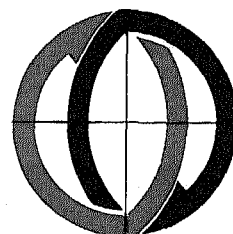


ITF NEWS



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NEWS

PROPOSED SHIP REGISTRATION AGREEMENT PRESERVES STATUS QUO SAYS ITF

The International Agreement which looks likely to emerge from the current session of the UN Conference on Ship Registration in Geneva will harmonise conditions downwards and legitimise the status quo for Flag of Convenience countries. This was the fear expressed by ITF Assistant General Secretary Åke Selander when he addressed the plenary session of the Conference on January 20. Referring to a detailed critique of the draft agreement which had been prepared by the ITF's Maritime Policy Committee and distributed to all the delegations present, Selander expressed the concern of the ITF and the ICFTU that the proposed agreement will not provide a definition of what constitutes a 'genuine link' between ship and flag state; will leave a large number of ships out in the cold; and will not ensure that the ships covered are manned by properly qualified and registered seafarers. He criticised the small number of national delegations which had included seafarer representatives and demanded that, whatever the shape of the final agreement, it should contain strict ratification procedures, the ratification of ILO Convention 147 (Merchant Shipping (Minimum Standards)) as a condition for accession; and the reintroduction into the agreement of the concept of port state control.

The ITF statement prepared by the meeting of the Maritime Policy Committee in Copenhagen from 7 to 8 January expressed extreme disappointment at the terms of the draft agreement. It gave detailed comments on the negotiating text on a wide range of issues including:- the need for a definition of the term 'seafarer'; the need to avoid any tonnage exclusion limit or the exclusion of offshore units; the need for maritime administrations to be located within a state's territory; the introduction of compulsory manning and ownership provisions and the need for a 'substantial' part of crew complement to come from flag state nationals or residents. The paper also commented on ship management conditions and assistance to displaced seafarers, and was particularly emphatic on the question of port state control which has, it appears, been entirely dropped from the draft wording. The Conference is scheduled to end at the beginning of February.

A full report on the final form of the UN agreement will be carried in the next issue of ITF News.

ITF AND ICMA STRENGTHEN COOPERATION

Representatives of the ITF and the International Christian Maritime Association (ICMA) agreed at a meeting in London on 17 January on closer contact and a regular exchange of information between seafarers' trade unions belonging to the ITF and the worldwide network of seamen's missions affiliated to ICMA in a bid to improve action against the widespread abuses of seafarer's rights. In a joint statement adopted by the meeting, the ITF and ICMA agreed to encourage personal contacts between local port representatives of ICMA member societies and ITF affiliates, thereby facilitating the exchange of information and enabling the best use to be made of the strengths of the two organisations. Working together, they would assist seafarers to obtain satisfaction of pay and other claims such as accident and injury compensation and encourage them to exercise their rights to freedom of association under ILO Conventions. The two organisations also undertook to maintain similar contacts at national and international level and to establish an international liaison committee which would seek the repeal of repressive laws and labour practices and their replacement by legislation beneficial to seafarers.

The liaison committee will work for the development and ratification of effective international agreements aimed at improving the position of seafarers, and will focus attention on: publicity for the seafarers' cause; the winning of support from sympathetic groups in each country; and the effective use of the legal services available to seafarers.

CHILE: INTERNATIONAL UNION MOVEMENT STAGES 'SOLIDARITY' WEEK

Trade unionists worldwide staged a week of protest action from 27 January to 2 February in response to a call from the ICFTU for the organisation of events in solidarity with the people and workers of Chile suffering under the repressive 12-year-old military dictatorship of General Pinochet. The ITF General Secretary has asked all affiliates to give all the support they can to the various activities decided on by their national centres during the Week with the aim of focusing public attention on the vicious stranglehold that the military junta exercises on the rights and aspirations of the Chilean nation. Meanwhile, the ICFTU is keeping up its pressure for the release of trade unionists arrested in recent months when government attacks on the trade union movement have intensified. One positive development is the release on bail of Manuel Bustos, the deputy leader of the national centre CNT at which the ICFTU has expressed its satisfaction while assuring him of its firm support in defence of democratic trade unionism in Chile.

UK-FRANCE: THE 'FIXED LINK' TO BE A RAIL TUNNEL

At a formal signing ceremony in the French city of Lille on 20 January the British Prime Minister and the French President announced the long-awaited decision on the 'fixed link' which is to take the form of an undersea twin bore rail tunnel - the proposal put forward by the Channel Tunnel Group (CTG). Construction work is expected to begin next year and the tunnel should be ready for operation by 1993. The two countries' commitment to an eventual road link is far less firm, although if the CTG fails to develop this proposal as it promised by the year 2000, it will lose its exclusive rights to the project.

