



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. 2

February 1985

IN THIS ISSUE

Page

News and Views from the ITF

- 11th Session of the ILO Inland Transport Committee 9
- The morass of compromises at UN Conference on Conditions for the Registration of Ships deepens 10
- ITF Offshore Working Group makes progress in Gothenburg 12

Transport

- European Parliament wins the first round in transport policy case against Council of Ministers 12
- German government urged by union and workers to drop plans to privatise Lufthansa 12

Social and Industrial News

- Icelandic seamen and fishermen strike for higher pay 13
- Unions strike over proposed closure of Portugal's two largest shipping companies 13
- Spanish rail unions call strike action to back contract demands 14
- New central pay agreement for Swedish blue-collar workers 14
- Continental parent corporation ordered to submit US pilot union damage claim to arbitration 15
- Eastern Airlines pay talks end (United States) 15
- Pilots win case against TransWorld Airlines in US over enforced retirements 16

News in Brief

Personalia

Forthcoming Meetings

Supplement: Federal Aviation Administration Goes Easy on Union Busting Continental Airlines

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

INTERNATIONAL

11th Session of the ILO Inland Transport Committee

The 11th Session of the ILO's Inland Transport Committee was held in Geneva from 23 to 31 January 1985 and was attended by 244 delegates representing 29 countries and international organisations, including the ITF.

In addition to discussing the International Labour Office's General Report concerning action taken to implement previous decisions of the Committee and describing developments in inland transport over the past five years, the Committee discussed, and adopted Conclusions on, the following two agenda items:

- The working and social conditions of boatmen in domestic and international inland navigation, including legal protection and repatriation as well as occupational safety and health aspects connected with the application of new technologies;
- Occupational safety and health in road transport.

With respect to improving conditions of inland boatmen, it was agreed that special attention should be paid to the harmonization of safety regulations, particularly relating to new techniques and equipment and the transportation of dangerous cargoes. The importance of regulating working hours and fixing a maximum daily working period was stressed especially in view of the spread of continuous day and night navigation. The Committee recommended that paid leave entitlement should be at least equal to that enjoyed by other transport workers and the importance of measures to protect young boatmen was underlined. In the light of technological progress, increased attention needed to be given to vocational training and re-training and to certificates of competency. In international navigation, provisions should be made for repatriation and for legal protection of boatmen when abroad.

With respect to the Road Transport agenda item, the Conclusions noted the need for improved statistics to enable a better understanding of the causes of safety and health hazards to be reached. The Committee stressed the great importance of cooperation between governments, employers, workers and manufacturers in vehicle design. Limitations should be placed on working and driving hours and adequate provision should be made for the length and frequency of rest periods in order to minimise driver fatigue. Bipartite or tripartite Safety and Health bodies should be established to advise on accident prevention, and occupational safety and health should be a prominent feature of vocational training programmes, with particular attention being paid to drivers and loading staff of vehicles carrying hazardous cargoes. Periodic inspections should enforce vehicle safety standards. The ILO was asked to carry out research into physical and mental stress and to provide technical assistance to developing countries, in particular to promote training activities in the light of technological change.

The Committee adopted ten Resolutions concerning:

- the promotion of collective bargaining in the rail industry;
- job losses on the railways;

- the right of workers in transport undertakings to organise and bargain collectively;
- the agenda of the Twelfth Session of the Inland Transport Committee;
- the representation of developing countries;
- the publication in Spanish of the reports of the Inland Transport Committee;
- the problems of young persons employed in the inland transport sector;
- freedom of association in the inland transport industries;
- ILO technical co-operation in the field of passenger transport;
- the future work of the ILO in inland transport.

The ILO Governing Body was invited to include the two following subjects in the agenda of the next (12th) Session of the Inland Transport Committee:

- (1) The social and legal protection (including repatriation) of inland transport workers engaged in international transport during their temporary periods of work abroad;
- (2) The consequences of modernisation and new technologies in inland transport having regard to the structure of employment, professional skills and methods of negotiation.

K Haussig, Germany, was elected Workers' Vice-Chairman of the Committee; J Grönberg, Sweden, was elected Chairman of the Workers' Group and G Brothers, ITF, Secretary of the Workers' Group. H Baumgartner (Switzerland) was elected Workers' Vice-Chairman of the Sub-Committee dealing with the agenda item on inland boatmen's conditions, and J Ashwell, Great Britain, was elected Workers' Vice-Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Safety and Health in Road Transport.

