REQUEST FROM THE SECRETARIAT OF THE I.T.F.

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