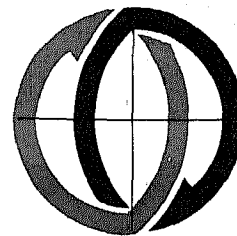


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NEWS

UN SHIP REGISTRATION CONVENTION "TOTAL FAILURE" SAYS ITF

The final version of the United Nations Convention on Conditions for Registration of Ships adopted by the 4th session of the UN Ship Registration Conference which concluded in Geneva on 7 February totally fails to deal with the massive problems posed by Flag of Convenience shipping, the ITF has made clear. As the ITF had feared earlier, the enormous pressure brought to bear on the Conference by flag of convenience operators through the governments of the OECD countries has resulted in an international instrument which, far from phasing out FOCs (the conference's original intention), actually enshrines the practice of operating so called "open registries" under international law. Not only is the convention useless, therefore, it is also dangerous both for seafarers and for the development of genuine national flag fleets. In a statement to the concluding session of the UN Conference, ITF Assistant General Secretary Ake Selander, while expressing approval of the articles in the Convention dealing with identification, accountability and joint ventures, made clear that the lack of any requirement that national Maritime Administrations should be based in the territory of the country concerned alone virtually guaranteed the continuation of Flag of Convenience shipping. Coupled with the inadequate provisions on manning by nationals of the flag state, this meant that the Convention provided no guarantee of a genuine link between ships and the flag state, and was totally one sided, he added.

The results of the UN Convention will be discussed at the forthcoming Conference of the ITF Seafarers' Section in Venice from 24-26 March which will provide the opportunity for seafarers' trade unions throughout the world to comment on its provisions in detail. However there is little doubt that the vast majority of seafarers' unions will be deeply disappointed by the terms of the Convention.

The most optimistic feature of the final session of the Conference was the provisions for bringing the new Convention into force. Only when at least 40 states together having at least 25% of the world's tonnage have ratified the instrument will it have the full force of international law. It is significant that Liberia has already announced that it will not be ratifying the Convention.

The efforts of the ITF and its affiliates in relation to the Convention will therefore probably be concentrated on opposing its ratification. Meanwhile the ITF's campaign against flags of convenience, coordinated by its Fair Practices Committee, will be intensified.

Inland Transport

ITF: ROAD SAFETY WEEK

ITF-affiliated unions organising road transport workers in eleven European countries are busy preparing for a road safety week being held next month in response to concern expressed by the Section at the effects on road safety and workers' health of drivers being required to work excessively long hours. Unions from most of the countries of the EEC as well as Austria, Cyprus and Sweden will be taking part in the Week from 20 to 26 April which will be launched with press conferences in London, Germany, France and Belgium under the slogan "Humanise road transport". During the week, unions will be campaigning for a reduction in drivers' working time in the light of the new EEC regulations due to come into force later in the year which will increase hours and reduce rest periods - an odd juxtaposition when one considers that the EEC has declared 1986 European Road Safety Year!

ITF: BORDER CROSSING PROBLEMS IN ROAD TRANSPORT

Kiefersfelden, on the border between West Germany and Austria, was the setting for an ITF meeting on frontier problems on 13 and 14 February 1986. One of the main themes for discussion was the setting up of trade union information and recruiting offices under the banner of the ITF at frontier crossing points. A previous experiment at the Spanish border town of Irun had shown up the difficulties with this idea. One obvious problem was financing the project, but even harder to overcome was the fact that drivers wanted to get away from the frontier posts as fast as possible and were very unwilling to stop and talk about trade union issues. On ferries, for example between Sweden and West Germany, on the other hand they had a certain amount of free time and could be approached. Other ideas were brought forward by the participants, including the use of CB radio, the distribution of a leaflet introducing the ITF at motorway service areas and the organisation of family events aimed specifically at road haulage drivers.

The meeting went on to consider arrangements for a week of publicity action (20-26 April 1986) protesting against the new EEC regulations on drivers' hours. Research into health and safety among road transport workers, with cooperation from the Universities of California and Groningen, was also discussed: it will be taken up by the Section's Steering Committee when it meets in May.

