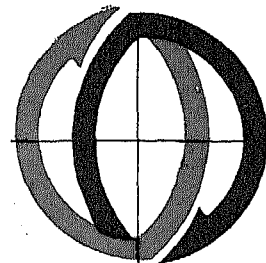


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No. 4/5

April/May 1985

IN THIS ISSUE

Page

The 40th Anniversary of the End of the Second World War

29

News and Views from the ITF

ITF Executive Board holds first meeting in Asia

30

ITF Marine Engineer Officers outline future programme of work

31

ITF Solidarity Meeting and Rally in support of Japanese railwaymen

32

Trade Unions

ICFTU protests to junta at deaths of two Chilean opposition leaders

33

Deep-sea divers set up council to lobby for higher safety standards in British offshore oil and gas industry

34

Social and Industrial News

Transport unions blockade state of Queensland in protest at enactment of anti-union legislation (Australia)

34

Government intervenes to end Danish private sector pay strike

34

Salary increases for FO-organised railmen (France)

35

4.85% pay rise for British Rail manual workers

35

5.2% pay rise for Japanese ocean-going seamen

36

New agreement for Swedish ratings in overseas trade

36

Higher pay in Swiss lake and Rhine navigation

36

US machinists and flight attendants call off strike against Continental

36

News in Brief

37

Obituary

38

Cont'd:	<u>Page</u>
<u>Personalia</u>	38
<u>Forthcoming Meetings</u>	39
<u>Supplements:</u>	
(1) Amnesty International issues May Day Appeal on behalf of imprisoned trade unionists	
(2) Fisheries Policy and Marine Pollution high on ITF Section Conference agenda	

The 40th Anniversary of the End of the Second World War

The commemorations marking the 40th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe, on 8 May, and in the Far East on 2 September inevitably have a military flavour.

It would be a gross injustice, however, if the role of transport workers and their unions in those momentous times were to be forgotten. Merchant seafarers, for example, were as much part of the war effort as any military force and untold thousands of them paid with their lives.

The ITF's battle against Nazism and Fascism in their various forms is a matter of history now, but of all the heroes and heroines who fought and risked and suffered for the trade union cause, special tribute is due at this time to those who fought and resisted within the dictatorships. They, above all, demonstrated that the war was essentially not a struggle among nations, but against evil and tyrannical political forces.

Forty years of relative "peace" on, the world has still to be rid of oppression and institutionalized terror and murder. The coming celebrations will only have real value if they are the occasion for rededication to the aims and principles which have always lain at the heart of the ITF's work and existence: universal, unqualified human and trade union rights applied to the promotion of social and economic justice.

Harold Lewis

General Secretary

26 April 1985

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

ITF Executive Board holds first meeting in Asia

A meeting of the ITF Executive Board was held in Tokyo, Japan, on 19 and 20 March 1985. It was the Board's first meeting in Asia and provided an opportunity to publicize the ITF's support for the Japanese railwaymen's unions in their struggle for the restoration of their trade union rights and against the government's plans to rationalize and privatise the state railways. It also enabled the Board to demonstrate once more the ITF's solidarity with the unions in the face of the huge damages suit which has been taken against them and by which the government hopes to punish them for having conducted strikes (See full report elsewhere in this Newsletter).

The Board considered a detailed report on the ITF's activities since its last meeting in October 1984, including items on: the outcome of the 11th Session of the ILO Inland Transport Committee in January 1985; the International Trade Union Conference on Visual Display Units organized by the International Trade Secretariats in October 1984; problems of ITF marine engineer officer affiliates; the trade union response to proposals by the European Communities (EC) Transport Commissioner concerning maritime transport within the common transport policy; the outcome of the resumed United Nations Conference on Conditions for Registration of Ships at the end of January 1985; the problems caused for seafarers by the worsening Iran/Iraq war; the activation of the ITF's campaign against flags of convenience in Japan; the British miners' strike; current disputes in the civil aviation industry; and the forthcoming Travel Bureau Section Conference in San Diego. The Board also discussed extensive reports on the ITF's activities in Africa, Asia and Latin America. It agreed to endorse the four resolutions adopted by the Solidarity Meeting held in support of Japanese railwaymen on 18 March (see report elsewhere in this Newsletter).

The Board agreed to ask the General Secretary to prepare a document for consideration by the next meeting of the Board summarizing the policies developed by the individual sections on rationalization, privatization, new technology and social questions such as unemployment, working hours; and making proposals on the best methods of coordinating and promoting them.

