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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

INTERNATIONAL

ITF Working Group reviews ICAO discussions on FOO licensing

The third meeting of the ITF Flight Operations Officers'/Flight Dispatchers' Working Group was held at ITF headquarters in London on 18 January, attended by representatives of unions in Canada, Great Britain, Portugal and the USA. Stuart Hyde of IFALDA was also present as an observer. The Group's new Chairman, A Sandziuk, presided.

The meeting had been convened specifically to review the outcome of the ICAO PELTP/2 meeting held in November 1983, at which it had been decided that the FOO Licence should be removed from ICAO Annex 1. However, the Panel decision had been far from unanimous and the Working Group felt that it should await the position taken by the current session of the ICAO Air Navigation Commission (January-March 1984) on the licensing issue before considering what further action should be taken. Meanwhile, it was agreed that work should commence on reviewing and updating the FOO's qualifications and that the next meeting should look at the proposals for a revision that IFALDA will be putting forward in the coming months.

The meeting thanked D'Arcy Kennedy, the ITF's retiring representative at ICAO, for his untiring work on behalf of FOOs and other aviation workers and wished him a long and happy retirement.

GERMANY

Alemania Express captain and crew members reinstated

Following the examination of the case by the Hamburg Labour Court, Hapag-Lloyd has agreed to reinstate the captain of the container vessel Alemania Express, Heinrich Kraft, and the two Workers' Council members Jürgen Söncksen and Günther Seiferth who it had dismissed after a resolution was adopted on board the ship calling on the ITF-affiliated German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV) and the ITF to oppose the transport of Cruise and Pershing II missiles. Hapag-Lloyd has also agreed to rescind the formal warnings given to two other Workers' Council members on the Alemania Express and to remove all references to these from their personal files.

The sackings prompted widespread reaction. The OeTV gathered 40,000 signatures to a petition to Hapag-Lloyd seeking the reinstatement of the captain and the crew members, and delegates to the ITF's Madrid Congress in October also endorsed a resolution - submitted under the emergency procedures - urging Hapag-Lloyd to withdraw the dismissal notices. Meanwhile, the OeTV has expressed its gratitude to all those trade union organisations which backed its protest and enabled it to win its case.

SOUTH AFRICA

ITF protests at KLM sponsorship of sports events in South Africa

Earlier this month it was reported that the Dutch national airline KLM was backing golf and tennis tournaments in Sun City, capital of the Bantustan of Bophuthatswana in South Africa. Despite protests from the KLM Works Council and Dutch MPs, KLM has not dissociated itself from these events - due to take place next month - and the Dutch government has refused to intervene.

The ITF, in a cable to the airline management, has described the company's decision as "extraordinary" and "all the more deplorable for its venue of so-called Sun City in the Bantustan of Bophuthatswana which was created as part of the repressive structure of apartheid". The cable also reminded KLM that its action might well be interpreted as "a calculated insult" to many of the countries the airline served.

Meanwhile, ITF aviation affiliates have been urged to make the most vigorous and public protests against KLM's action and to back this up with whatever action they deemed appropriate. It is hoped that the public outcry will finally persuade KLM that the international community looks with such distaste on the staging of sports events in South Africa that it will rethink its decision to back the tournaments.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

AUSTRALIA

Union victory on allowance for manning record-length train

A one-week strike last year by engineers and guards organised in the ITF-affiliated Australian Railways Union against the Emu Bay Railway has resulted in a complete union victory. The dispute arose on the west coast line in Tasmania when the twice daily train service was cut to one train a day and the four locomotives previously used for each of the two trains were amalgamated, with the new daily train being hauled by seven or eight locomotives. Disagreement over the proper compensation for the crews manning trains on this important freight line led to the company offering to apply the national multi-tonnage allowance for a trial three-month period. At the end of this, the union asked to revert to the company's own thirteen-year-old formula, which it considered superior, under an agreement entered into with the EBR when agreeing to the trial. EBR refused, claiming it could recall no such agreement, and the men came out on strike.