ITF: PROMOTING THE RAILWAYS

Future international union action in defence of the railways was the main item under discussion at the meeting of the ITF Railwaymen's Section Transport Policy Sub-Committee held in Brussels on 4 and 5 March 1986. The sub-committee will now concentrate efforts on persuading railway managements to play a more active and positive role in promoting the railways and on involving a wide range of national and international interest groups. Plans were also laid at the meeting for further ITF publicity and campaign activities. In other discussions, rail unions were

urged to provide more information on staff reductions, manning levels and service conditions for the benefit of fellow affiliates and suggestions were made about a second edition of the ITF publication "What's happening to the railways?". The meeting also received a report on the latest situation within Japanese National Railways (JNR). Finally, it was decided that the ITF should arrange meetings for affiliates concerned with the Channel Tunnel and at a later date for rail unions affected by plans for the development of a high speed France - Belgium - Holland/Germany line.

CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE ON RHINE MANNING REGULATIONS (CENTRAL RHINE COMMISSION)

The tripartite consultations conference on Rhine manning regulations which took place in Strasbourg from 25-27 February discussed a revised paper from the ZKR Secretariat outlining an amended text for the manning regulations (Article 14) of the Rhine Shipping Control Regulations (RSchUO). Some consensus was reached between trade unions and employers on operating patterns and manning of motor ships and passenger ships. The independent operators continued to support unacceptably long operating periods and lower manning scales. The Conference was attended by representatives of all ITF affiliates with members in Rhine navigation and by G Brothers, Section Secretary.

Civil Aviation

ITF: FLIGHT DECK TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETS IN LONDON

A meeting of the ITF Flight Deck Technical Committee was held in London on 5 February. Among the subjects discussed were: the problem of cracking on the B 747; B 747 400 series; the case for the retention of the flight operations officer licence in Annex 1; and the work of the ICAO Air Navigation Commission on the carriage of dangerous goods. The meeting urged the Secretariat to evolve an ITF policy on range limits for twin engined aircraft as well as a draft security policy which could then be submitted to all the civil aviation technical committees for consideration. The Committee also discussed the establishment of a safety committee to deal with questions of common interest to the section's three technical committees. On the forthcoming deliberations on a flight engineer licence, it was agreed that affiliates should contact panel members putting forward the ITF's view on the recommendations for the licence. The draft EEC directive on mutual recognition of licences within the EEC was also discussed, with the committee stressing that the draft still needs amending to include a reference to ICAO standards.

CANADA: UNION BUSTING IN PACIFIC WESTERN STRIKE

The strike at Pacific Western Airlines is still continuing after four months with the three unions involved united in resisting attempts by the company to impose sweeping concessions on its workers and the company using tactics against strikers that have compelled their unions to file a complaint of unfair labour practices with the Canadian Labor Relations Board. A second "final" offer from the company has been decisively rejected by both the IAM and CALFAA and although a tentative settlement is

reported as having been reached with UAW/CALEA, a back-to-work agreement has yet to be signed and UAW/CALEA members have indicated that they will respect picket lines at PWA locations. Meanwhile, the company has urged the IAM and CALFAA to accept this offer as any subsequent offer would be worse than that now on the table.

The union complaint arises from PWA's engaging a company of consultants to provide security guards. Almost immediately after the guards were introduced, a series of incidents began on the picket lines, with pickets being intimidated, assaulted and harassed. The guards have aimed blows at pickets, driven at speed on icy roads through their lines careless of pickets' safety, and have followed pickets home from picket duty. The head of the company has even engaged in surveillance of union members. The guards, all of whom were specially screened for their martial arts experience, have also been used, at least in the early days of the strike, as undercover agents and the unions are rightly concerned that they could be used to provoke picket line incidents. Employees of the company have been working long hours (in one instance, that of a supervisor, from 07.00 to 23.00) again increasing the likelihood of violence. According to testimony provided by a former company supervisor the company security manager had reportedly told staff that they would probably have to bash heads and the president of the company had openly stated that he was out to break the unions. Another supervisor, again according to this evidence, had referred to his own men as "reasonably well trained management goons".