The Board unanimously agreed to record its thanks to Jeannot Schneider for all his efforts during his time as Chairman of the ITF Railwaymen's Section and to wish him every success in his new position as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Luxembourg State Railways (see Newsletter no. 3). In the light of the results of extensive consultations with railwaymen's affiliates which had been carried out by the Secretariat, it was unanimously agreed that Piet Potums, General Secretary of the Railwaymen's Section of the Belgian Public Service Workers' Union (CGSP), should act as Chairman of the ITF Railwaymen's Section until the 1986 ITF Congress, when a fresh election would be held.

After noting that Deji Oyeyemi was no longer a Vice-President of the ITF because of the withdrawal from membership of the Nigeria Union of Railwaymen and that the procedures were under way for cooption of an Executive Board member to replace him, the Board agreed that Anderson Mhungu (General Secretary of the Zimbabwe Amalgamated Railwaymen's Union, and member of the Executive Board since 1980) should be invited to attend meetings of the Management Committee until the next Congress. It was also agreed to propose an amendment to the ITF Constitution at the next Congress to lay down a procedure for the replacement of Vice-Presidents between Congresses.

The Board considered appropriate action to be taken with regard to unions badly in arrears with affiliation fees. It approved applications for affiliation from eight unions in Liberia, Sri Lanka, Cyprus, Malaysia, Great Britain, Fiji, Canada and Pakistan, subject to the satisfactory completion of any remaining formalities.

The next meeting of the Board will be held in London on 15 and 16 October 1985.

INTERNATIONAL

ITF Marine Engineer Officers outline future programme of work

ITF-affiliated engineer officer unions met at the School of Marine Engineering and Navigation (run by District 2, MEBA-AMO) in Dania, Florida, on 1 and 2 April 1985 to consider matters of particular concern to engineer officers. The meeting was attended by representatives of unions organising engineer officers in Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Finland, Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden and United States. F Schamann (USA) acted as Chairman and R Dailey (Australia) as Vice-Chairman. A Selander, ITF Assistant General Secretary, represented the ITF Secretariat.

The participants covered a lot of ground and in particular voiced their concern at recent data which would indicate that engineer officers were subjected to many more, and some hitherto unknown, health hazards than other personnel ashore and afloat. This information clearly focused the need to improve the shipboard working environment, in particular that of personnel employed in the engine-room department. Concern was also expressed at the ecological consequences of employing non-certificated and non-qualified engineer officers, especially in the coastwise trade.

Among other subject discussed by the meeting were: exchanges of marine engineer officers' training programmes; certification of marine engineer officers in merchant ships and fishing vessels; engine-room environmental safety; relief systems for marine engineer officers and related training needs; the effects of farming out engineering work to shore-side operators; and the ergonomics of the marine engineers' workplace.

The meeting was of the opinion: that the nautical colleges training engineer officers should be run by civilian personnel rather than naval personnel; that engineer officers should be represented on the national education authority concerned as well as on the boards of management of nautical colleges; and that there was a great need for retraining of engineer officers to enable them to cope with the ever-increasing amount of new technology.

The participants decided to appoint one delegate to collect and collate training syllabi for engineer officers. They furthermore requested the ITF Secretariat to initiate a pilot study into factors (vibration, chemicals, stress, etc) which have a detrimental effect on the health of engineer officers with a view to determining whether a more comprehensive study might be needed in the longer term and for the purposes of presenting the IMO and ILO with corroborated data setting out the health hazards to which engine-room personnel, and in some cases other seafarers, are exposed. A commendable amount of documentation which could be evaluated within the framework of such a pilot study was introduced or referred to at the meeting and the ITF Secretariat was asked to act as a repository for this and any other material which might be forthcoming in the future.

JAPAN

Solidarity Meeting and Rally in support of Japanese railwaymen

One of the reasons why the ITF had chosen Tokyo as the venue for the Executive Board meeting last month was the unique opportunity the occasion offered to members of the Board to express in person their support for the campaign being conducted by our Japanese railway affiliates against the government's plans for the privatisation and fragmentation of Japan National Railways. The Board members, many of them from unions organizing railwaymen, were joined at the Solidarity Meeting in Tokyo by other rail union leaders who had come specially to Japan to give firm pledges of solidarity with their fellow railway trade unionists at this crucial juncture. Unions that were unfortunately unable to be present at the meeting on 18 March had sent cables and letters and resolutions of support that were read to the meeting, which as one would expect was attended by representatives of Japan's two main rail unions KOKURO and DORO, as well as of the private railway workers' union SHITETSU-SOREN and the municipal transport workers' union, TOSHIKO.

