



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. 8

August 1982

IN THIS ISSUE

Page

Transport

- Canadian Supreme Court declares commercial air transport an essential public service 86
Children's holiday coach crash leads to review of speed limits on French roads 86

Social and Industrial News

- French cabin crew strikes result in extra leave 87
3.4% increase for German inland boatmen 87
British Rail Sealink ferry crew strike 87
Rail unions stave off workshop closures (Great Britain) 88
P&O cruise ship crews' pay and conditions package (Great Britain) 89
Strike of Air India's London-based staff 89
British Airways agrees to drop new flight schedules after union protest 89
Three-year pay agreement for Aberdeen dockers sets new trend (Great Britain) 90
Danish Supreme Court upholds Greenland radio officers' complaint on pay 90
Dutch dockers' settlement details 90
Early retirement for Dutch inland navigation workers now a distinct possibility 91
New agreement for Dutch road haulage drivers 91
Transport workers express total dissatisfaction with Norwegian arbitration board's recommendations on pay 91
Sabena ground staff jobs at JFK now safe (United States) 92
Pay increases for Air California flight attendants 92
US maritime unions draw up joint policy to safeguard jobs in national merchant fleet 93
New contract for Northwest Airlines mechanics (United States) 93

News in Brief

93

Forthcoming Meetings

94

Supplement: General Workers' Union/SATS dispute over union recognition in South African harbours: SATS Director General refuses to answer letter from ITF General Secretary

TRANSPORT

CANADA

=====

Supreme Court declares commercial air transport an essential public service

The Supreme Court of Canada has upheld a lower court ruling by declaring that it is within the power of the Minister of Transport to deem normal commercial air transport an essential public service. It follows from the Court ruling that the country's air traffic controllers are "designated employees" with no legal right to strike. An appeal by the Canadian Air Traffic Control Association against the earlier ruling was accordingly dismissed.

FRANCE

=====

Children's holiday coach crash leads to review of speed limits on French roads

The recent tragic crash on the motorway near Beaune involving two holiday coaches carrying children and their supervisors from a small town near Paris to a summer holiday camp in the South of France - an accident which claimed 53 lives (44 of the victims being children) as a horrific fire engulfed the vehicles involved - has aroused very deep concern over road safety in a country with the worst road accident record in Europe. Within days of the accident, the French cabinet announced that it will decide - in the light of accident statistics during the next six months - whether existing speed limits on French roads and motorways should be reduced. Other road safety measures already introduced as a result of the crash include safety briefings for long-distance coach passengers on the location of fire extinguishers and emergency exits, and a reduction in hours of coach drivers at the wheel between rest periods from five to four. Buses will be obliged to keep a distance of 150 feet from other vehicles and observe strict lane discipline. The police have been urged to conduct more speed checks and to ensure that car passengers wear seat belts, as now required by law in France.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

FRANCE

=====

Cabin crew strikes result in extra leave

Five days of strikes were called by the ITF-affiliated French Cabin Crew Union in June and July against Air France, Air Inter and UTA in protest at the failure of all three airlines to extend to its members the shorter working hours they had already granted to their ground staff employees and that are indeed enjoyed by most other French workers following the introduction of the statutory 39-hour week last February^x. The possibility of a third strike in August over the same issue led to the signing, on 5 August, of an agreement between the parties giving cabin attendants working for each of the three airlines involved an extra 3½ days' leave each year instead of a shorter work week.

x) see ITF Newsletter No. 2, 1982, page 20

GERMANY

=====

3.4% increase for inland boatmen

The ITF-affiliated German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV) has negotiated a 3.4% increase in the pay and allowances of inland boatmen, effective 1 July 1982 for ten months. The expiry date of 30 April 1983 will enable our affiliate to conduct pay talks for all its members in the transport sector simultaneously.

GREAT BRITAIN

=====

Sealink ferry crew strike

British Rail Sealink's ferry operations were halted by a strike called by the ITF-affiliated National Union of Seamen from 09.00 on Monday 2 August in support of a four-week-old stoppage by 400 fellow union members at the east coast port of Harwich who, as a result of their refusal to work new rosters involving large pay

cuts, were facing a threat from Sealink to axe its loss-making Harwich-Hook of Holland route. A settlement acceptable to our affiliate and the Harwich men was hammered out in conciliation talks lasting until the early hours of Tuesday morning and normal working was resumed at mid-day. A five man sub-committee of the NUS executive, with the assistance of its local Harwich membership, will now examine working practices at the port with a view to establishing alternative ways of making the savings needed by Sealink if it is to retain its services out of Harwich, and in return the company has agreed to reinstate the old schedules and has lifted its threat to abandon the Harwich-Hook route while the cost-cutting exercise continues. Meanwhile, the NUS will be recommending its Harwich-based members - in line with union policy - to reduce the amount of overtime worked as a first step towards reducing crew costs.

