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 XXX The ITF wishes success in 1979 to  
 XXX its affiliates and all other or-  
 XXX ganizations fighting for workers'  
 XXX prosperity and freedom  
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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

INTERNATIONAL

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KSSU Group Unions plan future policy

ITF affiliates organising employees of the KSSU airline companies (KLM, SAS, Swissair and UTA) met in Zurich from 21 to 23 November and adopted a programme for closer inter-union co-operation. The programme includes - providing information on new airline projects for dissemination by the ITF Secretariat; further steps to influence their Governments to persuade the airlines to negotiate with the unions on a Group basis in conformity with the OECD's guidelines on multi-national enterprises; and a comparison of working conditions of selected categories of ground and flying staff with a view to harmonisation.

The KSSU Committee also set up a working party to draft a declaration to provide for mutual support with respect to the exchange of information and co-operation in all matters affecting civil aviation workers in their own and other countries of the KSSU Group. This mutual support would include action such as refusing to carry out work or to agree to interchange of crew without prior agreement between the unions involved. A second working party was set up to assess the particular problems facing airline mechanics arising from the agreements between the companies on the division of work.

The Committee elected Ove Johansson, Swedish Commercial Employees' Union, as Chairman and Victor Schiwoff, Swiss Public Service Workers' Union, as Vice Chairman.

TRANSPORT

Better medical care for Fishermen urged by ILO Committee

The International Labour Organisation's tripartite Committee on Conditions of Work in the Fishing Industry met in Geneva from 21 to 30 November and made recommendations for improving facilities for medical care of fishermen at sea. The Committee found that care could be more effective if methods for reporting sicknesses and accidents from vessels to medical consultants were standardised. The need was also stressed to improve information on the positions at sea of vessels carrying a physician. The presence of a standard medical chest on fishing vessels was strongly recommended as was international harmonisation of medical training programmes for fishermen. Great importance was given to making provision for the prompt evacuation of injured or severely ill crew.

The Committee also adopted Resolutions on : Social security cover for Fishermen; Holidays with pay; and Repatriation. The Committee asked the ILO Governing Body to place medical care for Fishermen, hours of work and manning, and stabilisation of employment and earnings on the agenda of a future International Labour Conference. It also called, at the request of the Workers' Group, on all maritime States to set up tripartite national labour boards to keep a register of qualified fishermen, to regulate their recruitment and training and to help standardise employment conditions. The Workers' Group also proposed that in its future work the ILO should study systems of remuneration and welfare facilities. Due to employer opposition, a Workers' Group motion advocating the use of edible fish only for human consumption failed to get the necessary support.

H. Rake, German Transport and Public Services Union, was Workers' Vice-Chairman of the Committee; D. Cairns, British Transport & General Workers' Union, was Spokesman of the Workers' Group; Ake Selander, ITF Assistant General Secretary, was Secretary of the Workers' Group. Other representatives of ITF affiliates in Canada, Faroe Islands, Iceland, Japan, Norway and Spain attended the Committee either as Workers' Members or as members of the ITF delegation.

#### AFRICA

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#### Liberian "counter-attack"?

According to press reports, Mr. Gerald Cooper, Liberian Maritime Commissioner, has forecast increased efforts by his Government to counter the ITF's flag-of-convenience campaign. Mr. Cooper has been visiting Asia to drum up support for a new Far East Committee of the Liberian Shipping Council.

The Liberian Government is said to be particularly annoyed by the recent boycott in Glasgow of the Liberian-flag Camilla M. The Liberians sent a strong protest to the British Foreign Office but are said to feel that their views were not being taken sufficiently seriously at the diplomatic level!

#### AMERICA

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#### TWU demonstrates for improved public transport

Local 100 of the Transport Workers' Union of America, an ITF affiliate, organised a mass picket of a public hearing held by the Metropolitan Transit Authority to discuss the spending of funds allocated to New York by the Federal Government. At the hearing, John Lawe, President of Local 100 which negotiates for 33,000 employees working on bus and underground rail services,

urged that the new Federal funds be used to achieve a substantial improvement in the safety, comfort and efficiency of the subway and bus systems. Headways between services had to be reduced to attract back the hundreds of thousands of passengers who had stopped using public transport in disgust at delays and breakdowns and fear for their safety on unmanned stations.

Lawe also called on the Authority to expand the TWU-promoted programme of installing bullet-proof booths to protect ticket clerks. The Transit Authority would also better reflect the city's needs if a genuine representative of the riding public and a member of the TWU, representing the workers, were appointed to the Board.

