

In case of reproduction, please mention source (ITF) · En cas de reproduction, veuillez mentionner la source (ITF) · Nachdruck bei Quellenangabe gestattet (ITF) · Var god ange källan vid eftertryck (ITF)

No. 5

May 1979

IN THIS ISSUE

Page

News and Views from the ITF

ITF Road Transport Workers' Section Conference held in Stuttgart 56

Transport

German union demands statutory right to compensation for short-time working for seafarers 57

Nautical Review calls for action on wholly-preventable accidents 57

Mandatory retirement of US commercial airline pilots at 60 outdated, union argues 57

Social and Industrial News

Danish ships' engineers win improved pay rates 58

British rail unions accept revised pay offer 58

Busmen's groups accept pay deals (Great Britain) 59

British Caledonian flight engineers' strike averted 59

Improvements for ground staff workers with British airlines 59

Icelandic merchant marine officers strike over pay 60

Railwaymen march on Indian parliament to press pay demands 60

Annual "shunto" gets under way (Japan) 60

New Zealand ships' engineers stage token protest stoppage 60

Spanish railway contract workers postpone strike action 61

US tug crew strike hits port of New York 61

United Airlines strike may end soon 61

US Machinists sign new Conrail pact 62

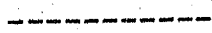
Page

News in Brief

62

Personalia

63



NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

INTERNATIONAL

ITF Road Transport Workers' Section Conference held in Stuttgart

A full Conference of the ITF Road Transport Workers' Section was held in Stuttgart on 24-26 April 1979, presided over by Hans Ericson, Section Chairman. The German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV) acted as hosts to the meeting.

With regard to next month's meeting of the International Labour Conference, which would be drafting the final text of the new Convention and supporting Recommendation on Hours of Work and Rest Periods in Road Transport, the delegates were agreed that, while it was essential that the workers' side be allowed a degree of flexibility in the position they adopted, they should nonetheless consider themselves bound by the basic principles laid down at the 1976 Vienna Section Conference. It was further agreed that affiliated unions should maintain their contacts with individual governments, especially member governments of the Community, with the aim of obtaining their support for the workers' viewpoint in Geneva.

The Conference was unanimously of the opinion that employment standards in international road transport were unacceptably low, largely because of cut-throat competition between individual firms in the industry, and that this was also endangering road safety. Delegates felt that a meeting of Section Chairmen should be held as soon as possible with a view to ameliorating the position and that the Section's Steering Committee, at its meeting in the spring of next year, should put forward concrete proposals for consideration by the ITF's 1980 Miami Congress.

Detailed discussions were held on the question of insurance cover for drivers engaged in international road transport and it was strongly suggested that a vigorous effort should be made to establish a Social Security Convention for Road Transport, on the lines of the Convention already reached for seafarers.

Assistant General Secretary Johann Hauf, who has special responsibility for the Section, reported on the meeting of inland transport unions held in Nuremberg last year on the implications for transport workers in the West of the construction of the Rhine/Main/Danube canal, which -- by the mid-1980s -- would provide Eastern bloc shippers with easy access to Western markets. The delegates suggested that a further meeting of this type would be most useful and that the effects on the entire inland transport industry of the growing use of transport on own account should form the main topic under discussion on this occasion.

TRANSPORT

GERMANY

=====

Union demands statutory right to compensation for short-time working for seafarers

The ITF-affiliated German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV) has written to the Minister for Employment and Social Services demanding that seafarers, like land-based workers, should have the statutory right to compensatory payments for short-time working. The letter points out that it is unjust that the latest series of amendments to current legislation should continue to deny seafarers the opportunity to claim this benefit, although they are required to make the same contributions to the fund as other workers. It is manifestly discriminatory, the union claims, that a seafarer whose ship is ice-bound or a fisherman unable to continue fishing because fishing quotas have been exhausted should have no entitlement to the appropriate monetary compensation.