Within days of the decision, Britain and France also announced that they are jointly to develop a new generation of high-speed trains capable of carrying 750 passengers for use on the tunnel route. At the same time details were revealed of a £1 billion investment project in new equipment, track and station facilities. When it is opened the new 100-mph trains will operate services through the tunnel at a maximum frequency of four an hour, cutting the London - Paris or Brussels journey times from five to just over three hours.

British and French union reaction to the 'fixed link' announcement has been mixed. Although it will create a large number of temporary construction jobs, seafarers' unions with members on the cross-Channel ferries are concerned about the effect that the opening of the tunnel seven years hence will have on cross-Channel ferry services. The rail unions, however, believe that the building of the Channel tunnel could lead to a more prosperous future for the industry by encouraging the transfer of international freight from road to rail as well as an upswing in passenger traffic.

Inland Transport

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY: DEREGULATION WILL DESTROY PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Proposals currently being discussed by the European Commission could bring about the wholesale destruction of the public transport network throughout Europe, transport workers' unions in the Community countries believe. This fear was expressed by ITF Inland Transport Secretary Graham Brothers in a letter to Stanley Clinton Davis, EC Commissioner for Transport, on 20 January. Pointing to the combined effect of the decision of the European Court of Justice on 22 May 1985 and the recent Commission White Paper on 'Completing the Internal Market', the letter expresses grave concern at the Commission's expressed intention to introduce total "freedom to provide services" for the transport of passengers by road by 1989. At present, the ITF letter stresses, most large urban and many rural areas in Europe have developed systems of public passenger transport based on the principle of complementarity between different transport modes. A balance has been struck in rural areas between bus, tramway, light rail transport, underground railways and suburban and main line railways. Each mode undertakes the function for which it is best suited and the whole system is integrated from the point of view of timetabling, ticketing, marketing, pricing etc. In many rural areas a similar system operates between bus and rail transport, and the result has been a steady move back towards public transport in recent years.

Regulations allowing anyone to provide any passenger service in any area would, the letter continues, enable anyone who chose to do so to buy a few second hand buses and operate them on a few profitable routes in major cities. This would inevitably lead to the break up of the complementary public transport network, chaos on the streets, a serious deterioration of urban environments, a reduction in the overall quality of service to the public, and a worsening of working conditions for the workers concerned. In the light of these concerns Mr Clinton Davis has been asked to supply the ITF with a clear idea of how the Commission thinks its proposals will be implemented in practice and what effect it expects them to have on urban public passenger transport.

FUTURE OF RAILWAYS DISCUSSED AT PARIS SEMINAR

'The European Dimension and Future Proposals for the Railways' was the theme for a three day seminar held in Paris in January. The seminar, which was organised by the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT), a body set up within the structure of the OECD, brought together representatives of governments, railway undertakings, trade unions, universities and technical institutes. Graham Brothers, Railway Section Secretary, attended on behalf of the ITF. Papers on a variety of subjects including likely changes in demand for rail travel, high speed trains, computer technologies, international rail traffic, and investment financing were submitted to the seminar. In its final statement the meeting stressed the importance of a fixed rail link across the English Channel built to dimensions adequate to allow the carriage of road vehicles.

AUSTRIA: MOBILE UNION ORGANIZERS INTRODUCED

A mobile advisory service has just been inaugurated by the OGB (the Austrian national trade union centre) in conjunction with the Chamber of Labour to provide information and assistance to haulage drivers who, because of the nature of their work, often find it extremely difficult to visit a union office when in need of help. Two specially trained ex-haulage drivers will man a converted minibus which will travel constantly around the major road arteries used by long-distance traffic. The 'travelling secretaries' will inform drivers of their rights and responsibilities, giving advice on a range of problems. They will also tell drivers of the activities that the unions and the Chamber of Labour are carrying out on behalf of professional drivers, hoping in this way to encourage more drivers to join the unions.

The OGB also released details of a study carried out by the Austrian Institute for Research into Vocational Training which supports the need for a system of vocational training leading to a recognised professional qualification for road haulage drivers. Of the drivers participating in the study one-third stated that they knew nothing of the specific driving characteristics of their vehicle when taking up the job and had no period of driving practice prior to starting work. The overwhelming majority of those surveyed supported the case for proper professional training and said that they would have taken advantage of the opportunity had it presented itself. As two-thirds of the respondents were classed as unskilled workers it is obvious that a course of training would have improved their status, job satisfaction and earnings potential as well as making an important contribution towards improving road safety.