UNITED STATES: INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM DISCUSSES HEALTH AND SAFETY OF CABIN CREWS

A wide range of issues with a bearing on the health and safety of the world's cabin crews were discussed at the Third Annual International Aircraft Cabin Safety Symposium held in Anaheim, California at the end of January 1986 under the auspices of the Institute of Safety and Systems Management of the University of Southern California. ITF Civil Aviation Section Secretary Hans-Bernhard Beyertt attended the Symposium from the Secretariat.

During the five days of the symposium sessions were held on topics including survival, with presentations on crash fire rescue and crew member training for full-scale evacuation demonstrations (the latter paper given by Steven Vincent, Chairman, Aircraft Technical Committee of the US Association of Flight Attendants); human factors, with papers on flight attendant health and the effects of shift working on circadian rhythms; regulation of commercial aviation; cabin environment; and terrorism. Other areas covered by the symposium included accident investigation, crash survivability, cabin-cockpit relations and hazardous materials, the latter introduced by Captain Ronald Macdonald of the International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations. A paper on post-accident trauma was introduced by Barbara Dunn, National Safety Chairperson of the Canadian Air Line Flight Attendants' Association, who was also represented on the Planning Committee together with other representatives of aviation labour.

UNITED STATES: SAFETY FEARS OVER BLOCKED 747 DOORS REMAIN DESPITE EVACUATION TEST

All 540 passengers and crew escaped safely from a Boeing 747 with two blocked overwing exits in an evacuation test carried out by Boeing in Everett, Washington, in February in response to safety fears raised by organisations representing flight crews and passengers. The evacuation was carried out in the standard manner through half the available exits (ie through four main deck exits and one upper exit) in 80 seconds, well within the current FAA 90 second limit. Data from the exercise is now being studied by the Federal Aviation Administration, which in the meantime is maintaining its advice to airlines to keep all ten doors in operation so as to give an extra margin of safety. Once the information has been evaluated, airlines that have blocked off their B 747 doors are expected to take a decision on whether the exits should be restored to meet objections over the distance some passengers would have to cover in an emergency (perhaps complicated by fire with choking fumes and poor visibility) to reach an exit door.

UNITED STATES: SETTLEMENT AT EASTERN AIRLINES FOLLOWED BY TAKEOVER BID FROM TEXAS AIR

Following intensive mediation sessions during February, pilots and cabin attendants with Eastern Airlines have reached agreement with the management of the company on new contracts, in both cases shortly before a strike deadline. While the employees have had to accept substantial pay cuts and other concessions, Eastern, with somewhat insensitive timing, has just reduced fares to over one hundred US cities by up to 75% to match similar discount fares being offered by other airlines. According to recent reports, Eastern plans to recall the flight attendants who were laid off at the beginning of February as well as to hire additional staff to cope with a planned expansion of services.

Meanwhile, Eastern has accepted an offer from Frank Lorenzo, Chairman of Texas Air Corporation (parent company of Continental) to acquire the troubled company and the proposed takeover is now awaiting approval from the Department of Transportation. Not surprisingly, in view of Continental's track record in the field of labour relations, Eastern's unions have been angered and upset by this latest move and are now seeking alternative buyers for the company.

UNITED STATES: EMPLOYMENT PROTECTION RULES FROM AIRLINE DEREGULATION ACT NOW IN FORCE

Seven years after the enactment of the 1978 Airline Deregulation Act in the United States, aviation workers have at last overcome the resistance of the Reagan administration and the airlines to the hiring preference rule contained in the Act, introduced to protect employees who lost their jobs as carriers adjusted to the new economic realities of the post-deregulation era. All airlines will now be required to list their job vacancies with a central register which will be published by the Labor Department to assist displaced workers in gaining re-employment. Airlines in existence when the Act came into force will have to give first

preference when hiring workers from outside their labour force to applicants with hiring rights, ie those with four years' service and over at the time of deregulation. The clause was originally intended to give employees protection in the ten years following deregulation but because of the long delay will now remain in force for less than three years.

