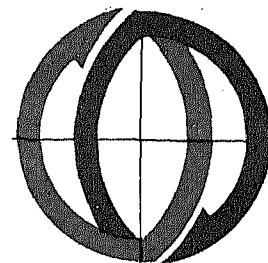


# ITF

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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

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INTERNATIONAL

ITF Cabin Crew Technical Committee discusses wide range of category problems at Lisbon Meeting

A meeting of the ITF Cabin Crew Technical Committee was held in Lisbon from 9 to 11 May 1984 with an attendance of 42 members, advisers and observers from 18 countries. One minute's silence was observed in memory of former ITF Civil Aviation Section Secretary Ken Golding.

The Committee elected J F M Woltering (Dutch Cabin Crew Association) as its new Chairman and L Leblanc (Canadian Air Line Flight Attendants' Association) as Vice-Chairman. Thanks were expressed to the outgoing Chairman E McDermott for his excellent and enthusiastic work on behalf of the Committee during his three-year period of office.

The meeting restated its intention of continuing to pursue the case for an international cabin crew licence. A small committee was appointed to draft a questionnaire seeking precise and detailed information from affiliates on training procedures and practices within individual airlines in time for the next meeting of the ICAO Personnel Licensing and Training Panel so that the ITF might be able to point to the deficiencies that exist as evidence of the need for ICAO to develop an international licensing standard.

It was also agreed to set up a Working Group to provide expert guidance to the Technical Committee on a range of occupational health and environmental problems. The Group will help prepare the ITF position for the ILO Tripartite Civil Aviation Conference due to be held during the 1986/7 biennium which will have occupational health and safety as one of the main agenda items.

The Committee decided to ask the ITF Executive Board to convene an International Conference of Cabin Crew Unions with the theme of 'health and safety' and a number of subjects connected with this were put forward by Committee members for consideration by the conference. It was further decided that a new international survey of Cabin Crews' Working Conditions should be published in 1986. Other questions dealt with by the meeting included: flight and duty time limitations; crew complements on different aircraft types, on which further information was requested; the shooting down of the Korean Air Lines Boeing 747; and the banning of trade union activity within Pakistan International Airlines.

A resolution opposing the Canadian Transport Minister's proposal to introduce US-style deregulation in the airline industry in Canada was adopted by the meeting, which also adopted four resolutions of support for cabin crew affiliates involved in negotiations and/or disputes with their governments and/or airlines, notably the German union currently seeking a reduction in monthly flight time for its members employed by Lufthansa; the Spanish union which is demanding that a full cabin crew complement should be carried on all Iberia flights and not just those with full occupancy; the Greek union still pursuing its case for an acceptable pension scheme; and the Portuguese union which is opposing a government decree setting different criteria for cabin and flight deck crews. One final resolution demanded that no duties should be required of cabin staff during the

taxiing of aircraft, with the sole exception of such duties as are essential to either flight or passenger and crew safety.

At the close of the meeting, the participants thanked the host union, the Portuguese Flight Staff Union (SNPVAC) for its warm hospitality and for the hard work put in by union officials in making the arrangements for the meeting.

#### ITF Standing Committee Working Group to investigate safety and training in the offshore industry

The first meeting of the ITF Standing Committee on Maritime Mobile Offshore Units set up by the Seafarers' Section at the ITF's Madrid Congress took place in Hong Kong on 5 and 6 April 1984 under the Chairmanship of S Wall (United States), Section Vice-Chairman. Twenty-five members, substitute members, advisers and observers from 13 countries participated. The meeting was preceded by an ad hoc meeting of unions (ITF affiliates and other unions) representing offshore divers at which it was decided to establish an international association of professional divers in the offshore industry, with the ITF being granted observer status.

The Standing Committee decided to appoint two working groups - one dealing with safety and training in the offshore industry and the other with the elaboration of an ITF collective agreement applicable to maritime mobile offshore units. Both groups have issued their preliminary reports and a joint meeting of the two working groups will be held in the autumn to further elaborate on these initial findings.

#### International Committee on Seafarers' Welfare meets in Geneva

A meeting of the International Committee on Seafarers' Welfare was held on 26 April 1984 at ILO headquarters in Geneva, preceded by a meeting of its Presidium the previous day. K Mols Sørensen, Chairman of the ITF Seafarers' Section and a Vice-Chairman of the Committee, chaired both meetings, and Ake Selander, ITF Assistant General Secretary, and Øysten Ringvold (Norway) represented the ITF on the Committee. Also represented were the International Shipping Federation (ISF), the International Christian Maritime Association (ICMA), the United Seamen's Service (USS), the International Labour Office (ILO) - acting as Secretariat to the Committee - as well as the British, Dutch and the four Nordic seamen's welfare agencies. R Anttila, Finnish Seamen's Union, was a member of the Finnish Government Welfare Service Board delegation.