The participants were welcomed to Tokyo by KOKURO President H Muto, who is a Vice-President of the ITF, and the meeting was chaired by Piet Potums, the new acting Chairman of the ITF Railwaymen's Section.

Addressing the meeting Railwaymen's Section Secretary Graham Brothers explained that the ITF's supporting action on behalf of its railway affiliates in Japan was an integral part of a wider campaign which sought to draw widespread public attention to the vital importance of the railway industry, other projects being the Eurotrain currently speeding across Europe spreading the pro-rail message (a full report on this will appear in the next issue of the Newsletter) and the Urban Transport Week in October which would stress the need for the retention of a viable commuter rail network.

The Section Secretary said he hoped that the strength of feeling underlying the speeches made by delegates attending the Solidarity Meeting would help persuade the Japanese government to change its plans for the railways while there was still time and that it would serve to alert governments in other countries which might be contemplating similar steps that the unions were determined to defend rail jobs and their industry against such onslaughts. Governments and rail administrations alike should be warned that fierce and sustained resistance could be expected from organised labour.

The meeting agreed that in order to bring pressure to bear on the Japanese government ITF affiliates should be asked to take the following action:

- hold demonstrations outside Japanese embassies;
- make early written protests to Japanese embassies;
- give publicity to the Japanese railwaymen's case in their own publications and send copies to the Japanese trade unions; and
- in conducting campaigns to promote the railways and public transport in other countries publicise the Japanese case.

All four resolutions before the meeting were adopted unanimously and were subsequently endorsed by the Executive Board when it met later in the week. The key resolution re-iterated the concern of ITF railwaymen's trade unions at a situation in which the Japanese government, ignoring union objections, was pressing ahead with policies that would lead to job losses on a massive scale and to the worsening of the working and social conditions of those who would remain in the service of the railways after

privatisation and invited the Board to urge international solidarity action by ITF railwaymen's affiliates in support of their Japanese colleagues. A second resolution called for the withdrawal of the Y 20,248 million damages suit against KOKURO and DORO for their part in the 1975 rail strike and repeated ITF demands for the restoration of full trade union rights to Japanese railway employees. A further resolution urged the Japanese government to adopt a transport policy which would allow for the railways to be developed to meet the needs of such a highly urbanised and industrialised country, while a final resolution in support of the municipal transport workers' union TOSHIKO condemned the government's continuing refusal to implement the recommendations of independent arbitration for public servants.

Following the meeting, one delegation met with the Ministers of Transport and Labour, while a second delegation went to see the Chairman of Japanese National Railways in order to outline ITF objections to the proposed plans.

In the evening of 18 March a mass rally attended by 12,000 railwaymen and Solidarity Meeting participants was held in Meiji Park followed by a candlelit march to Tokyo's Shibuya station. Our Japanese affiliates plan further mass demonstrations in the summer when the government's plans are due to be debated in the Diet (parliament).

TRADE UNIONS

CHILE

ICFTU protests to junta at deaths of two opposition leaders

At the beginning of this month, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions sent a strongly-worded cable to President Pinochet stating that it held his government responsible for the abduction and subsequent brutal assassination of two opposition leaders, Manuel Guerrero Ceballos, a top official of the Chilean Teachers' Union - AGECH, and José Manuel Parada, a leading member of the Vicaria de Solidaridad, a church human rights organisation which helps victims of the repression in Chile. The cable also interceded with the President for the lives of the AGECH Santiago headquarters staff members and other regional officials who had been abducted by the security forces in similar raids on 28 and 29 March.

General Secretary John Vanderveken warned the Chilean President that the ICFTU would be stepping up its denunciation of the junta before the court of world opinion: the ICFTU was not prepared to tolerate the continued violation of human and trade union freedoms in Chile and the government's total lack of respect for humanitarian principles.

Opposition groups in the country staged a day of action on 11 April to protest at this latest tightening of the screw by an already deeply regressive regime.

According to the latest reports reaching us, the AGECH General Secretary, who was one of those detained last month, has been released, together with a woman official of the union. Both are reliably believed to have been cruelly tortured while in detention. The bodies of Señor Ceballos and Señor Parada were found on 30 March in a ditch on the outskirts of Santiago. Their throats had been cut and their bodies showed unmistakable signs of torture.