The ITF held a preliminary meeting of affiliates' representatives attending the Inland Transport Committee in Geneva on 22 January 1985.

The morass of compromises at UN Conference on Conditions for the Registration of Ships deepens

The resumed session of the United Nations Conference on Conditions for Registration of Ships had a sporting chance of reaching some sort of an agreement which might have satisfied most parties to a larger or lesser degree. However, the f-o-c lobby whips were after a real whitewash job and very nearly succeeded in doing so with the text on the "rôle of flag states in the management of shipowning companies and vessels" - a text which, had it been adopted, would have put the clock back to the days when few regulations governed the f-o-c operator. The text on "manning of vessels" still contains references to multinational or bilateral crewing agreements or other arrangements as well as to "the need to operate vessels in the most competitive and efficient manner" - "competitive" meaning by the cheapest crews on earth wherever they may be found and this certainly does not correlate to "efficient manner". Fortunately, the latter text - produced by the "B" Group (read group of OECD countries) - is within so-called square brackets. The text on ownership of vessels would appear quite reasonable but for the footnote - inserted by the "B" Group - to the effect that the word "national" in "adequate participation by nationals of the flag state in the ownership of vessels" should be defined as meaning both natural and juridical persons. Such a definition would not permit the flag state to exercise effectively

its jurisdiction and control over the vessels flying its flag. In spite of considerable compromises by all groups - often to the point where the ITF participants must have been wondering whether the object was to maintain the status quo or to tighten up the conditions governing the registration of ships - it was not possible to reach agreement this time around and right at the end the US delegation - presumably speaking on behalf of the owners of the large US-owned tonnage under foreign flags - insisted that the next resumed session must be convened within present budgetary limits. In the end and after much soul-searching by the US delegation a compromise formula was found to the effect that the Conference should request the UN Secretary-General to seek the approval of the General Assembly at its resumed 39th session - in April 1985 - to resume the Conference for a period of two weeks in July 1985. It is already clear that the Conference has moved considerably away from its original objective of phasing out open registers and is now seeking to surround those registers with a minimum of regulations to ensure identification, accountability and safe operation.

Ake Selander, ITF Assistant General Secretary, speaking as ICFTU observer again stressed the need to define and retain the genuine link. One defender of the open registry system stated "that an international binding agreement with the crew nationality criteria included would in their opinion ruin shipping companies in those countries where maritime labour is costly, and compartmentalize relations between international shipping operators, countries of registry and labour-supplying countries and thus reduce the international flexibility of such operators". Brother Selander retorted that the truth of the matter was that those companies want to avoid responsibility and enter into a free-for-all market where competition is not only free but boundless - Cyprus yesterday, Vanuatu today and St Vincent tomorrow. Once rock-bottom wages and conditions have been obtained what are they going to do - lower other standards?

In his closing remarks Brother Selander took the Federation of American Controlled Shipping to task for having published a totally unwarranted and disparaging attack on the UNCTAD Secretariat accusing the latter of collusion with labour and feather-bedding.

Throughout the present resumed session it became abundantly clear that unless the present system of debate is changed - which was in fact suggested by the spokesman of the Group of 77 in his closing address - there is the danger that the next and presumably final resumed session will come to nothing. It would certainly be more congenial to the delegates and far more beneficial to the debate if the committee meetings, informal contact group meetings and plenary sessions were to kick off in the morning and be followed by meetings of the various interest groups.

The ITF scored one notable success during this resumed session in that it was able for the first time to attend the meetings of the "B" Group following consensus agreement within the Group.

Affiliated seafarer organisations were as usual represented on their national delegations and this time the record showed that Belgium, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, India, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and United States had afforded such representation. The ITF/ICFTU delegation was headed by Ake Selander who was assisted by L Heinonen (Finland) and K E Sukhia (India).