GREAT BRITAIN

=====

Nautical Review calls for action on wholly-preventable accidents at sea

In a recent number of Nautical Review^{x)}, attention is drawn to the sad fact that almost three hundred professional seamen lost their lives in two consecutive months (December 1978 and January 1979) and that many of these deaths were the consequence of what can only be regarded as wholly-preventable incidents resulting from the neglect of safe operating procedures -- a tanker unloading without the use of inert gas injection or the shifting of badly-stowed cargo in poor weather conditions. The article advocates urgent preventive action by unions, flag states and IMCO and stresses the importance of flag states initiating immediate investigations into such accidents and ensuring that their findings are widely disseminated without delay to prevent the recreation of circumstances leading to disaster.

x) published by Lloyd's of London

UNITED STATES

=====

Mandatory retirement of commercial airline pilots at 60 outdated, union argues

The US Air Line Pilots' Association has argued before a Select Committee of the House of Representatives that, as experience is the single most important factor in safe flying, the Federal Aviation Administration regulation calling for the mandatory retirement of commercial airline pilots at age 60 is now obsolete and irrelevant.

The association said that it welcomed the government panel's willingness to investigate the problems of the compulsory early retirement, often of very active, healthy men in the airline industry.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

DENMARK

=====

Ships' engineers win Improved pay rates

Improved rates of pay, effective 1 March 1979, have been successfully negotiated by the ITF-affiliated Danish Ships' Engineers' Union. The following new monthly rates (basic pay plus cost-of-living allowance) now apply: donkeyman and pumpman: 6,298.79; stoker and motorman: 5,963.79. Overtime rates (per half-hour) on weekdays are 22.76 kr for donkeymen and pumpmen and 21.55 kr for stokers and motormen. The corresponding rates for overtime performed on Sundays and Public Holidays are 29.13 kr. and 27.58 kr.

The seniority bonus for motormen and higher grades now ranges from 200 kr per month after one year's service to a maximum of 565 kr. after 12 years. The allowance for service on tankers has also been improved and goes from 384.45 kr per month to 457.90 kr for donkeymen and from 340.90 to 414.35 kr for stokers and motormen.

The special allowance paid to "company" employees is now 235 kr, and seniority pay for this group is 325 kr after one year rising to a maximum of 700 kr after ten years.

GREAT BRITAIN

=====

Rail unions accept revised pay offer

The three British rail unions- the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, the National Union of Railwaymen and the Transport Salaried Staffs' Association - last month agreed to accept British Rail's revised pay offer^{x)} of increases averaging between twelve and thirteen per cent. The package is made up of a 9.3% increase on basic rates plus full consolidation of the national business productivity payment (currently approximately £2 per week) and, for train drivers, of the 5 per cent award made by the National Rail Staffs Tribunal in March. However, the Board has said that it is prepared to consolidate only £2 of the £6 phase one supplement into basic rates, a stance which is likely to result in a request for arbitration on this issue. To maintain differentials, it has also been agreed that the top three grades of signalmen and the two top grades of signals and telecommunications technicians should receive an extra £2.50 per week on basic rates.

x) see ITF Newsletter No. 2, 1979, page 24 for further details

London weighting for staff in the metropolitan area has also been improved, and the adult rate will now come into operation at age 18 (previously 21). The annual pay settlement date for all rail staff is 23 April.

Busmen's groups accept pay deals

A pay settlement was reached on 19 April for the last major group of Britain's bus workers when London Transport's 20,000 bus staff agreed to accept increases of 9.6% on basic pay, higher London weighting and a productivity bonus for drivers of one-man-operated buses. The package, worth up to fourteen per cent, gives the following new basic rates: drivers: £65.53; conductors: £63.91; one-man operators: £75.

Previously 70,000 drivers, conductors and maintenance staff employed by the National Bus Company^{x)} had accepted an improved 9.9 per cent offer, while settlements of between seven and nine per cent were reached for employees of three Passenger Transport Executives in the major conurbations. Municipal busmen have also won a 6 per cent basic pay rise, boosted by the consolidation of phase 1 and 2 pay supplements (£6 plus five per cent) of the previous government pay policy into basic rates. However, the municipal employers have refused to apply the six per cent to the annual bonus and this has caused the national busmen's secretary of the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union to announce that the union would be withdrawing from the national agreement for this group.