As we went to press, it was learned that the AGECH headquarters had been destroyed by uniformed police.

GREAT BRITAIN

Deep-sea divers set up five-man council to lobby for higher safety standards in offshore oil and gas industry

Deep-sea divers organised in the ITF-affiliated National Union of Seamen have set up a five-man diving safety council to lobby for higher safety standards in the North Sea and other sectors of the offshore oil and gas industry. The council will make representations to the Department of Energy urging that the DoE diving guidelines should have mandatory rather than merely advisory status as at present. It is also hoped that council members will become involved in negotiations on pay with the Association of Offshore Diving Contractors, which represents most major British diving companies.

Divers attending the meeting which led to the creation of the safety council heard NUS General Secretary Jim Slater and the NUS-sponsored Labour MP John Prescott, himself a qualified diver, express their concern at the number of divers who have lost their lives in this high-risk profession over recent years and castigate those owners who compromised divers' safety in the interests of maintaining production.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

AUSTRALIA

Transport unions blockade state of Queensland in protest at enactment of anti-union legislation

On 17 April, road transport workers in New South Wales and Victoria began a blockade of the state of Queensland, joined two days later by other transport trade unionists who disrupted rail, air and sea links with the state for 24 hours in protest at the anti-union legislation enacted by the right-wing state government following the recent power workers' strike. This bans strikes in the power industry, as well as severely curbing other general trade union freedoms in the state.

The state government is still refusing to re-instate hundreds of strikers unless they divulge the names of the strike ringleaders or sign a no-strike agreement and accept longer working hours.

DENMARK

Government intervenes to end private sector pay strike

As anticipated, the Danish parliament, meeting in extraordinary session in late March, rushed through legislation imposing settlements covering workers in both the private and public sectors. This ended the private sector pay strike* officially at midnight on 31 March and pre-empted public sector negotiations on an agreement that was not due for renewal until April.

* see page 21 of last issue for details of the strike

Pay increases of only 2% for 1985 and 1.5% for 1986 have been ordered by the government for workers in private industry under an agreement extended for a further two years, while the public sector agreement, similarly renewed, provides for lesser increases of 1.75% in the first and 1.25% in the second contract year. A mere one hour reduction in the working week has been sanctioned and then towards the end of the life of each of these two key agreements (December 1986 in the case of the private and one month later in that of the public sector workers). Prime Minister Poul Schlüter has announced additional measures which he claims will improve productivity, employment and competitiveness, including an increase in corporation tax and a cut in employers' social security payments. Higher-paid workers are also to be compelled to invest 8% of all income over 150,000 D kr per annum in non-interest bearing accounts.

Workers in both sectors were greatly angered by the enforced settlement which was denounced as 'undemocratic' by the opposition Social Democrat party leader Anker Jørgensen, himself a former General Secretary of the ITF's biggest Danish affiliate. Huge protest demonstrations have been mounted outside the parliament building in Copenhagen on a number of occasions in recent days, as well as in other major cities. Many workers have staged walkouts that have extensively disrupted normal life, although the imposed settlement makes these illegal and renders those participating liable to heavy fines.

Prior to the compulsory ending of the strike, unions in Norway and Sweden (including a number of ITF affiliates) had given notice of sympathy action in support of their Danish private sector colleagues. However, this was prevented from going ahead when the strike officially ended at the end of last month.

FRANCE

Salary increases for FO-organised railmen

The ITF-affiliated French FO Railwaymen's Federation has signed a pay agreement with the French National Railways (SNCF) for 1985. This provides for three pay rises: 1.5% from 1 March, 3% from 1 July and 4.5% from 1 November, calculated on base rates as at 31 December 1984. During the negotiations, the union succeeded in persuading the SNCF to bring forward by one month the dates on which the second and third increases are to be paid and to agree to consider a further adjustment to salaries should inflation exceed 5.2% this year. Another notable feature is that the salaries of all railmen will be augmented by 280 francs in September - a measure that will particularly benefit the lower-paid.

GREAT BRITAIN

4.85% pay rise for British Rail manual workers

British Rail's two manual unions - the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen and the National Union of Railwaymen (both ITF affiliates) - have accepted an improved pay offer for 1985 of 4.85% on basic rates and an increase of £4.30 to £93.30 in the minimum earnings level, from the 1 April anniversary date.

The two unions are now expected to seek additional increases for those members affected by productivity improvements.