Seafarers

ITF: ASIA/PACIFIC SEAFARERS MEET IN SYDNEY

Members of the Asian Regional Committee of the ITF Seafarers' Section from unions in Australia, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Indonesia, Kiribati and Tuvalu, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan and Vanuatu attended a meeting in Sydney last month where their deliberations ranged over a wide span of concerns affecting their members, many of whom serve on flag of convenience vessels. The ITF Secretariat was represented by Assistant General Secretary Ake Selander, M S Hoda, Secretary of the Asia/Pacific Region and B Laughton, Secretary of the Special Seafarers' Department. K Mols Sorensen, Seafarers' Section Chairman, attended in his capacity as ex officio member of the Committee.

The three-day meeting discussed the large surplus of ratings in the region and its effects in depressing wage rates and went on to adopt a resolution urging that officers and ratings from the region recruited under ITF-approved agreements be of the same nationality to prevent flag-of-convenience operators exploiting this surplus of labour by deliberately engaging officers and ratings of different nationalities and on different wage scales, a practice that was widening the differentials between the two groups. In a second resolution adopted by the meeting the Committee gave expression to its view that the International Maritime Organisation should be transformed into a tripartite body, while a third resolution on the phasing out of Greek bilateral crewing agreements recommended that action be taken by the Secretariat with a view to reaching agreement with the Greek seamen's union and the Greek owners on acceptable terms of employment for non-domiciled seafarers and on the numbers of seafarers to be supplied to Greek ships from each country in the region.

SHIP HIJACKING: NEW INTERNATIONAL RULES TO BE DRAWN UP

New international rules designed to prevent terrorism and other aggressive acts against international shipping are being drawn up following a discussion of the issue at the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) in February. Following the hijacking of the Italian cruise ship "Achille Lauro" in October 1985, the ITF approached the Secretary General of the IMO asking that organisation to take a lead in introducing measures designed to safeguard international shipping against acts of unlawful interference. A paper submitted to the MSC meeting by the ITF on behalf of the ICFTU, which has consultative status with the body, made more detailed proposals on ways of reducing the risk of terrorist acts against shipping and indicated the ITF's willingness to cooperate in providing expertise and funding to any work instituted by the IMO in this field.

The ITF's initiative was followed by a similar suggestion from the government of the USA and a set of proposals, drafted by the IMO secretariat, is currently being considered by various of its committees prior to final adoption by the Maritime Safety Committee at its next session in September this year.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE REVIEWS SEAFARERS' WELFARE NEEDS

Seafarers' welfare needs in the next decade were assessed by the International Committee on Seafarers' Welfare at its meeting in Geneva on 5 and 6 February 1986. The international committee, which has members from the ITF, the International Shipping Federation (ISF), the International Christian Maritime Association (ICMA) and various national agencies and other organisations active in the field, elected ITF Assistant General Secretary Ake Selander as Chairman for the next two years. Seafarers from the developing nations were identified by the meeting as being in the greatest need of welfare facilities in port, but it was recognised that seafarers' centres of some kind open to seafarers of all nationalities were likely to be needed in most ports. While it was generally agreed that national governments must bear the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that adequate facilities and amenities were provided in ports in accordance with the relevant ILO instruments, the Committee felt that owners, seafarers' unions and voluntary organisations should be encouraged to play an active role in the provision of shore-based welfare facilities, making the best possible use of the resources at their disposal. Financing should come from governments but it was recognised that there could be instances when this would be insufficient and that other alternative sources would need to be explored. The meeting also called for constant monitoring of seafarers' welfare needs by port welfare committees on which should be included representatives of port and civic authorities, shipowners and agents, seafarers' unions, voluntary organisations, consuls and other relevant groups.

ITF SEEKS ARREST OF HONG KONG SHIP FOR BACK PAY

ITF lawyers in Italy are seeking the arrest of the Hong Kong registered "Sleeping Beauty" currently berthed in Catania in Sicily. The ship arrived in the port on 3 February and the crew, made up of British officers and Polish and Turkish ratings, complained to the ITF that they were not being paid according to their employment contracts.