^{x)} see also Newsletter No. 3, 1979, page 39

British Caledonian flight engineers' strike averted

British Caledonian flight engineers, who are organized in the ITF-affiliated Merchant Navy and Airline Officers' Association, cancelled a strike scheduled for 26 and 27 April shortly before the deadline following further talks with the management leading to an improved pay offer. The men have accepted a 9.2 per cent increase on basic rates backdated to 1 January 1979. BCal has also undertaken to effect major improvements in the f/e pay scale to restore lost differentials.

Improvements for ground staff workers with British airlines

ITF aviation unions^{x)} representing ground staff in companies covered by the National Joint Council for Civil Air Transport have concluded pay agreements for 1979 with the following airlines:

British Airways: productivity deal giving 14 per cent additional new money on wages and salaries plus improved shift pay;

British Caledonian Airways: 9½ per cent increase in pay and salaries and higher shift premiums;

^{x)} the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs and the Transport and General Workers' Union

British Island Airways: 10 per cent on all wages and salaries plus supplementary payments.

ICELAND

=====

Merchant marine officers strike over pay

Masters and officers of the Icelandic merchant marine, members of the ITF-affiliated Icelandic Seamen's Union, went on strike on 25 April in furtherance of a pay dispute, tying up all sixty national-flag vessels in the island's ports.

INDIA

=====

Railwaymen march on Indian parliament to press pay demands

Thousands of Indian railwaymen held a mass rally -- organized by the ITF-affiliated All-India Railwaymen's Federation -- in front of the parliament building in New Delhi, demanding immediate implementation of the improved pay and conditions for which they have been fighting ever since the 1974 railwaymen's strike. Resentment has been building up for two years now among the country's one and a half million railway workers over the Janata government's unwillingness to accede to their demands, despite the fact that two former AIRF leaders now hold key ministerial posts.

JAPAN

=====

Annual "shunto" gets under way

Japan was hit by a series of strikes at the end of last month as workers demanding higher pay participated in the national spring offensive or "shunto". Transport workers involved included employees of the state-owned Japan Railways Corporation, as well as private railway workers and cabin and cockpit crews and ground service workers of three Japanese airlines. Wage offers have been accepted by both groups of railway workers, but it is not yet known whether the airline staffs have obtained satisfaction of their pay grievances.

NEW ZEALAND

=====

Ships' engineers stage token protest stoppage

Ships' engineers belonging to the ITF-affiliated New Zealand Institute of Marine and Power Engineers staged a 24-hour token stoppage on 3 April, halting all shipping, including the Inter-Island road-rail ferries, after the government rescinded pay increases agreed with New Zealand Railways and asked a committee of inquiry to conduct an investigation into pay relativities between the four unions involved in the Cook Strait ferry service.

SPAIN

=====

Railway contract workers postpone strike action

Contract workers with the Spanish National Railways RENFE have decided to postpone a strike scheduled for 7-12 May after reaching a verbal agreement with twenty rail sub-contractors on the content of their first-ever collective contract. This guarantees the 6,000 men, who are employed to clean passenger trains and load and unload goods waggons, a minimum monthly salary of 28,000 pesetas (30,000 pesetas in Madrid and Barcelona) and offers improved social benefits. The employers have also agreed to recognize certain basic trade union rights.

The contract workers had already staged a 24-hour strike on 5 March, followed by a two-day stoppage one week later, in support of their contract demands. If the present contract is confirmed, the current strike threat will, of course, be lifted.

UNITED STATES

=====

Tug crew strike hits port of New York

Commercial tug crews belonging to Local 333 of the United Marine Division of the ITF-affiliated International Longshoremen's Association have been on strike against the New York Towing and Transportation Employers' Association since 1 April -- their contract renewal date -- following the breakdown of negotiations. The two major areas of difficulty are the negotiation of improved contract provisions, notably higher rates of pay, on which the employers and the union are still wide apart, and the key question of whether the local should be allowed to extend its representation over coastwise shipping operations (now limited to the New York area) from Maine to Virginia. Talks have been held on a daily basis with the assistance of federal mediators and, as they seem to have made little headway, two commissions have been appointed to look at the specific problems mentioned above.