The survey also established that there was considerable scope for improving conditions in an industry which is notoriously difficult to regulate. In particular, it noted, drivers' health is under threat from long hours spent at the wheel, poorly designed cabs and seats which give rise to postural problems and from erratic eating patterns.

UNITED STATES: STUDY FINDS HIGH STRESS AMONGST BUS DRIVERS

The preliminary findings of a major study into the effects of working environment on the health of bus operators in San Francisco, California was published late last year. The study, which began three and a half years ago with the active support of local officials of the ITF-affiliated Transport Workers' Union, was made possible by federal grant aid. However, recent government spending cuts have delayed analysis of the data collected and the TWU, backed by a recent Convention decision, is now actively lobbying for continued government funding of this important initiative.

Over two thousand workers participated in the study which compared the health of bus operators with that of the general population of San Francisco; measured the levels of pollution and noise and the traffic patterns which bus workers experienced in the course of their work; considered ergonomic factors such as bus and cab design; and examined the management structure and management attitudes within the city's transport authority.

The study concluded that bus operators suffered physical and psychological strain as a result of their work and had a substantially increased risk of disease. They were under a great deal of pressure to perform complex tasks under a rigid time schedule and were required to exercise a high level of responsibility for their passengers and the vehicle, while having little control over the way in which

their tasks were conducted - factors that are commonly recognised as giving rise to stress. The study provided clear evidence that San Francisco bus crews suffer more from stress than other comparable groups and that programmes to reduce stress and improve health are urgently required.

Civil Aviation

CANADA: PACIFIC WESTERN AIRLINES STAFF STRIKE

The ITF's three Canadian affiliates* organising Pacific Western Airlines ground and flying staff called a strike from 21 November after contract talks collapsed over the sweeping concessions demanded by the profit-making airline. PWA is seeking 'give-backs' in all areas, including an increase in maximum monthly limitations and longer duty periods, reduced crew rest at home and away bases and the weakening of existing vacation and seniority rights. It also intends to abolish the purser scale, replacing it with a bonus which would not be paid during vacations or sick leave and to pay less to part-time workers and new recruits. The airline is maintaining services during the strike with the assistance of management and supervisory staff and is understood to have taken on temporary mechanics from the United States to carry out essential maintenance duties. In response to requests from the unions involved, the ITF has contacted its aviation affiliates in Britain and elsewhere, alerting them to the possibility of PWA contracting out maintenance work to UK airlines.

GREAT BRITAIN: CAA DRAWS LESSONS FROM MANCHESTER FIRE TRAGEDY

Last year's Manchester Airport disaster when fifty-five persons died in the fume-filled cabin of a British Airtours 737 jet has led the Civil Aviation Authority to take action to ensure that passengers can be quickly and safely evacuated in the event of a cabin fire. The authority is insisting that all newly-manufactured passenger seating shall meet improved fire-resistant standards from July this year, while the date by which fire-resistant seating must have been installed in all large British-registered aircraft has been brought forward to July 1987. Survivors of the Manchester fire experienced difficulties in reaching the overwing exits and as a result the CAA will be introducing new rules, again from this July, improving the access routes to these mid cabin exits. As visibility in the upper part of the cabin is often greatly reduced in an in-flight fire, the Authority will also require airlines to install floor level emergency path lighting indicating the escape routes and positions of exits. Meanwhile, discussions are taking place with other European airworthiness authorities on the use of safer materials for cabin floors, walls and ceilings, and on the feasibility of providing passengers with masks to reduce the effect of toxic gases.

These moves by the CAA underline the crucial role in an evacuation of the mid-cabin escape exits and further weaken British Airways' position in refusing to unblock the overwing exits on its B747 aircraft in the face of sustained opposition from organisations representing aviation workers and airline passengers, and the US Federal Aviation Administration.

* the Canadian division of the IAM, UAW/CALEA and CALFAA

UNITED STATES: EASTERN HEADS FOR SHOWDOWN WITH UNIONS

Eastern Airlines employees have become the latest victims as yet another US airline, faced with huge debts, attempts to follow Continental's lead by imposing massive cuts in pay and conditions on its labour force. Attempts to negotiate Eastern's flight attendants' contract failed earlier this month as a thirty-day cooling-off period expired without settlement. Eastern has reacted to this impasse by announcing plans to dismiss a thousand flight attendants from 1 February and to enforce pay cuts (of 20%) and work-rule changes on those still at work. Meanwhile, talks with a second group - the pilots - have also broken down and are now entering their final stages. The crisis at Eastern will probably come to a head towards the end of next month as the company's loan extension date approaches and its unions consider strike action in defence of their rights.

