



INDEX

No. 5

May 1986

NEWS

New draft Seafarers' standards	43
South African unions harassed	44
Tunisia: government attacks UGTT	44
Legalise boycotts says ITF	44

Inland Transport

Rail unions back JNR campaign	45
Road safety action week	45
Austrian road-rail success	46
Freight computerisation a threat to workers	46

Travel Bureau

Europe still safe says WTO	46
----------------------------	----

Civil Aviation

Indian unions start signature campaign	47
Draft U.S. legal protection for employees	47
Airport workers should be consulted says ICAA	47
European deregulation decision	48

Seafarers

Japan Foc joint action	48
French gov't consider new convenience flag	49
ITF campaign: FPC to meet in London	49

Dockers

Australian strikes as talks break down	49
----------------------------------------	----

Obituary

50

NEWS

New draft Seafarers standards emerge from Geneva ILO conference

Draft international labour standards covering social security, health protection and medical care, seafarers' welfare and repatriation were among the results of the Preparatory Technical Maritime Conference (PTMC) which took place at the ILO headquarters in Geneva from 5 to 16 May. The conference was attended by tripartite delegations (governments, shipowners and seafarers) from 40 maritime countries. K. Mols Sørensen, chairman of the ITF Seafarers' Section was elected chairman of the Group, Åke Selander, ITF Assistant General Secretary was elected Secretary and Leo Barnes (NUSI, India) was elected Vice President of the Conference, reflecting the fact that the vast majority of seafarers' delegates were from ITF affiliated unions.

The Preparatory Conference is part of the maritime machinery of the ILO. Its job is to draft international labour standards (Conventions and Recommendations) On this occasion the PTMC discussed the preparation of new international instruments in four important fields : seafarers' welfare at sea and in port; social security; health protection and medical care; and repatriation.

On *welfare* the work of the seafarers was coordinated by Eric Nevin (NUMAST, Great Britain). The Conference agreed to submit a draft convention and recommendation to the 1987 Maritime Session. The **Convention** text lays down that governments should provide adequate cultural, welfare, recreational and information facilities to seafarers both in port and aboard ship. The **Recommendation** text goes into the type of facilities to be provided by governments and provides that welfare facilities should be financed from a combination of public funds, levies, or voluntary contributions.

On *social security*, where the seafarers spokesman was Pat Geraghty from the SUA, Australia, a draft Convention was adopted, although decisions on the central question of shipowners' liability and whether the flag state or the country of residence should be responsible for seafarers' social security were left open.

On *health protection and medical care* the discussions were coordinated by Sven Erik Nylund (Finnish Officers' Union). and also resulted in the adoption of a draft Convention. The text lays down standards for the contents of ships' medicine chests and the drafting of medical guides, for medical advice by radio or satellite communications, and for medical training. As well as general training for immediate action in cases of illness or accident on board for all seafarers, the draft text requires more advanced medical training, including the possibility of making intravenous injections to be received by "specified persons" on board all but small coastal ships.

The most difficult discussions of the two week conference took place in the committee dealing with the *repatriation* of seafarers where the seafarers were led by Frank Drozak (SIU, USA). Here also it was agreed to draft a Convention, but most of the items contained in it were adopted against the strong opposition of the shipowners group. The new instrument provides that a seafarer should be entitled to be repatriated after 6 months service as well as in circumstances such as illness, shipwreck etc. Repatriation should normally be by air and the costs should be borne by the shipowner to the seafarer's country of residence, place of engagement, country of origin, or any other place chosen by the seafarer which is no more costly. Pay and allowances should also be borne by the shipowner until the seafarer reaches the chosen destination, and the flag state, the port state, or if necessary the state of citizenship of the seafarer should meet the cost if the shipowner fails to do so.

In addition to the four Technical Committees, a special working group met during the Conference to decide on a new mechanism for including Conventions in the appendix to ILO Convention 147. This Convention helps states with ports at which ships call to enforce minimum standards on board even when the flag state does not. The Conference endorsed a procedure whereby in the future it will be possible to bring social questions covered by ILO Conventions more firmly within the scope of port State Control.