The strike has halted the use of tugs for docking and undocking of ocean shipping and the movement of commercial oil barges.

United Airlines strike may end soon

The strike against United Airlines^{x)} by members of the ITF-affiliated International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, which has been continuing since 1 April, may soon be over if a tentative settlement reached with the airline on 19 May by union negotiators proves acceptable to IAM's rank and file members.

x) see ITF Newsletter No. 4, 1979, page 51 for earlier details

Machinists sign new Conrail pact

The ITF-affiliated International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers has approved a new 39-month contract for its 4,500 members employed by Conrail, which broadly follows the lines of the pact signed by another US affiliate, the Brotherhood of Railway, Airline and Steamship Clerks, reported in the last issue of the Newsletter (page 51).

NEWS IN BRIEF

A full report on the ILO Meeting of Experts on Air Traffic Controllers, which was held in Geneva from 8 - 16 May 1979, and at which the ITF was fully represented, will be carried in the June Issue of the ITF Newsletter.

The ITF has recently appointed a new Ship Inspector Gerry McCullough to assist Tom McGrath of the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway, Transport and General Workers in the port of Vancouver. Brother McCullough has visited a number of ships anchored in Vancouver in the six weeks from 1 April and has successfully obtained backpay settlements in respect of two Japanese-flag crew-of-convenience vessels the MAYA PIONEER and the PACIFIC ARROW. Meanwhile, the two CBRT&GW officials have warned the masters of those vessels they visited during this period which were not covered by an ITF agreement that they should put their affairs in order before returning to Vancouver or face possible difficulties.

The Canadian division of the ITF-affiliated United Transportation Union and Canadian Pacific Rail have jointly asked the federal labour department to appoint a special commissioner to look at three contentious items in a new contract for the railway's 7,000 drivers, guards and yardmen.

Non-operating staff on Canada's railways have now ratified the new three-year contract reached earlier this year (see ITF Newsletter No. 3, 1979, page 37).

Air France ground staff workers staged a four-hour strike on 10 May.

Great Britain: Liverpool dockers have accepted a fourteen per cent pay deal, raising the basic weekly rate to £66.50 from 28 April. Bonus rates, holiday pay and skill differentials have also been improved as part of the package.

Air New Zealand ground engineers struck briefly earlier this month to express their dissatisfaction at the tax paid on their travel allowance.

Dockers in Bordeaux (France) and Lisbon (Portugal), in solidarity with their Spanish colleagues in the port of Barcelona, have refused to offload from the MV Covadonga an American-built generator destined for a Spanish nuclear power plant at Lemoniz near Bilbao.

Spanish airline pilots employed by Iberia are currently working to rule to press their claim for shorter working hours.

The ITF extends its congratulations to the Swiss Transport and Commercial Workers' Union (VHTL), which celebrates its 75th anniversary this year.

PERSONALIA

Ole Alexandersen has been elected vice-president of the Norwegian Navigating Officers' Association.

René Hers and Roger Demoyer have been elected federal president and general secretary respectively of the French Federation of Railway Technical and Supervisory Personnel (FMC).

Alex Kitson has been appointed deputy general secretary-designate of the British Transport and General Workers' Union. Brother Kitson is a member of the Committee of the ITF Road Transport Workers' Section and of its Steering Committee. He will succeed Harry Urwin, who retires from the post in February 1980.

A farewell dinner was held for Philipp Seibert on 10 May 1979 to mark his retirement as president of the Brussels Committee, which he has headed for the past seventeen years and built up into a strong body representing transport workers' unions in the European Economic Community. Tributes were paid to Brother Seibert for the valuable contribution he had made to European unity in the workers' movement and the former German railwaymen's leader also gave a valedictory address.

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

-----ooo0ooo-----