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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

UNITED STATES

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ITF expresses concern at findings of Presidential Task Force on Crew Complement

The report of the United States Presidential Task Force on Crew Complement^{x)} published last month endorsed the certification of the DC9 Super 80 as a two-man aircraft and concluded that "as designed, the B-757, B-767 and A310 potentially can be operated safely by a crew of two".

The ITF has since issued a statement expressing surprise and concern at these basic conclusions, which it believes, while no doubt sincerely held, are misguided and based on a fundamental misconception of the safety issues involved in the crewing of current and new-generation aircraft. "For flight deck personnel", the statement continues, "the question is not whether the operation of particular aircraft types is potentially, safe, but whether the highest possible degree of operational safety is in fact provided."

"Flight deck personnel, i.e. those who have actual day-to-day experience of operating aircraft in line service and in a variety of situations, firmly believe," the statement concludes, "that maximum safety in what the Task Force itself describes as a complex and demanding air traffic environment can only be achieved through the utilization of a properly-integrated three-man specialist crew on a flight deck specifically designed for that purpose. They believe further that the twin questions of crew complement and flight deck layout are matters for negotiation between their trade union organizations and airlines, taking into account all relevant factors in the fields of safety, workload and working environment. They will continue to press this point, and for the greater involvement of flight crew personnel in the certification process, as recommended by the Task Force itself."

x) see also ITF Newsletter No. 2, 1981, page 16

TRADE UNIONS

INDIA

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Government bans strikes in essential services

In the face of strong union opposition, the Indian government has issued a decree outlawing strikes in essential services,

including the railways, airlines and ports. The special presidential decree also confers on the government the power to declare any service "essential", thus making it subject to the strike ban. The penalty for strikers and strike organizers will be a term of imprisonment and a fine, and summary courts - headed by special magistrates - will be established to try those found violating the provisions of the decree - even those suspected of financially aiding strikes will be subject to severe penalties.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

CANADA

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Wardair dispute hardens

Following the issue of the Conciliation Commissioner's report, the ITF-affiliated Canadian Air Line Flight Attendants' Association (CALFAA) asked to meet Wardair again to negotiate further on its claims for a new two-year contract.^{x)} However, no progress could be made and CALFAA then called a twenty-four hour strike from 06.30 on 6 August of its members at Toronto Airport in an effort to persuade the company to negotiate realistically. Wardair used the strike as a pretext to claim that the union had called a country-wide strike and informed CALFAA that its members' services were no longer required and that they were not permitted to operate services. Identity cards needed to enter security areas were taken from union members by the police on company instructions and CALFAA had to pay to get cabin crews stranded in London, Frankfurt, Amsterdam, Paris and Hawaii back to Canada. Wardair flights are currently being operated by newly-trained cabin crews.

CALFAA considers that it has been locked out by Wardair and is now trying to get clarification of its legal position from the Canadian Labour Relations Board. Its main aim at the present time is to get Wardair back to the negotiating table. At CALFAA's request, ITF affiliates have been contacted and informed of the latest developments.

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see page 81 of last issue

COLOMBIA

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Merchant seamen strike national shipping line

Members of the ITF-affiliated Colombian Seamen's Union (UNIMAR) have been on strike against the national shipping line Grancolombiana since 6 July in support of their claims for improvements in a new collective agreement. At UNIMAR's request, the ITF has contacted its seafarer and docker affiliates, requesting them to resist any attempts that may be made to introduce replacement crews and asking them to arrange for emergency food supplies should action be taken to cut off provisions to striking crew members.

FRANCE

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Pay rise for railwaymen

The French National Railways has offered railwaymen a 3.3% salary increase from 1 June. At the same time, holiday pay goes up to 275 francs plus 15 francs for the first and only child and 20 francs for the second and subsequent children. The railwaymen's unions have indicated their dissatisfaction with the level of the award (it is less than was paid for the same period last year) and have demanded the immediate re-opening of negotiations on pay.

GERMANY

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Pay agreement for travel bureau staffs

Under a new pay agreement negotiated by the ITF-affiliated German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV), salaries of employees of privately-owned travel bureaux are increased by between 4.9% and 5.7%, with effect from 1 June 1981. Salaries of those earning less than 2,000 DM per month will first be increased by 10 DM before the 4.9% increase is added.

Higher pay for inland boatmen

The ITF-affiliated German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV) has negotiated a 4.35 per cent increase in the pay and bonuses of inland boatmen, effective 1 July 1981. The Christmas bonus is also raised from 25% to 50% of the monthly basic rate.

GREAT BRITAIN.