The Committee discussed among other things the publication of a list of existing welfare facilities for seafarers, difficulties experienced by seafarers abandoned in foreign ports, availability of ship-to-shore communications for seafarers and possible elements in a port fee scheme to finance certain welfare facilities for seafarers. At the conclusion of the meeting two resolutions - both sponsored by the ITF - were adopted. One, on abandoned seafarers, urged both groups of the ILO Joint Maritime Commission seriously to consider how the cost of food and basic necessities, payment of wages and other entitlements and repatriation expenses might be met when all legal and contractual avenues had been exhausted; the second requested the ILO Director-General seriously to consider how best the Committee could be fully integrated into the ILO to ensure that all parties with a legitimate substantial interest in seafarers' welfare would become members of the Committee and to determine the scope of 'seafarers welfare' in ILO activities based on the relevant ILO instruments.

## ASIA

### Asian Seafarers' Regional Committee meets in Taiwan

Taipei, Taiwan was the venue for last month's meeting of the ITF Asian Seafarers' Regional Committee held under the chairmanship of K Mols Sørensen, Section Chairman. The delegates and advisers were drawn from unions in Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kiribati, Korea, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore and Taiwan and the ITF Secretariat was represented by A Selander, B Laughton and M S Hoda. The Committee embodied its views in a series of resolutions. These dealt inter alia with: the setting up of an Asian Seafarers' Secretariat; respect for the right of seafarers to freedom of movement when in port; an urgent appeal to all ITF affiliates to impress on their national delegations attending the forthcoming UN Conference of Plenipotentiaries the importance of giving their full support to efforts aimed at the transformation of open registries into normal registries; and the launching of an international campaign to convince governments of the need to incorporate in their national shipping legislation provisions for the safeguarding of seafarers' wages and other entitlements. It was also decided to recommend to the ITF Seafarers' Section that the Committee's name should be changed to the ITF Asia/Pacific Seafarers' Regional Committee as this would reflect its true composition.

## EUROPE

### ITF European Seafarers' Conference discusses continuing decline of European fleet

An ITF European Seafarers' Conference was convened in Antwerp, Belgium on 8 and 9 May 1984 to consider the continuing decline of the European fleet, practical action against f-o-c and other cheap carriers and measures to support national fleets. Some forty delegates from seafarers' unions in thirteen countries attended and the Section Chairman, K Mols Sørensen presided. The Conference adopted a resolution on the employment of non-domiciled seafarers calling for certain measures to be taken with a view to ending the discriminatory arrangements under which these seafarers are engaged at rates below the flag rate. Also adopted was a resolution on missile attacks on ships and mining of ports which in essence addressed itself to owners not to encroach upon the inalienable right of seafarers to refuse to sail into war risk areas and expressed the hope that the UN might prevail on warring countries not to attack civilian targets such as ships during innocent passage.

### Young railwaymen's leaders rally to the defence of public transport

Twenty-five leaders from the youth sections of ITF-affiliated railwaymen's unions in eight European countries met in Remich, Luxembourg last month for this year's young railwaymen's conference. By a happy coincidence, Jeannot Schneider, President of our Luxembourg railwaymen's affiliate, which hosted the conference, is the new ITF Railwaymen's Section Chairman, while for Graham Brothers, who attended from the Secretariat, this was his first official duty in his post as Railwaymen's Section Secretary.

Jeannot Schneider, in his keynote address to the conference, argued the case for an offensive strategy in defence of public transport and said that as Section Chairman he had already been in contact with railwaymen's unions in most of Europe to discuss what forms of campaigning action should be taken. It was the privilege of youth to inject new ideas and fresh blood into the labour movement and their active participation in these efforts would be warmly welcomed.

The delegates then split up into Working Groups to examine various topics and their recommendations to the full session placed particular emphasis on the need for international action in defence of public transport in general and the railways in particular and the importance of convincing the general public of what they stood to lose if positive policies promoting public transport were not adopted soon.

The conclusions of the conference were incorporated in a resolution adopted at its close which summarized the goals that the participants rightly believed should be pursued. This resolution, after calling first for a return to full employment, to be achieved through the introduction of a 35-hour week and a shorter working life, went on to list the transport policy measures to which they would give priority, including:

- a European-wide transport strategy giving pride of place to public transport on the grounds of its obvious advantages as regarded safety, the efficient use of energy and its contribution to reduced levels of pollution;
- the assignment of goods to the most appropriate transport mode, with all long-distance traffic and dangerous cargoes being transferred to the rails;
- an end to unfair competition between road and rail; and
- the improvement of the living and working conditions of public transport workers.