ITF Offshore Working Group makes progress in Gothenburg

The combined working group appointed by the ITF Standing Committee on Maritime Mobile Offshore Units met in Gothenburg on 7 and 8 February 1985. Affiliates in Australia, Great Britain, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and United States were represented. The delegates approved two sets of ITF collective agreements for the offshore industry (subject to further work to be undertaken by an inter-sessional working group) and adopted papers dealing with ITF manning scales for the offshore industry, construction/strength/stability of offshore units, fire-fighting equipment and procedures, life-saving appliances, muster lists/musters/drills, helicopter operations, medical examination/health certificate, basic safety training and living accommodation. The working group's recommendations will next be submitted to the full standing committee for final approval. The meeting was chaired the first day by the Vice-Chairman of the ITF Seafarers' Section, Shannon Wall, United States, and the second day by the ITF Assistant General Secretary, Ake Selander.

TRANSPORT

EUROPE

European parliament wins the first round in transport policy case against Council of Ministers

In a formal opinion delivered last month, the European Court declared that the case brought by the European parliament against the Council of Ministers two years ago* was admissible. The parliament had charged the Council with failing to act in accordance with its obligation under the Treaty of Rome to agree a common transport policy. Although the opinion will probably form the basis of any final decision of the court it is not in itself legally binding.

As this is the first time that a legal challenge has been mounted by one Community institution against another the court action is being regarded as a key test case of Community law.

GERMANY

Government urged by union and workers to drop plans to privatise Lufthansa

The ITF-affiliated German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV) is concerned that the international competitiveness of the national airline Lufthansa will be damaged if the government goes ahead with plans to sell off a quarter of its 80% stake in the carrier. The strength of feeling is testified to by the fact that over nine thousand employees of Lufthansa and its two sister companies Condor and Lufthansa Service have already added their signatures to a petition drawn up by the OeTV opposing partial privatisation. Many more company workers are expected to sign in the coming weeks as the petition continues to circulate.

* see ITF Newsletter No. 1, 1983, page 1 for details

OeTV President Monika Wulf-Mathies and transport policy spokesman Eike Eulen, in a joint letter to Chancellor Kohl, have called on the government to take full account of this clear expression of worker opinion and the arguments against privatisation advanced by the OeTV when making a final decision on the matter.

In recent months, the OeTV has argued strongly in favour of the retention of the present level of state support for Lufthansa as being in the best interests of its employees and vital to the continued viability of the airline.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

ICELAND

Seamen and fishermen strike for higher pay

Vessels owned by the Icelandic Steamship Company were tied up on their return to their home port of Reykjavik earlier this month when members of the ITF-affiliated Icelandic Seamen's Federation went on strike in support of a pay claim. The industrial action was called off on 10 February after an agreement was reached between the owners and the union and the government said it would cut seafarers' income tax by ten per cent. Details of the settlement are not yet available.

The following week, Iceland's 5,000 fishermen commenced an indefinite strike to back their claim for a minimum monthly wage of 28,000 Icelandic kroner on fishing vessels under 500 tonnes and 21,000 kr on larger vessels*. The action is also affecting workers employed in ancillary industries on shore, notably in freezing plants. The employers have conceded that the fishermen's pay demands are reasonable but that they are unable to meet them due to falling catches and lower world market prices for Icelandic cod.

PORTUGAL

Unions strike over proposed closure of Portugal's two largest shipping companies

Virtual one hundred per cent support was won for a strike called by shipping unions (including ITF affiliates) early this month over the Portuguese government's decision to close the country's two largest shipping companies, Companhia Portuguesa de Transportes Marítimos (CTM) and Companhia Nacional da Navegação (CNN), which between them employ about three-quarters of Portugal's seafarers.

The government intends to put the two loss-making companies, which were nationalised ten years ago, into liquidation and to replace them by two mixed-capital companies, Portline and Transinsular. (It is proposed that Portline should handle Portugal's international seaborne traffic and that Transinsular should operate the domestic routes between the Portuguese mainland and the islands of Madeira and the Azores.)

* the difference is explained by the fact that crews are paid a share of the value of the vessel's catch. The larger the ship, the larger the cash value of the bonus.

The unions maintain that the two existing companies could still be made viable and have petitioned President Eanes urging that he refuse to promulgate the decree ordering their compulsory winding up. President Eanes has referred the government order on the closures to the constitutional court for an opinion (expected early March) on its legality under the constitution.