Seafarers

GREAT BRITAIN: UNION ANGER AT BP'S PLANS TO END EMPLOYMENT OF TANKER CREWS

Maritime unions have reacted angrily to this month's surprise announcement by BP Shipping, Britain's largest shipping company, that it is ending direct employment of all its 1,700 sea-going staff - a move which has been described by organised labour as a 'shattering blow'. Under the BP plan, on which unions were not consulted, foreign-going officers and ratings will be made redundant and then offered re-employment on 'offshore' terms and conditions by three international manning agencies (based in Geneva, Bermuda and Hong Kong), with the crewing of the North Sea fleet going to an Aberdeen-based agency. The company estimates that the re-organisation, which will cut the number of sea-going jobs by one-third and involve redundancies among shore-based staff, will bring about savings of between £10 and £12 million a year. As a further cost-cutting measure an unspecified number of vessels are to be transferred to the Bermudan registry.

Probably the most worrying aspect of the proposed new crewing arrangements is that British seafarers involved would lose their traditional right of union representation. According to the terms of the draft contract, seafarers must undertake not to involve an industrial organisation in any dispute arising from the terms of the contract or practices on board the vessel without first consulting the company and allowing thirty days for a written reply.

The British officers' and ratings' unions (NUMAST and the NUS) have condemned this threat to their continued right to represent BP's seafarers and are instructing members not to accept the new contracts until meetings with the agencies, now taking place, have been satisfactorily concluded. Union members are also being asked to delay sailings of BP tankers as a protest measure; to refuse to leave their ship unless replaced by registered British seafarers; and to inform management that they will refuse to sign any new contract not approved by their unions. The ITF General Secretary has asked seafarer affiliates to support the British unions in their efforts to protect the seafarers' rights, and to instruct their members not to conclude any agreements with the manning agents involved for service in BP ships.

BRAZIL: IMPROVED PAY IN OFFSHORE INDUSTRY WON AFTER STRIKE

Following a six-day strike which ended on 1 January, seafarers and divers working in Brazil's offshore oil industry who are members of the ITF-affiliated National Confederation of Maritime, River Transport and Aviation Workers (CNTTMFA) obtained an immediate 14% pay rise, with the prospect of a further 25% increase from November and the introduction of a 2:1 relieving system (one month off for every two months worked). At the request of the Brazilian union, ITF seafarer affiliates were informed of the strike and requested not to supply replacement workers for the duration of the action. Meanwhile, our Brazilian affiliate is taking action through the courts to secure a similar settlement from foreign shipowners operating offshore.

General

BRUSSELS COMMITTEE REVIEWS EC TRANSPORT POLICY

A general review of progress in the development of transport policy in the European Community was conducted by a meeting of the Committee of Transport Workers' Unions in the European Community (the Brussels Committee) on 12 December. The meeting, at which the ITF was represented by Graham Brothers, was informed that the Council proposed to abolish bilateral quotas in goods transport by 1992, and it was suggested that a group of trade union experts should be established to defend what remains of the regulated transport market in the EC states and to ensure that the Commission met its social obligations. As far as the driving hours regulations were concerned, the meeting regretted the Council's adoption of the revised regulation 543 and decided that national pressure had to be exerted on transport ministers to safeguard superior standards in national legislation. On Maritime policy it noted that the Council had yet to make a decision on the Commission's proposals and that the European Parliament would be examining them in early 1986. It was likely that a maritime session of the Council of Ministers in March 1986 would try to adopt regulations affecting maritime transport. In the meantime union pressure would continue to focus both on the Parliament and on the Economic and Social Committee which had yet to adopt its final opinion.

Following its internal meeting, the Committee held a joint session with EC Transport Commissioner Stanley Clinton Davis. During the course of these discussions the Commissioner stressed that the Commission were very unhappy with the shape of the new driving hours regulations, that they would continue to influence the Council of Ministers to adopt a positive attitude towards railway financing; that US style deregulation was not envisaged in the civil aviation sector; and that the Transport Directorate General (DG VII) of the Commission was under standing instructions to consult with the trade unions at an early stage when formulating proposals.