As the strike began to bite EBR agreed to accept a proposal put forward by the ARU for settling the dispute. Under this, EBR was asked to concede that its existing multi-locomotive allowance was best suited to the particular circumstances applying to west coast operations and that this allowance should be upgraded and extended to eight locomotives. The new scales thus agreed with the company give an allowance of A\$ 4.60 for two-locomotive operation, rising by steps of \$ 2.30 to \$ 18.40 for eight locomotives. The new rates apply with retroactive effect from 26 January 1983 and represent an increase of 18 per cent on the old rates.

AUSTRIA

Higher pay for coach drivers

Following long and difficult negotiations, the ITF-affiliated Austrian Transport Workers' Union (HTV) has succeeded in renewing the collective agreement of drivers employed by private coach companies. This gives a 4.36% increase in pay and allowances, effective from 1 December 1983.

BELGIUM

National agreement signed on introduction of new technologies

Employers and unions in Belgium have concluded a national agreement on the introduction of new technologies. The agreement, which comes into force at the beginning of next month, applies to all companies of 50 or more employees and is the first such national agreement to be reached outside Scandinavia. It obliges all companies of this size intending to introduce new technology that will affect employment levels, the organization of work or working conditions to supply employee representatives - at least three months before the date of its proposed introduction - with written information on the economic and technical reasons for the planned changes. Employers will also be required to supply written information and consult employee representatives on the social consequences of the introduction of new technology - this to include the effect on employment levels, health and safety, and training and retraining measures for workers whose jobs are affected. Employers who fail to inform and consult their employees and then impose redundancies as the result of the introduction of new technologies will be liable to pay the employee(s) concerned a sum equivalent to three months' salary in addition to normal pay during notice periods.

The working of the agreement will be reviewed after two years. In the interim, it is hoped that the national agreement will pave the way for further agreements improving on its provisions at sector and company level. Prior to the conclusion of the national agreement, only one sector level agreement (in the printing industry) included a new technology clause.

Sabena staff strike over airline's refusal to restore pay cut

Ground and flying staff of the Belgian airline Sabena - including members of ITF affiliates⁺ - staged a twenty-four-hour strike from 07.00 on 22 December in protest at the airline's refusal to restore a pay cut. Following the company's poor financial performance in 1981, the unions had entered into a 21-month agreement (expiring on 31 December 1983) under which they had accepted a 15 per cent reduction in pay on the understanding that salaries would revert to their previous levels at the beginning of 1984. However, in December, the management said that it was prepared to restore only one per cent of the pay cut, even though Sabena had shown consistently good results in 1983. This offer was of course totally unacceptable to the unions and several three-hour protest walkouts took place, culminating in the one-day stoppage. Work was resumed on 23 December (except for the pilots who continued their action for a further 24 hours) to allow union/management talks to be resumed. These have made some progress but have not yet reached a firm conclusion.

At the request of its Belgian affiliates involved, the ITF contacted aviation unions in the neighbouring countries requesting them not to handle any flights that might be diverted from Belgium as a result of the action by our unions there.

FRANCE

Bill proposes that atc strikes should no longer be illegal

A draft bill proposing that strikes by air traffic controllers should no longer be illegal has been presented by the Transport Minister to the French cabinet, which has given it its formal approval. However, under the bill's provisions, the unions would be obliged to give five days' notice of strike action and there would be a legal obligation to maintain a minimum level of service.

The draft legislation has met with considerable opposition from the chief controllers' union which claims that the requirement to maintain a minimum level of service would mean that striking controllers would have to perform over half of their normal duties. This was clearly unacceptable and the government was urged to think again.

Under laws passed in 1964 and 1971 sanctions may be imposed on air traffic controllers for any interruption in service:

⁺ the Civil Aviation Section of the Belgian Public Service Workers' Union (CGSP) and the Metal Workers' Union (CMB)

GREAT BRITAIN

Unions win victory on sea dumping of nuclear waste

The action of three of the ITF's British affiliates⁺ in implementing a ban on the transport by road, rail and sea of nuclear waste scheduled for dumping at sea has persuaded the Conservative government to agree to an independent investigation into the safety aspects of sea dumping. The responsible minister has also indicated that Britain's sea dumping programme will be halted while the investigation continues.