The ITF-affiliated Transport Salaried Staffs' Association, which represents white-collar staff, has rejected the offer and requested arbitration before the Railway Staff National Tribunal.

JAPAN

5.2% pay rise for ocean-going seamen

The ITF-affiliated All-Japan Seamen's Union (JSU) has successfully concluded a new agreement for ocean-going seamen, effective from 1 April, providing for a 5.2% salary increase. The settlement gives an average increase of yen 9,450 per month. The percentage rise is higher than the figure most other unions have settled for this year and reflects the JSU's determination to bring seafarers' rates of pay back into line with those of shore-based workers.

SWEDEN

New agreement for overseas trade ratings

The ITF-affiliated Swedish Seamen's Union reached agreement last month with the shipowners on a new one-year pay agreement for ratings in the overseas trade. This provides for monthly pay increases averaging 360 kr from 1 April, and an increase in the victualling allowance to 67 kr, with retrospective effect to 1 January (69 kr from 1 April).

The ferry agreement has also been renewed, again giving an average increase of 360 kr on monthly rates and an improvement in the victualling allowance to 64 kr from 1 January and to 66 kr from the beginning of this month.

Ratings covered by both agreements will receive a single payment equivalent to 5% of pay and allowances to cover the period 1 January to 31 March.

SWITZERLAND

Higher pay in lake and Rhine navigation

The pay of seafarers employed by companies belonging to the Swiss Shipowners' Association went up by 3.5% for ratings and 1.5% for officers from 1 January. The basic agreement governing terms and conditions of employment on Swiss vessels has also been extended to the end of 1986.

In separate negotiations, the pay and allowances of crews engaged in Rhine navigation were adjusted by 2.6%, backdated to 1 July last. A further adjustment of 0.7% came into effect at the beginning of 1985.

Both sets of negotiations were conducted by the ITF-affiliated Swiss Transport and Commercial Workers' Union (VHTL).

UNITED STATES

Machinists and flight attendants call off strike against Continental

The ITF-affiliated International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) announced earlier this month that it was ending its strike action against Continental Airlines and had instructed its striking members to return to work.

In a press statement issued on 17 April, the union said that it believed it could best achieve fair and equitable working conditions for its members by ordering a return to work and requiring the airline to live up to its obligations under the Railway Labor Act. International President William W Winpisinger emphasised that the IAM had no intention of abandoning its efforts to improve the working conditions of its members at Continental and that the call for a resumption of work was evidence of its desire to preserve and improve the jobs of its members in the airline.

Winpisinger's letter informing Continental of the union's decision called for the immediate re-instatement of the returning IAM members. He pointed out that the ending of the union's strike did not constitute a waiver of his members' rights to back pay and other damages because of Continental's action in deliberately provoking and then prolonging the stoppage once it had begun. The IAM made clear that it intended to continue to pursue whatever legal avenues were open to it to enforce those rights.

The Union of Flight Attendants (UFA), which organises Continental's cabin personnel, also notified the airline this month that it was calling off its industrial action, while the ITF-affiliated US Air Line Pilots' Association (ALPA) put out a statement to the effect that it would remain on strike against Continental until it was able to conclude a satisfactory agreement on a number of issues of key concern to its members in the airline.

NEWS IN BRIEF

With effect from 1 July 1986, heavy goods vehicles operated by member countries of the European Economic Community will be required to carry a document or bear a plate proving that the vehicle complies with revised regulations on weights and dimensions of vehicles - a measure designed to reduce delays at border crossings within the Community. Details must be given inter alia of the manufacturer's name, the overall laden weight of the vehicle and the maximum weight per axle. In December 1984, an overall EEC lorry weight of 40 tonnes was adopted, although Great Britain and Ireland, which had expressed reservations, were given leave to limit lorry weights to 38 tonnes for the time being.

The European Court of Justice has ruled that Denmark must widen the scope of its equal pay legislation to include work of equal value in order to comply with the appropriate EEC Directive.

Employees of Japan National Railways have been awarded a 5.64% pay increase for 1985.

Japan has agreed to observe the international ban on whale hunting with effect from 1988.

Portugal: the decrees ordering the compulsory winding up of the two state-owned shipping companies CTM and CNN were promulgated last month.*

* for further information see ITF Newsletter No. 2, 1985, page 13 and No. 4, 1985, page 23

Spain: unions and management have formally approved the two-year agreement* reached for staff of the National Railways (RENFE) last month.