#### EUROPE

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#### British proposal to change tonnage measurement strongly attacked

The ITF-affiliated Radio and Electronic Officers' Union has strongly criticised the proposal by the British Department of Trade, which has jurisdiction over merchant shipping, to change its interpretation of IMCO's Recommendation on the treatment of Shelter Deck and Other Open Spaces. The new interpretation would increase the deadweight tonnage of certain vessel without increasing their gross registered tonnage. In particular the 1600 GRT figure in IMCO's Safety of Life at Sea Convention, which governs the need for Radio Officers on board ship, would be circumvented. The interpretation which the British Government proposes to place on the IMCO Recommendation is similar to that which the Federal Republic of Germany has permitted its shipowners for a number of years.

The Chairman of IMCO's Maritime Safety Committee pointed out that the British proposal could lead to a scramble by other countries to give their shipowners a similar advantage. Countries would thus be vying with each other to undermine internationally accepted standards of safety at sea.

#### Stricter safety rules urged for Norwegian chemicals ships

Recommendations for improving safety on board Norwegian vessels carrying liquid chemical and gas cargoes have been made in the report of a committee of inquiry set up by the Norwegian Directorate for Seafarers in 1972, following complaints made by the ITF-affiliated Mates' Union on the basis of a survey it had carried out. That survey indicated the need for improved safety training and also revealed that many Navigating Officers on such ships were having to work for up to 90 hours a week.

In its own report, the committee of inquiry recommends a considerable intensification in safety training, both on board and ashore; improved stipulations on safety routines and the use of safety and protective equipment; the introduction of comprehensive

health checks; reductions in the overtime burden on crew members; and the introduction of stricter controls on the use of alcohol on board. The administrative head of the Seafarers' Directorate, who was one of the members of the committee, said that their investigations had uncovered what he described as "hair-raising negligence" on such ships and commented that even when members of the committee had been on board them they had witnessed examples of extreme carelessness.

The carriers themselves are mainly modern, first-class vessels, but one of the problems is that there are constantly new types of chemicals being transported, with a consequent need for additional research and watchfulness on safety problems. During normal work tasks on board, crew exposure to noxious chemicals and gases is well below safe levels, but the committee pointed out that the opposite is often true of more specialized work operations, such as tank cleaning, the tapping of tanks, inspection of the pump room and cargo tanks, and the coupling and uncoupling of feeder lines during loading and discharge. In such operations, claims the committee, there are often high concentrations of chemical gases. One of its recommendations concerns closer collaboration in health checks between the Seamen's Medical Centre in Oslo and the similar centre in the Port of Rotterdam, which is trafficked by over 90% of Norwegian liquid chemical and gas carriers.

TRADE UNIONS

GERMANY

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Do German Railwaymen earn too much?

German railwaymen have recently come under attack by a Vice-Chairman of the Federal Railways (DB) Board of Directors for earning "too much". The critic of the railwaymen's level of pay is Hans-Günther Sohl, former President of the Federation of German Industry, the employers' organization.

Hubert Vomberg, Vice-President of the ITF affiliated German Railwaymen's Union, refuted Herr Sohl's allegations with the following figures:- In 1977 the average earnings of all German male industrial workers were DM 28,219 and the average earnings of salaried staff were DM 40,633. For the same year, the average earnings of all DB employees, from Platelayers to the Chairman of the Board of Directors, were DM 28,500. Vomberg further pointed out that, since 1974, employment on the DB had been reduced by over 72,000 jobs and the engagement of trainees had been cut by 60%. The shortage of staff on the DB was now so great that regular employees were working excessive overtime and the DB was forced to use soldiers and convicts as auxiliaries.

UNITED STATES

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American Unions propose boycott of Chile and other countries

The U.S. American Federation of Labour - Congress of Industrial Organizations has declared an indefinite boycott of Chilean goods with effect from 1 January 1979. U.S. unions will refuse to unload or handle goods from Chile. The United States is the largest market for Chilean goods and raw materials.

In May, an AFL-CIO delegation led by International Longshoremen's Association President and ITF Vice-President Thomas Gleason visited Chile and as a result the AFL-CIO Executive Council warned General Pinochet that unless his régime made substantial progress towards restoring full trade union and human rights, U.S. unions would join other Latin American and Caribbean unions in action against Chile.

Elsewhere, in November the Inter-American Regional Labour Organization (ORIT) called on its affiliates to boycott all goods going to or from Chile, Cuba and Nicaragua by air, sea and land, on human rights grounds. ORIT also asked the ICFTU to support the action.