The joint union ban, which gained the support of transport unions on the continent, meant that for the first time since 1949 no nuclear waste was dumped in the Atlantic last year. The ITF's recent Madrid Congress also backed a call for an end to the use of the world's oceans as a dumping ground for nuclear waste in an emergency resolution which was adopted unanimously by the assembled delegates.

GREECE

ITF given assurances by Olympic Airways in London on cabin crew pension fund improvements

At a meeting held in London last month between representatives of the ITF and Olympic Airways, assurances were given on behalf of the airline on the three issues that have been causing the ITF-affiliated Greek Hostesses' and Stewards' Union (EISF) much concern over recent months. Most importantly, the company undertook to seek the implementation of an acceptable cabin crew pension scheme - one of the EISF's major objectives at the present time. The airline representatives further assured the ITF that Olympic had not recruited additional cabin staff as strikebreakers (the staff concerned would be employed on a temporary basis for one year and would then be made permanent employees). Finally, the ITF was informed that the four cabin staff recommended for dismissal by a disciplinary committee had not actually been dismissed as Olympic had not yet decided to make the dismissals effective, and would indeed avoid doing so.

In an effort to ensure that the improved pension arrangements sought by the EISF are implemented without undue delay, the ITF agreed to assist Olympic by providing it with information on the pension schemes operated by other airlines.

For full background details see ITF Newsletter No. 9/10, page 84 and No. 11, 1983, page 100.

⁺ The National Union of Seamen, the Transport and General Workers' Union and the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (see ITF Newsletter Nos. 6-8, 1983, page 66 for details of ban).

INDIA

Dockers stage campaign over contract renewal

Indian dockers - including members of ITF affiliates - have been staging a series of demonstrations in all major ports this month in support of their demands for improved pay and conditions. A four-year pay agreement expired on 31 December but has not been renewed as union/management talks have failed to produce a settlement.

NORWAY

Higher pay in overseas trade

A mediated pay settlement has been reached for seafarers in the overseas trade organized in the Norwegian Navigating Officers' Association and the Engineers' Union, giving a general pay increase of 160 kr on both 1 November 1983 and 1 May 1984. (Chief engineers not entitled to overtime pay will receive an increase of 234 kr on these two dates.) The victualling allowance has also been increased to 43 kr a day.

SINGAPORE

New Neptune agreement offers increased job security

A new three-year pay and conditions agreement was signed recently between Neptune Shipmanagement Services PTE Ltd and the ITF-affiliated Singapore Organisation of Seamen on behalf of all categories on the company's 27 vessels. The agreement contains a number of interesting features, with seafarers who have served all their first period of articles on board a Neptune-owned ship being offered permanent employment with the company. It is hoped that more seafarers will thus be encouraged to stay with Neptune, enhancing both job security and their promotion prospects. Seamen who have served a minimum of three years with the company will also benefit from the introduction of a study leave scheme to enable them to upgrade their skills. Neptune has further undertaken to employ only seafarers registered in Singapore, a change in company policy that has been warmly welcomed by our affiliate which would like to see other companies follow Neptune's lead.

UNITED STATES

Continental Airlines dispute no nearer solution

The long-standing dispute between the ITF-affiliated International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) and Continental Airlines is no nearer solution. Negotiations with the IAMAW and Continental's other US unions were resumed late

+ see ITF Newsletter No. 9/10, 1983, page 86 and No. 11, 1983, page 98 for earlier details.

last year, but these proved unproductive as the company merely repeated its demands that the employees accept the wage reductions it had previously proposed. At the request of our affiliate, aviation unions in Australia, New Zealand and Fiji have therefore been contacted and asked to impose a complete ban on Continental operations until such time as the company concludes a proper settlement. This action is being joined by affiliates in Japan and the Philippines who have been requested to support a boycott of Air Micronesia, a company controlled by Continental, which is now operating services on behalf of the company.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Agreement was reached in December on the controversial question of the division of North Sea herring catches between EEC member states and a number of outstanding issues (including Scottish mackerel quotas and the access of member states to Greenland cod), thereby rendering 'Blue Europe' - the EEC Common Fisheries Policy - fully operational.