A few days before the national Sealink strike began, officers at Harwich - members of the ITF-affiliated Merchant Navy and Airline Officers' Association - had agreed to revised working schedules that will mean them making more trips each year, while remaining on existing rates of pay. This will enable Sealink to save money by manning its two passenger ferries operating on the North Sea routes out of Harwich with three rather than four crews, as at present. The changes are expected to lead to the loss of between 13 and 26 jobs by June 1983, most probably through retirement and voluntary redundancy.

Unions stave off workshop closures

British Rail unions, following talks with BR management, have successfully staved off forced workshop closures and compulsory redundancies among employees in the carriage works run by British Rail Engineering Ltd., although 4,500 jobs (mainly engineering, but also some clerical and middle management jobs) are to go through voluntary early retirement. Men over 46 with at least 15 years' service will be offered a total of £10,000 in severance pay if they take voluntary redundancy before the end of 1983. They have been given until 30 September 1982 to take up the offer.

The unions' campaign^{x)} against BR's plans to run down its engineering division has saved an estimated 1,500 jobs.

x) see also page 78 of last issue

P&O cruise ship crews' pay and conditions package

The ITF-affiliated National Union of Seamen has recently negotiated substantial improvements in the pay and conditions of its members on P&O cruise ships. The P&O ratings are being recommended to accept a deal giving them an extra £438 per annum from 1 September, six extra days' leave (raising the total entitlement to 96 days for leading hands, 90 days for other ratings), a local leave allowance of £250 (up £50) and an improvement of six per cent in the penalty rate for work in excess of standard hours. Leading hands, who do not currently receive excess hours' compensation, are also being offered the alternative of one day's leave or one day's pay for each 10 hours worked in excess of 140 hours over a 14-day period.

Strike of Air India's London-based staff

Air India's London-based staff - members of the ITF-affiliated British Transport and General Workers' Union - have been on strike for the past five weeks following the sacking of a Heathrow Airport shop steward, who had refused to work new rosters involving substantial cuts in take-home pay that had been unilaterally imposed by the airline in defiance of an agreement signed by Air India UK in May in which it had undertaken to consult the union on proposed changes in working practices. The company has now dismissed the striking workers and this has only served to harden the dispute.

At the request of the T and G, ITF civil aviation affiliates have been urged to cable the Air India head office in Bombay calling for the reinstatement of the dismissed UK Air India employees and for the resumption by Air India UK of negotiations in good faith on the issues in dispute. Similar cables had earlier been sent by the ITF Secretariat in an effort to promote a satisfactory settlement.

British Airways agrees to drop new flight schedules after union protest

British Airways has agreed to drop new work schedules that involved cabin crews on long-haul flights from London to various US and Caribbean destinations working a "back to back" system, which the crews claimed was causing them to become jet-lagged. The cabin attendants complained that frequent time zone changes were likely to affect their physical and mental health in a way that would make it impossible for them to respond effectively to an in-flight emergency. They pointed out that several cabin attendants working the new schedules had already received medical treatment in flight after collapsing on duty, while others had become ill immediately after leaving flights. The BA decision came only after the cabin

crew - members of the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union - had staged a strike because several of their number had been suspended by the airline after refusing to fly the new schedules.

Three-year pay agreement sets new trend

A three-year pay agreement has been negotiated by the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union for dockers at the Scottish North Sea port of Aberdeen. This is the first time that an agreement of this length has been concluded and under its provisions dockers at the port will receive a guaranteed pay rise each December. A further 12 dockers are also to be employed at Aberdeen and as trade expands it is hoped further to augment the local dock labour force.

GREENLAND

=====

Supreme Court upholds radio officers' complaint on pay

It will be recalled that following a four-month strike last year, radio officers, radio sonde personnel and telecommunications technicians stationed in Greenland were awarded pay increases of 3.7% on 1 April 1981 and of 1.8% on 1 April 1982 - rises which their union, the ITF-affiliated Danish Radio Officers' Association, argued at the time should have been far higher. x) The Danish Supreme Court, to which the disputed rises had been referred, has now recommended that this original award should be increased by 35 kr in respect of 1982 and 15 kr for 1981. The new figures, expressed in kr, are as follows: radio officers 420 kr (1981); 230 kr (1982); radio sonde personnel - 375 kr (1981); 210 kr (1982); telecommunications technicians - 400 kr (1981); 225 kr (1982).