TUNISIA: GOVERNMENT ATTACKS ON UNIONS CONTINUE

After a short period when it appeared that the crisis in relations between the Tunisian government and the national trade union centre UGTT, to which the ITF's affiliated unions belong, had been improved, the government launched late in December a renewed attack against the unions' leadership. Habib Achour, former General Secretary of the UGTT who had been removed from office as part of an

agreement reached with the authorities was, on 31 December, sentenced to one year's imprisonment for entering in 1982 a workers' cooperative which had been seized from the union by the government. In a statement issued following this decision the ICFTU emphasised that this could only be viewed as a further example of government attempts to destroy the independence of the Tunisian trade unions and to render worthless the agreement reached between the union and government on 4 December. According to press reports, Achour was later reinstated in his position as UGTT General Secretary by the organisation's Executive. The unions' property remains seized by pro government forces and a number of trade union activists remain in jail.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES

Amnesty International's 1985 Annual Report which was published recently contains details of action undertaken during 1984 in the organisation's campaign against human rights abuses in 123 countries. Torture and imprisonment of citizens for their beliefs or ethnic origin continues in many countries, with trade unionists and workers often among the principal victims. Evidence of this trend ranges from Guatemala where a former trade union secretary who disappeared in January 1984 is reported as having been seen at a government punishment centre, to the Philippines where a number of organisers of the First of May Movement (an independent trade union grouping), first arrested in 1982, are still in detention. In South Africa, Amnesty interceded during the year on behalf of some three hundred cases among them many black trade union officials held under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act which permits persons to be held incommunicado for interrogation without limit of time. A similar situation exists in Turkey where, in areas still under martial law, political detainees may be held in isolation at police stations for 30 days before being brought before the courts, a situation that is particularly worrying in view of the information Amnesty has received on the frequent torturing of prisoners, who include a significant number of trade unionists. Attention is also drawn in the report to the unexplained deaths of trade union and political activists in Poland where individuals have been found dead after being detained by the military or undergoing interrogation by the police. These examples are but a handful of the many thousands that come to Amnesty's notice in the course of each year, and it is heartening to note that at a time when it is more than ever necessary to have a growing body of individuals committed to the upholding of human rights support for the organisation is growing: Amnesty now has more than half a million members and supporters in over 150 countries worldwide. Copies of the report may be obtained from Amnesty's International Secretariat at 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 8DJ and from its national sections.

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIATS CONDEMN TERRORISM

"Terrorism is an immediate and growing threat to the safety of workers and their families worldwide." This was one of the conclusions of the annual conference of the International Trade Secretariats (ITSS) which was held in London on 7-8 January at the invitation of the ITF. The conference brings together representatives of the 16 industrially based international trade union federations and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), to discuss issues of current concern to the international trade union movement. The meeting adopted a statement on terrorism which condemned the attacks launched at Rome and Vienna airports in December 1985, stressed that no cause is advanced by terrorism, and called on national governments and international organisations to coordinate intergovernmental action against it within the framework of international law. The two day meeting also discussed control of hazardous substances - a subject on which cooperation between ITSS and the ICFTU has already begun and on

which a code of conduct will be drafted during 1986 by a group of trade union experts. The ILO will be requested to adopt the draft code in the form of a new International Labour Convention together with effective enforcement measures to ensure that dangers to employees and the general public from the production or transport of dangerous substances are reduced. On Chile the ICFTU informed the meeting of the efforts which it had undertaken to secure the release of Manuel Bustos, who had eventually been released by the junta just before Christmas. In response to a proposal from the ITF, the meeting agreed that a joint ICFTU/ITS meeting of trade union journalists would be convened during the coming year to discuss improvements in the communication of international trade union affairs.

The Conference also discussed South Africa following the formation of COSATU and proposals for further action to harass the South African regime. It was agreed that a special week of action against apartheid would be organised by the international trade union movement during the week beginning 17 March - the anniversary of the Sharpeville shooting. Other items covered included anti union practices where it was agreed that a number of ITSs would cooperate in a meeting on trade union strategies to combat anti union policies, practices and techniques; Poland; Latin America; and trade union education. The meeting was chaired by Stefan Nedzynski (Post, Telegraph and Telephone International) who was reelected Chairman of the General Conference. ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis was reelected as a substitute ITS representative on the ICFTU Executive Board, and it was decided to hold the next session of the Conference in Berne, Switzerland, at the headquarters of the Graphical Workers' International.