Germany: the protracted negotiations on a new basic agreement⁺⁺ for road haulage workers organized in the ITF-affiliated German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV) were concluded earlier this month. The new agreement runs from 1 January 1984 to 31 December 1987.

West Germany: control of the West Berlin section of the S-Bahn (the elevated urban railway) recently passed from the East German Reichsbahn to the West Berlin Transport Authority. The city intends to modernize the railway and the Federal Government has already promised aid to the project.

Ratings on the Cunard-owned Queen Elizabeth 2 and the Cunard Countess have been awarded a six per cent increase on consolidated rates from 2 January under a new pay agreement negotiated by the ITF-affiliated British National Union of Seamen.

Greece has just enacted equal pay legislation, bringing it into line with other EEC states.

Israel: dockers at the ports of Ashdod and Haifa have been awarded 25 per cent on basic rates in return for agreeing to productivity improvements and a reduction in gang size.

⁺ See ITF Newsletter No. 2, 1983, page 13

⁺⁺ See ITF Newsletter No. 4, 1983, page 40 and No. 9/10, 1983, page 83 for details.

Italian dockers took industrial action last month, angered by the slow progress of talks with the port employers on redundancy payments and demands for the introduction of a guaranteed wage.

The ITF extends hearty congratulations and best wishes to its Luxembourg affiliate, the Federation of Railway and Transport Workers (FNCTTFEL), which is currently celebrating the 75th anniversary of its foundation. The union has for many years played an active rôle in ITF affairs, a tradition that continued in Madrid when union president Jeannot Schneider was elected to the chairmanship of the Railwaymen's Section.

Luxembourg: employees of private coach operators have been awarded increases of 1,000 francs from 1 January 1984 and 500 francs from 1 January 1985 under a new agreement negotiated by the ITF-affiliated Federation of Railway and Transport Workers (FNCTTFEL).

We extend warm congratulations to the ITF-affiliated Malta General Workers' Union which celebrated its 40th anniversary recently.

Ground staff of the Portugese national carrier TAP staged a 24-hour strike on 28 December in an effort to speed up negotiations on the renewal of their collective contract.

Venezuelan dockers took strike action last month in protest at the port employers' failure to pay out accrued wages and a Christmas bonus.

Mrs JANET GOLDING would like to thank all those who have written to her offering their condolences on the death of her husband, Ken. She hopes everyone will understand that she is unable to reply individually to the many letters of sympathy she has received and would ask all concerned to accept this announcement as a mark of her appreciation of the kind thoughts expressed. These have proved a great comfort to her and her family in recent weeks.

OBITUARIES

Louis Joye, Vice-President for thirteen years of the Swiss Railwaymen's Union (SEV), died suddenly on 24 January. He would have been 65 on 1 February. Joye came from a railway family; he first entered railway service in 1941 and joined the SEV shortly afterwards, becoming an active union member. In 1952, he began work at the SEV head office, was made a union secretary in 1955 and moved to the editorial chair on 'Le Cheminot' in 1960, where he stayed, editing the magazine with great flair, until elected union Vice-President in 1969. He also held high office in the Swiss Federation of Public Service Workers (Föderativverband) and was the longest-serving member of the Executive Committee of the Swiss Trade Union Confederation (SGB).

Within the ITF, Joye represented Switzerland on the Committee of the Railwaymen's Section for a number of years before being elected to the chairmanship of the Section in 1977 - a post he occupied with great distinction, only retiring at our recent Madrid Congress.

Affiliates wishing to make a donation in his memory may do so to the Fund for the Relief of Swiss Workers (Arbeiterhilfswerk), with which he was very closely associated. Contributions may be made to:

Schweizerisches Arbeiterhilfswerk Zürich
Postscheck Konto 80-188
CH 8000 Zürich

Yngve Gyllin, for many years editor of the Swedish Seamen's Union magazine 'Sjömannen', died on 29 November, at the age of 80. Gyllin had continued to write a regular column in the magazine until quite recently. He came to the Seamen's Union mid-way in a successful journalistic career and in the ten years he spent there wielded a powerful pen on behalf of Swedish seamen and the interests of seafarers worldwide. He was a convinced internationalist and a leading figure in the Swedish peace movement. Gyllin will be best remembered for his two-part history of the Swedish Seamen's Union, which has already become a classic.