The resolution also opposed privatisation of any sector of the transport industry and supported fast, modern, comfortable and reasonably priced services. It ended with a resounding call for an international demonstration to convince our legislators, who had failed us up to now, of the need to defend public transport and protect the jobs of those employed in this vital industry.

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TRANSPORT

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AUSTRALIA

Australia bans overweight containers from the waterfront

New procedures were introduced last month banning overweight containers from the Australian waterfront as part of the continuing efforts of waterside labour to improve safety. The necessary measures were agreed by a national advisory committee on which the ITF-affiliated Waterside Workers' Federation (WWF) was prominently represented, together with the Department of Transport, federal and state associations of hauliers, shippers and freight forwarders, the waterside employers and other industry unions.

The arrangements arrived at require documentation accompanying containers for export to bear a rubber stamped certificate declaring that the all up weight of each container does not exceed the maximum gross weight permitted for that container, the declaration to be signed by the packer. Where, in the case of containers forwarded by rail, it is customary for the shipper to send a telex in lieu of documentation, the text of the telex shall include an identically-worded declaration. In special circumstances, such as consolidated rail shipment, the shipping agent or other authorised organisation shall provide either a rubber stamped declaration or forward a telex testifying that the container is not overweight. All other containers not falling within these three categories now need a weighbridge certificate, either publicly or privately issued.

The WWF has been made responsible for conducting random checks on containers other than in areas where container handling equipment is fitted with suitable load devices or other measuring equipment where no such checks will be carried out. The parties have also given warning that should the agreed procedures not be observed weighbridge certificates would be introduced for all export containers, with the exception of those packed at recognised depots or on the wharf.

Both employers and unions have said that they will jointly press for state and federal legislation to back up the procedures and provide for penalties for persistent overloading - a legislative goal that the unions on the federal advisory committee have been pursuing for some time now.

The new procedures are believed to be among the first ever introduced and it is hoped that ITF affiliates in other countries will follow the lead set by the Australian unions in pressing for similar steps to be taken in their own countries. In Australia, the unions' next move will be to deal with the somewhat more intractable problem of imported containers, where the maximum gross weight is frequently exceeded, and measures of enforcement of weight limits are less easy to devise. As a first step, it is being proposed that containers in excess of 25 tonnes should be unpacked on the wharf as a deterrent to overloading.

#### GERMANY

##### Union calls for introduction of system of state licensing for firms transporting hazardous and dangerous cargoes

Karl Heinz Hoffmann, Vice-President of the ITF-affiliated German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV) - in a letter to federal Transport Minister Werner Dollinger - has called for the introduction of a system of state licensing for road haulage companies which transport toxic substances and other hazardous cargoes. Describing as 'completely unsatisfactory' the present situation in which owners without distinction were currently entitled to move dangerous or toxic loads, the union's vice-president is advocating that detailed regulations pertaining to the carriage of such cargoes should be drawn up, with licences issued only to those undertakings that were suitably equipped to handle these cargoes in safety. Licences would be revoked for repeated or gross violation of the stipulations contained in the new regulations.

The OeTV would also like to see training of drivers improved and companies required to appoint a safety officer to deal with these cargoes.

#### SWEDEN

##### Weekend heavy lorry ban to be lifted again this summer

Following the success of last year's experiment\*, the Swedish Minister of Transport and Communications has agreed that the summer weekend ban on heavy lorry traffic should not be imposed this year. Voluntary restraint is again the keynote, with haulage operators being asked to reschedule their operations to avoid the main holiday weekends. The ITF-affiliated Swedish Transport Workers' Union, which is keen to have the ban lifted permanently, has asked European road transport workers' unions, through the ITF, for their cooperation and support in ensuring that foreign lorries do not add to road congestion at peak traffic periods during the summer months.

\* see ITF Newsletter No 3, 1983, page 25 for further information

UNITED STATES

Standard Oil must pay full damages for AMOCO CADIZ disaster

Following a law suit brought by the French government and various municipalities, a US Federal Court has ruled that the Standard Oil Company of Indiana - America's fourth biggest - was largely responsible for the loss of the Liberian-registered tanker AMOCO CADIZ in 1978. The company now faces claims of up to \$2 billion for pollution to over 100 miles of the French coast.

The AMOCO CADIZ, which was only four years old, was regarded as one of the best equipped and operated VLCCs when its steering gear failed and it ran aground one mile off the Brittany coast on 16 March 1978, spilling its cargo of 226,000 tons of light crude oil. Holiday beaches were ruined by the massive oil slick from the stricken vessel and the local shellfish industry wiped out.