All the decisions taken by the PTMC will be reviewed by the full Maritime Session of the International Labour Conference in October, 1987 at which all states which are members of the ILO are entitled to be represented.

South African unions harassed during May Day demonstrations

Black South African trade unions provided a massive display of solidarity in opposition to white minority rule with a one day general strike on May 1st -- and were subjected to organised police violence and intimidation.

ITF affiliated General Workers Union (GWU) members took the day off to attend May Day rallies. The ITF later received word from the GWU that workers from the Everite Factory in Cape Town, on their way peacefully to a mass meeting, were attacked by the security forces. The police ordered them to return to their hostel and fired tear gas.

Five trade unionists -- including Msokoli Qotoli, General Secretary of the GWU -- were arrested under the notorious section 50 of the Internal Security Act which allows the police to detain anyone deemed a "threat to internal security" for 48 hours without charge or access to legal counsel.

ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis sent two telexes to the South African President and the London Embassy protesting against the arrest of the trade unionists, and calling for their immediate release. "Police action and arrests were totally unjustified and provocative. Have informed the GWU of our total support and will give maximum publicity to their case," he added.

In fact, the South African government released the five within the 48 hour period without charges -- proving, once again, that the lifting of the state of emergency has made no difference to the widespread and arbitrary powers of the state to harass the majority.

Tunisia: government steps up attacks on UGTT

The Tunisian government's relentless attempts to destroy independent trade unionism in their country, including the imprisonment of national centre UGTT General Secretary Habib Achour (ITF News April), have continued in spite of mounting international protest from the free trade union movement.

In concert with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and other International Trade Secretariats, ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis cabled Tunisian President Habib Bourguiba on April 29 demanding Achour's release and "genuine negotiations with the leadership of the UGTT."

But, the next day, the Tunisian government sanctioned a phony congress of the union, organised by supporters of the government, which claimed to elect a new union executive that then denounced the legitimate UGTT leadership and stated that the new leadership was standing beside the ruling party and government. The real UGTT leadership has denounced the congress and its elections as "illegal" and has called for the release of Achour and other jailed activists. They stress that the membership of the UGTT will not accept what amounts to a government take over of their union.

Legalise transport boycotts of South Africa says ITF

Governments which are serious about enforcing the UN embargo on arms to South Africa should start by legalising boycott action by transport unions. This was the message delivered by ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis to the International Seminar on the UN Arms Embargo held in London from 28-30 May.

The meeting, sponsored jointly by the UN Apartheid Committee and the Anti Apartheid Movement (AAM) was held to discuss ways of tightening up the ban on arms shipments destined for the South African Defence Force. In a statement delivered to the meeting, Harold Lewis stressed that the ITF was bound by its constitution to oppose "any discrimination based on colour, nationality, race or creed". In pursuance of this objective, he pointed out, ITF unions had boycotted, demonstrated and lobbied as much as any and more than most.

Governments should, he urged, make it a serious criminal offence for ships of its flag to carry arms or oil to, or destined for, South Africa. At the same time, governments should ensure that workers and unions which are involved in boycotting goods destined for South Africa did not face legal action as a result.

INLAND TRANSPORT

Rail unions support Japanese campaign against privatisation

The ITF-sponsored international day of action on May 14 against the Japanese's government's plans to privatise Japanese National Railways (JNR) and throw 124,000 employees out of work saw railway unions on every continent express their solidarity with the JNR unions.

Unions sent delegations and messages of protest to the Japanese government expressing their opposition to the proposed break-up of JNR into competing rival companies. The massive redundancies proposed -- and the fact that the government is planning to discriminate against "disruptive" employees (those with records of union activism) in deciding who will lose their jobs -- were key features in many of the protest messages.

The draft legislation -- now before the Japanese Diet -- proposes to break up the railway system on March 31, 1987. The campaign against privatisation continues -- already, earlier this year, 40 per cent of the Japanese people signed petitions opposing the move. The ITF will continue to give the strongest possible support to its affiliates KOKURU and DORO in their campaign.