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National rail pay strike called

The Railway Staff National Tribunal has recommended that British Rail workers for their 1981 settlement should receive an eight per cent increase backdated to 20 April, followed by a further 3 per cent from 1 August, based on rates as at 19 April. British Rail has held a series of meetings with all three rail unions and has claimed that it can only afford to pay eight per cent and that the outstanding three per cent will have to be deferred and will depend on concessions on productivity. The unions have said that they would prefer talks on productivity to follow payment of the award and the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen and the National Union of Railwaymen have called a national strike for midnight on 30 August, while the Transport Salaried Staffs' Association, which has decided not to recommend strike action, has urged the Trades Union Congress to intervene to promote a settlement before the strike date.

x) see also ITF Newsletter No. 4, 1981, page 46 and No. 5, 1981, page 55 for earlier details

Settlements for London Transport bus and Tube staffs

The three British rail unions have accepted an improved 11% pay offer on behalf of London Transport Underground staff. Talks on London Transport busmen's pay have been re-opened by the Transport and General Workers' Union and have resulted in the busmen being granted a further three per cent pay rise from August (see also pages 82 and 83 of last Newsletter).

New pay deal for Southampton dockers

Southampton dockers have resumed normal working after voting to accept a new pay deal giving them a 14 per cent increase over two years. Under the agreement, put forward by the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union and accepted by the British Transport Docks Board, basic pay goes up by £11 to £105, backdated to 1 January 1981 - the dockers' annual settlement date - and a second stage rise of 5 per cent on the new basic weekly rate will apply to the period 1 July 1981 to December 1982. The TGWU has also agreed to the labour force in the port being cut from 1,600 to 1,300 through voluntary severance.

x) see ITF Newsletter No. 4, 1981, page 45, No. 5, page 55, and No. 7, page 86 for earlier details

Extra leave for merchant navy officers

British merchant navy officers - including members of ITF affiliates - have voted to accept the General Council of British Shipping's offer of an extra 5 days' annual leave from 1 September -- the second stage of this year's pay and conditions settlement.x)

x)

see also ITF Newsletter No. 3, 1981, page 29

GREENLAND

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Radio officer strike in Greenland

Radio officers, radio sonde personnel and telecommunications technicians stationed in Greenland, who belong to the ITF-affiliated Danish Radio Officers' Association, went on strike on 24 June after the Ministry for Greenland refused to accept that radio officers at coastal stations in Greenland should continue to receive the same pay as their counterparts in Denmark. Negotiations between the parties on the renewal of collective contract had already lasted nearly four months, with the employers saying that they were prepared to offer only 3.6%, in line with their declared intention of narrowing the gap between Danish workers in Greenland and local employees. Both the offer and the employers' attitude are totally unacceptable to our affiliate.

NORWAY

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Compulsory arbitration in mobile rig dispute

A threatened strike and lockout on Norwegian mobile drilling and accommodation rigs has been averted, following the referral by the government of the dispute to compulsory arbitration. The ITF-affiliated Norwegian Seamen's Union is seeking a 10.2% pay increase for its members on the rigs.

SWEDEN

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New rates of pay for engineer officers in the deep-sea trade

A new two-year deep-sea trade agreement has been negotiated by the ITF-affiliated Swedish Engineer Officers' Union (SMBF), based on the mediated settlement reached following the private sector pay strike in May. Under the new agreement, the pay of chief and first engineers is increased by 3.8% from 1 May 1981 and 4.25% from 1 January 1982, while that of second engineers goes up by 4.3% in the first contract year and 4.75% on 1 January 1982. Officers in service on 30 April received a single lump-sum payment of 750 kr to compensate them for the lack of any salary rise in the first four months of the year.

Mediation in air traffic controllers' dispute

Swedish air traffic controllers called off an overtime ban on 9 July to facilitate further pay talks between their union and the Civil Aviation Authority. However, these were unsuccessful and both sides have now agreed that a mediated settlement should be sought. The controllers are asking for higher starting salaries and an improved pay structure. In support of their case, they have pointed to the recent improvements in Norwegian controllers' rates of pay^{x)} and have reminded the Authority of the conclusions of the 1979 ILO Meeting of Experts, which stressed the importance of relating the remuneration of atcs to the degree of responsibility they are required to exercise and noted the link that existed in at least one country between the pay of atcs and that of airline pilots.

x) see also ITF Newsletter No. 3, 1981, page 31 and no. 7, 1981, page 84 for further details of the Norwegian controllers' pay award

SWITZERLAND
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Swissair ground staff talks deadlocked

The Civil Aviation Section of the ITF-affiliated Swiss Public Service Workers' Union (VPOD) has announced the breakdown of negotiations for a new collective contract for its ground staff members with the national carrier Swissair - the management having failed to concede a single union claim, despite the improvement in its overall financial position. In particular, our affiliate is seeking the employment of additional permanent - and not just occasional, temporary - staff to reduce the need for excessive overtime working, the bringing of apprentices within the scope of the contract and the extension of the airline's profit-sharing scheme to the ground staff category. The VPOD also accuses Swissair of contravening its own written guidelines on reducing working hours, which make shorter hours a matter for negotiation between the two partners. The union has warned Swissair that if the situation does not improve it can accept no responsibility for the inevitable consequences.