The court in Chicago held Standard Oil and its subsidiaries 'jointly and severally liable' for the accident and said that the French claimants and the cargo insurers were 'entitled to the full extent of their incurred damages'. Further proceedings will now be held to determine the precise figure.

Amoco Oil - an offshoot of Standard Oil and operator of the AMOCO CADIZ was censured by the judge for failing to ensure that the vessel was seaworthy and its steering gear adequately maintained and that the crew had received adequate training. A claim by the company that the German tug operator had bungled the rescue attempt was dismissed by the court, which also rejected the oil company's charge that the French government and coastal towns had mishandled the efforts to clean up the oil spillage. The court did, however, concede that Standard Oil was entitled to damages against the Spanish yard which had built the AMOCO CADIZ 'to the extent that its own liability (Standard Oil's) was contributed to by the negligence and fault of the shipbuilder'.

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TRADE UNIONS

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NEW ZEALAND

Bomb takes life of caretaker at Wellington Trades Hall

The national labour movement was greatly outraged and New Zealand's proud image as a non-violent society rudely shattered when Ernie Abbott, a caretaker at the Wellington Trades Hall, was murdered on 27 March by a bomb placed in a suitcase in the foyer of the building. Brother Abbott had been a wharfie for most of his working life, and was widely respected by his fellow trade unionists on the waterfront. In recent years, while employed as a caretaker, he had been an active member of the cleaners' union, taking part in many conferences in Wellington's old town hall. It was here, fittingly, that his funeral was held, attended by thousands of trade unionists, the mourners led by national union leaders and local Labour politicians. Workers in Wellington also stopped work during the ceremony as a mark of respect for a fellow worker whose life had so tragically and brutally been cut short.

It is a sad comment on the times in which we live that the policies of division fostered by the current government of New Zealand should have led to this act of mindless violence with such tragic consequences for an innocent worker, going about his normal duties, and his close family. In his funeral oration, Labour



Party President Jim Anderton echoed the thoughts of all the ordinary decent working people of New Zealand when he said he hoped this terrible outrage would convince his fellow countrymen of the need to build a society based on equality, social justice and democracy, where peace and cooperation were the models, rather than confrontation and division.

## POLAND

### Authorities accused of torturing detained trade unionists

A letter from Andrzej Slowik, Chairman of Solidarity in the Lodz Region, smuggled out of Barczewo prison in northern Poland and dated 13 April describes how he has been subjected to mistreatment amounting to torture for refusing to be force-fed while on hunger strike seeking the right to be treated as a political prisoner. Slowik adds that four of his fellow prisoners, who like him are exhausted after a many-weeks-long hunger strike, were given one month in solitary at the end of March and that three of them had on the previous day been locked up in cells known as 'thermos flasks' (specially constructed cells with no toilet, water or ventilation and soundproofed by means of double walls and doors) where he expected they would be kept for between 24 and 48 hours.

There is every reason to believe that the detainees in this and other Polish prisons are being ill-treated by the authorities in a deliberate attempt to undermine their health and thus persuade them to emigrate when they are released after serving their sentences. According to more recent information, mass beatings have taken place in Barczewo prison, with several prisoners suffering severe injuries (one has a sprained arm, another two broken ribs). Visits from families and lawyers have already been suspended for some time.

In the light of these and other reports, the ICFTU has asked for representations to be made to Polish diplomatic missions abroad in protest at the brutal treatment of persons imprisoned for their espousal of trade union rights. Free trade unionists are also being requested to approach their respective governments asking them to intervene with the Polish government seeking an immediate end to these disgraceful and inhuman practices against trade union and political prisoners.

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## SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

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## AUSTRALIA

### Dockers impose work to rule to back contract demands

Dockers at all major Australian ports began a work to rule last month after the employers turned down a claim made by the ITF-affiliated Waterside Workers' Federation (WWF), in connection with the contract renewal, for significant improvements in the dockers' early retirement scheme. The WWF has since reached agreement in principle with the waterside employers on most of its contract demands, and it has been further agreed that those issues still in dispute (the early retirement scheme, redundancy arrangements for dockers leaving the industry and proposed roster changes in the container terminals at Sydney and Melbourne) should be referred to arbitration. The dockers have lifted their three-week-old ban to enable these talks to take place unhindered.

## DENMARK

### New pay rates for navigating officers

Revised pay rates, effective 1 April 1984, have come into operation for members of the ITF-affiliated Danish Navigating Officers' Association. The new monthly pay ranges (inclusive of cost-of-living allowance), according to vessel size and length of service, are as follows: chief officer: 10,830 kr to 15,198 kr; 1st officer: 10,667 kr to 13,582 kr; 2nd officer: 10,667 kr to 12,210 kr.