Industrial action was suspended on 7 February pending further discussions within the Shipping Ministry on the unions' demands in connection with the closures, although a warning has been given that the strike will be re-imposed at the end of this month if satisfactory assurances are not obtained by then. The unions are determined that should it prove impossible to prevent the closures from going ahead, employee rights would still be fully protected. In particular, they are demanding solid assurances of continued employment for all ex-employees of CTM and CNN and that the pensions of retired staff would continue to be paid. They are also seeking guarantees that the right to free collective bargaining - which they believe to be under threat - would be respected by the management of the two new companies.

Prior to the strike, the ITF had cabled President Eanes and Prime Minister Soares expressing serious concern at these attempts to dismantle the two state-owned shipping companies and pointing out that the world's maritime unions were behind their Portuguese colleagues in their struggle for a fair deal. Seafarer affiliates have also been quick to respond to a request that they should send messages of support for the unions' position.

SPAIN

Rail unions call strike action to back contract demands

Spain's railway unions - including members of the ITF-affiliated UGT Transport Workers' Federation - have given notice of three one-day strikes on the national railway network (RENFE) in February/March to back demands for a 7.5% pay rise this year and the creation of the extra 7,500 jobs that they claim are needed to reduce excessive overtime working and enable existing staff to take outstanding leave. The employers have so far refused to improve on their offer to raise pay by 4 per cent in both 1985 and 1986 and to create 2,700 new jobs. The unions have turned this down.

The union side is also in dispute with the management over the latter's insistence that railway workers maintain a minimum level of service (25 per cent of normal) during strikes. The unions insist that no trains at all should run, although dispensations would be considered in cases of genuine emergency.

SWEDEN

New central pay agreement for blue-collar workers

A new pattern agreement has been negotiated by the Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO) with the Employers' Association on behalf of blue-collar workers organised in over twenty LO-member unions. The agreement provides for salaries to rise by a total of five per cent this year, in keeping with the government's informal pay guidelines. Other improvements relate to long-term sickness benefit and working hours of shift workers.

UNITED STATES

Continental parent corporation ordered to submit pilot union damage claim to arbitration

Texas Air Corporation (TAC), the owner of Continental Airlines, has been ordered by a federal district court in Houston to submit to arbitration the damage claims made against it by the ITF-affiliated Air Line Pilots' Association in connection with the Continental bankruptcy.

TAC had been vigorously resisting arbitration as were it to lose the case it might find itself liable for tens of millions of dollars in damages for failing to require its Continental subsidiary to observe the labour contract entered into with the union.

In August 1982, Continental pilots signed a labour contract with Continental in which they agreed to major concessions on pay and conditions. In return, the parent corporation agreed that it and all its subsidiaries would stand by the terms of the contract for its full term. It was separately agreed that any disputes involving the agreement should go to neutral arbitration.

When Continental revoked all its labour contracts on declaring bankruptcy in the autumn of 1983 TAC attempted to have the issue settled in the bankruptcy court rather than submit to arbitration. In the decision handed down last month, the district court held that the bankruptcy court had no jurisdiction in the case and ordered that the dispute proceed to arbitration.*

Eastern Airlines pay talks end

Eastern Airlines agreed to restore full pay to its entire workforce for the month of January, only days before it was due to appear in court to defend an action brought by two of its unions.

Eastern Chairman Frank Borman had written to employees on 31 December informing them that the 1984 pay cuts (of between 18 and 22 per cent that had been agreed with Eastern's unions in return for a 25 per cent equity stake in the company) would again be applied in 1985 as the airline could not afford to start paying salaries in full. The unions (the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers and the Air Line Pilots' Association - both ITF affiliates) immediately sought a court order to prevent the airline from continuing the concessions while revised collective agreements were being worked out. They dropped their case when the airline had a change of heart.

Further negotiations have since been held between the company and its unions, resulting in tentative agreement on new contract terms covering both ground and flying staff employees. Some concessions on pay are once again involved, although these are understood to be less drastic than those agreed to last year. Full details will be given in a future issue of the ITF Newsletter.

* Readers are referred to a Supplement to this edition for a further Continental story

Pilots win case against TransWorld Airlines over enforced retirements

In a recent judgement, the US Supreme Court ruled that Transworld Airlines had violated federal legislation outlawing age discrimination by compelling ten former company pilots to retire at age 60 instead of offering them continued employment as flight engineers. TWA had claimed in its defence that at the time the pilots were retired in 1978 it had no vacancies for flight engineers.