FEIA confirms policy on small jet crew complements

At its General Assembly held in San Francisco, U.S.A., from 6 to 9 November, the Flight Engineers' International Association, an ITF affiliate, underlined its policy that all jet transport aircraft, by the very nature of their technical design and operational requirements, unequivocally need a minimum operating crew of two Pilots and a Flight Engineer.

The FEIA noted that certification of aircraft for operation by two-man flight deck crews had been granted by certain national civil aviation authorities on the basis of certification testing by specially trained test pilots employed by aircraft manufacturers in an artificially controlled environment which in no way resembled day-to-day airline operations.

The FEIA applauded the action of some Pilots' unions in support of the retention of the Flight Engineer function; action which has led to agreements with some airlines to cancel their previously planned introduction of two-pilot crew aircraft into operation.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

AUSTRALIA

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Prompt application of ILO Code of Practice in Ports

Action has been taken by the ITF-affiliated Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia to implement the ILO Code of Practice on Safety and Health in Dock Work, adopted in 1977. The WWF has reached agreement with the Association of Employers of Waterside Labour to introduce the system of medical examinations recommended in the ILO Code. The agreement covers: 1) Pre-employment examinations for entry to the port industry; 2) Periodic re-examinations; 3) Operators of specialised equipment; 4) Disability classification; 5) Examinations after absence from work; 6) Examinations required by an employer who doubts an employee's fitness for work; 7) Examinations for Superannuation Fund purposes; 8) Examinations of workers leaving the industry; and 9) Familiarisation of Medical Officers with Dockers' working conditions.

DENMARK

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Air Traffic Controllers seek earlier retirement

Danish Air Traffic Controllers at Kastrup are threatening action over the Christmas period in support of their demand for a lowering of their retirement age. The Controllers state that the nature of their work is so exacting and arduous that the normal age of retirement should be lowered to 55 years from the present 67. After 2 years of fruitless negotiations with the Ministry of Finance, the Controllers are proposing to work strictly according to the rules concerning overtime and standing in for staff absent sick or on leave.

GREAT BRITAIN

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First oil rig agreement in North Sea fields

The Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs, an ITF affiliate, has signed an agreement with Occidental Petroleum covering the union's right to represent 75 production workers on the Occidental Piper platform in disciplinary and grievance matters. The union will obtain full negotiating rights on salaries and other conditions of employment when it has organised a majority of the workers on the Piper and nearby Claymore field platforms. ASTMS is a member of the Aberdeen Inter-Union Offshore Oil Committee

established to co-ordinate and provide mutual support for union organising activity in the British Sector of the North Sea.

#### Rail unions negotiate on payments

Following rejection of a productivity payments system recommended by a Tribunal on the grounds that the proposed payments were limited to Drivers of high speed trains, the ITF affiliated Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers & Firemen has supported the setting up of a working party to discuss ways of assessing and improving the productivity of all Train Drivers.

A further Tribunal proposal that a Business Performance Payments scheme be introduced is still under discussion between the British Railways Board and the three Railwaymen's unions - the National Union of Railwaymen, the Transport Salaried Staffs' Association, both ITF affiliates, and the ASLE&F. This scheme would provide for an identifiable and separate bonus, payable to all rail staff, calculated by reference to a performance index, based on passenger miles plus freight tonne-miles divided by man-hours worked. The amount of the bonus would reflect the percentage change in performance compared with the corresponding period in a preceding year.

#### Seafarers accept pay offer

A pay offer of 8.75%, to come into effect from 2 January 1979, made by the General Council of British Shipping has been accepted by the National Union of Seamen. The offer produces an AB's basic rate of pay for a 40 hour week of £45.64½. The offer was being examined by the Department of Employment to see whether it exceeded the Government's non-statutory pay guidelines. However, the shipping industry was confident that it would not be rejected as the pay guidelines allow for increases in excess of 5% for low-paid workers.

SPAIN

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#### Pay increases for Basque Road Haulage Workers

A threatened indefinite strike by members of the ITF-affiliated Union of Basque Workers (ELA-STV) in the road haulage industry in the Spanish province of Vizcaya was called off when the employers made an acceptable offer on 18 November, 2 days before the strike was due to start. The settlement negotiated provides for an average 24% increase in basic pay, two wage adjustments in 1979 to compensate for increases in the cost of living, three additional payments of one month's basic pay per year, 30 days annual leave, loss-of-licence insurance and severance payments for workers leaving the industry voluntarily between the ages of 60 and 64.

Examples of the new basic rates of pay are: Driver-Mechanic, long haul - Ptas. 31,046 per month; Vehicle Loader - Ptas. 26,713 per month.