Overtime rates, inclusive of cost-of-living supplement, per half-hour on weekdays range from 40.69 to 51.30 kr for chief officers and from 40.08 to 45.23 kr for 1st officers, depending on size of vessel. Second officers receive a uniform rate of 40.08 kr. The corresponding rates for overtime performed on Sundays and Public Holidays are 51.65 - 65.12 kr (chief officers); 50.87 to 57.41 kr (1st officers); and 50.87 for all second officers.

The two-watch allowance (vessels not exceeding 1,400 grt) is 311 kr per 24-hour period for chief officers and 283 kr for 1st officers.

## FINLAND

### Radio officers boycott commercial messages to coastal radio stations

Radio officers on board 50 Finnish-registered vessels have been instructed by the ITF-affiliated Finnish Radio Officers' Association to stop transmitting commercial messages to Finnish coastal radio stations. The union boycott has been prompted by an announcement from the Finnish telecommunications authority that the Kotka coastal radio station and the Helsinki Radio short-wave station will be closed down at nights - a cost-saving measure which the union charges will endanger the safety of life at sea as this is the time when most accidents occur. Our affiliate has warned that if the authority's decision is not reversed the boycott will be widened to include all Finnish-registered vessels and radio officers of other nations' fleets would be asked to join in.

The Kotka station handles emergency calls in the east of the Gulf of Finland, while the Helsinki Radio short-wave station is the only station tuned to lifeboat emergency frequencies. Both stations relay calls between doctors in hospitals ashore and medics treating injured seafarers on shipboard.

### Coastal trade seafarers win pay increases

New pay rates have come into force for coastal trade seafarers organised in the ITF-affiliated Finnish Seamen's Union. On 1 March, pay and monetary allowances were increased by 3.2%, with an increase of 8.5% in benefits in kind. Stewardesses and deck and engine department ratings, as a low pay group, have been awarded an extra 55 markka per month. A further 3.6% increase in pay and allowances will take effect on 1 March 1985.

The pay improvements are based on the central wage agreement concluded in March by the Finnish Trade Union Confederation (see page 30 of March issue of the Newsletter).

## SOUTH AFRICA

### Stevedores' pay rates agreed

The South African General Workers' Union, an ITF affiliate, has concluded its fifth annual wage agreement with South African Stevedores Ltd, the largest stevedoring company in the country. Basic wage increases for stevedoring hands range from 12½% to 15% and for drivers from 12½% to 20%. The basic wage rate for stevedoring hands in Cape Town is now R19.13 per day, in Durban R18.65 per day and in Port Elizabeth and East London R18.70. Stevedoring hands are guaranteed 36 hours' wages per week. In the past five years - since the General Workers' Union has been representative in the industry - basic daily wages have increased by approximately 80%. Moreover, until the workers joined the General Workers' Union, there was no guaranteed wage.

The 1984 wage negotiations have been hindered by the economic recession as well as by the emergence of a number of small stevedoring companies. These companies have, on payment of a nominal fee, received licences for stevedoring work. They employ casual labour at cut rate wages, do not pay holiday pay, sick pay or provide protective clothing. Casual labour is often worked on 20 hour continuous shifts. All these factors have allowed these companies to undercut union labour and their services are being used by major international shipping lines.

A particular instance which came to the ITF's notice recently was the Israeli vessel, "Moran", owned by Zim, which was loaded with steel and general cargo in Durban by casual workers employed by Keely Stevedoring Ltd. The casuals have no guaranteed wages, no protective clothing and are not allowed any lunch or tea breaks. They often have to work until the job is finished, which can mean shifts of fifteen hours or more.

When the ship arrived in Israel, the ITF's inspector, Captain Groman of the Israeli Sea Officers' Union, lodged a strong protest with Zim against the use of stevedoring companies which fail to provide acceptable pay and working conditions and pointed to the problems which Zim could encounter if it continued to do so.

## SWEDEN

### SAS cabin crew strike averted

Contract negotiations between the ITF-affiliated Swedish Commercial Employees' Union (HTF) and the Commercial Employers' Organisation (HAO) on behalf of Swedish-based cabin staff employed by the Scandinavian airline SAS broke down on 13 April following an offer that would have widened the existing pay differentials between the company's Swedish-based and its Norwegian- and Danish-based cabin crews and involved an extension of duty hours. Talks were resumed but collapsed again and our affiliate called a warning strike on the short-haul network on 4 May.

