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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

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INTERNATIONAL

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Railwaymen's Section Conference held in Luxembourg

A full Conference of the ITF Railwaymen's Section was held in Luxembourg from 23 to 25 February 1982, with an attendance of some 120 delegates. Many leading figures from the host country, including the Transport Minister Josy Barthel and the President of the Luxembourg Railways Administrative Council Georg Thorn participated in the opening ceremony.

Extensive documentation had been prepared for the meeting which had before it a wide-ranging agenda covering: transport policy; energy and transport; the use of microelectronics in the railway industry; transit traffic and short-distance passenger transport; and the situation of the railways in the United States and Africa.

The Conference adopted two resolutions. The first of these, submitted by the Austrian Railwaymen's Union, rejected categorically moves to denationalize the railway industry on the grounds that privatization would endanger the existing rights of railway staff and also negate efforts to promote coordinated measures of transport planning. In a second resolution, drafted jointly by the British National Union of Railwaymen and the German Railwaymen's Union, ITF railway affiliates undertook to negotiate agreements that would protect the jobs of existing employees as well as to pursue policies that would lead to increased job opportunities for railwaymen.

The plenary sessions of the Conference were dominated by a debate on transport policy and the discussions concluded with the adoption of a transport policy document setting out the Section's thinking on this vital issue.

It is also worth noting that the Conference approved a statement on the use of microelectronics in the railway industry that was based on the recent discussions on the subject within the ITF's Civil Aviation Section. The forthcoming Conference of the Road Transport Workers' Section will also be turning its attention to this topic, which is assuming an increasing importance in many different sectors of the transport industry.

The meeting closed with a vote of thanks from the Section Chairman Louis Joye to our Luxembourg hosts, the Federation of Railway and Transport Workers (FNCTTFEL), for making the delegates' stay in their small but beautiful country such a happy one.

UNITED STATES  
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Air Florida jet would not have crashed if there had been a flight engineer on board, says FEIA

Air Florida flight 90 would not have plunged into the icy waters of Washington's Potomac river on 13 January if there had been a flight engineer on board. This is the firm conclusion that the ITF-affiliated Flight Engineers' International Association (FEIA)<sup>x)</sup> has come to after listening to the evidence presented to the public hearing currently being held by the National Transportation Safety Board into the disaster.

Evidence given to the Board's hearing clearing clearly indicates that improper power settings of the engines for take-off caused the crash. Bill Gill - FEIA President and Chairman of the ITF Civil Aviation Section - points out in a press statement issued on behalf of the association on 4 March that had there been a flight engineer in the cockpit on that fatal afternoon he would in all probability, given the prevailing weather conditions (heavy snow and ice), have turned on the engine anti-ice, thereby preventing the probe from icing and, crucially, precluding the erroneous epr (engine pressure ratio) reading which misled the two Air Florida pilots into believing the engines were developing sufficient power for take-off.

Even had the flight engineer been faced by erroneous epr gauges, the FEIA maintains that the crash would still not have taken place. The flight engineer would have been cross-checking all the engine instruments to verify that the engines were developing the correct power and if he had found this not to be the case he would have advised the pilot crew members that there was a problem in plenty of time to abort the take-off.

It is also doubtful, the statement concludes, that a flight engineer would have started the take-off with snow or ice on the wings. He would have advised the pilots that de-icing was necessary.

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<sup>x)</sup> The FEIA is an international organization with chapters in the following countries: Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Great Britain, Hong Kong, India, Israel, Italy, Kenya, Malta, Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, Portugal, Singapore, South Africa, Spain and the United States.

Lives would have been saved if there had been a flight engineer on the flight deck of Flight 90 that day to provide the vital "human back-up" that would have stopped the pilots from making such a fateful error.

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TRANSPORT

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LIBERIA

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New Zealand Court of Inquiry into stranding of Liberian bulker castigates Liberian authorities for failing to supervise crew standards

A New Zealand Court of Inquiry into the stranding last May outside Wellington Harbour of the 18,400 dwt Liberian bulker Pacific Charger has castigated the Liberian authorities for failing to supervise crew standards and has asked the New Zealand Transport Minister to raise with UNCTAD the matter of seafarers' certificates being issued to unqualified personnel. Both the master and chief engineer were found to have passed examinations for Chinese Class "B" certificates and had qualified for class "A" certificates by further sea service only, while the second mate had not passed any examinations and had received a Liberian licence of competence on payment of a fee. Ocean Chargers of Monrovia, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Japan's Kansai Steamship Company, was criticized by the court for permitting this state of affairs, as was the Harmony Maritime Company which managed the ship.