* see page 25 of last issue

OBITUARY

Gunnar Carlsson, former Secretary of the Swedish Seamen's Union, died on 30 January, aged 82. Carlsson first became a full-time official in the Swedish firemen's union (an early affiliate of the ITF) in 1926, where he worked as officer in charge of grievances (ombudsman) in various parts of Sweden until 1948, when he went to the United States to look after the interests of Swedish seamen in San Francisco. He returned to Sweden a year later to take up the post of union secretary, which he held until his retirement in 1962.

PERSONALIA

Josy Konz has been elected the new President of the Luxembourg Federation of Railway and Transport Workers (FNCTTFEL) in succession to Jeannot Schneider, who last month took up his new post as Chairman of the Board of Directors of Luxembourg State Railways. Konz has a history of service to the FNCTTFEL going back over twenty years to the time when he was active within its youth section, of which he was the president in the mid-60s. He moved on to become the union's Treasurer in 1970, a post he held until 1976 when he was appointed General Secretary. Konz has replaced Schneider on the Committee of the Railwaymen's Section and on its Sub-Committee on Transport Policy.

Hans Möllmann becomes a Vice-President of the German Railwaymen's Union with effect from the beginning of June.

Allen C Scott has succeeded John Beirne as Atlantic and Gulf Region Vice-President of the US International Organisation of Masters, Mates and Pilots. Scott currently serves on the Committee of the ITF Seafarers' Section and on the Section's Manning Committee and its Standing Committee on Maritime Mobile Offshore Units.

Philipp Seibert, President of the German Railwaymen's Union (GdED) from 1959 to 1979, and a long-time member of the ITF Executive Board, celebrated his 70th birthday on 20 March.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Asian Seafarers' Regional Committee - Solo (Indonesia) 8-10 May 1985
Standing Committee on Maritime Mobile Offshore Units - Singapore 13-14 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
Radio Officers' Meeting - London 12 October 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

Amnesty International issues May Day Appeal on behalf of imprisoned trade unionists

With the approach of International Labour Day, the day on which more than any other workers and trade unionists seek to give concrete expression to their feelings of solidarity with their fellows throughout the world, Amnesty International has once again issued its annual appeal to all in the international labour movement to remember those trade unionists who will be spending 1 May in detention. To illustrate their plight, Amnesty has selected eight cases from different parts of the world for special action. Each of the eight has either been formally adopted by Amnesty as a prisoner of conscience or is a victim of 'disappearance' and all have been chosen for the non-violent nature of the activities on which they were engaged prior to their arrest or abduction. These few must necessarily stand as symbols of the many thousands of trade unionists who have suffered a similar fate at the hands of governments that are not prepared to countenance the peaceful exercise of fundamental human rights within their borders.

The first of these, Edgar Fernando García (aged 25) of GUATEMALA has been missing since he was abducted by the security forces well over a year ago in a Guatemala City street. García was the chief negotiator of the glass workers' union at the Cavisa glass factory, where he was an employee, and was about to sign a new collective bargaining agreement when he 'disappeared'. (Five other members of the union's negotiating committee at the factory are reported to have fled the country following threats.) The Guatemalan authorities have consistently denied that they are holding García, although it is believed that he might well be held in a secret detention centre in the capital.

It is not without significance that the glass factory where García worked makes glass for the bottles used at the local Coca Cola bottling plant where - at the time of his arrest - the trade union was occupying the premises in protest at the announcement of its abrupt closure, which was widely interpreted as an attempt to break the union. In the following months, a number of trade unionists and others who had actively supported the bottling plant workers also 'disappeared' and a number of them were unlawfully executed, most probably by agents of the government.

The second case is that of Antonio Limaco Chuchon of PERU, a 54-year old teacher, who was apprehended at his lodgings in the Andean city of Ayacucho by heavily-armed, hooded men, some in army uniform, at 11.30 pm on 11 May 1983. Shortly before his arrest, Limaco had led a group of teachers who had met the local education authorities to request that classes be formally suspended because of the danger to staff and pupils of unrest in the area, involving guerillas and government forces - a concern that was shared by the teachers' union. Classes were indeed suspended, but Limaco was arrested three days later. Attempts by his family and the provincial attorney to ascertain his present whereabouts (and that of 100 other persons who have been detained and/or have 'disappeared') have failed to produce any results. The only information available, which relates to the period immediately after his arrest, is that the authorities confirmed they were holding Limaco, who would be handed over for questioning within 15 days. He was not. He was also seen by a fellow prisoner at the police barracks with burns to his face and body.