An indefinite stoppage by all SAS's Swedish cabin personnel was averted when the mediator's proposals on pay were accepted by both parties. The settlement, which is of one year's duration, is estimated to produce an increase of about 11.7% for 1984 and is based on the central agreement reached between the Swedish Employers' Association (SAF) and the Private Salaried Employee Cartel (PTK). It also makes provision for various special additional increases to be paid for the period 1985-1987 over and above the sums fixed by agreement between the SAF and the PTK. These increases amount to 4 per cent for each of the years 1985 and 1986 and 3 per cent for 1987. The intention behind the payment of these special additional increases is to attempt to raise the pay of Swedish-based cabin staff to the same

relative position as the Norwegian-based personnel have vis-à-vis the Norwegian labour market. A special control group of employer and employee representatives will also be set up to monitor the effects of these measures.

The HTF had requested sympathetic action from ITF civil aviation affiliates in the event of a strike and a number of unions had already responded positively to this appeal for assistance when the news of a settlement was announced.

#### Road haulage agreement concluded

Following a difficult contract round, the ITF-affiliated Swedish Transport Workers' Union has signed a new one-year pay agreement on behalf of 25,000 members in road haulage. The agreement provides for a total wage increase equivalent to 9.5% by the end of 1984, with increases in the hourly rate of 2.10 kr on 1 April and 1.70 kr on 30 December. A lump sum payment of 300 kr has been made in lieu of retroactivity for the months of January-March. Unsocial hours payments and other allowances went up by 7% on 1 April and will be further increased by 3% at the end of December. It has also been agreed that leave pay will be improved at the beginning of 1985.

#### One-year pay agreement for ratings

The ITF-affiliated Swedish Seamen's Union reached agreement last month with the shipowners on a new one-year pay agreement covering 7,000 ratings. This gives pay increases of 475 kr per month from 1 May, followed by a further 104 kr on monthly rates from 1 October next. A lump-sum payment of 2,000 kr will also be made in lieu of retroactivity for the first four months of 1984.

A joint committee has been set up to look into working hours at sea in the hope that a satisfactory settlement of the question can be achieved before the end of the year.

### UNITED STATES

#### Unions picket non-union airline

A coalition of airline unions - including members of ITF affiliates - has set up picket lines at terminals used by a new airline - Frontier Horizon - to alert passengers to the fact that the carrier, set up by the parent company Frontier Airlines, is using non-union crews. The unions, which failed to block Horizon's certification by the Civil Aeronautics Board, are now considering mounting a further legal challenge and will argue that the airline's 275 ground and flying staff should be covered by the same agreements as already reached in respect of the parent company.

The new airline began services earlier this year between Denver and Washington DC, Chicago and San Francisco.

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#### NEWS IN BRIEF

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The 1981 amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) and the 1978 Protocol will enter into force on 1 September 1984 for all states party to the Convention or the Protocol. A deadline of 1 March 1984 for the receipt of objections to the amendments passed without any communication from contracting parties.

A fourth coastal shipowner has agreed to enter into an agreement with the ITF-affiliated Danish Ships' Catering Personnel Association for employees in the catering departments on its two vessels and has been removed from the list of owners against which action is being taken (see also page 40 of our last issue).

Great Britain: flight engineers serving with British Caledonian have won a 7.5% pay rise and a 4.9% productivity bonus under a deal negotiated by the ITF-affiliated Merchant Navy and Airline Officers' Association.

Greek cruise ship crews have won pay increases of 25%, backdated to 1 January, under a new one-year agreement negotiated by the ITF-affiliated Pan-Hellenic Seamen's Federation (PNO). The rises are the highest achieved for any group of Greek workers this year.

Japanese dockers ended a container terminal strike last month after being promised greater job security.

Portuguese dockers, fearing job losses and reduced earnings, have said they will resist government plans to make the loss-making ports more competitive and have warned of possible strike action.

The ITF-affiliated Swedish Transport Workers' Union has negotiated average pay increases of 4.9% this year for drivers employed by privately-owned coach companies.

United States: a tentative agreement reached for Northwest Orient Airlines cabin attendants last month provides for six per cent pay increases on 1 July 1984 and 1985. The settlement on pay averted a strike.

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OBITUARY

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Walter Padley, President of the British Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers from 1948 to 1964, died on 15 April, aged 67. A prominent Labour politician, he held the office of Minister of State for Foreign Affairs for four years during the 1960s.

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PERSONALIA

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Kim Dong-in, President of the Korean Federation of Port and Transport Workers' Unions, has been elected to the presidency of the Federation of Korean Trade Unions.

Captain Kerry Dwyer has resigned from the vice-presidency of the Merchant Service Guild of Australia on being appointed to a senior management post with the Queensland Department of Harbours and Marine.

Aage Jensen, former chief treasurer of the Danish Commercial and Clerical Workers' Union (HK), celebrated his 75th birthday on 6 May.