The inquiry further revealed that the pay of the Burmese ratings on the Pacific Charger was below the ITF rates for the vessel that had been negotiated in Taiwan and that the Taiwanese officers were also not in receipt of ITF approved rates.

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TRADE UNIONS

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CHILE

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Trade union leader murdered after forming "common front" to fight government's economic policies

One of the main leaders of the Chilean democratic opposition, sixty-year-old Tucapel Jimenez, president of the Public

Administration Employees' Union, was found brutally murdered in his car on a deserted dirt road about forty kilometres outside Santiago late last month only a week after he had held a press conference to announce the formation of a "common front" of Chilean labour groups to oppose the current economic policies of General Pinochet. At the conference, Jimenez pointed out that 56,000 public sector employees had lost their jobs during 1981 and that 12,000 more had been laid off during the first two months of this year.

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions has issued a statement expressing its deepest dismay at the barbarous assassination of a peaceable democrat, who believed in justice and freedom.

PHILIPPINES  
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International boycott of Manila Peninsula Hotel called off

The international boycott of the Manila Peninsula Hotel is now over.x) The decision to call off the boycott follows the successful conclusion by the National Union of Workers in Hotel, Restaurant and Allied Industries (NUWHRAIN) of a new collective contract for the hotel's staff and the exhaustion of all the legal avenues of appeal over the question of the reinstatement of nine NUWHRAIN local officials who were "preventively suspended" in 1977. (The Supreme Court last December upheld a previous court decision confirming the termination of employment of the men concerned.)

In contacts with the International Union of Food and Allied Workers' Associations, which declared the boycott last March, NUWHRAIN has expressed its appreciation of the valuable support it had received from the international trade union movement.

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x) see ITF Newsletter No. 11, 1981, page 131 for details

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SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

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AUSTRALIA

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Strike by ships' engineers leads to signing of new pay agreement

A three-week strike<sup>x)</sup> last October by members of the ITF-affiliated Australian Institute of Marine and Power Engineers has now led to the signing of a new 18-month pay and conditions agreement for ships' engineers covered by the Maritime Industry Seagoing Award.

Improvements include: pay: 5.9% increase from 26 August 1981; leave: ratio increased to .857 with immediate effect, and to .926 on 4 May 1982; two crew duty system: to be implemented by 4 May; victualling and accommodation allowance: raised to A\$ 210 per week; loss of personal effects: cover increased to A\$1,650.

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x) see ITF Newsletter No. 10, 1981, page 119

BELGIUM

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Sabena calls for pay cuts

After suffering heavy losses in 1981, the Belgian national airline Sabena hopes to effect considerable economies during 1982 by asking its employees to accept pay cuts of between 2% and 17%; the halving of the end-of-year bonus; and compulsory early retirement (at 57 for ground personnel and 55 for flying staff). Our two Belgian aviation affiliates<sup>x)</sup> say that any sacrifices must be accompanied by a formal guarantee - rather than merely a promise of favourable consideration - from the responsible Minister of annual state subsidies to Sabena in the region of 1,400 million Belgian francs, in addition to an equally firm guarantee of the company's re-capitalization. Union members are currently being balloted on the proposals.

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x) the Metal Workers' Union and the Aviation Section of the Public Service Workers

FINLAND

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Two pay rises for seafarers in overseas trade

Higher rates come into operation in two stages this year for seafarers in the overseas trade belonging to the ITF-affiliated Finnish Seamen's Union. Effective 1 March, rates were increased by 6.9% plus 9 markka, with increases of 10 per cent in benefits in kind and of 8.3% in allowances. The rates of lower-paid categories will be increased by higher than average amounts.

Further increases will come into effect on 1 October next.