Bob Kettle, president-elect of the British National Union of Railwaymen, died on 28 December, aged 61. Brother Kettle was elected to the presidency at the union's conference last year and had been due to take up office on 1 January.

Aldo Ortolani, former General Secretary of the Italian Transport, Dock and Allied Workers' Union, died on 24 December 1983, aged 77. Brother Ortolani served on the Committee of the ITF Dockers' Section from 1968 to 1974.

PERSONALIA

A formal ceremony was held in the Vienna Kongresshaus shortly before Christmas to mark the 60th birthday - on 27 December - of ITF President Fritz Prechtl. Many leading figures in the Austrian trade union movement, as well as officials of the Austrian Federal Railways were in attendance to extend their birthday good wishes in person. Former ITF Assistant General Secretary Hans Hauf - who is now working in Vienna - was also present and passed on the ITF's warm congratulations to its distinguished president on this happy occasion. The highlight of the ceremony came when Anton Benya, President of the Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB), presented Brother Prechtl with the Johann Böhm Plakette, a prestigious medal awarded for distinguished services over many years to the Austrian trade union movement.

Hans Baumgartner has been appointed Secretary to the Rhine Shipping Section of the Swiss Transport and Commercial Workers' Union (VHTL). Baumgartner is a member of the Committee of the ITF Inland Navigation Section and of the Section's 'Rhine-Main-Danube' Working Group.

Egil Halvorsen, former President of the Norwegian Railwaymen's Union, celebrated his 70th birthday on 12 January. Brother Halvorsen served on the ITF Railwaymen's Section Committee for a number of years and was awarded the ITF Gold Badge at the 1977 Dublin Congress.

Alf Karlsson has been appointed Negotiations Secretary of the Swedish State Employees' Union (SF) with effect from 1 May. Brother Karlsson was elected to the ITF Executive Board at our recent Madrid Congress and also serves on the Committee of the ITF Railwaymen's Section. Ture Persson has been chosen to succeed Ingvar Andersson as Chairman of the union's railway section when the latter retires in a year's time. Persson recently replaced Andersson as his country's deputy in the ITF Railwaymen's Section.

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland is the 1983 recipient of the Paul Hall Memorial Award, named in honour of the late President of the Seafarers' International Union of North America. Kirkland receives the Award for his staunch support of the US maritime industry.

George J Kourpias has been appointed General Vice-President of the US International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM). Kourpias was previously Executive Assistant to IAM President Winpisinger.

Eric Larsson, former official of the Swedish Transport Workers' Union, celebrated his 75th birthday on 29 November. Brother Larsson was Sweden's dockers' representative on the ITF Fair Practices Committee between 1958 and 1969.

Hans Mayr has been elected President of the International Metalworkers' Federation in succession to Eugen Loderer. Mayr is President of the German Metalworkers' Union IG Metall.

Wim Snijder of the Dutch Road Transport Workers' Union (Dienstbond FNV) retired at the beginning of this month after a union career spanning nearly forty years. Brother Snijder has served as a deputy on the Committee of the ITF Road Transport Workers' Section for a number of years.

Thomas Whaley (USA) has succeeded Günter Stephan as President of the International Federation of Commercial, Clerical, Professional and Technical Employees (FIET); FIET's two new Vice-Presidents are Bengt Lloyd (Sweden) and Siegfried Bleicher (Germany).

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Management Committee - London 20 March 1984
Executive Board - London 20-21 March 1984
Cabin Crew Technical Committee - Lisbon 9-11 May 1984

SUPPLEMENT NO.1 TO ITF NEWSLETTER OF JANUARY 1984

ITF Working Party to elaborate new standards for cruise ships

The Standing Committee on Cruise Ships, meeting in Dania, Florida earlier this month, decided to set up a working party to draft ITF standards to be applied to cruise ships under flags of convenience. Members will be drawn from Great Britain, Greece, Italy, Norway and the USA, together with Francis Mungroo of the Caribbean Maritime and Aviation Council (CMAC). To assist the Working Party in its work, the ITF Secretariat has been asked to circulate a list of cruise ships among affiliates requesting information as to the type of contractual situation on board, type of crew and trade union coverage. The Seafarers' International Union of North America and District 2 of the National Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association have also agreed to conduct a survey on employment and other conditions on cruise ships operating out of Miami and to submit their findings, and the Norwegian Seamen's Union will also provide similar details. The first meeting of the Working Party will be held in Oslo in early March, at the invitation of the Norwegian Seamen's Union.