Justus Muléi has been elected General Secretary of the Kenyan Central Organisation of Trade Unions (COTU) in succession to Juma Boy who died last year.

Lars-Erik Nicklasson, who retired this month from the presidency of the Swedish State Employees' Union (SF), has been appointed Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Swedish State Railways (SJ).

Wim Snijder, recently retired from the Dutch Road Transport Workers' Union (Dienstenbond FNV), has been created a knight of the Order of Orange-Nassau. We extend hearty congratulations to Brother Snijder on receiving this award.

Hubert Vomberg, Vice-President since 1967 of the German Railwaymen's Union (GdED), retired at the end of last month. Vomberg was for many years the union's negotiating secretary and it is largely thanks to his far-sightedness that Germany's railwaymen today have such excellent general conditions of service. Brother Vomberg has been a prominent member of the Committee of the ITF's Railwaymen's Section since 1977, having previously served as a deputy on that body. Gerhard Pohl succeeds Vomberg as GdED Vice-President. Brother Pohl currently serves on the Committee of the ITF Road Transport Workers' Section.

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FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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Fair Practices Committee - London .....	21-22 June 1984
Fishermen's Section Steering Committee - London .....	5 July 1984
Marine Pilotage Committee - Copenhagen .....	20-21 August 1984
Ground Staff Technical Committee - Amsterdam .....	2 October 1984
ATLAS/KSSU Committee - Amsterdam .....	3-4 October 1984
Management Committee - Innsbruck .....	16 October 1984
Executive Board - Innsbruck .....	16-17 October 1984

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"New Continental" - Safety Last!

Regular readers of the ITF Newsletter\* will remember that back in the autumn of last year Continental Airlines - faced by a strike of its employees - declared itself bankrupt, repudiated existing agreements and reorganised as "New Continental", hiring non-union labour and re-engaging those of its former employees who felt that they had no choice but to rejoin on whatever terms they could get. The situation, to say the least, still remains fraught and detailed reports made available to us from reliable sources point up serious and alarming deficiencies in the safety of Continental's operations in the months since reorganisation which we feel should be brought to wider public notice.

According to the Union of Flight Attendants (UFA), which organises Continental's cabin personnel, this category has been so hastily cross-trained and is currently working under such pressures that the ability, especially of the newly-hired staff, to carry out even routine duties and safety procedures must be in doubt. One particular incident, a 'bomb scare' on a scheduled flight last October, to which we will revert later, shows just how ill-equipped Continental's flight attendants are to deal with a real in-flight emergency.

When the airline reorganised this group lost the essential protection of union-negotiated flight and duty time limitations and mutually-agreed maximum monthly hours. Many of Continental's strike-breaking cabin attendants are logging up to 100 actual flying hours per month, some even up to 140 hours. Maximum duty periods are now 16 hours domestic and 17½ hours international, and legal rest periods may be as short as 7 hours block-to-block. The safety implications of flying with a fatigued cabin crew are obvious and the reason why aviation unions have fought to ensure that collective agreements include detailed stipulations as regards minimum rest periods and maximum duty hours.

Also lacking in Continental today is that vital sense of unity between cabin attendants flying as members of a team with trust and confidence in each other. The long-standing distrust of Continental's former cabin staff for their opposite numbers in the parent company Texas International (these two groups have now merged) remains as strong as ever, with the company making no effort to encourage its staff to sink their differences. Add to this the fact that it is now flying with crews made up of cabin attendants who crossed picket lines early on and believe they have 'saved the airline', a more recent group forced by the fear of unemployment to ask for their old jobs back and inexperienced scabs hired during the IAM strike last August and the potential for serious friction in the cabin is clearly set. The cabin is no place for settling old scores or for lame ducks - in-flight emergencies, when they do occur, must be dealt with promptly and efficiently if all on board are to have the best possible chance of survival.

The shortcomings of company cross-training (training given to enable cabin attendants to serve on aircraft types with which they are unfamiliar; in Continental's case, as a matter of policy, crews are now being trained to serve on all the aircraft types in its fleet) have been briefly alluded to. The flight attendants undergoing this training have been justifiably alarmed at Continental's somewhat cavalier approach to crew training and have contacted their union to tell it of their experiences. Their criticisms are wide-ranging and merit detailed mention.

