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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

INTERNATIONAL

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ITF attends World Tourism Conference in Manila

For the first time ever, the ITF was represented at the World Tourism Conference held in Manila in October. M.S. Hoda, Travel Bureau Section Secretary, attended the meeting, together with Lars Hellman, Section Chairman and K. Fukudome, its Vice-Chairman. Also present were four representatives from the Japan Federation of Travel and Air Cargo Agency Workers' Unions (KANCO-ROREN). The WTO Conference of over 700 delegates and advisers from more than 100 countries and organizations provided an important forum for presenting the ITF's views on the many problems facing workers in the travel trade and our suggestions for developing a career structure for staff in a well-regulated industry. In this connection, Lars Hellman pointed out that the ITF was advocating compulsory registration of agencies, with the provision of financial guarantees as a condition of operation in an effort to put the industry on a sound footing and to provide protection for employees and customers alike. The ITF, he said, was also unhappy at the lack of career consciousness among travel trade employees and thought that this could best be overcome by introducing training facilities and offering staff a greater degree of job security and improved social status. The WTO was also asked by Hellman to consider lending its authority to the introduction of some kind of internationally approved licence for certain categories of travel trade employees. The possession of a licence could then be made a prerequisite for employment in a travel establishment.

International Committee on Seafarers' Welfare holds inaugural meeting

The inaugural meeting of the International Committee on Seafarers' Welfare - made up of representatives of governmental and national seamen's welfare services, shipowner and seafarer organisations as well as voluntary organisations active in the field of seafarers' welfare - was convened on 11 October 1980 in Geneva under the chairmanship of ITF Assistant General Secretary A. Selander.

The purposes of the Committee - which is a voluntary, non-profit making organisation - are:

- to identify any need for welfare facilities and programmes for seafarers visiting ports other than those in their own countries (in accordance with ILO recommendations and with particular reference to countries where welfare facilities do not exist);

- to bring together appropriate interests to fulfil the needs identified and co-ordinate their action;
- to make recommendations concerning the means of financing the welfare needs identified;
- to establish and maintain close working relationships within the ILO with regard to its activities concerning seafarers' welfare.

The Committee elected a Presidium consisting of representatives of governmental seamen's welfare services, ITF, ISF, ICMA and USS. The Committee's Chairman is L. Ridder-Nielsen of the Norwegian Government Seamen's Service and the ILO has been asked to provide the Committee's Secretariat. K. Mols Sørensen, ITF Seafarers' Section Chairman, was elected a Vice-Chairman of the Committee.

The establishment of the Committee is the result of several years' work by the participating organisations - under ITF auspices - to achieve co-ordination and improvement of welfare services to seafarers. It is intended that, eventually, the Committee should form part of the ILO's activities in the field of seafarers' welfare and that consideration should be given to this matter at the time of the next Maritime Session of the ILO. Among the issues which the Presidium will look into shortly are the plight of seafarers abandoned in foreign ports and port fee systems.

ITF road and rail committees meet jointly in Copenhagen

A joint meeting of the Sub-Committee on Transport Policy of the ITF Railwaymen's Section and the Steering Committee of the Road Transport Workers' Section took place on 30 and 31 October in Copenhagen. The meeting discussed a joint paper on short-distance passenger transport. Kurt Haussig (OeTV, Germany) took the chair.

The two committees also dealt with the proposed rerouteing of the Basle - Luxembourg - Amsterdam rail link, which would seriously affect commuter transport in Luxembourg. The participants expressed their solidarity with their Luxembourg colleagues and offered them international assistance.

TRANSPORT

INTERNATIONAL
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SOLAS Protocol enters into force next May

The 1978 Protocol to the Safety of Life at Sea Convention will come into force next May, six months after

16 governments representing 50.65% of the world fleet formally deposited their signatories. The Protocol includes requirements relating to the fitting on tankers of inert gas systems, duplicated steering and independent radar. Inspection and certification procedures will also be tightened up under the Protocol.