EUROPE: FIVE NEW STUDIES PUBLISHED BY TRADE UNION INSTITUTE

Five new studies were published at the end of December by the Brussels based European Trade Union Institute (ETUI). The institute, which is linked to the ETUC, publishes a regular series of information pamphlets on different trade union issues for use by unions throughout Europe. Two of the new publications deal with the structure and functioning of the trade union movement in Austria and in Italy. Prepared according to a common format (previous editions have dealt with Great Britain, Sweden, FR Germany and Greece) the pamphlets discuss trade union history, unionisation rates and financing, collective bargaining structures, political affiliations and international relations. Two further studies deal with "Pay Developments in Western Europe 1984-5" and "Technology and Collective Bargaining", a review of ten years of trade union experience in collective bargaining and new technologies in Western Europe. A final pamphlet, "trade union services for the unemployed", results from a seminar on ways in which trade unions are helping unemployed workers. These publications are available directly from ETUI, Boulevard de l'Impératrice 66, Bte 4, 1000 Brussels.

UNITED NATIONS: DOCKERS' LEADER DEFENDS TRADE UNION RIGHTS

Speaking in his capacity as a member of the Dutch delegation to the United Nations, Kees Marges, Secretary of the Dockers' Section of the ITF-affiliated Vervoersbond FNV made a strong defence of trade union rights at the session of the UN General Assembly held in November 1985. Although all governments are free to include trade unionists in their UN delegations, few do so, and Marges had to deal with protests from the delegation of the USSR before he could proceed with his speech, which drew attention to the UN International Covenant on Human Rights and its references to the basic rights of organisation into free trade unions. Despite the sentiments expressed in the Covenant and in other international instruments protecting union rights, he went on, the harsh reality of today's world is that trade union activists often prove to be vulnerable targets of the wrath of

authoritarian and totalitarian regimes. Trade union leaders are jailed, tortured and murdered in many different countries, he argued, because they are ready to defend, without regard to their own security, the rights of others and because they often aim at a change of power structures in order to bring about a democratic society, he pointed out. In South Africa he referred to draconian legal restrictions on the right of trade unions to negotiate on behalf of their members and continued attacks on strikers by the security police; in Chile he pointed out that large numbers of trade unionists are still held in prison for protesting against the repressive policies of the 12-year-old junta. In countries under Communist regimes in Eastern Europe and elsewhere he reminded the delegates that trade unions are strictly subordinated to the Party and any attempts to establish independent trade unions are suppressed by all available means. Concluding his statement Marges pointed out that these three examples, however different they may be, show the dangerous position of organizations and persons who are defending and furthering the interests of workers, as well as showing the importance of the work of the United Nations organisations such as the ILO for the protection and promotion of human rights in general and trade union rights in particular.

Regions

EAST AFRICA: UNIONS REVIEW TRANSPORT POLICIES

Twenty-one trade union officials from six organisations in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania (five of them ITF affiliates) took part in a five-day East African Transport Policy Seminar held at the Tom Mboya Labour College in Kisumu, Kenya at the beginning of November. The seminar was opened by the Kenyan Minister for Transport and Communications, Arthur K Magugu, and closed by the Mayor of Kisumu, George W Okalo. Ben Udogwu, the ITF's African representative, was responsible for organising the seminar, with assistance from the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES).

The seminar participants reviewed the current transport policies of the three East African states and made a series of recommendations on improvements which would also benefit workers in the various sectors of the industry.

The seminar regretted the decline in the East African Railways and called on the railway authorities in the region to undertake measures for a complete rehabilitation of the system, taking full account of railwaymen's need for job security and an appropriate level of remuneration. The importance of integrated operations between the three East African states was also stressed.

The seminar, while welcoming the considerable investment already made by East African states in the modernisation and expansion of the region's ports, called for a revival of the shipping activities formerly carried out by the East African National Shipping Line; the building of dry dock and other port facilities; and the negotiation of arrangements to give African shipping lines a fair share of cargo carried to and from their ports.

The neglect of the economic potential of the East African fishing industry was noted and the individual states urged to undertake significant investment in this sector and to consider increased cooperation with neighbouring states in exploiting the fish in their oceans, lakes and rivers.

With regard to the introduction of new technology into the maritime industry, the seminar felt that this should take place in close consultation with the trade unions and should take full account of the prevailing levels of employment and the local economic situation.

The seminar noted the relatively low level of trade union organisation in the road transport sector and the problems of drivers engaged in inter-state operations and called on their respective governments to ratify convention no 153 on working hours and rest periods in road transport and on employers to take active steps to protect the health and safety of their workers.

It was acknowledged that while the airlines of the three nations had made tremendous progress in recent years they must nonetheless rationalise their operations in the interests of efficiency and profitability.