While investigating the ship, the ITF Special Seafarers' Department (SSD) discovered that back wages were still outstanding to a number of British officers who had formerly served on the ship. With assistance both from the ITF, the ITF's Italian affiliate FIT-CISL and from NUMAST, Great Britain, who had some members amongst the officers, agreement was reached with the charterers of the ship to pay the outstanding wages. Since the ex-crew were not included in this settlement, however, the ITF then decided to take steps to arrest the ship (a legal process preventing it from sailing).

While the present crew received their backpay, their troubles were by no means over. The Catania harbour master, worried he would be left with a useless ship, confiscated the airline tickets of the crew to prevent them returning home. Two managed to make their way to London at their own expense, but one was arrested by the Italian police, and charged with deserting his ship. When the officer concerned was brought to trial, the ITF's lawyers argued successfully that the charge of desertion only applied to Italian flag ships, and he was released, opening the way for the repatriation of the rest of the crew. While the ship was berthed awaiting a resolution of the dispute, however, a fatal accident occurred in which a seaman on a neighbouring ship was killed as a result of faulty equipment on the "Sleeping Beauty". Legal proceedings are now under way by the relatives of the dead man as well as the ITF.

Although Hong Kong is not officially classified as a Flag of Convenience (FOC) by the ITF, this case shows many of the features commonly associated with FOCs. In particular it has, so far, proved impossible to identify the real owner of the ship. The registered owner is a Guernsey company called Princess Shipping with seven shareholders: Bachmann Alpha, Bachmann Beta, Bachmann Gamma, Bachmann Delta, Bachmann Epsilon, Bachmann Pi and Bachmann Omega Ltd. Each one owns one share. Bachmann is a Guernsey company which specialises in setting up "nameplate companies" to disguise their real ownership.

"Sleeping Beauty" is only one example of the type of ship which the ITF has to deal with daily on behalf of seafarers who are members of its affiliates or directly members of the ITF Special Seafarers' Department.

ITF RADIO UNIONS OPPOSE DROPPING RADIO OFFICER ON SHORT VOYAGES

ITF unions organising radio officers are likely vigorously to oppose new draft regulations drawn up by the British government exempting British registered vessels from the requirement to carry a radio officer in short-sea operations. The move follows a year-long official trial on Scottish shipowners Christian Salvesen bulk carriers, now extended for a further six months, during which navigating officers were used to handle radio telephone communications. The Department of Trade claims that non-carriage of a radio officer did not degrade the safety of the vessels involved in the experiment or reduce their capacity to assist other ships in distress.

GERMANY: TALKS BREAK DOWN OVER SEAFARERS' HOURS

Talks between the ITF-affiliated German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV) and the shipowners' association on a new basic agreement for 20,000 seafarers have broken down over the question of working hours. The union claim for a reduction in annual working time was rejected by the owners as non-negotiable. Instead they had proposed an increase in normal working hours from 40 to 56, which would have meant an end to overtime payment for work on Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays and a significant drop in seafarers' earnings. The negotiations have now gone to mediation.

GREAT BRITAIN: OTHER OWNERS READY TO FOLLOW BP'S LEAD

Despite negotiations, the ITF's British ratings' and officers' unions NUS and NUMAST have failed to persuade the three agencies selected to provide crews for BP Shipping to grant them recognition, which has led them to raise the question of trade union representation with the ILO. Both organisations have condemned the British government's tacit approval of the ending of direct employment by BP and the offshore conditions the company is attempting to force on its crew and fear that the company has no intention of retaining British nationals on its ships in the long term. Meanwhile, no doubt spurred on by BP's example, two further companies, Jebbens and Souters, are planning to leave the British register. In the case of Jebbens, plans are being laid to switch seven bulk carriers managed by its British subsidiary, possibly to the new Isle of Man registry. Only days later, Souter announced that three chemical carriers which it operates for the Hamburg based company John T Essberger would probably be transferred to Bermuda. The unions view both these proposals with concern because of the likely implications for the seafarers involved but welcome the fact that the companies have indicated that they are prepared to negotiate.