Examples of the new basic rates of certificated ratings are given below:

<u>deck and engine department</u>	<u>1 March</u>	<u>1 October</u>	
bosun	3,428	3,524	markka
carpenter	3,312	3,408	markka
AB, stoker, greaser, motorman	3,125	3,215	markka
OS	2,621	2,709	markka

An electrician in the highest grade will be earning between 3,565 markka and 3,832 markka per month from 1 March, depending on the size of the ship's generator. The corresponding salary range from 1 October will be 3,665 - 3,940 markka.

stewards department

+chief steward (highest grade)	3,701-4,267	3,814-4,398	markka
+chief cook	3,259-3,466	3,357-3,570	markka
+cook	3,065-3,247	3,157-3,344	markka

+ all grades within the stewards department are paid according to deadweight tonnage of vessel

FRANCE  
=====

Vessels held up in protest at delay in implementing shorter working week

French seamen are currently taking protest action - delaying vessels attempting to enter and leave port by 48 hours - after reaching an impasse in negotiations with the employers on the implementation of the new French law on the 39-hour week and the additional fifth week of paid leave. The action is due to continue until 8 April.

GERMANY  
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Public service unions resist attempts to impose wage cuts

Public service workers' unions in the Federal Republic - including the ITF-affiliated Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV) and the Railwaymen's Union (GdED) - have successfully resisted the employers' attempts to impose a one per cent cut in allowances from 1 March. Negotiations in the 1982 pay round have just opened.



4.3% increase for seafarers

A new one-year agreement signed by the German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV) on behalf of the country's seafarers increases basic pay by 4.3% from 1 January. The victualling allowance goes up from 12 DM to 13.82 DM and remaining monetary allowances (with the exception of the sailing allowance which remains unchanged) are also increased by 4.3%.

GREAT BRITAIN

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London Transport bus and underground staffs seek retention of cheap fares

London Transport bus and underground staffs - members of ITF affiliates - came out on strike on 10 March, shutting down the capital's entire bus and tube network for the day. The unions are objecting to the Law Lords decision last December, which rendered the "fares fair" (cheap fares) scheme introduced two months earlier by the Labour-controlled Greater London Council illegal and obliged London Transport to impose a 100 per cent fares rise from 21 March. The Lords decision will also mean that jobs will be lost, many Tube stations and several bus garages closed, and services withdrawn.

The workers have formed an inter-union committee to campaign for a change in the law to permit cheap fares in London and are appealing for subsidies for the capital's public transport system in line with those of other major Western cities.

Ramp workers' strike continues

The five-week-old strike by British Airways ramp workers<sup>x)</sup> handling domestic and European flights at London's Heathrow Airport is still continuing, with several groups of BA workers staging short stoppages in support of their striking colleagues.

The ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union called the strike after BA unilaterally imposed new work rosters, raised ramp workers' hours from 38½ to 40, and terminated a guaranteed earnings agreement.

At the request of the T and G, civil aviation affiliates have been contacted and asked not to provide more fuel to BA aircraft using their airports than they would normally do while the dispute is in progress.

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x) see page 19 of last issue

### New pay deal for municipal busmen

The ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union has negotiated a 6.6% pay rise for Britain's municipal busmen, with crew drivers and conductors getting an extra £1 per week. All staff have been awarded 2 additional days' annual leave and a 39-hour week will be introduced in November. A working party has also been set up to investigate how busmen's pay compares with that of other groups of local authority manual workers.

The new rates of pay are as follows: one-man operators (double deckers) - £74.50 (plus £9.30 shift pay); one-man operators (single deckers) - £71.50 (plus £8.94 shift pay); drivers £60.60 (plus £7.58 shift pay); and conductors - £59.45 (plus £7.43 shift pay).

### NORWAY

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### Improved rates for deck officers in overseas trade

Following resumed negotiations between the ITF-affiliated Norwegian Navigating Officers' Association and the shipowners' association, the overseas trade agreement - now in its second year - has been revised to give an increase of 236 kr in monthly pay, from 1 November 1981. Rates will be raised by a further 284 kr per month from 1 May next. A working party has been established to examine pay differentials between deck officers and ratings and its findings will be taken into account by our affiliate when formulating its demands for the next contract round.

### Engineers on trawlers and factory ships win higher pay

New agreements for ships' engineers working on trawlers and factory ships have been concluded by the ITF-affiliated Norwegian Ships' Engineers' Union. The trawler agreement gives the engineers a 12 per cent pay rise (subject to a minimum increase of 340 kr per month) while at sea, as well as a 10% increase in the off-season rate. On factory ships, rates have been increased by 8.25%.