SWITZERLAND

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Municipal Drivers call for longer holidays

A conference of the public transport section of the ITF-affiliated Swiss Public Service Workers' Union, held on 28 November, adopted a resolution calling for improved annual leave entitlements. The demand was prompted by evidence that the stress of modern traffic conditions was causing increasing damage to the health of bus and tram drivers in large towns. It was stated that ulcers, circulatory disorders, back trouble and insomnia had, in the case of drivers aged between 40 and 50, reached epidemic proportions. In fact, three-fifths of all drivers were forced to retire early for health reasons.

The Conference felt that the increasing stress could be mitigated by longer periods away from the job. Other Swiss public employees, working for Federal undertakings, had had their leave entitlements increased to: - 4 weeks for employees over the age of 30, from 1 January 1979, and for all employees, i.e. including those under 30, from 1 January 1981; 5 weeks on reaching the age of 50 from 1 January 1979; and 6 weeks for employees 60 and over from 1 January 1981. The municipal Drivers are pressing for leave parity with the Federal employees.

U.S.A.

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Important ruling on railroad picketing

A United States Federal Court's refusal to ban picketing of railway companies taking part in a strike-breaking mutual aid pact, although those companies' workers were not on strike, became the determining decision when the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear an appeal by the railway companies.

The ITF-affiliated Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks' strike against the Norfolk and Western Railway had ended on 29 September after the union started picketing 40 other railway companies which were subsidising the Norfolk and Western during the Clerks' strike. The Federal Court decided that the Norris-La Guardia Act prohibits the granting of an injunction to prevent picketing in such circumstances.

Supreme Court decision in favour of pregnant Airline Stewardesses

The United States Supreme Court refused to alter a decision of a lower court that United Airlines had violated New York State's sex discrimination legislation by forcing Stewardesses to take unpaid maternity leave as soon as they learn they are pregnant. The decision means that a Stewardess could remain at work for the first 20 weeks of pregnancy if her own doctor approves and for a further 8 weeks if the company doctor agrees.

Machinists' 3 year agreement with TWA

The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, an ITF affiliate, has negotiated a new 3 year agreement with Trans World Airways providing for pay increases and improved fringe benefits for the company's 14,000 mechanics and other ground staff.

Rates of pay are increased by 9.2% on 1 November 1978, 1.5% on 1 July 1979, 3.9% on 1 January 1980, 2% on 1 July 1980, 3.5% on 1 January 1981 and 5% on 1 July 1981. The agreement also provides for cost of living adjustments in September 1980 and 1981 of 1 cent on the hourly rates for each rise of three-tenths of a point in the consumer price index between December and August, with a maximum cost of living increase of 17 cents in 1980 and 18 cents in 1981.

A seventh week of annual leave is introduced for employees with 30 or more years service and 4 and 5 weeks leave come into effect after 10 and 17 years service respectively.

NEWS IN BRIEF

4,000 Qantas ground staff struck for 24 hours in Australia on December 5 in protest against the company's decision to appeal against pay increases of up to A\$25 per week awarded to the ground staff by arbitration.

China is the latest country to become a party to the 1963 Tokyo Convention dealing with prevention of aircraft hijacking. The Convention comes into force for China on 12 February 1979.

Denmark has recently approved a new law providing for equal treatment of men and women in employment. The law makes it illegal for employers to discriminate when engaging, posting or promoting staff and prescribes equal treatment in training, re-training and working conditions. Failure to abide by the law results in fines on the employer and any worker who is dismissed for demanding equal treatment or who in any way has his or her rights under the law infringed is entitled to compensation from the employer.

A London differential has been added to the severance payments scheme for British Dockers. The differential has been backdated to 24 November and could add £1,500 to the existing maximum payment of £7,000 for a docker with 20 years service. The severance scheme applies to Dockers over the age of 60 and all Lightermen who leave the industry voluntarily.

An 11 day national strike by Indian Dockers ended on 27 November following talks between the All India Port and Dock Workers' Federation and the Ministers of Transport and Labour. We hope to give details of the strike settlement in the January "Newsletter".

2,300 members of the Irish National Busmen's Union have voted for an indefinite strike from 2 January 1979 as a result of the state-owned transport undertaking CIE rejecting their claim for a £17.50 per week pay rise.

Dutch Seafarers have received a 2.73% cost of living increase, applicable from 1 November 1978, subject to a minimum increase of f 51.20 on deep sea ships, sea-going tugs and supply ships and of f 50.10 per month in the short sea trade.