European unions stage action week against new driving regulations

European ITF-affiliated road transport unions conducted a successful joint week of action -- Road Transport Safety Week -- from April 21-26 to educate drivers and the public about the dangers of new European Community regulations on drivers' working hours.

The new regulations -- couched in almost incomprehensible bureaucratic terms -- actually increase the numbers of hours truck or coach drivers may legally drive during any week. When they come into effect this September, inevitably there will be an increase in the number of drivers in Europe suffering from fatigue.

The ITF printed draft pamphlets and posters for affiliated unions and co-ordinated a European wide week of press conferences and leafleting. Participation in the week of action was widespread -- transport unions from Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, France, Luxembourg, Denmark, England, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden and Austria were involved.

Transport unions from outside the European Community took part because the regulations will affect them too -- its provisions will be adopted by the AETR road transport agreement run by the United Nations-- in Cyprus, for example, the ITF-affiliated FTPAW printed 20,000 copies of the leaflet and distributed them in every workplace, bus, coach, taxi and truck station in the country -- the union estimates that almost everyone in the country was informed of the problem.

The steering committee of the ITF Road Transport Section met in London on May 21 and 22 to assess the results of the week, to consider further publicity campaigns against the new EC regulations, to discuss research into health and safety problems, and to prepare for the section conference in Luxembourg.

Austrian rail piggyback services boost road-rail co-operation

The Austrian government's ambitious road-rail investment programme -- aimed at encouraging truck traffic to ride 'piggyback' on the railways -- is beginning to show the first tentative signs of success.

According to the *Wall Street Journal* rail freight carried in Austria increased from 9.4 million tonnes in 1984 to 10.4 million tonnes last year -- a significant increase at a time when most European National Railways are experiencing reductions in levels of freight carried.

Austria's support for rail and encouragement of truck piggyback services stems from strong public concern about the high levels of European truck traffic through the country -- Austria is one of Europe's crossroads, and uncontrolled trucking had started to threaten the local environment.

Germany: computer controlled freight movements pose threat to workers

New computer systems, making use of satellite communications, which control the movement of freight were the subject of a two day seminar organised by the DGB, the German national trade union centre in Münster on 18-19 April. The meeting, which was organised together with the ITF affiliate ÖTV and other DGB unions examined how new technologies were being used to speed up the movement of goods between factories, docks, warehouses and retail stores.

These developments, known as "logistics" - a term borrowed from military terminology- were described in detail by Wolfgang Baars, the ÖTV official leading the discussion. He referred to important new developments such as "just in time production" which were drastically reducing the requirement to hold stocks of components or finished products in manufacturing and distribution. The effects on employees included job losses, greatly increased workloads, and strict monitoring of the location and behaviour of road transport drivers. Other speakers expressed concern that the Federal Government was heavily subsidising research into "logistics" without paying adequate attention to its social effects.

ITF Research Officer David Cockroft, who attended the seminar, stressed that, although transport unions in other countries were urgently studying the impact of new technologies, little had so far been done on the specific question of "logistics". He pledged the ITF's assistance in encouraging the exchange of information and experience in this field between unions in the Federal Republic of Germany and those in other countries.

TRAVEL BUREAU

Europe safer than ever -- WTO meeting tells U.S. tourists

The World Tourism Organisation (WTO) Commission for Europe has told U.S. tourists they shouldn't cancel their holidays for fear of terrorism. In a unanimously adopted resolution at their Helsinki meeting from May 12 to 14 the WTO stressed that security provisions all over Europe were better than they had ever been.

"Life as usual is the password in all European countries today, as in the past," the resolution affirmed. Despite this and other assurances, however, the numbers of U.S. tourists booked to visit Europe this summer has fallen drastically.

The ITF, which is an affiliated member of the WTO, was represented at the meeting by Travel Bureau Section Chairman Lars Hellman and Section Secretary Bernie Beyertt. Over 60 delegates from affiliated organisations, governments and unions discussed a wide range of topics relating to the tourist industry.

CIVIL AVIATION

Indian Civil Aviation unions aim for 50,000 signatures on memorandum

The nine month old All India Co-ordinating Committee of Aviation Trade Unions (ITF News/November 1985) - which groups together most of India's aviation unions, including all the ITF affiliates -- has decided to submit a memorandum petition to the Indian Prime Minister outlining united trade union positions on aviation policy.