In its conclusions the seminar called for the revision of labour legislation, much of which dated from colonialist times, to bring it into line with modern industrial relations practice. Recognising the importance to the transport industry of a well-qualified labour force, the seminar also called on each of the governments in the region to ensure that training facilities were made available to workers from the two other countries.

ASIA: TRAINING KEY TO DEVELOPMENT SAYS ILO CONFERENCE

The 10th ILO Asian Regional Conference, which closed in Jakarta on 13 December, identified vocational training as the 'key for unlocking the potential for improved quality of life' for the people of the Asia and Pacific region. Such training if it were to make a real contribution to progress, the Conference stressed, must reach the majority if not all of the population and be relevant to job requirements and development potential, with special attention being given to rural workers. Well-designed training schemes should also be evolved which could help reduce levels of unemployment and underemployment among vulnerable groups such as women, older workers and the disabled. Governments in the region were urged by the Conference to invite employers' and workers' organisation to participate at all levels in designing, implementing and evaluating vocational training schemes in order to achieve the most effective results and the conference also called on the ILO to convene a World Conference on Training and to seek greater funding resources for its efforts in this area.

The Conference also discussed the integration of the approximately 300 million disabled persons in the Region into productive employment, particularly in rural areas. Once again, it was urged that employers' and workers' organisations be fully involved in all aspects of vocational rehabilitation programmes for disabled persons.

Resolutions adopted by the conference included one calling on countries to expand their internal markets to promote economic growth as well as to encourage and support efforts to enhance awareness of the need for increased productivity; and ones on equality of opportunity for women and youth unemployment. The Bhopal disaster no doubt influenced the adoption of a further resolution asking the ILO to call on states to take special measures to promote the safe use or replacement of hazardous chemicals and urging it to pay increased attention to the improvement of occupational health and safety in the rural sector as well as in industry.

On the crucial question of standard setting, the Conference stressed the universality of ILO standards and called for more participation by developing countries in the standard-setting process.

Union News

GREAT BRITAIN: SHIPS' PILOTS VOTE TO JOIN TGWU

Around 1,000 marine pilots organised in the UK Pilots' Association have voted overwhelmingly in favour of joining the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU). The pilots' decision was prompted by government proposals for the reorganisation of the industry which will result in pilots losing their traditional self-employed status and becoming salaried employees. Many pilots will lose their jobs in the change-over and the pilots have become increasingly frustrated by the government's reluctance to finance redundancy payments and to deal with the other issues involved.

INDONESIA: NATIONAL CENTRE CHANGES NAME

At its second national Congress at the end of November, the Indonesian national centre, the Indonesian Labour Federation (FBSI), decided on a name change and elected new officials. The new unified centre, which replaces the previous federation of trade unions, is to be known as the All Indonesia Workers' Union (Serikat Pekerja Seluruh Indonesia - SPSI). The new SPSI President is Imam Soedarwo and its General Secretary Arief Soemadji. Soemadji will retain his position as General Secretary of the ITF-affiliated Indonesian Seamen's Union (KPI).

SWEDEN: SHIPS' OFFICERS JOIN SALF

The beginning of January saw the merger of two Swedish ITF-affiliates, the Swedish Ships' Officers' Association (SFBF) and the Foremen's Union (Sveriges Arbetsledareförbundet, SALF). The SFBF, which organises just over three thousand of Sweden's masters, mates, radio officers and pursers, will have the status of an independent union within SALF. It is hoped that the merger, recommended by the association's executive and formally approved at a series of meetings, will give the union's former members the many added benefits that come from belonging to a large trade union organisation. It should also facilitate closer cooperation with the Engineers' Union which joined SALF some time ago.

NEWS IN BRIEF

India: dockers at the port of Visakhapatnam are currently staging a go-slow in support of contract demands.

A draft constitution for the new Malaysian national centre - to be known as the United Malaysian Labour Movement (UMLM) - was formally adopted by a special delegates' conference of the Malaysian Trades Union Congress in November (see page 109 of last issue).

The European Commission is reported to be considering a reduction in the total allowable catch for 1986 of mackerel, scad, cod, plaice and whiting in order to protect these species, while permitting increases in the quotas for herring, monkfish and sardines as stocks of these latter varieties have now been replenished.

Recent Pay Settlements

Australia - waterside workers, 3.8% from 4 November 1985; France - railwaymen, 2.9% cost-of-living allowance from 1 January 1986; Great Britain - haulage drivers in London and South East, increase of £6 per week from January.