UNITED STATES

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Air travellers would prefer 3 man flight deck crew

An opinion survey conducted on behalf of the ITF-affiliated Flight Engineers' International Association among regular air travellers in the U.S.A. showed a clear preference for manning by a three man flight deck crew. 72% of travellers surveyed thought that, despite the back-up systems for aircraft functions provided by the new technology, human back-up was still needed. 75% felt that the new technology would be insufficient if one of a two-man crew became incapacitated. Nearly three quarters of the respondents to the survey said they thought the cost of the third crew member was worth the expense to the passenger (the extra cost of a three-man crew over a two-man crew is calculated to add on average only \$2 to the price of an airline ticket in the U.S.A.).

Introducing the results of the survey at a press conference, Bill Gill, FEIA President and Chairman of the ITF Civil Aviation Section, said that the union was concerned over the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration's refusal to let professional flight personnel or the public participate in the certification process of new aircraft. The pilots' union, ALPA, criticised the FAA's programme of safety testing, accusing the FAA of taking the manufacturer's word on many safety questions. The FAA had obtained little or no valid, scientifically tested evidence on matters such as the increased physical and mental workload on crews in the cockpits of the high technology aircraft. The FEIA survey had shown that 89% of air travellers believed flight engineers and pilots should have a say in the certification of aircraft by the FAA.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

GERMANY

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Higher pay for deep-sea fishermen

The ITF-affiliated German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV) has negotiated new pay agreements, effective 1 June 1980, for crew members and skippers in the deep-sea fishing fleet.

On factory ships, the basic rate and journey pay go up by 11.3 per cent and production bonuses for skipjack and halibut are brought into line with those for cod. On fresh fish vessels, the basic rate and journey pay are raised by 12.3 per cent, with a 10 per cent improvement in guaranteed pay. Other monetary payments, notably for overtime working, have been raised by 6.8 per cent.

GREAT BRITAIN

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Action over Cunard flagging-out plans

Rejecting proposals put forward by the Cunard Steamship Company to transfer two cruise ships - the CUNARD COUNTESS and the CUNARD PRINCESS - from the British to the Bahamian flag-of-convenience registry and to replace British ratings and catering staff by cheaper seamen, the ITF-affiliated National Union of Seamen called a 24 hour strike of its members on all British ships in British ports on 3 November. This action was in addition to work stoppages already taking place on Cunard ships.

The NUS action was called off after an agreement between the union and Cunard on 6 November, the main terms of which were that:

- The Cunard Countess would remain under the British flag and be manned by NUS members and Cunard would strive to continue to keep the Queen Elizabeth 2 under the British flag.
- The Cunard Princess would be operated under the Bahamian flag.
- Cunard would retain all former crew members of the Cunard Princess on full pay until 2 April 1981 unless offered comparable employment on the Cunard Countess or the QE2. Any crew remaining unemployed would receive a severance payment of £100 per year of service with the company.

INDIA

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Air India ground staff strike over non-payment of bonus

Members of the ITF-affiliated Air India Employees' Guild have been on strike since 27 October following the failure of the airline to honour a three-year agreement on the payment of a productivity-linked bonus for the operating year 1979/80. The Guild informs us that the bonus promised was of 20%, as in the previous year, whereas the company is now offering only the minimum bonus payment of 8.33%.

After the strike action had begun, Air India suspended 25 Guild members and also withdrew its recognition of the union. In response to an appeal for international support from the

Guild, the ITF asked all aviation affiliates to send cables protesting at the actions of management to the Indian Minister of Civil Aviation and Tourism. At a later stage, it also contacted all affiliates in countries where the airline has major stops, requesting them to advise local Air India management that they were aware of the strike and the measures of victimization taken by the company in India, pointing out that the situation could have international repercussions and urging a speedy and just settlement of the dispute.

It is understood from the Guild that, although the strike is still continuing on a very solid basis, a first meeting aimed at a settlement has been held between the Guild's President and the Minister. Although this was inconclusive, further meetings are scheduled.

NORWAY

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Mobile drilling workers awarded 23 per cent rise

North Sea oil mobile drilling rig workers have been awarded a 23 per cent increase by the voluntary arbitration panel set up following a five-week strike in the summer. A number of other improvements have also been achieved, notably in respect of extra payments for irregular crew changes (16 kr per hour), work with oil-based sludge (80 kr shift) and overtime compensation for safety drills performed less than half an hour after end of shift. Changes have also been agreed in certain other areas, including the introduction of new grades, extra increases to those in the lower grades, an increase in the tax-free victualling allowance to 511 Kr. per month, improved insurance provisions.