A lightning strike by Amsterdam public employees completely shut down tram, bus and underground railway services on 7 December. The strike was one of a series by Dutch public employees in protest over the Government's proposals to curb pay increases.

A new law coming into force in Sweden on 1 January 1979 gives parents with children under 8 the right to a 6 hour working day; while parents with children under 18 months will have the right to full leave of absence. The law applies to both parents but there is no provision for compensation for any loss of income over and above existing legal entitlements.

PERSONALIA

Pekka Olvio, President of the Finnish Trade Union Centre and formerly President of the Railwaymen's Union, celebrated his 60th birthday on 24 November.

Jean Bauché, former Vice-President of the French Federation of Railway Supervisory Staff, died on 21 November.

Elgar H. Ottersen, former Radio Secretary and Education Secretary of the Norwegian Seamen's Union, celebrates his 70th birthday on 24 December.

Gunnar Karlsson, President of the Swedish Seamen's Union, celebrates his 50th birthday on 1 January 1979.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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|--|----------------------------------|
| Preparatory meeting for 11th Session IMCO Sub-committee Standards of Training and Watchkeeping | - London, 18-19 January 1979     |
| Ground Staff Committee   | - London, 23-25 January 1979     |
| Sub-committee on Transport Policy  | - Luxembourg, 29-30 January 1979 |
| Railwaymen's Section Conference  | - London, 3-4 April 1979         |
| Road Transport Workers' Section Conference   | - Stuttgart, 24-26 April 1979    |
| Civil Aviation Section Conference  | - Paris, 28-31 April 1979.       |

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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LATE ITEM

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Dutch Unions' support for striking F-o-C crew upheld by Amsterdam Court

The 23,000 ton Singapore-flag TROPWIND, American-owned through Tropwood A.G. of Switzerland and operated by Navicom Inc. of Milwaukee, U.S.A., arrived in Amsterdam on 20 October to load a cargo of fertilizer for Pakistan under a Dutch government aid programme. The majority of the crew were Philippine nationals, engaged on crewing agency contracts providing an AB with about \$300 gross per month, overtime and leave pay included. Faced with the owners' refusal to negotiate and sign an ITF agreement, the crew took strike action on 7 November, supported by Dutch Seafarers' and Dockers' unions. Owners then went to court, seeking the eviction of the crew from the ship and claiming that the strike was not justified, proper procedures had not been followed and insufficient notice had been given. Owners also sought orders against the ITF and the Dutch unions forbidding further support of the striking crew or action against the ship.

The Amsterdam District Court refused the owners' claims, finding that the strike was not unreasonable; that 2 days notice of strike action was not irresponsible as the ITF campaign was well known in shipping circles; that the strike was the only way of persuading the owners to negotiate; and that the strike was not a sit-in - the crew were domiciled on the TROPWIND and their continued presence on board was an integral part of the strike. The Court refused to order the trade unions to cease solidarity action.

The owners gave notice of appeal against the District Court's rejection of their case. The appeal has been set for 5 January. In view of the fact that the owners have told the crew that the TROPWIND has been sold to "a first class Greek company", the crew, with the assistance of ITF Inspector Johan Altena, have further protected their interests by arresting the ship for \$40,000 balance of wages, repatriation, etc. The sale has not been confirmed. If it is, Tropwood's appeal is automatically void.

One of the typical and unsavoury aspects of this case is the pressure the Philippine government has been putting on the crew via its Ambassador in Bonn and its Labour Attaché in London. It seems that the Philippine government is not content with prohibiting strikes at home and wants to keep Philippine workers in the grip of martial law throughout the world.

Oldendorff ships in default again

Union actions have again forced the Lübeck-based German ship owner Egon Oldendorff to comply with the provisions of the ITF Collective Agreement on two of his flag of convenience ships. In the middle of December, for the second time in five months, the Narvik members of the Norwegian Transport Workers' Union came to the assistance of the crew of the Singapore registered LUDOLF OLDENDORFF and obtained large arrears of underpaid wages. In the port of London, just before Christmas, members of the British Transport and General Workers' Union gave full support to the crew of the Panamanian flag MARIA OLDENDORFF and assisted the British Seamen's Union's newly appointed ITF Inspector, John Nelson, to recover approximately US\$ 88,000. Both ships are believed to be working under charters which require the crew to be covered by ITF agreements. Affiliates are requested to keep a look out for other "Oldendorff" ships covered by ITF agreements - 15 of the 30 or so f-o-c ships operated by the Company - and check them for breaches of the ITF agreement.