Obituaries

Hector Basteiro, General Secretary of the Argentinian Civil Aviation Workers' Association (APA), has died.

Raimund Kopfensteiner, a leading official of the Austrian Municipal Employees' Union and Chairman of its Vienna Transport Authority Employees' Group, died on 27 December as the result of injuries suffered in a traffic accident. He was 54. Kopfensteiner had been an active trade unionist from his earliest youth and had risen to a position of prominence within the national labour movement, serving in recent years on the Executive Board of the Austrian Trade Union Confederation (ÖGB) and the Vienna Chamber of Labour. He also served as a member of the Committee of the ITF Road Transport Workers' Section and represented Austria on the Section's Urban Transport Committee.

Robert Lonati, the outgoing Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization (WTO), died on 31 December in Madrid, the city in which the WTO has its headquarters.

Personalia

P P Narayanan, the founder of the Malaysian Trades Union Congress, stepped down from the presidency at the end of December and was declared Honorary President for life in recognition of the years of loyal service he had given to the organisation. Narayanan continues as General Secretary of the National Union of Plantation Workers, which he also helped found, and still serves as President of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. The new MTUC President is Zainal Rampak.

Fernand Decoster retired in December from the General Secretaryship of the Belgian Metal Workers' Union. His successor is Germain Duhin, formerly Assistant General Secretary. Michel Cossaer has taken over as the union's new Assistant General Secretary.

Jens Anker Engelbrechtsen has been appointed Acting Vice-President of the Danish Transport and General Workers' Union (SiD) after Ib Schelde who retired at the end of last year. Engelbrechtsen was formerly treasurer of the union's transport group. He is also deputy member for Denmark on the Committee of the ITF Road Transport Workers' Section.

Bill Gill Jr, President for the past twenty years of the US Flight Engineers' International Association (FEIA), retired at the union's annual convention in Auckland, New Zealand, last November. To mark his retirement he was presented with the Frank Durkin Award and voted the title of President Emeritus. Within the ITF, Gill has made a valuable contribution over many years to the work of the Civil Aviation Section of which he was Chairman from 1974 until October 1985. Alan Widdicombe a Pan American flight engineer, was elected by the Convention as the union's new President.

Luciano Mancini and Sergio Mezzanotte have been elected General Secretary and Assistant General Secretary respectively of the Italian Transport Workers' Federation-CGIL. Mancini was appointed to the ITF Executive Board at the 1983 Madrid Congress, while Mezzanotte sits on the Committee of the ITF Railwaymen's Section and also serves on its Transport Policy Sub-Committee.

Gilbert Mousset retired as General Secretary of the Belgian Public Service Workers' Federation (CGSP) in October and has been succeeded by Gilbert Ionnoy.

Ulrik Salmonsén was elected President of the Danish Locomotivemen's Association in succession to K B Knudsen at the union's final Congress before its merger with the Danish Railwaymen's Union. Salmonsén now heads the independent locomen's section within the railwaymen's union, of which Ole Husted Andersen is the new Vice-President.

Manuel Simon, formerly secretary for International Relations of the Spanish national centre, the UGT, took up the post of Director of the ILO office in Madrid on 1 January.

Cliff Twort was appointed in December to the post of National Secretary of the Passenger Services trade group of the British Transport and General Workers' Union. He takes over from Bill Morris, TGWU Deputy General Secretary Designate.

Bill Whatley, General Secretary of the British Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers (USDAW) retired on 31 December. He is succeeded by Garfield Davies.

Forthcoming Meetings

Flight Deck Technical Committee - London	5 February 1986
Road Transport Workers' Section Working Group on Frontier Problems - Kiefersfelden	13-14 February 1986
ITF Asian Seafarers' Regional Committee - Sydney	19-21 February 1986
Railway Sub-Committee on Transport Policy - Brussels	4-5 March 1986
Management Committee - Nairobi	18 March 1986
Executive Board - Nairobi	18-19 March 1986

ITF Seafarers' Section Standing Committee on Maritime Mobile
Offshore Units - Venice 23 March 1986

Seafarers' Section Conference - Venice 24-26 March 1986

Railwaymen's Section New Technology Working Group - Paris 22-23 April 1986

Asia/Pacific Civil Aviation Conference - Tokyo 19-23 May 1986

Road Transport Steering Committee - London 21-22 May 1986

Fair Practices Committee - London 3-4 June 1986

Dockers' Section Conference - London 5-6 June 1986

35th ITF Congress - Luxembourg 31 July - 8 August 1986