### SWEDEN

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### Pay increases for seafarers in overseas trade

The ITF-affiliated Swedish Seamen's Union has reached agreement with the shipowners on an across-the-board increase of 343 kr for the second year of the deep-sea trades agreement. Examples of the new monthly starting rates, effective 1 February 1982, are as follows (figures in brackets refer to pay after 5 years' service):

Dry cargo ships

Oil tankers

group 1 5,241 (5,612) kr  
group 2 3,197 (5,241) kr

group 1 5,503 (5,903) kr  
group 2 3,325 (5,484) kr

The pay of ratings aboard ferry vessels has also been increased by 343 kr. The new monthly starting rates range from 3,475 kr (group 4) to 5,241 kr (group 1), with corresponding rates for seafarers with five years' service of 5,353 kr and 5,612 kr.

As compensation for January, ratings covered by both agreements will receive 7.1% of the sum of basic pay, allowances, overtime and holiday pay, this to be paid out with the March salary.

More pay for bus and coach drivers

The ITF-affiliated Swedish Transport Workers' Union has negotiated enhanced weekly rates for bus drivers in the second year of a pay agreement. Drivers will now reach the top grade after 8½ years' continuous service with the same company and an increase in the starting rate will bring them into line with other comparable groups of workers. The stand-by allowance has also been increased from 17.40 kr to 18.36 kr per hour and the previous unsocial hours payments 3.50 and 7.55 kr rise to 3.70 and 7.95 per hour respectively. The revised weekly rates ranging from 1,327 kr to 1,552 kr took effect on 1 January.

UNITED STATES  
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New contract for maintenance of way employees

Following protracted negotiations, the US Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees has recently signed a new contract on behalf of members working for railroads belonging to the National Railway Labor Conference. The mediated settlement provides for four pay increases over the life of the 39-month agreement: 2% backdated to 1 April 1981; 3% backdated to 1 October 1981; and two further increases, both of 3%, on 1 July 1982 and 1983. Cost-of-living adjustments to hourly rates will be made as follows: 32 cents from 1 July 1981; 35 cents from 1 January 1982 and further adjustments, in line with rises in the index, on 1 July 1982, and thereafter every six months to 1 January 1984. Other improvements include longer holidays, better health, welfare and dental benefits and higher expenses when working away from home.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

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Antigua and Barbuda has become a member of the International Labour Organisation by accepting the obligations of the ILO Constitution. The ILO now has 147 members.

Australian trade unions have imposed a week-long ban on South African shipping followed immediately by a similar ban on South African Airways as a protest at the death in detention of the union leader Dr. Neil Aggett (see page 15 of last issue).

France: crews of Brittany Ferries staged a week-long strike earlier this month in a dispute over working hours. The strike was suspended following a meeting between the unions and officials from the Ministry of the Sea.

The British Transport and General Workers' Union celebrated its diamond jubilee earlier this month. A ceremony marking the occasion was attended by former TGWU General Secretaries Frank Cousins (a former president of the ITF) and Jack Jones (Vice-President of the ITF from 1974 to 1980).

The British government has announced that it is to hold a public inquiry into the loss last December of the Irish-registered Union Star and the Penlee lifeboat, which went to the coaster's aid (see page 15 of last issue).

A female clerk won a six-year legal battle when the European Court of Justice - in a case brought by the Equal Opportunities Commission with the support of the Transport Salaried Staffs' Association - found British Rail guilty of discrimination for withdrawing concessionary rail travel facilities from the families of its female but not its male employees upon retirement.

Italian air traffic controllers staged a 12-hour strike on 16 March in protest at delays in the introduction of new work contracts.

Flight engineers of the Spanish airline Iberia have called off a strike after the management agreed to negotiations on their pay claims.

The US Firemen and Oilers have reached agreement with the major railroads on a new 39-month contract providing for total average hourly increases of \$3.33, together with longer leave and improvements in the health and accident insurance schemes.

#### OBITUARIES

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Sigurd Klinga, president of the Swedish Transport Workers' Union from 1953 to 1961, has died, at the age of 82. Brother Klinga was a member of the Executive Committee of the ITF from 1958 until 1962 and was also a member of the Committee of the ITF Road Transport Workers' Section from 1954 until his retirement from union office. He gave a lifetime of service to the trade union movement in his native Sweden, being actively involved with the work of the National Trade Union Confederation (LO), and was also chosen to sit on a number of different committees connected with the road transport industry.

Else Pfaff, a member of the executive of the Norwegian Seamen's Union, died on 4 February, only a few days after her 41st birthday. With a background in the hotel and catering trade, she took a special interest in promoting the interests of women seafarers, but was also active in a wider field and had a seat on a number of the industry's key committees. She was a delegate to the 1975 ITF Women Workers' Conference.