Negotiations for Seafarers in the foreign trade

The ITF-affiliated Norwegian Mates' Association and Norwegian Engineers' Union have reached agreement with the Shipowners' Association for improved conditions of service for their members working on ships in the foreign trade, to take effect from 1 November 1980. The agreements provide for overall improvements adding up to approximately 18%, including a 15% increase on rates of pay.

The Norwegian Seamen's Union, also an ITF affiliate, rejected the shipowners' 10.5% offer and called for industrial action in support of its claim for a 32% improvement for its members. However, industrial action was suspended while mediation took place.

Pay increases in the coastal trade

Seafarers in the coastal trade represented by the Norwegian Seamen's Union have received a Kr. 690 per month pay increase, effective from 1 October. The increase represents the "guarantee

supplement" agreed in the Spring in order to raise the union's members' pay to the level of 85% of the average industrial wage. With the supplement, this year's increase totals Kr. 1,495 per month.

UNITED STATES
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J.P. Stevens dispute ends after 17 years

One of the most protracted disputes in American labour history has been brought to a successful conclusion. The textile giant J.P. Stevens has finally agreed that it will concede the ten per cent of its hourly-paid employees who voted for representation by the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers' Union normal bargaining rights. For 17 years, the ACTWU has been fighting for the recognition which the company refused to concede despite more than 20 rulings by the Government's National Labour Relations Board in favour of the union.

The agreement provides for some \$3 million in back pay to employees excluded from company wage increases over the last two years as punishment for their participation in the campaign. A four-year boycott of Stevens' products led by the AFL-CIO was terminated.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Following a series of incidents involving violent passengers, cabin staff working for the Australian airline Qantas went on strike at the end of last month to demand the introduction of self-defence training. Qantas is also considering terminating duty-free drink sales on board its aircraft.

A four hour strike by Belgian pilots and flight engineers caused the cancellation of Sabena flights on 23 October. The action was caused by the company's plans to operate A310 aircraft with only a two-man flight deck crew. Action by Dutch pilots and flight engineers over the same issue was called off when KLM agreed to set up a joint evaluation committee to study the position.

As part of its continuing attempts to improve the level of union organization among travel agency staff, the Brotherhood of Railway, Airline and Steamship Clerks in Canada has recently successfully organized Wardair Canada Ltd. and Globus Gateway Tours of Toronto.

France: employees of the Paris public transport authority (the RATP) received a 3.25 per cent cost-of-living increase on 1 October, bringing the total increase so far this year to 10.75 per cent.

An offer by the President of Ghana of immediate reinstatement afloat to officers dismissed by the Black Star Line has been rejected by the officers who are insisting that Philippine officers engaged to work in their place should be dismissed before they return to work.

Unions organizing ratings and officers in the merchant navy have rejected a 9.78 per cent pay offer made by the General Council of British Shipping.

Greek workers staged a 24-hour general strike on 10 November to press for pay increases commensurate with the current rate of inflation of 25 per cent. All public transport was halted by the strike and all domestic and most international flights were suspended.

Four major port and dock workers' federations in India have served joint notice on their employers of indefinite strike action from November 17 in all major ports following the breakdown of discussions between employers and workers.

Alitalia pilots staged a 24-hour strike on 29 October in support of demands for higher pay. All domestic and international services operated by the Italian carrier were grounded for the duration of the dispute.

A six-day strike by Portuguese train drivers ended on 13 October when the men's union and the management of the state-owned railways agreed to set up a joint commission to consider the drivers' demands. These included the reinstatement of two dismissed colleagues and the introduction of productivity bonuses.

OBITUARIES

Khody Kolah, General Secretary of the Maritime Union of India since 1975, died on 2 November. Brother Kolah suffered a severe heart attack after his return from the ITF Congress in Miami. Brother Kolah took a keen interest in Asian and international affairs, representing his union at many ITF, ILO and IMCO meetings. He was a member of the ITF mission which visited several Asian countries at the end of 1979 and also acted as Vice-Chairman of the ITF Asian Seafarers' Conference held in Hong Kong in March this year.

Børge Aanaes, President of the Danish Railwaymen's Union since 1969, died on 9 November, aged 63. Brother Aanaes was a member of the ITF Railwaymen's Section Committee.