x) see ITF Newsletter No. 11, 1981, page 130

NETHERLANDS

=====

Dockers' settlement details

We have now received details of the framework and individual company agreements negotiated by the ITF-affiliated Dutch Transport Workers' Union (FNV) which ended the strikes by dockers in various sectors of the port of Rotterdam during May and June. x) A number of concessions have been won, including an agreement from the employers to continue wage indexation during 1982, which has already resulted in the payment of a 1.1% increase from 1 January 1982 in respect of rises in the index during December. Other major improvements relate to longer leave (2 additional days have been granted) for workers in the ore, coal and grain sectors, who also receive increased compensation for dirty and heavy work, while

employees of the container-handling company UNITCENTRE will benefit from a 32.6 hour week when continuous shift working is introduced on 1 January 1984 and those container-terminal dockers working for ECT have had a clause incorporated in their collective agreement entitling them to equal time off for all overtime, and work performed on Public Holidays. When the FNV first entered into negotiations on the renewal of their agreements the union was informed that the port employers intended to reduce payments made to employees during sickness in line with government proposals at the time. However, our affiliate was able to persuade them to continue paying full pay during sickness and after other Dutch unions had achieved similar undertakings the government decided to drop its plans.

x) see ITF Newsletter No. 5, 1982, page 55 and No. 6, 1982, page 68

Early retirement for inland navigation workers now a distinct possibility

The ITF-affiliated Dutch Transport Workers' Union (FNV) and the National Office for Rhine and Canal Navigation have reached agreement on the principle of early retirement at age 63-64 for inland navigation workers on dry cargo vessels and tankers. Both parties hope that it will be possible to introduce a regulation to this effect at the beginning of next year. For 1982, inland navigation workers received a 3.4% cost-of-living increase on 1 January, followed by a 1.5% basic rate increase from 1 July (this latter payment to apply to weekday overtime rates and rates for working Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays); the diploma allowance has been increased by 7 per cent; and the employers' contribution towards the cost of trade union courses for inland navigation workers has been raised by 5 guilders to 35 guilders per man.

New agreement for road haulage drivers

The ITF-affiliated Dutch Transport Workers' Union (FNV) has signed a new collective agreement for the country's 70,000 road haulage drivers. Improvements include: 2.4% cost-of-living increase on 1 July 1982, followed by a further adjustment on 31 December based on increases in the RPI; a (maximum) accommodation allowance of 59.40 guilders for consecutive 24 hour periods; and a "stop-over" payment of 29.70 guilders per day spent abroad.

NORWAY

=====

Transport Workers express total dissatisfaction with arbitration board's recommendations on pay

The ITF-affiliated Norwegian Transport Workers' Union has declared itself totally dissatisfied with the key recommendations of the arbitration board set up following a two-week strike of dockers

and road transport workers, x) which reported towards the end of last month. The board award is of a 2 kr per hour general pay increase from 1 April, although it has been decided that low-paid workers should also receive an extra 2.50 kr per hour on previous rates over and above the main award. The union had been seeking a 6 kr general increase and a total increase of 8.30 kr for those in the lowest grades.

The union particularly regrets that its dockers members - because the award assumes a 40-hour week and dockers frequently work far fewer hours - will end up with less than the recommended two kroner and thus suffer an appreciable loss in purchasing power. In fact, the only area of the award that met with general satisfaction was that to bus drivers working for private companies, who will get increases of between 5,256 kr (on starting rates) and 9,960 kr (after ten years) as a further step towards pay parity with drivers in the public sector.

x) see ITF Newsletter No. 5, 1982, page 55

UNITED STATES
=====

Sabena ground staff jobs at JFK now safe

The ITF-affiliated Transport Workers' Union of America informs us that its dispute with the Belgian national airline Sabena involving a threat to ground staff jobs at New York's JFK Airport has been satisfactorily resolved and that the removal of this final obstacle has enabled a new agreement to be signed. Full details will be published in the Newsletter as soon as they come to hand.

x) see page 71 of June issue

Pay increases for Air California flight attendants

Air California flight attendants have won substantial increases in pay and allowances in a new two-year contract negotiated on their behalf by the ITF-affiliated Transport Workers' Union of America. Basic pay has been increased by 4% backdated to 2 April 1982, and there will be increases of 3% on 1 October 1982, 5% on 1 April 1983 and 4% on 1 October 1983, bringing the monthly base rate of a new entrant to \$1,137 over the life of the contract. Senior attendant pay has been raised to \$1.85 per hour with immediate effect, rising to \$2 on 1 January 1984, and surface deadheading is to be more generously remunerated. Air California has also undertaken to enter into joint talks with the TWU over the next two years on the possible introduction of a pension scheme for its flight attendants.