STRIKE THREATENED IN GREEK MARITIME INDUSTRY

The ITF-affiliated Panhellenic Seamen's Federation (PNO) decided at an Executive Board meeting on 10 March to call a 24-hour warning strike on March 21. The strike is in support of the union's demand for the retention of the special tax regime for seafarers' earnings which has been in operation for 33 years. Vessels in Greek ports are to be affected by the strike with effect from 6 am on March 21, while vessels at foreign ports will be affected in the 24 hours following their safe mooring at the first port of call between 21 March and 7 April. ITF affiliates have been informed of the action taken by the PNO and requested to take any necessary action to support the union.

UNITED STATES: SHIPOWNERS ATTACK ON TAX CHANGES "CRY FROM THE WALLET"

Attacks made by the Federation of American Controlled Shipping (FACS) on changes in the tax reform bill adopted by the US House of Representatives which would withdraw tax privileges from US owned FOC shipping have been heavily criticised by the ITF. Writing in "Lloyds List" on February 18 the ITF General Secretary pointed out the main purpose of the tax changes are to ensure that US shipowners should pay their fair share of tax and should not be able to opt out by borrowing Liberian, Panamanian, Bahamian or Honduran nationality. US operators of FOC ships have, he went on, been getting away with fiscal murder for years. American citizens and corporations, who have had to make good what the owners have been dodging, can, the ITF stressed, fairly ask why the free loaders should live off them any longer. The claims made by Mr Loree, the Chairman of FACS, that the changes would damage the US strategic interest should fool no-one, Lewis concluded. The cry comes from the wallet not the heart.

Travel Bureaux

DENMARK: JOINT UNION CAMPAIGN ON BEHALF OF MEMBERS IN TRAVEL TRADE

Two Danish unions - the Salaried Employees' Union (Funktionaerforbund) and the General Workers' Union (SiD) - have joined forces to campaign for better conditions for workers in the travel industry, which they claim is seriously undermanned. The unions are particularly concerned at the long hours worked by coach drivers, particularly those taking parties of tourists from Denmark to destinations in Austria and Italy. Although the driving is normally shared between two drivers the pressure on them to make the journey within twenty-four hours means that they are unable to get to their objective in time without exceeding the agreed limits on working hours. Similarly long hours are also worked by couriers at holiday resorts. In the coming months the two unions will be leafleting the general public in an effort to make them aware of the dangers of exploitation of this kind.

General

AFRICA: OATUU BREAKS UP IN ACRIMONY

Following more than a year of internal warfare, the Organisation of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU) finally broke into two competing factions following its Extraordinary Congress in Accra from 6-8 February. Strong disagreements continued amongst the various delegations present about financial arrangements, voting rights, and the position of the OATUU General Secretary Denis Akumu. As a result of the lack of agreement on these issues, 30 national trade union centres, out of a total of 46 represented at the Congress, walked out to hold a parallel Congress and elected their own leadership. Both groups have approached the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) claiming recognition as the legitimate representative of African workers. The majority group elected Hassan Suomonu (NLC, Nigeria) as President, with Vice Presidents from Togo, Zaire, Gabon and Zimbabwe. The General Secretary elected was Abdoulaye Mohamed from Niger. The minority group elected Ali Nefishi from Libya as President and Denis Akumu as General Secretary, with Vice Presidents from the Ivory Coast, Ghana, Tanzania, Sudan and Egypt.

LATIN AMERICA: ICFTU LODGES FURTHER COMPLAINTS AGAINST NICARAGUA AND DOMINICAN REPUBLIC ALLEGING CONTINUED VIOLATION OF TRADE UNION RIGHTS

Two complaints lodged by the ICFTU recently with the Committee on Freedom of Association of the ILO provide further evidence of the continuing and systematic repression of trade unions in Latin America. In both cases, the complaints were supplementary to earlier evidence submitted alleging violation of basic union rights.