TransWorld is now obliged to invite the pilots back to fly as third cockpit crewmember once they have passed the relevant competency and proficiency tests. It will also have to pay the ten the salaries due to them since they were compulsorily retired by the airline. However, TransWorld will not have to pay double damages as the judge ruled that the violations were not 'wilful'.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Great Britain: the ITF-affiliated National Union of Seamen has negotiated a two-tier agreement for the crew of the Cunard cruise liner QE2 providing for extra leave for waiters and stewards and an eight per cent pay increase for all other staff. In a separate deal, the crew of the Cunard Countess also receive an eight per cent pay increase.

Great Britain: dockers in the west coast port of Bristol - in their first two-year pay agreement - have won increases of 6 per cent on 1 January 1985 and 1986 plus a guarantee of more money next year should inflation exceed this level. Improved mechanical handling arrangements and revised manning levels for tally clerks have also been agreed with the port employers.

India: the ITF-affiliated Transport and Dock Workers' Union cancelled plans for an indefinite strike from 1 February in the Bombay docks after the port management promised further talks over proposed cuts in the size of container handling gangs. The strike notice had been prompted by union fears that smaller gangs would lead to large-scale lay-offs and dismissals.

The US Transportation Department has announced that - subject to Congressional approval - the government stake in Conrail will be sold to another railroad company, the Norfolk Southern Corporation. This was the preferred bid over twelve others submitted last year (see ITF Newsletter No. 9, 1984, page 89).

PERSONALIA

Carmel S Consiglio will take over from George Agius as General Secretary of the Malta General Workers' Union when the latter retires later this year. Consiglio has been appointed to the temporary post of General Secretary (Adjunct) until he assumes his new responsibilities.

Ernst Haar, President of the German Railwaymen's Union (GdED) and a member of the ITF Executive Board, celebrated his 60th birthday on 26 January. ITF President Fritz Prechtel attended the birthday celebrations to convey congratulations and best wishes to Haar on this happy occasion.

Henk Leisink has been appointed chairman of the Civil Aviation Section of the Dutch Transport Workers' Union. He succeeds Henri Popelier. Popelier currently serves on the Committee of the ITF Civil Aviation Section and on its Ground Staff Technical Committee, with Leisink as his deputy.

Margaret Prosser is the next Women's Officer of the British Transport and General Workers' Union. She succeeds Marie Patterson who retired at the end of last year after over twenty years in the post. Delegates to the 1975 ITF Women's Conference will remember Ms Patterson as the most able chairman of that meeting.

Leif Rasmussen becomes treasurer of the Transport Group of the Danish Transport and General Workers' Union (SiD) with effect from the beginning of next month.

We extend our most sincere congratulations to Hans Schmölz, General Secretary of the Austrian Railwaymen's Union, who has been awarded the Grand Medal of Honour for Services to the Republic of Austria.

Fritz Schreiber, Chief Treasurer of the German Railwaymen's Union (GdED) from 1956 until his retirement in 1970, celebrated his 80th birthday on 5 February.

Nobuo Tomizuka has been elected the new President of the Japan Federation of Travel and Air Cargo Agency Workers' Unions (KANKO-ROREN). The outgoing President is Naruo Ozaki, who has served for some years as a most-valued Vice-Chairman of the ITF Travel Bureau Workers' Section.

Gerald Toppen, an International Vice-President of the US Brotherhood of Railway, Airline and Steamship Clerks since 1971, retired late last year.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Executive Board - Tokyo 19-20 March 1985
Marine Engineer Officers - Dania (Florida) 1-2 April 1985
Fair Practices Committee Collective Agreement Review
Sub-Committee - London 17-18 April 1985
Fishermen's Section Steering Committee - Boulogne 23 April 1985
Fishermen's Section Conference - Boulogne 24-25 April 1985

Asian Seafarers' Regional Committee - Solo (Indonesia) 8-10 May 1985
Civil Aviation Section Conference - Stockholm 13-15 May 1985
Seafarers' Section Maritime Policy Committee - London 6-7 June 1985
Fair Practices Committee - London 10-11 June 1985
Travel Bureau Section Conference - San Diego 17-18 June 1985
Railwaymen's Section Conference - Nuremberg 17-19 September 1985
Road Transport Workers' Section Conference - Rome 6-8 November 1985