\* see ITF Newsletters Nos. 9/10, 1983, page 86  
11, 1983, page 98  
1, 1984, page 7  
2, 1984, page 22

They report greatly overcrowded classes (with trainees obliged to share desks and even chairs), instructors who read from their notes and were unable to answer trainees' questions or answered them vaguely, inadequately and even incorrectly (one instructor was unable to say how many passengers could be carried on the B 727-100 and the 727-200, another was totally unfamiliar with the exit doors on the 727). In one training class, the instructors were unable to name the various items of safety equipment and were forced to fall back on phrases such as 'thing-of-a-majig' etc. The organisation of individual classes was often chaotic, with instructors leaving the classroom for extended periods (a matter of hours in one instance) or unclear of what should happen in the next phase of training.

One class was rehearsed in all the set questions two hours before the actual test and was allowed to write down the answers to the most difficult questions. The actual tests were taken with the aid of notes, papers and emergency equipment diagrams placed on the table or laid on the floor in full view of the invigilator. Papers were marked on the same table as was being used by those still taking the test. One trainee said that at least half of those in her class had cheated in order to pass the test. Indeed, they seem to have been encouraged to do so so that a one hundred per cent pass rate could be recorded.

None of the trainees who wrote to the union and whose reports we have read felt that they were sufficiently knowledgeable safely to evacuate in an emergency the aircraft type on which they were supposedly now 'qualified'. Significantly, they referred to 'alleged' training or put the words 'cross-training', 'qualified' and even 'instructor' in inverted commas.

Initial training of scabs hired last August was no better, with classes of up to 400 completing their training in just two weeks. Many of these new hires are said still to be unable to perform even their routine duties and they would appear totally to lack the necessary grounding and confidence to handle difficult emergency situations.

Alarming, while the standard of flight attendant performance in an emergency has dropped, the number of safety incidents has been rising in the months since reorganisation. One experienced flight attendant said she had been involved in three emergencies since she returned to work two months ago, the only such emergencies in a fifteen-year career with Continental. It is perhaps unfair to infer that all emergencies would be so poorly handled, but the 'bomb scare' incident already referred to was so woefully mishandled that had there been a bomb on board, and thankfully there was not (though nobody could have known that at the time), the casualty figures might well have been very high indeed.

In this particular emergency, Continental cabin staff who were flying as passengers (they were deadheading) had to take over from the duty flight attendants, who were totally unable to cope. One can only speculate on the outcome had they not been on board.

The deadheading attendants had observed a number of safety violations even before the 'bomb scare' was announced about twenty minutes before landing. The new hire in the first-class area (where most of the deadheading flight attendants were seated), when running through the emergency drill, had been unable to point out the location of the emergency exits. There had been no baggage or passenger seat check and a passenger who lit up while the no-smoking signs were still showing had not been asked to extinguish his cigarette. The crew's authority, such as it was, had been further undermined by the fact that the two new hires were not in uniform and could be identified solely by the company ribbon they were wearing (passengers turned to the deadheading FAs, who were in uniform, for information as a result). Passenger requests for service were also ignored by the duty FAs on a number of occasions.



Most seriously, when the captain rang insistently back to the cabin there was no response. Eventually, the second officer opened up the cockpit door and summoned assistance from the senior flight attendant in the deadheading crew. So little confidence did he have in the new hires flying with him that this attendant was asked not to inform them of the 'bomb scare' as they would only be frightened.

Instead, he asked the deadheading crew members to secure the cabin for landing. Items that had been left obstructing the aisles were properly stowed and two of the deadheading crew substituted in the jump seats for the new hires who had got wind of what was happening and were so panic stricken that they were unable to fasten their seat belts. When the plane had landed, the passengers were instructed to leave in the normal way, taking their luggage with them (even though the bomb could have been hidden in a suitcase). They were not urged to hurry.

A mobile lounge or people mover was used to take the passengers back to the airport hall. Because of mechanical problems, it remained attached to the aircraft for 20 minutes. When it did eventually get away, it was driven recklessly, and a number of the hapless passengers were injured when it came to a sudden and abrupt halt and then lurched forward again without warning.

The captain boarded the crew bus with the duty crew and the deadheading crew members. The unclaimed cabin baggage was placed in the bus! Two of the deadheading crew members had failed to board, but the captain still told the driver to 'get the hell out of here', leaving the passengers in the mobile lounge and the two FAs to their fate.

Lest we give the erroneous impression that these safety lapses involve only the cabin crew we should add that we have detailed reports documenting the poor performance of Continental's pilots, many of whom are also newly hired, which we will deal with in the next issue of the Newsletter. The US Air Line Pilots' Association has compiled a list of safety incidents it has verified headed "Safety - 35 Reasons Not To Fly The New Continental". (A further 63 incidents are awaiting final verification.) Concern is now growing and a recent TV programme has prompted a full Congressional investigation into safety within the new Continental. We can only hope that there will be no serious or fatal injuries to either Continental's personnel or its passengers before action can be taken. Continental's luck has held this far, but how much longer can it last?