PERSONALIA

General Secretary Harold Lewis conveyed warmest 80th birthday congratulations to Vice-President Teddy Gleason on behalf of his many good friends in the ITF, particularly those on the Executive Board and in the Dockers' Section.

Henrik Aasarød was elected President of the Scandinavian Transport Workers' Federation at its ordinary congress held in Copenhagen last month. Brother Aasarød is President of the Norwegian Seamen's Union and a member of the ITF Executive Board.

Erik Balle has been appointed secretary for public sector workers of the Danish Trade Union Confederation (LO) in succession to Svend Bache Vognbjerg, whose death was reported in our September issue.

Kare Hansen was elected President of the Norwegian Commercial Workers' Union (HK) at the union's recent Congress. Sidsel Bauck was elected the HK's Vice-President.

Christy Kirwan, national group secretary of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, has been appointed Chairman of the Dublin Port and Docks Board. Brother Kirwan is a member of the Section Committees of the ITF's Railwaymen's, Road Transport Workers' and Dockers' Sections.

E.G. Thompson has resigned from the General Secretaryship of the New Zealand Waterside Workers' Federation. Brother Thompson will continue to work for the union in an advisory capacity as Administration Assistant to the Secretary. Brother Thompson serves on the Committee of the ITF Dockers' Section and is also his country's representative on the Fair Practices Committee. He is succeeded in his union post by Sam Jennings.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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Fair Practices Committee	- London 16-17 December 1980
European and N. American Civil Aviation affiliates	- London 13-15 January 1981
ITF Radio Officer meeting	- London 14-15 January 1981
ITF preparatory meeting on Seafarers Training and Qualifications	- London 16 January 1981
Flight Deck Technical Committee	- London 10 February 1981
Road Transport Section Steering Committee	- Zurich 18-19 February 1981.

STOP PRESS

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Seafarers and shipowners battle over manning and flags of convenience at ILO Joint Maritime Commission

Manning and flags of convenience turned out to be the real sticking-points of the 23rd session of ILO's Joint Maritime Commission which was held in Geneva from 16 until 24 October this year. The meeting was attended by thirty-six shipowner representatives and forty-two seafarer representatives from every corner of the world - including the ITF Seafarers' Section Chairman, K. Mols Sørensen, Vice Chairman, S. Wall and ITF Assistant General Secretary, A. Selander. The main items of business were: social security and employment conditions of seafarers serving in flag of convenience ships; employment conditions of other non-domiciled seafarers; and revision of the international minimum basic wage for able seamen.

The meeting got off to a bad start when the representative of the International Labour Office announced tentative plans for ILO maritime meetings which included a proposal that the next Maritime Session of the International Labour Conference should be held in 1986 - far too late for the seafarers' liking as they had previously been led to believe that the latest date for such a session would be some time during 1982; any later date would increase the interval between such sessions. Such a delay was unacceptable in view of the fact that shipping industry was continually undergoing technical changes which were increasing the stresses in shipboard occupations.

On the subject of flags of convenience the shipowners accepted that there were some problems in connection with the employment of seafarers in flag of convenience ships but argued that these problems were common to all itinerant workers, including all seafarers, because most social security legislation rested on the principle of territoriality. Whilst they voiced strong support for ILO Convention No. 147 (Minimum Standards in Merchant Ships) as a panacea for all f-o-c problems, they were unequivocally opposed to the use of "ILO inspectors" for the purpose of eliciting information concerning employment standards obtaining in f-o-c ships in the absence of such information from phoney registries.

Understandably the seafarers took issue with the shipowners and did not consider that the ILO report contained sufficient information to prove that in general employment conditions on board f-o-c ships were good. They condemned Liberia for not having supplied any information whatsoever - a remarkable fact considering that approximately 100,000 seafarers find employment in the Liberian fleet! The seafarers agreed with the shipowners on the need for further ratifications by governments of ILO Convention 147 in order to bring it into force but fired a broadside over the shipowners' refusal to accept a physical survey of f-o-c ships by the ILO.