Maritime unions draw up joint policy to safeguard jobs in national merchant fleet

Two US maritime unions - the Seafarers' International Union of North America and the Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association (both ITF affiliates) - have agreed on a joint policy to safeguard jobs for their members on new vessels added to the nation's merchant fleet (currently standing at 749 vessels, most of which are over twenty years old and in need of replacement). The policy provides for joint contracts covering the entire crew complement (both licensed and unlicensed), joint collective bargaining, and inter-related training and upgrading programmes-measures by which the unions hope to be able to help keep costs down, promote more harmonious industrial relations and generally make the declining US merchant marine more competitive with foreign fleets.

New contract for Northwest Airlines mechanics

We are now in a position to give readers details of the settlement reached between the ITF-affiliated International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers and Northwest Airlines, which ended a 26-day strike.^{x)} The Machinists' 38-month contract provides for an increase of 9% on basic rates, backdated to 1 November 1981, followed by increases of 9% and 5.6% on 1 January 1983 and 1984. The hourly pay of mechanics will rise from \$13.39 to \$16.80 over the life of the contract.

x) see page 71 of June issue

NEWS IN BRIEF

Australian harbour pilots struck at the beginning of this month over the refusal of an arbitration commissioner to concede an agreed 6 per cent pay increase. In a separate dispute, deck officers who, like the pilots, belong to the ITF-affiliated Merchant Service Guild of Australia, had earlier staged three lightning strikes to give effect to talks with the owners on a number of outstanding issues from their recent pay negotiations.

Following a three-day strike, bus drivers in Celle (Lower Saxony) - members of the ITF-affiliated German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union - have won a 3.9% pay rise, effective 1 May 1982, followed by a further 4.1% increase on 1 November.

Great Britain: offshore catering staff have accepted a seven per cent pay offer (see page 82 of last issue).

Great Britain: dockers currently working 40 hours a week on day work will move to a 39-hour week from this September.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

=====

Rhine Manning Regulations	- Strasbourg, 15-17 September 1982
Licensed Aircraft Technicians	- Lisbon, 28-29 September 1982
Offshore Activities	- Oslo, 5-6 October 1982
Management Committee	- Bremen, 18 October 1982
Executive Board	- Bremen, 19-20 October 1982
Dockers' Section Conference	- London, 26-27 October 1982
Urban Transport Working Group	- London 16-17 November 1982

AFFILIATED UNIONS REQUIRING FURTHER
INFORMATION ON ANY ITEM IN THIS
NEWSLETTER MAY OBTAIN IT ON REQUEST
FROM THE SECRETARIAT OF THE ITF

GENERAL WORKERS' UNION/SATS DISPUTE OVER UNION RECOGNITION
IN SOUTH AFRICAN HARBOURS: SATS DIRECTOR GENERAL REFUSES
TO ANSWER LETTER FROM ITF GENERAL SECRETARY

On 24 June 1982, the ITF General Secretary took up the offer made by Dr. Loubser, Director General of South African Transport Services (SATS) to investigate allegations that the police had harassed and intimidated docker members of the ITF-affiliated General Workers' Union (GWU) and sent the company details of three specific cases of which he had evidence. In the same letter, the General Secretary also questioned Dr. Loubser's decision to turn down the General Secretary's suggestion that he should come to South Africa to discuss the whole matter of SATS' relationship with the GWU, a meeting which he felt could have made a constructive contribution towards an eventual settlement in the SATS/GWU dispute over union recognition. (SATS' repeated refusal to have any dealings with the GWU in spite of its substantial membership among dockers employed by the company has been reported in supplements to the January, March, May and June ITF Newsletters.)

Dr. Loubser has now written to say that because the General Secretary's letter to him was released to the press, he cannot now reply to it. The ITF is very surprised at his reaction as the letter was only released after allowing ample time for him to receive and consider it. There was no question of the press having it before he did.

The matters the General Secretary raised - both the general question of SATS industrial relations and the particular question of police harassment - have both been extensively aired in the press. The management itself has explained its position on the general question to the British press. The ITF is sure that the management would not dispute anyway that these questions are of public concern, involving the policy and practices of a state-owned enterprise of great size and importance.

The General Secretary will be writing to Dr. Loubser as soon as he receives a report he is expecting from South Africa on the latest developments there.

-----ooo0ooo-----