The third victim is Jiri Wolf, a CZECH citizen, currently serving a 6-year sentence in Valdice prison after being convicted of subversion, arising from his arrest in May 1983 on a charge of passing information on prison conditions in Czechoslovakia to the Austrian Embassy in Prague. As a Charter 77 signatory, Wolf had made himself known to the authorities, who seem to have singled him out for exemplary punishment for his human rights activities. He was first arrested early in 1978 when police searching his flat found 'subversive' literature. This resulted in a three-year prison sentence in a second (stricter) category prison, but just over half way

through this sentence he was convicted of a further charge of 'grossly insulting a public functionary' (a charge often brought against human rights workers in Czechoslovakia for criticizing the authorities) and given an extra six months. Shortly after this latest conviction he was moved to the strictest category prison régime for non-fulfilment of the work norm. He was re-arrested a few months after his eventual release as a member of a group that was distributing leaflets denouncing the imposition of martial law in Poland and calling for Solidarity with Polish workers. On this occasion, he was fortunate to be released after questioning (others in the group were given sentences of between 1 and 4 years).

The fourth is a prominent TURKISH trade unionist, Mustafa Aktulgali, who has been formally adopted by Amnesty International as one of its many prisoners of conscience. Aktulgali, an executive committee member of the Turkish Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions (DISK) and a former president of one of DISK's affiliated unions, was arrested with hundreds of other Turkish trade unionists on 12 September 1980, the date of the military coup. On 24 December 1981, he was put on trial with 51 other leading DISK officials before an Istanbul military court, facing charges carrying the death penalty. As none of the defendants had been charged with specific acts of violence and all appeared to be being prosecuted solely because of their trade union activities, they were adopted by Amnesty as a group as prisoners of conscience. Further indictments were added to the charge sheet and by the end of 1984, by merging the trials of members of all 30 DISK-affiliated unions with the main trial, the number of defendants rose to 1,474, with 78 prisoners facing the death penalty. Although the trial is still continuing, the original defendants were all provisionally released in 1983/4 with the sole exception of Aktulgali who by that time had been sentenced to eight years' imprisonment for his activities prior to the coup on behalf of the then legal Turkish Workers' Party. (All imprisoned Workers' Party members are regarded by Amnesty as prisoners of conscience.) Aktulgali is currently held in the Metris Military Prison in Istanbul awaiting the outcome of his appeal against conviction.

The fifth prisoner is José Britanico of the PHILIPPINES who has been detained since September 1982 when he was arrested with three other workers employed by the Redson Textile Manufacturing Corporation. His arrest was part of a wave of arrests of trade union leaders and activists in Manila following the upsurge in trade union activity that accompanied the lifting of martial law in January 1981. President Marcos and the military authorities have accused the independent trade unionists of engaging in subversion. The trial of Britanico and over 20 others began in January 1983, is still continuing and could last until well into 1986. He is charged with conspiracy to commit rebellion and with illegal possession of ammunition and subversive documents, charges which he has strenuously denied and regarding which no convincing evidence has been brought. Amnesty, believing that he was arrested for exercising his legitimate right to trade union activity and that the charges are therefore false, has adopted Britanico as a prisoner of conscience. It has followed the cases of many such prisoners of conscience in the Philippines who have been charged with violent offences after expressing beliefs critical of official policies.

The sixth case is that of He Qiu of the PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, a shipyard worker and editor of two unofficial journals, who was arrested in Beijing in April 1981 when he went there to discuss with the authorities the question of a citizen's right to publish these journals. He was charged with 'inciting violation of the laws and decrees of the State' and 'counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation' and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment under articles of the criminal law dealing with counter-revolutionary offences. No official information or statement about the trial has ever been made public. The democracy movement in China started in late 1978 with calls for democratic reforms and human rights. Young people, mostly workers,

gathered in small groups and started publishing unofficial journals. Qiu's journals were part of that movement. In March 1979, a ban was imposed on unofficial journals considered to be 'opposed to socialism and to the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party'. New warnings were issued by the authorities in mid-1980 and in April 1981 the 20 main editors of unofficial journals were arrested. Qiu has been adopted by Amnesty as a prisoner of conscience, who has been imprisoned for the peaceful exercise of his human rights.