The seafarers were heartened by a statement by the representative of UNCTAD to the effect that a government's capability of applying proper standards depended on whether that government had a genuine economic link with the vessels under its flag and that as no such link existed in the case of open registry ships their flag countries were incapable of applying international conventions. The shipowners - taken aback by the UNCTAD statement - in response to a draft resolution by the seafarers (requesting measures designed to ensure immediate application of the provisions of ILO Convention 147, strengthening of the governments' inspector network, more complete information on conditions in f-o-c ships and appointment of "ILO inspectors" to carry out a physical survey of ships not covered by collective agreements and ships from countries withholding information on employment conditions) tabled a half-baked resolution which did not recognise that the majority of f-o-c ships were substandard or permit even a discussion of the phasing out of open registries - the ultimate objective for the ITF campaign. The end result was deadlock between the parties and the seafarers' spokesman delivered a strongly worded statement concerning the growing practice of shipowners in traditional maritime countries transferring their existing ships to and registering their newly acquired ships in open-registry countries and demanded that the ILO Governing Body should make room in the agenda for the next ILO Preparatory Technical Maritime Conference for a discussion on the phasing out of open registries.

On the question of employment conditions of non-domiciled seafarers, the seafarers were amazed at the lack of opposition by the shipowners to their proposal that this item should be placed on the next Maritime Session agenda and at the end of the day there was agreement on a resolution which contained an appeal to governments for more complete information to be sent to the ILO, to ensure the application of ILO Convention No. 147 and Recommendation 155 (concerning the Improvement of Standards in Merchant Ships) and to request the ILO to undertake a survey of the extent to which the provisions of Convention No. 9 (concerning the Placing of Seamen) were observed throughout the world.

In connection with the discussion of the updating of the international minimum wage for able seamen the seafarers proposed the establishment of a permanent tripartite subcommittee on training and manning which could also review the bases used for setting the minimum A.B. wage and update the same at more frequent intervals. The ILO needed a suitable machinery to allow timely consultation and ratification by the competent ILO authorities of decisions taken by IMCO and the Joint IMCO/ILO Committee on Training regarding questions of common concern. Also the minimum rate fixed by ILO Recommendation No. 109 (concerning Wages, Hours of Work and Manning) had never been adequate and broader criteria were necessary in order to take full account of the increase in the productivity of seafarers over the years.

The seafarers' proposal was clearly designed to save the ILO time and expense but the shipowners, not unexpectedly, were fighting shy of the manning issue, opposing the concept of a tripartite subcommittee, and expressed their scepticism of the need for a minimum wage. In the end, however, all but one shipowner representative agreed to the recommendation by an ad hoc working group that the ILO minimum basic wage of able seamen should be increased from £78 and \$187 to £115 or \$276 (whichever figure is higher in relative terms).

The seafarers' side also expressed the desire to revise ILO Recommendation No. 109, to collect statistical data concerning loss of life of seafarers (by marine casualties and accidents and diseases), and to increase the membership of the JMC in view of the increase in the number of seafaring unions in ILO member states, especially in developing nations. The shipowners agreed to increase the number of regular members of each group from 18 to 20, provided that the number of deputy members was reduced by one on each side.

The subject-matters of the other two seafarer proposals were considered in conjunction with proposals concerning the convening and agendas of the forthcoming sessions of the JMC and the preparatory and full maritime conferences of the ILO on which the two sides had great difficulty in reaching agreement. Eventually it was possible to arrive at consensus on the following matters:

- that a meeting of the JMC should be convened in the near future to discuss the revision of ILO Recommendation No. 109 concerning wages, hours of work and manning; adoption of international maritime labour standards on medical care aboard ship; revision of ILO Convention No. 74 concerning the certification of able seamen; revision of ILO Convention No. 9 concerning the placing of seamen; a report from the Joint IMCO/ILO Committee on Training; and a report from the ILO on statistical data concerning the loss of life of seafarers;
- that the JMC meeting should be followed within one year by a Preparatory Technical Maritime Conference to discuss seafarers' welfare at sea and in port, employment conditions of seafarers serving in ships flying flags other than those of their own countries together with such items as the JMC may decide to add.

The outstanding issues, including the question of the phasing out of open registries, have been referred to the ILO Governing Body for decision. The JMC also adopted a resolution which noted a report by its Tripartite Subcommittee on Seafarers' Welfare and among other things urged the ILO Governing Body to take steps designed to achieve a greater uniformity and better level of treatment of seafarers in transit; to adopt improved international standards on the question of facilitation of customs formalities; and to adopt an instrument or instruments on seafarers' welfare at sea and in port, including the welfare of seafarers stranded in foreign ports.