In the first case, that of Nicaragua, the ICFTU complaint instances three manifestations of the systematic government campaign being waged against the national centre CUS: the serving of summonses by the State Security Department on over three hundred trade unionists belonging to CUS, accompanied by intimidation and threats; "visits" by a three-man delegation of government officials to various CUS member organisations to warn them of their position under the state of emergency; and the banning of the CUS union review "Solidaridad". In the case of the Dominican Republic, the ICFTU supplies details of the break up by police of a meeting of the general assembly of the Catarey Sugar Workers' Union called to discuss action in connection with a pay claim. One worker was killed (according to eye witnesses shot dead by police), thirty were injured and thirty were still being detained.

SOUTH AFRICA: INTERNATIONAL PROTEST WEEK BEGINS

The international week of protest action coordinated by the international trade union movement against the Apartheid regime in South Africa which was agreed by the January meeting of the ITSS began on March 17 and ended on March 21, the anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre. In an appeal to all ITF affiliates General Secretary Harold Lewis informed them of the following specific suggestions for action made by the ICFTU in relation to air services to South Africa:-

- representations to governments in countries where landing rights are granted to South African Airways (SAA)
- representations to airlines with traffic to and from South Africa to stop such traffic
- representations to governments to take action to stop such traffic
- picket lines around SAA offices
- distribution of information to travel agents and South African tourist offices discouraging the use of SAA
- distribution of leaflets to passengers flying to South Africa and to those servicing those flights
- harassment of SAA and other flights to and from South Africa by all appropriate and practical means.

In addition, ITF affiliates have been asked to support action taken by national trade union centres, eg in organising demonstrations etc against the apartheid policies of the South African government and in particular demanding the release of trade union and political detainees.

TURKEY: TURK-IS CAMPAIGNS FOR RESTORATION OF TRADE UNION RIGHTS

Despite the much-vaunted "transition to democracy" now under way in Turkey, human and trade union freedoms remain severely limited and the government shows no signs that it is prepared to amend current labour legislation and the provisions of the 1982 Constitution to bring them into line with ILO standards and ICFTU principles. It is against this background that the trade union centre TURK-IS has launched a national campaign aimed at democratising political life and restoring fundamental rights which began with a mass rally in Ankara addressed by ICFTU General Secretary John Vanderveken. A second rally held last month in Izmir also attracted large crowds.

The Turkish unions are pressing for the restoration of the right to strike and to free collective bargaining and an end to the onerous restrictions governing elections to trade union office. They are also seeking the lifting of the ban on so-called "political" activities by trade unions as well as the removal of provisions that have weakened the financial independence of unions. A further objective is official recognition that unions should be free to establish and join federations and confederations and that they should have the unfettered right to affiliate to international trade union organisations.

Meanwhile, the ICFTU has renewed its representations to the Turkish government in the light of the resumption of the trial of DISK union leaders which is now entering its final phase.

WEST GERMANY: UNION MOVEMENT UNITED AGAINST ANTI STRIKE BILL

Many thousands of German workers have been staging a series of short stoppages and demonstrations under the banner of their national centre (the DGB) during recent months in protest at plans by the German government to withdraw entitlement to unemployment benefit from workers not directly involved in a strike but who are temporarily laid off as the result of industrial action. The most recent stoppages were staged in early February to coincide with the first reading of the bill.

The unions view the government's action as the most serious threat to their right to take strike action of the post war era as even the most prosperous unions would be seriously inhibited from taking strike action if they had to bear the enormous financial burden of paying out benefits both to strikers and those made idle by a dispute, a situation which the employers would not be slow to exploit. Attempts are now being made to influence the views of the small group of politicians in the ruling coalition with a union background whose support could decide the fate of the bill.

The government's latest move was sparked off by the successful engineering workers' strike in 1984 in support of the joint union campaign for a shorter working week which brought the entire motor industry to a standstill, making 400,000 workers idle, following industrial action at selected component manufacturers, a strike that proved very costly in terms of the payments made from the unemployment fund.

NEWS IN BRIEF

The government of Antigua and Barbuda has deposited an instrument of acceptance of the IMO Convention with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The International Maritime Organization now has one hundred and twenty-eight full members and one associate member.