UNITED STATES
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Air traffic controllers' strike

Air traffic controllers in the United States - members of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers' Organization (PATCO) - went on strike on 3 August after the membership, on the executive's recommendation, rejected a tentative pay settlement + and last-minute negotiations failed to produce substantial improvements in controllers' pay and

fringe benefits. The government has countered the controllers' action with draconian action against the strikers and their union: all the strikers have been dismissed, union funds have been seized, and criminal charges have been brought against union officials.

The ITF has cabled President Reagan expressing dismay at the US government's response to the dispute, adding that it was deplorable that union leaders should be subjected to criminal proceedings for action which would be lawful for non-governmental employees. "Press and TV pictures of union leaders in handcuffs", the cable continued, "have badly tarnished the American image." In the interests of fair labour practices and air safety, the ITF cable went on strongly to urge President Reagan that the punitive measures be withdrawn and renewed efforts made to reach a negotiated settlement with workers whose grievances were clearly so deeply held that they were ready to sacrifice their careers and their liberty.

x)

see ITF Newsletter No. 7 of 1981, page 85

NEWS IN BRIEF

Norway: unions representing workers on fixed installations in the North Sea have been given until 20 August to reply to the mediator's pay offer to employees of Mobil, Elf and Phillips.

Pilots with the Peruvian private airline Faucett struck early in July to back demands for higher pay and improved working conditions.

Poland: dockers in the Baltic ports staged a one-hour protest strike on 8 July to press for improvements in their conditions. The national airline LOT was closed down on the following day for four hours when workers walked off their jobs after the government refused to accept the LOT workers' council nominee for the post of general manager of the airline.

Lisbon dockers called off their work to rule and overtime ban on 10 July after the employers conceded their demands for improvements in working conditions (see also page 86 of last issue). The action had the full support of workers in other Portuguese ports.

Spain: Iberia pilots called off a five day work to rule at the end of last month after reaching agreement with the company in a dispute over pay and conditions.

OBITUARIES

Fred Kroll, President of the US Brotherhood of Railway, Airline and Steamship Clerks (BRAC), died on 31 July, aged only 45, after a long illness borne with great fortitude. Brother Kroll was elected as a BRAC International Vice-President in 1971, becoming International President some five years later. He was a well-known figure in the American labour movement and was elected to the AFL-CIO Executive Committee in 1978. He also took a deep personal interest in the ITF and will be remembered for the contributions he made to our most recent Congresses, in Dublin and Miami.

Serge Peinaud, Assistant General Secretary of the French Railwaymen's Federation FO, died on 25 July. Brother Peinaud was a deputy member of the Committee of the ITF Railwaymen's Section and also represented French Railwaymen on the Committee of Transport Workers' Unions in the European Community.

PERSONALIA

Richard Ignatius Kilroy has been unanimously elected International President of the US Brotherhood of Railway, Airline and Steamship Clerks (BRAC), in succession to Fred Kroll, whose sad and untimely death is reported above. Brother Kilroy has been an International Vice-President of the Brotherhood since 1973.

Tom O'Brien has been appointed Vice-President of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union in succession to John Carroll, who now holds the union's presidency. Fintan Kennedy, who retired as IT&GWU General President in January, has been re-elected Treasurer of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

Jan Schroër, President of the Dutch Transport Workers' Unions FNV, has retired, for health reasons, at the age of 56. He remains, at least for the present, as President of the Transport Workers' Union NKV.



FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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Fishermen's Section Conference	- Reykjavik, 26-28 August 1981
Steering Committee	- Stockholm, 7-8 September 1981
Cabin Crew Technical Committee	- Madrid, 8-9 September 1981
Asian Civil Aviation Section Conference	- Manila, 19-23 October 1981
Civil Aviation Section Conference	- Malta, 24-27 November 1981

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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Crew forced off Greek vessel at gunpoint

The Greek-flag ship ANNA P put into the Spanish port of Bilbao at the end of June. As part of his routine duties, ITF Ship Inspector Agustín Aguirre went on board some days later, at the crew's request, and established that they had a claim to outstanding salaries and leave due under the Greek collective agreement. Despite his best efforts to secure their back pay, nothing happened until, on 17 July, he received a telephone message from a much distressed crew member, informing him that a man identifying himself as the owner had forced the crew off the ship, gun in hand. The vessel sailed the same evening, and still the crew had not been paid. Meanwhile, they were left stranded in Spain. We later learned that the owner had informed the Greek Ministry of the Mercantile Marine that the crew had "abandoned" the vessel! He is now arranging for them to be repatriated. But when, one wonders, are they likely to get the \$ 63,000 they are owed?

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