The seventh case is that of Ali El-Mahi El-Sakhi, a skilled metal worker and SUDANESE trade union leader, who was arrested on 19 December 1982 and is being held at the Kober prison in Khartoum North under the 1973 State Security Act, which provides for detention without trial for an indefinite period. He was first arrested in July 1979 when he was president of the metal workers' trade union and also the vice-president of the Sudanese affiliate of the ICFTU and detained without trial or charge until mid-1982. After his release, he remained an active trade unionist. Amnesty believes that Ali El-Mahi El-Sakhi is a prisoner of conscience who has been imprisoned for peaceful trade union activities which had involved opposing government policy and which brought him into conflict with the Act. Many other critics of the Sudanese government, including a number of trade unionists, are being similarly held.

The final cases are those of Jean Pagnimba Bila, Ousmane Ismaël Kindo and Joachim Sib of BURKINA FASO*, respectively general secretary, deputy general secretary and international secretary of the national teachers' union who have been detained in military barracks in Koudougou since March 1984 for criticising the policies of the National Revolutionary Council which assumed power in August 1983. When the teachers' union called a 2-day strike of its members in protest at the arrest of its leaders the striking teachers were dismissed by the authorities, despite protests that the dismissals constituted an infringement of the internationally recognised right to strike and a further curtailing of trade union freedoms. The three detainees have been accused of subversive political activities and of seeking to destabilise the government. Shortly after the arrests, Amnesty appealed to the authorities in Burkina Faso to bring the three to trial immediately or to release them in accordance with human rights principles. No reply was received to the appeal and there have been no reports suggesting that charges have been brought and that the trials have begun. Amnesty has accordingly adopted the teachers' leaders as prisoners of conscience and has repeated its calls for their release from custody.

The ITF is pleased to join with Amnesty International in requesting that maximum publicity be given to the cases that are being highlighted on May Day of this year. Affiliates can assist by printing details of these eight case histories in their own publications and by writing letters to the authorities in the relevant countries appealing for the immediate release of these imprisoned trade unionists. (The addresses you should write to may be obtained from the local Amnesty office in your own country.) There is no doubt that pressure of public opinion on behalf of these individuals could mean the difference between prison and freedom, perhaps even in some cases between life and death. It is vital to show the governments concerned that the world is aware of such prisoners, cares desperately about their fate and that their fellow workers and trade unionists are pledged to work for their release.

* formerly Upper Volta

Fisheries Policy and Marine Pollution high on ITF Section Conference agenda

The ITF Fishermen's Section held its conference on 24 and 25 April in the little village of Ambleteuse near Boulogne, France. Twenty-three delegates from fishermen's unions in Belgium, Denmark, Faroe Islands, France, Germany, Great Britain, Iceland, Norway, Portugal, South Africa, Spain and United States met under the chairmanship of Oli Jacobsen (Faroe Islands). The ITF Fishermen's Section Vice-Chairman, Jan Skrede (Norway) was also in attendance and the ITF Secretariat was represented by Ake Selander, ITF Assistant General Secretary. The conference was preceded by a meeting of the ITF Fishermen's Section Steering Committee on 23 April.

On the question of the establishment of an ITF fisheries policy the conference agreed to adopt a British paper which would be further discussed by a meeting of the enlarged steering committee to take account in particular of measures to protect the resources of the sea, consumer demands, trade union rights, representation and the problems of inshore fishermen, etc. Several of the fishermen's representatives present expressed grave concern at the difficulties within the joint employer/worker committee within the framework of the EC Commission to arrive at an agreed position on the harmonization of working conditions in sea fishing.

The increasing pollution of the oceans and its consequences were highlighted in an excellent paper submitted by the ITF's German fishermen's affiliate which engendered some considerable discussion. The conference recommended that the ITF Fishermen's Section should prepare a specific action programme on marine pollution and keep a watching brief on pollution issues in national and international fora.

With regard to the protection and rational utilization of marine resources the conference adopted a resolution in which it decided to urge further co-ordination of scientific research projects into marine resources in the fishing areas with participation of the countries concerned; and the observance of catch quota set on the basis of scientific data and in consultation with the fishermen concerned for continued fishing and whaling for the coming generations.

The conference decided to seek further information from affiliates on the influence of multinational companies in the fishing and related industries and to request that the ITF survey of fishermen's conditions be supplemented and subsequently updated.

The conference welcomed the possibility of affiliation of further fishermen's unions in the Asia/Pacific region and urged the ITF Secretariat to take the necessary steps to facilitate such affiliations.