Western Australian maritime unions are demanding that the Cocos Islands trade be reserved for Australian-flagged and -manned ships. The route is currently served by a Singapore-flag vessel, the Pacific Bold, which has been delayed several times in Fremantle in recent months as part of the unions' campaign. It is argued that as Australia now has responsibility for the islands' economy trade between the two should be carried in ships of the Australian fleet. This could well come about if the owners of the Pacific Bold decide not to tender when the cargo contract comes up for renewal later this month.

Belgian railwaymen organised by the Public Service Workers' Union (CGSP) staged a 24-hour strike at the end of January in protest at recent cuts in manpower which they believe are endangering rail safety - a view that is shared by rail management and has been brought to the attention of the relevant minister. The men have also been angered by plans to tax bonuses paid for night work and work in inclement winter weather.

A strike of Finnish icebreaker crews called by the ITF-affiliated Seamen's Union last month was called off when the finance ministry agreed to establish a working party to examine the taxing of travel allowances.

The German Seeverufsgenossenschaft has refused to bow to pressure from the federal government to dispense with the night watch on certain foreign-going vessels. The government's plans, first announced last summer, attracted vigorous protests from the German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (OeTV) which stressed the threat to the safety of life at sea. The ITF also complained to the IMO charging the German government with violating the Standards of Training and Watchkeeping Convention.

A second Japanese shipping company bankruptcy - that of Nakamura Kisen - has followed hard on the heels of the collapse of Sanko Steamship. Nakamura controls a fleet of about 60 ships and is second only in size to Sanko.

In what is being viewed as a first step towards the eventual deregulation of the aviation industry, Italian short haul traffic on domestic and some international routes to EC destinations has been opened up to regional airlines by means of a Transport Ministry decree.

Dutch inland navigation workers may now take early retirement at age 62. The previous age limit was 63.

Spanish dock workers are staging a series of strikes this month in protest at government plans for the privatisation of the dock industry.

United States: Senate approval has been won for the sale of Conrail to Norfolk Southern Corporation.

Recent Pay Settlements

Germany - public service workers, 3.5% backdated to 1 January and an increase in holiday pay from DM 300 to DM 450; United States - United Airlines flight attendants, 4% from 1 May.

Obituaries

Ethel Chipchase, former member of the British Transport Salaried Staffs' Association's head office staff and Women's Officer of the Trades Union Congress, died in January, shortly before her 70th birthday.

Personalia

Albert Bousser, Honorary President of the Luxembourg Federation of Railway and Transport Workers (FNCTTFEL), celebrated his 80th birthday on 8 February. Bousser was General Secretary from 1945 to 1954 when he was made President.

Hans Freihs1, editor since 1962 of the magazine of the Austrian Railwaymen's Union, retired at the beginning of this year. The magazine's new editor is Rainer Mayerhofer.

Bernard Olivier retired from the General Secretaryship of the French Federation of Railway, Technical and Supervisory Personnel (FMC) in late January and is succeeded by Jean-Claude Desorme.

Robert Strobl, Second Vice-President of the Austrian Railwaymen's Union, has been elected to the Austrian parliament.

Forthcoming Meetings

ITF Seafarers' Section Standing Committee on Maritime Mobile
Offshore Units - Venice23 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

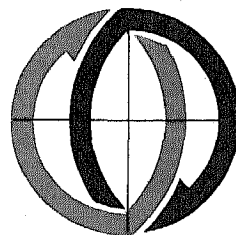
Inland Navigation Section - London 2 June 1986

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

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MAY 1 - 100 YEARS

May 1 this year marks the 100th anniversary of events which contributed to the creation of the international trade union movement. On May 1 1886, while workers in many parts of the world fighting for union recognition and the eight hour day were being confronted by state repression, in Milwaukee, USA, nine trade unionists were gunned down by the police. Further shootings followed a few days later in Chicago. In response May 1 became an international day for demonstrations of trade union solidarity.

Those traditions of solidarity continue within the international trade union movement. Workers in the transport industry are well aware of the value of international solidarity. Today new challenges face transport workers: mass unemployment; attacks on trade union rights, privatisation and deregulation; technological change all demand new strategies and responses. These questions will be debated in depth at the 35th ITF Congress this July in Luxembourg. Whatever the response, however, the underlying principle of international solidarity remains the same.

Harold Lewis