#### PERSONALIA

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Heinz Oskar Vetter, President of the German Trade Union Federation (DGB), has been awarded the Grand Cross of the Order of Merit of the German Federal Republic. The award was presented to Brother Vetter by the President of the German Federal Republic Professor Karl Carstens, who praised Vetter's many achievements during the thirteen years he has headed the national centre.

Emilio Agostinetti, former editor of the Italian-language magazine of the Swiss Railwaymen's Union, celebrated his 70th birthday on 27 February.

#### FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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Seafarers' Section Training Committee	- London, 21 April 1982
Seafarers' Section Conference	- London, 22-23 April 1982
Road Transport Workers' Section Conference	- Stockholm, 18-20 May 1982
Flight Deck Technical Committee	- London, 20 May 1982
Fair Practices Committee	- London, 2-3 June 1982
Inspectors Seminar	- London, 4-5 June 1982
Travel Bureau Section Conference	- Stockholm, 14-16 June 1982

STOP PRESS

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Death of Grand Old Man of Austrian trade union movement

As this issue went to press, we learned the sad news of the death, at the magnificent age of 102, of Karl Weigl, the Grand Old Man of the Austrian trade union movement.

Weigl led the Austrian Transport Workers' Union for over forty years, serving from 1911 as its general secretary and returning in 1945 - after over a decade of enforced exile - as president to rebuild a union that had been utterly destroyed by the ravages of war. It was not until 1954, by which time he was 75, that he felt his work was done and he could retire and hand over the reins of power to a younger man.

Weigl was associated with the ITF for a great many years. He attended his first ITF Congress in 1913 and throughout a long and distinguished career maintained very close links with the Federation. He was a member of the General Council for Austria until his retirement and shortly afterwards, at the 1958 Amsterdam Congress, was awarded the ITF Gold Badge in recognition of his outstanding services to the cause of transport trade unionism. Brother Weigl was also a welcome and honoured guest at the 1956 Vienna Congress of the ITF and at our 75th Anniversary Congress, again held in the Austrian capital, in 1971.

His many friends in the ITF and in Austria especially will be deeply saddened by the passing of a truly great man.

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SOUTH AFRICAN RAILWAYS AND HARBOURS TELLS BRITISH PRESS THAT  
IT SEES NO REASON TO RECOGNIZE BLACK DOCKERS' UNION

Regular readers will remember that in January we outlined (in a Newsletter Supplement) the problems that the ITF-affiliated General Workers' Union of South Africa had been encountering ever since it started to press for recognition as the representative of South African shoreside dockers employed by South African Harbours and Railways (SAR&H). Later that month, the dockers' difficulties were feature in a front page story published in the Journal of Commerce (a Liverpool-based newspaper with a nationwide circulation among businessmen with an interest in the transport industry). As is the usual practice, SAR&H was given the right of reply. This it did, issuing a lengthy statement - through the South African embassy in London - to the effect that it felt itself neither bound nor obliged to recognize our affiliate as the dockers' official representative.

Naturally, the ITF could not let the SAR&H statement go unanswered and ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis wrote to the Journal of Commerce to point out through its pages (the story appeared in the issue of 10 March) that the SAR&H statement was interesting as much for what it glossed over as what it said. For it had studiously avoided the question of police harassment and the charge that the dockers employed by SAR&H had been pressured to join the staff association set up under management's auspices. Nor did it refer to the summary dismissal of Jeremiah Tolwana, Chairman of the GWU members' Workers' Committee in Port Elizabeth, who had worked for SAR&H for 12 years. (No reason has ever been given for his dismissal, although a labour inspector has let him know that he was fired for refusing to join the black staff association and that if he "begged" one of the association's officials he might be reinstated.)

Nonetheless, the General Secretary said, progress of a kind had been made. For this was the first time SAR&H had actually explained its position at all. "It says something", the ITF reply concluded "that SAR&H is ready to reply, albeit inadequately to the British press, but feels able to brush off a union which was asking for nothing more than a meeting with management at local level for 'talks about talks'."

And yet the ITF cannot help feeling that the issue of union recognition would be better discussed around a table in Cape Town by the two parties directly involved than in the pages of the British press. Once again, the ball is back in SAR&H's court.