The aim is to obtain signatures from all of the country's nearly 50,000 Civil Aviation workers on this memorandum as a graphic demonstration of the unity of the unions. The decision to launch the signature campaign was taken at the committee's last meeting on March 20 in New Dehli. Early reports indicate that the campaign is doing well and receiving a solid response.

The Committee has decided to hold a national seminar on safety in Civil Aviation later this year, and as a token of their appreciation for the assistance they have received from the ITF the committee has also decided to co-opt ITF Asia/Pacific Regional Secretary Mo Hoda as an honorary member.

Union backs draft U.S. law to protect airline workers' jobs during mergers

The ITF-affiliated Airline Pilots Association (ALPA) representing 34,000 pilots in the USA has warmly welcomed a proposed law that would guarantee protection for workers involved in airline mergers.

"The continuous upheaval in the airline industry since deregulation -- including the recent spate of airline merger announcements -- coupled with the Department of Transportation's refusal to grant protection to airline workers in recent merger cases has created an urgent need for legislation," said ALPA President Captain Henry Duffy.

Following the government's abolition of the Civil Aeronautics Board in 1984 -- which had enforced a policy of labour protection provisions in merger cases -- there has been little protection for airline employees in the mergers. The draft legislation -- introduced in the U.S. congress on May 15 -- would reintroduce these safeguards.

Airport workers should be consulted on new technology says ICAA

The ITF was represented, for the first time, at an International Civil Airports Association (ICAA) seminar in Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia on April 24 and 25 by ITF Civil Aviation Section Secretary Bernie Beyertt. The ICAA -- an international umbrella organisation for civil airports -- met to discuss the issue of the "Impact of Modern Technology on Airport Personnel Management." Over 80 people representing management and workers attended the seminar, at which management representatives generally agreed on the need to include worker's representatives as early as possible in the planning and introduction of new technology and to provide full information at all times to airport employees. The seminar ranged over a wide variety of topics, from information and ticketing systems to technical automation and its human impact. The ICAA Director-General Mr. Block and the ITF agreed to establish close co-operation between the two organisations in the future.

European Court deregulation ruling casts clouds of doubt over industry

The European Court in Luxembourg ruled on April 30 that airline regulation by national governments contravenes the free trade statutes of the European Community (EC).

The ruling in favour of the Paris based *Nouvelles Frontiers* group, said that national regulations requiring government approval of airline fares contravene the Treaty of Rome -- the EC's founding document. But the Court has left the detailed consequences of their decision to national governments and the EC Commission to work out.

So the actual effect of the ruling remains obscure. Cutprice operators -- like Richard Branson's *Virgin Atlantic* in London, have announced that they intend to apply for a low fare services on major European routes by the end of this month to test the ruling. But the French government, in a statement issued after the ruling, said that they were still free to interpret EC regulations as they saw fit. A spokesperson for Air France and KLM also said that the ruling doesn't change anything. Meanwhile, Air France has also announced a series of cuts in European fares of up to 30 per cent on certain routes pending bilateral approval.

One thing the entire confusion highlights is the continuing absence of a coherent EC transport policy -- an area of harmonisation that has eluded the member states despite frequent discussions and debates.

The influential Association of European Airlines (AEA) responded to the ruling on May 22 by stating that the EC must now move towards a common air transport policy -- the greatest danger, say the airlines, would lie in each member country attempting to implement free trade policies in different ways. European Transport Ministers are set to meet on June 19 -- and the airlines hope they will take concrete steps towards setting up a common policy.

SEAFARERS

Japan: seafarers and dockers in joint action against f-o-c shipping

A successful three day blitz against flag of convenience ships was executed with precision by the ITF-affiliated All-Japan Seamen's Union (JSU) last month. The action -- co-ordinated simultaneously in five ports -- was cleverly timed to coincide with both the final stages of the JSU's 1986 collective agreement negotiations and a strike by the Japanese Harbour Workers' Federation at major port container terminals.

JSU supporters joined the dockers' pickets between April 11 and 14 while inspection teams checked out a total of 52 ships. Five of these were Japanese flags and the other 47 were Focs of which only nine had ITF Blue Certificates. Ships without acceptable agreements were warned of possible future boycott action.

The campaign was also successful in informing JSU rank and file members and the dockers about the ITF Foc campaign and encouraging their support and participation in future actions.

French government considers remote isles for new flag of convenience

The French government is reported to be seriously considering developing a remote archipelago in the Southern Indian Ocean as a French flag of convenience, allowing shipowners to evade the maritime code, hire non-French crews and still fly the French flag.

The Kerguelen Islands -- part of the French Southern Antarctic Territories -- are populated by only 80 people and thousands of penguins.

The suggestion comes in the wake of the anti-union Lathière Report on the French Maritime industry earlier this year. One of the report's suggestions was that the government create a temporary "option flag" where French shipowners who expressed the desire to flag out would be offered a two year period of exemption from shipping regulations.

So far, France has suffered relatively less flagging out than other Western European nations. If the Kerguelen Flag plan is adopted, it is estimated that some 40 ships might move -- keeping French officers and hiring non-domiciled ratings.

Taking Stock of the F-o-c campaign: ITF Fair Practices Meeting in London

The leading body in the ITF's campaign against Flag of Convenience shipping meets in London June 3-4 for the annual review of the campaign. Over 100 delegates from ITF seafaring and dockers unions will gather to review the years activities, discuss policy and plan action.

According to a report prepared for the meeting by the ITF's Special Seafarers' Department the total number of ITF approved agreements on Focs in 1985 reached 2,061 against 1,880 for 1984. The total amount of recovered unpaid wages, reported to the ITF last year was US\$3,426,445 from 81 ships. From January to April this year US\$1,361,032 for 33 ships has been notified.

Actions continue around the globe against focs (see the item in this issue about the recent JSU campaign) and there are now an additional eight ITF inspectors working in the USA from the beginning of April.

The Fair Practices Committee will also be reviewing the ITF list of countries considered to be offering flag of convenience facilities. The Secretariat is suggesting that Saint Vincent, Antigua and Barbuda, and the Isle of Man should be added to the list. On the positive side the Seychelles are recommended to be removed. This leaves 18 nations as recognised Foc providers. A full report on the discussions and debates of the Fair Practices Committee will appear in the next ITF News.

DOCKERS

Australian Wharfies take action as agreement negotiations break down

Negotiations in Australia for a new two year maritime agreement have broken down. Members of the ITF-affiliated Waterside Workers' Federation (WWF) in Fremantle, Newcastle and Hobart staged a 24 hour strike on May 21.

As we go to press a number of stopwork meetings are being held in other Australian ports, and the strike action is expected to spread. These warning strikes, according to the WWF, are the last resort before a full national stoppage is declared.

OBITUARY

Ben Kok, former General Secretary to the Dutch Transport Workers' Union (Vervoersbond FNV) died suddenly on May 23. From 1979 to 1983 he was a member of the ITF Executive Board and for many years he was a leading member of the ITF's Civil Aviation Section. He was awarded the ITF Gold Badge at the 1983 Madrid Congress.

ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis adds:

Ben Kok made some deep and lasting friendships in the ITF. He was not a flamboyant personality but he had great sincerity and integrity and the more you knew him the more you liked and respected him. Everyone was very sorry that ill-health forced him into early retirement but he had seemed to have benefitted from the relief that retirement brought. The news of his sudden death was all the more of a shock for that, and his friends throughout the world will join in sending their deepest sympathy to his wife and family.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Cabin Crew Technical Committee -- Madrid
ITF Executive Board -- Luxembourg
35th ITF Congress -- Luxembourg

10-11 June 1986
29-30 July 1986
31 July -- 8 August 1986

Please let us know.....

Our major source of information for **ITF News** is our affiliates throughout the world -- so please try and keep us in touch with events in your country and industry so that we can pass the information on. We have now begun a process of improving the design and style of **ITF News** and you can help us improve the content. So, please let us know what you think and give us any suggestions you have on how we can improve this newsletter.