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

Federal Aviation Administration Goes Easy on Union Busting Continental Airlines

We publish below in full an article by Captain Henry A Duffy, President of the ITF-affiliated US Air Line Pilots' Association describing recently discovered evidence of air safety discrepancies at Continental:

Most readers of this publication probably are aware that a labor dispute has been going on at Continental Airlines since the fall of 1983. What they may not know is that there is growing evidence that the bankrupt, labor-struck airline also has serious safety problems.

Although the Air Line Pilots' Association began warning the public of these problems more than a year ago*, you don't have to take our word for it. The Federal Aviation Administration, our government's air safety enforcer, said so itself. In an April 20, 1984 internal report, the FAA listed dozens of safety discrepancies it discovered in a special inspection of Continental. It described major problems in training, maintenance, and flight operations, and cited specific incidents of each.

Despite the bureaucratic tone of the report, even the most enthusiastic air traveler cannot help but be alarmed at language such as this, taken directly from the FAA report:

On a single flight ... apparent complacency on the part of the flight crew resulted in the following unacceptable procedures:

- 1 Poor starting procedure.
- 2 Insufficient external vigilance resulted in near-miss with a flock of birds on takeoff.
- 3 Neither crewmember identified the ILS (instrument landing system) properly.
- 4 Sterile cockpit (paying attention only to essential duties) not adhered to below 10,000 ft.
- 5 Flight attendant unfamiliar with how to close cockpit door.

Very strong stuff, indeed. The problem is, the FAA kept that report to itself for eight months, until an enterprising reporter from the Washington Post ferreted it out through a Freedom of Information Act request. The story hit the stands last December and caught everyone (including us) by surprise.

The House Government Activities and Transportation Subcommittee was particularly chagrined when it learned of the existence of the report. Last June the Subcommittee had held a two-day hearing on safety problems at Continental. The FAA calmly assured the subcommittee that Continental was a perfectly safe airline. Not once did the FAA mention the existence of this report. According to U.S. News & World Report, the FAA didn't mention it because no one asked them specifically about it.

* See Supplement to ITF Newsletter No. 6/7 of June/July 1984 for full details

We don't know why the FAA did not reveal the results of this report until forced to do so; perhaps it was simple bureaucratic incompetence. The important point is that hundreds of thousands of Continental passengers flew for eight months, blissfully unaware that the FAA, which is supposed to protect them, was not informing them of the facts.

The FAA's failure to act on the results of its investigation at Continental becomes even more disturbing in the light of other actions the agency has taken to improve its sagging image as our safety watchdog. Recent embarrassments, such as its failure to discover safety problems at Air Illinois until one of that airline's planes crashed, prompted a high-visibility enforcement drive. Last spring, the FAA launched a special "white glove" inspection of US airlines. It later shut down several small carriers for safety violations.

These "small fry" were publicly hung out to dry as examples. Yet if you compare the Continental report with the official FAA reasons for shutting down the smaller carriers, you will find many striking similarities. American Central Airlines was cited because, among other things, "transition and upgrade training did not include the required subjects or required flight training." The FAA shut them down. At Provincetown-Boston Airline, "the curriculum for crewmember emergency training ... lacks required subject matter and drill." The FAA shut them down. At Continental, "the basic crewmember indoctrination ground training ... did not conform to the requirements of the Federal Aviation Regulations in that all required training subjects were not covered." For Continental, the result was not a shutdown, but merely a slap on the wrist. At most, it will be fined for a few of its most flagrant violations.

Continental claims it has corrected all the problems revealed in the FAA report, but there is good reason to doubt that. ALPA has forwarded to the FAA nearly 300 reports of Continental safety incidents. These incidents are still occurring. The FAA has never made an adequate accounting of exactly what improvements were made as a result of its investigation, so the public has no way to know just how safe Continental really is now.

Many of you already are refusing to fly Continental because it is a union-busting operation. For that, the thousands of striking Continental pilots, flight attendants, and mechanics are grateful. Now you have another good reason not to fly Continental: it's not just for our sake, but for yours, as well.