At the end of its deliberations, the Standing Committee adopted a resolution calling on the ITF to consider the appointment of Cruise Ship Inspectors in Miami and the Caribbean area to police the standards once they have been elaborated.

To reflect the growing number of countries with an interest in the cruise trade, the Standing Committee also decided to recommend that new members from Denmark and France be co-opted.

Seafarers on cruise ships

Around 100 participants gathered in Miami on 11 January this year to scrutinize problems besetting crews on cruise ships and to try to reach consensus on what should constitute good employment practices on such ships. The forum was a workshop administered by the Center for Seafarers' Rights of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York and New Jersey and sponsored by several international and regional bodies, among them the ITF. ITF Seafarers' Section Chairman, Knud Mols Sørensen (Denmark), acted as one of the workshop chairmen and Ake Selander, ITF Assistant General Secretary, was one of the speakers. The ITF Seafarers' Section Vice-Chairman, Shannon Wall, was also in attendance together with a number of representatives of ITF seafarer affiliates in Europe, the United States and the Caribbean with a particular interest in the conditions of seafarers serving in cruise ships operating out of Miami and other US ports.

It is to be regretted that the majority of the shipowners concerned could not pluck up sufficient courage to attend the workshop to listen to what is wrong with the cruise ship industry today. In his address to the meeting Ake Selander postulated that "they feared the combined forces of the ITF and the voluntary organisations; to the shipowners and their passengers cruising is 'la vie en rose' - to some of the crew members cruising is tantamount to a slow death unless they find salvation in early dismissal." Nevertheless, some of the cruise ships operators were represented indirectly through the Liberian Shipowners' Council (Jeremy M S Smith) as were the Liberian authorities in the shape of Frank Wiswall, President of the Liberian Services. Some of the less prestigious flag-of-convenience registers did not bother to show the flag.

The speeches covered some considerable ground - the cruise ship industry today, the seafarers' perspective, the union perspective, a legal case, the Kloster project, existing US laws, immigration procedures, a code of ethics, the responsibility of registering countries, legislative proposals, chaplains' responsibilities and visiting cruise ships. The workshop split into debating groups and as a result the final plenary session was able to adopt a resolution which urged the workshop:

To SEND an urgent letter to all parties concerned outlining severe problems on some cruise ships and urging their immediate attention to these problems;

To ENDORSE the general principles on employment practices in cruise ships;

To CONSIDER for the time being the standards of the collective bargaining agreements of the Norwegian Seamen's Union as embodying desired goals for all seafarers in the cruise industry trading in the Caribbean basin;

To NOTE that several countries particularly the Bahamas and Panama, have failed to enforce their maritime law and to call upon all flag states to effectively strengthen their enforcement procedures;

To CALL UPON the United States government to ratify ILO Convention 147 and provide for its enforcement on an urgent basis;

To ENCOURAGE owners and operators in the cruise ships industry to employ seafarers from the areas which the ships are serving;

To SUPPORT the AFL-CIO in their legislative efforts to improve conditions on cruise ships engaged primarily in the United States trade;

To EXPRESS its appreciation of the efforts already undertaken on behalf of seafarers serving in cruise ships operating out of US ports and in the Caribbean area by the ITF and CMAC and their respective affiliates active in the area; and

To RESOLVE that correspondence be initiated with the owners of the 'Britanis' and 'Victoria' and if immediate improvements are not made to organize a consumer boycott of these ships.

The ITF wishes to extend a special thank you to the Rev Paul K Chapman, The Center for Seafarers' Rights, and the Rev J R Whittemore, Director of the Seamen's Church Institute, for their untiring efforts in making the workshop a success in spite of the heavy odds against: