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EXCLUSIVE

South Africa: unions continue organising

Msokoli Qotoli, former General Secretary of the South African General Workers' Union, now an official with the merged Transport and General Workers' Union, came to London for the ITF Dockers' Section Conference at the beginning of June -- just missing the imposition of the state of emergency by the South African government.

Before he returned to South Africa at the beginning of July, Qotoli and ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis visited the South African Ambassador in Great Britain - - Dennis Worrall-- to reiterate the ITF's protests at the detention of many members of Qotoli's union in South Africa.

After visiting the embassy, and shortly before boarding his plane to South Africa, Qotoli spoke to *ITF News*. At the time he didn't know whether or not he would be detained the next day. Happily we are able to report that, two weeks later, he was still at liberty. Qotoli's former Union -- the GWU -- has just merged with the Transport and General Workers' Union. The final agreement took place shortly before he left South Africa, and the new union is called the Transport and General Workers' Union. Both unions are members of the year-old Congress of South African Trades Unions (COSATU) -- which has adopted a policy of merging member unions into single industrial groups. But this merger predates the formation of COSATU.

"We started off in different places, we (the GWU) started off in Cape Town and

the T and G started in Natal. When the GWU went into Natal then we realised that we conflicted, we realised that we had better talk to each other." Qotoli said.

These discussions began as demarcation talks, but eventually the two unions realised it would make more sense to merge. The decision to work for a merger was, according to Qotoli, taken well before the formation of COSATU.

The new union groups together about 25,000 workers in many areas. A large number of these are in the direct transport field -- such as stevedores, bus and municipal transport employees. Workers in some transport related manufacturing concerns -- such as brake makers -- are also in the unions, along with a number of Asbestos and Engineering factories.

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NEWS

...railway organising drive planned

Continued from page one

But the new union's main priority is to organise the vast majority of workers who have no real union representation at all. In addition to the many unorganised Dock Workers, Qotoli says the union has set its sights on increasing the small foothold it already has in the railways.

"One of the things you have in the railways is protected jobs for the whites,

"The state of emergency just means extra work, frustration...It just puts you in a situation where you get really desperate, you don't know what is going to happen tomorrow." said Qotoli.

But this state of emergency, while harassing the union and imprisoning many union activists, has not stopped the union from organising. Qotoli says that

other reason -- you know they say they are not detaining people for their trade union work, but they don't have any other reason. That's certainly proven by the fact that they haven't charged anyone with anything," he said.

In the case of one GWU official -- Ray Lazarus, a book-keeper in the union's Cape Town office -- who was detained, a lawyer asked the police why she was being

That Qotoli wasn't arrested upon his return may be due, in part, to the pressure brought to bear on the South African authorities before his return. Messages of protest do often work, says Qotoli.

"I strongly believe that those kinds of actions have got an effect, whether the results would be exactly what you want or maybe just a little bit of what you want is another matter. In many cases it has proven to be an effective method, I think it is certainly a legitimate thing to do."

Qotoli found his meeting with the South African Ambassador -- who tries very hard to portray himself as a "liberal" -- "interesting."

"It was interesting to speak to the guy because on the one hand it showed quite clearly the problems that there are in South Africa. The government is claiming that it is ready to talk to anybody -- with a whole lot of preconditions -- but anyway they say they are prepared to talk to anybody, but at the same time you don't get very much out of those talks. I mean you basically have a chat and at the end of the day

"The state of emergency just means extra work, frustration...."

they've been bought off by the Nationalist government but that is going to come to an end pretty soon I think -- that is when you are going to have problems," he said.

Black people, who used to be restricted to casual manual labour on the railways (as part of the racist job reservation policy), are now working full-time in some areas of the railways, Qotoli says.

"You go to places like Durban and you find blacks driving railway trucks. In days gone by that was completely unheard of. Blacks were casuals on the railways, now they drive trucks."

The new union, twice the size of the previous two, is better placed to achieve these goals: "There's a better chance now with the merged union because we have got more resources and you can do much bigger things than we could have handled as separate small unions."

The imposition of the state of emergency is an obvious hindrance to trade union work.

the union made prior arrangements for just such an event.

"After May Day when they just arrested people and disrupted meetings, the union did have a meeting where we decided that we had to prepare ourselves for that kind of a situation -- how do we respond? One thing that was worked out is that if an organiser phones the factory then people should know what to do without having to

held, and was told it was a "higher decision" and the local police had "nothing against her." The same day, however, Lazarus was told she would be held until the end of the state of emergency.

Qotoli and other GWU officials were held briefly after May Day -- but they weren't charged or even interrogated during their time in jail. When the state of emergency was declared the police went to Qotoli's Cape Town home

"Messages of protest do often work."

wait for an executive meeting or anything like that."

Qotoli believes that the widespread detentions of South African trade unionists is simply part of a strategy to harass and disrupt the unions.

"They want to disrupt things, the organisation. I don't believe they have any

looking for him, but were told he was in London.

"Apparently, they've been back to my place again a second time -- I don't know why -- when I spoke to people I was told that this last time they went round to my place and asked if I'm back from London yet."

all it boils down to is a chat, nothing improves after that, nothing really gets done. I meet this guy, and then as soon as I get back (to ITF HQ) the first person I speak to told us that one of our organisers has just been redetained, which is exactly what we were talking about."

UNIONS DEFY APARTHEID

Transport workers' unions throughout the world have been bombarding South African embassies and the government in Pretoria with demands for the release of officials of ITF affiliates in South Africa detained under the state of emergency.

Those who thought that the South African government had already gone to the limits of repression were proved massively wrong by the terms of the new Emergency (the second within a year). Not only were thousands of trade unionists detained, but even *communicating information* on who is detained was made an offence punishable by up to ten years' imprisonment. It is hardly surprising therefore that, despite constant telephone contact between the ITF and its South African affiliates, details about the situation are still sketchy.

In response to the Emergency and the detention of trade union leaders, the ITF General Secretary on 23 June sent all affiliates a list of names of officials of the Transport and General Workers

Union (TGWU) and the Transport and Allied Workers' Union (TAWU) which he had been informed were detained. He asked unions to communicate these names to the ambassadors of South Africa in their countries and to request information on why they have been detained, where they are being held and whether any charges are to be brought against them. The ICFTU in Brussels has been publishing and updating a regular list - now more than 160 strong - of all known union activists detained by the authorities.

The ITF General Secretary also decided, in view of the gravity of the situation, to make personal contact with the South African ambassador in London in order to present him with the list of names. Two meetings took place at the South African embassy, for the second of which he was accompanied by Msokoli Qotoli, former General Secretary of the GWU (*see separate interview*).

Copies of letters and telegrams already received in the ITF office have

demonstrated the massive response of affiliated unions to the ITF's request.

In South Africa, the state of emergency has provoked an increasingly strong response from the independent trade union movement. In July a well supported protest strike was organised by the largest trade union organisation in South Africa, COSATU. The strike was in support of two sets of demands: one directed to the government which called for an immediate end to all harassment and victimisation of trade union officials and one directed to employers which included full pay and employment security for all those detained, adequate facilities for shop stewards of COSATU unions, and paid time off for union activities for union members.

The ITF's two affiliates within COSATU meanwhile have agreed to merge into one united union which will be called the Transport and General Workers' Union. The President of the merged union which was formed at a Conference on 24-25 May is Jerry Ntombela. Its General Secretary is Jane Barrett.

On 17 July, the ICFTU announced the despatch to South Africa of a high level mission to examine the current situation. The ICFTU mission will meet representatives of COSATU and the Council of Unions of South Africa (CUSA). The team includes ICFTU General Secretary Johnny Vanderveken, Norman Willis from the TUC, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, and Ernst Breit from the DGB, Germany.

ICFTU ANNUAL REPORT:

UNION RIGHTS UNDER ATTACK

Serious breaches of trade union rights continue in every part of the world according to the latest edition of the 'Annual Survey of Trade Union Rights' published by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). "Despite some noticeable improvements in certain countries, particularly those which have recently returned to democracy, the overall picture remains grim" says the survey, which is prepared by the ICFTU's Geneva office.

"Violations of trade union rights range from murder, torture and imprisonment, to bureaucratic and legal restrictions and union-busting. Whatever their form, they are all aimed at preventing trade unions from doing their job of defending the interests of workers and their families" the survey stresses.

As well as reviewing the general situation in various parts of the world, the ICFTU survey also deals with a number of specific problems in depth. Two such issues covered this year are the position of *professional and managerial staff* and trade union rights in the *rural sector*. Copies of the survey, which is available in English, French, German and Spanish, can be obtained directly from the ICFTU, 27-29 Rue de la Coulouvrenière, 1204 Geneva, Switzerland.

Luxembourg greets ITF

THE ITF's 35th Congress opens with a ceremony in the Municipal Theatre, Luxembourg in the morning of 31 July. Among the speakers at the opening will be Luxembourg's Prime Minister Jacques Santer, and European Commissioner Stanley Clinton Davis. As well as reviewing the work of the International over the past three years, the Congress will be debating the major issues facing the trade union movement today under a special agenda item "Transport Workers and their Unions: the Modern Challenge". Calls for intensified action against South Africa are amongst some thirty motions submitted for debate by ITF-affiliated unions. A full report on the Congress proceedings will be carried in the next edition of ITF News.

Chilean general strike

The fight for democracy and human rights in Chile has entered a new phase.

Following the successful two day general strike on July 2/3, which brought the country to a standstill, the Pinochet military dictatorship has responded brutally by shooting and killing demonstrators -- and innocent passers by -- and, in a wave of arrests, attempting to silence the mass opposition to the dictatorship.

The general strike was called by the Asamblea Nacional de la Civilidad (National Civilian Assembly) -- a broad based popular coalition formed in April which includes the two main trade union bodies: the National Workers' Command (CNT) and the Democratic Workers' Central (CDT), to demand an end to 13 years of savage military rule and a return to democracy and human rights. The Asamblea, which groups together nearly 3 million organised workers, white collar staff, university students and shanty town

dwellers represents more than a third of the Chilean population. Their strike call, and the tactics they have adopted, emphasise non-violent civil disobedience.

But the Pinochet regime responded to the peaceful stay-away with a characteristic display of thuggery. On the first day of the strike soldiers moved in force into Santiago's working class districts and attacked the local residents. In the two days more than a thousand people were arrested, and seven people were shot dead by the army. The most

tragic, and disgraceful of these army killings was that of a thirteen year old girl in the La Florida district in South Santiago. Nadia Fuentes Condra was sent by her mother to buy bread, but was murdered in the street by rampaging soldiers on the way home, with the loaf of bread lying beside her.

The authorities have now arrested the leaders of the Asamblea, and are attempting to maintain their increasingly tenuous grip on power through further repression.

The General Secretary of the ICFTU, Johnny Vanderveken, has expressed the complete solidarity of the international trade union movement with the struggle in Chile. In a statement issued following the two day strike he says that "Their campaign to return their country to democracy and to regain their trade union rights is supported by workers all over the world. Pinochet reportedly considers the strike to be 'just more bravado'. That goes to show how out of touch he is with the Chilean people and their aspirations."

Nigeria: internal feud wrecks ITF Conference

Internal feuding inside the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) appears to be the main factor behind the forced cancellation of the ITF's African Regional Conference which was scheduled to take place in Lagos from 12 to 16 May.

Leaders of transport workers' unions from all over Africa arriving for the Conference's opening session on May 12 were astonished to see officials of the Nigerian Security Organisation (NSO) arrive and forcibly close the meeting. This followed a press conference at which officials of the NLC had called on the government to stop the ITF meeting in Lagos, describing it as a "subversive organisation".

Statements made by government spokesmen following the NSO action, made it clear that the Nigerian government had been seriously misled by some NLC officials both about the nature of the ITF, and about the policy of the Organisation of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU) towards international links.

In a letter sent to the Nigerian Labour Minister following the Lagos fiasco, ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis set the record straight. He pointed out that the ITF had been invited to Lagos by a unanimous decision of its Nigerian affiliates in 1983. The Nigerian

government had been fully informed of preparations for the meeting and had never expressed the slightest objection to it taking place. He reminded the Minister that the ITF is a world wide free and democratic trade union organisation grouping well over 5 million transport workers and founded in 1896, and pointed out that even under existing OATUU policy unions were free to decide whether or not to be members of industrial federations like the ITF. In fact, he stressed, OATUU representatives frequently attended ITF meetings. (The OATUU is itself deeply divided over a number of questions including international affiliation, see ITF News February/March 1986.....)

Pointing out that the ITF never works where it is not welcome, Lewis concluded by expressing his disappointment at the halting of the Lagos meeting, particularly by a government which is widely respected for allowing full freedom of association. The ITF, he suggested, had been made "the victim of a totally unjustified and unprovoked attack by elements who, for whatever reasons, have made us the battleground for a fight that essentially had nothing to do with the perfectly proper meetings that we had planned to hold".

Zweirad fahrer
Über den Spiegel können wir uns verständigen!

Conducteurs de deux-roues
entendons-nous à travers le rétroviseur!

Chauffeurs FCIA

Chauffeurs VHTL

These bright and friendly stickers are produced by the ITF affiliated Swiss commercial, food and transport workers union VHTL as part of their annual "Two Wheels" awareness campaign for truck drivers. The campaign includes publicity leaflets warning drivers to look out for cyclists and motorcyclists on the roads.

Dutch union calls for new-tech deals

The ITF's Dutch affiliate, the Vervoersbond FNV (Transport Workers' Union) has announced its willingness to take strike action if necessary in order to make employers sign Technology Agreements. This is one of the main points contained in a report specially prepared for 'ITF News' by the union's Docks Secretary Kees Marges.

Pointing out that Dutch employers are constantly calling for greater labour flexibility to be achieved through using new technologies, Marges points out the stark choice before them: to develop technologies in either a human or an inhuman way. The objective of technology agreements (TO's in Dutch) is to ensure that only human forms of technology are implemented in practice.

The basic principles for inclusion in TO's laid down by the Vervoersbond FNV include:

- the right of the Union to be informed in advance about new

technologies;

- the right of union members to collect information about new technologies during working time;

- full involvement of the Union in the decision making process;

- a veto over the installation of new technologies without union consent.

Marges points out that Dutch trade unions want to use TOs in two ways: to influence the internal organisation of companies; and to affect the design of individual workplaces and jobs. Unless unions exert influence on these two areas, he believes, there will be a growing polarisation of the workforce between highly paid 'management'

personnel on the one hand and low paid 'marginal' workers (part time, no job security) on the other.

Most union agreements up to now, Marges argues, have been concerned only with questions such as pay, holidays, working time, pensions and sick pay. Some, in addition, have dealt with manning levels, voluntary redundancy etc. TO's represent a new step forward in extending the boundaries of collective bargaining since they involve bargaining also about the organisation of work and the structure of the enterprise itself.

Other vital issues include training for those displaced by new technologies, preference to existing workers in getting new jobs, and a reduction in working time to avoid any negative consequences on employment levels. These questions will be among the top priorities of his union in future he concludes.

European Commission warned on truck, air and boat liberalisation

The coordinating committee of transport workers' unions in the European Community met in Brussels on 9 June. The ITF was represented at the meeting by Inland Transport Secretary Graham Brothers.

The meeting concentrated on two important Community proposals which result from the ruling of the European Court in 1985 on the key issue of 'freedom to provide transport services'. Both of the proposals are designed to lift restrictions on transport operators in one EC country entering the internal transport market of another member state (usually known as 'cabotage'). One deals with inland waterways, the other with road haulage. They both propose almost total liberalisation of 'cabotage' in the EC countries so that boats or trucks registered in any member state will be able to carry out internal transport services throughout the Community.

Since there are no guarantees that the economic and social conditions under which each operator works will be harmonised, these proposals are likely to result in 'flag of convenience' operations in both these sectors with companies registering in countries with low vehicle and income tax and inferior working conditions and then competing directly with national companies elsewhere.

The Brussels Committee unions agreed to press for the strictest possible conditions to prevent unfair competition

in these two areas. Similar proposals relating to passenger transport - both short and long distance - are also under consideration by the Commission.

On Civil Aviation, the Committee reviewed the European Court decision in the 'Nouvelles Frontières' case which had declared price fixing illegal. If legal action were taken against airlines under the competition rules of the Treaty of Rome, it was reported, the result would be total chaos in European air fares.

Sorry....

Because of the pressure on the printing and translating resources of the ITF in the period leading up to the 35th Congress, the June and July issues of 'ITF News' have been combined. We are sure that our readers will understand the need to take this action.

CIVIL AVIATION

ILO slams Pakistan on PIA union ban

The International Labour Organisation has for a second time strongly condemned the government of Pakistan for its continued refusal to grant trade union rights to employees of Pakistan International Airways (PIA).

The ILO Governing Body decided in June, as a result of a complaint submitted by the ITF in May 1985, that the Pakistan government was violating articles 2 and 3 of ILO Convention 87 (Protection of the Right to Organise), and "deplored" the fact that the government had refused to give its comments to the ILO despite numerous requests to do so.

The 1985 complaint by the ITF follows an earlier one, presented after the declaration of martial law in 1979 when all union activities within the airline were banned. Initially the government had argued that trade union rights were only suspended temporarily while martial law was in force. In 1985, however, it repealed the relevant regulation and replaced it with an amendment to the Pakistan International Airlines Corporation Act, which declared all PIA employees to be civil servants, and hence banned them from trade union membership.

In addition to the ban on trade union activity, the Governing Body also condemned a separate amendment to the

PIA Act which allows the Corporation to dismiss any employee at 90 days' notice without reason and with no possibility of appeal. This, the ILO stressed, was a violation of Convention 98 since it made it easy for the airline to indulge in acts of anti-union discrimination.

This decision, and the contemptuous way in which the Pakistani government treated the ILO while it was considering the ITF's complaint, demonstrates quite adequately that claims that democracy is returning to Pakistan are very far from the truth.

European air policy talks fail

The utter confusion surrounding the European Community's air transport policy remains unresolved after two Transport Ministers' meetings in June which reportedly ended in "shambles".

The confusion stems from the ruling of the European Court on April 30 (reported in *ITF News May 1986*) stating that national regulation of air fares and routes within the EC contravened the treaty of Rome.

The European Commissioners responded to this ruling by putting pressure on national governments, and their transport ministers, to conclude some agreement on deregulation -- in line with the court ruling -- at their meeting on June 19.

But that meeting, and a subsequent one ten days later, ended acrimoniously with some ministers denouncing the way the Commission had tried to force a decision from them.

The Commission made their desire to see deregulation public by threatening, before the first Transport Ministers' meeting, to take legal action against the national governments for fare fixing. Letters initiating such legal procedures were drawn up before the meetings, but any such action -- subject to the notorious delays of the European Court system -- will take a number of years.

The Commissioners -- divided amongst themselves as to the best policy to take - appear prepared to begin the long process of taking governments to court. Meanwhile, the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC), meeting at the end of June, has agreed to a series of proposals that will slightly relax airline

regulation in Europe. The 22 government ECAC plan -- opposed by the strong proponents of deregulation (Great Britain and The Netherlands) as being too weak - will allow airlines to increase the number of seats on routes and introduce "deep discount" fares on many routes,

French strike against deregulation

ITF-affiliated unions in Air France took strike action for one day on July 9 to protest against deregulation moves by the government.

Ground and cabin crew affiliated to the CFDT and Force Ouvrière halted nearly 70 per cent of all Air France flights on the day, showing their clear displeasure at the government's decision to allow two private charter airlines permission to fly to French overseas territories in the Caribbean.

The two charter lines -- Point-Air and Minerve -- plan to start services in December to the French Antilles and Réunion. While Air France is required to maintain a regular service to these islands - regardless of the traffic loads -- the charterers, which are subject to no such obligations, will be able to skim off profitable traffic at peak times with less frequent services. The unions fear that

this will be only the beginning of a large scale plan of deregulation -- a policy that the new conservative government is keen to pursue.

IAM dispute

The long standing dispute between the US International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) and the Israeli state owned airline El Al was finally settled on 14 July with a back to work agreement. IAM General Vice President John Peterpaul has expressed the union's thanks to the ITF and its aviation affiliates for the solidarity which had helped it settle this bitter two year strike against the airline.

Cabin crews spotlight security

The ITF Cabin Crew Technical Committee which met in Madrid on 10 and 11 June 1986 focused most of its attention on safety. Members of the committee expressed serious concern at the increasingly grave risks run by cabin attendants as a result of hijacks and bomb threats against aircraft. They agreed that the ITF should seek information from its civil aviation affiliates about ratification of ICAO security Conventions, union representation on national security committees, as well as on a number of other airport security questions.

Committee members also reported on recent disputes involving cabin crew, many sparked off by demands from airlines for massive cuts in wages and conditions, as they

fight to survive in the fierce post-deregulation competitive climate. The Committee also discussed the recent B 747 emergency evacuation trial in Seattle, and the decision to build the new B 747 400 series with eight rather than ten emergency exits. Air France's decision to provide its flying crews with specially modified smoke hoods for use during emergency evacuation was also debated at length.

A statement was adopted by the meeting condemning the operation of cabin air pressure packs at less than full strength for cost saving reasons and urging that this practice be abandoned at least until such time as it could be proved that reducing the quality of cabin air had no lasting effects on health.

Committee Chairman Jan Woltering of the Dutch Cabin Crew Union announced that

he would be retiring from his union shortly after Congress and that this would therefore be his last Committee Meeting.

Civil Aviation Section Secretary Bernie Beyertt thanked him for the excellent work he had done for cabin attendants during his years as Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee and wished him a long and happy retirement.

Asian unions set new-tech policy

The Social Repercussions of Technological Change in the Aviation Industry was the theme of the Asia/Pacific Civil Aviation Conference-Seminar held in Kan-nami, Japan, in late May, hosted by the Japanese Confederation of Aviation Labour, KOKU DOMEI. The meeting was chaired by Bruce Deahm of the Australian Licensed Aircraft Engineers' Association who was re-

elected chairman of the ITF Asia/Pacific Civil Aviation Committee at the closing session.

ITF Regional Secretary M S Hoda and the Deputy Director of the ILO Tokyo Office took part in the meeting which focused attention on health and safety, job security, training and retraining, and the special needs of older workers.

Separate workshops for ground staff and flying staff were established to assist in drawing up the Conference's conclusions. These included resolutions calling for an urgent ILO Tripartite Technical Meeting on Civil Aviation, and for the reinstatement of employees of the Bangladesh carrier Bangladesh Biman recently victimised for trade union activities.

Pay Deals

Germany: Lufthansa, 3.9%, plus an increase in the holiday bonus to DM 1,000, dockworkers, 3.9% backdated to 1 April, plus an increase in the holiday bonus to DM 700; Norway - engineer and navigating officers on mobile rigs, a general increase of 5.1% from 1 April, producing an annual increase of 630 kr per month, under an agreement expiring in March 1988, and the introduction of a 10-year long service bonus worth 385 kr; Sweden - ratings in overseas trade, 400 kr per month on 1 May, with a further 330 kr per month on 1 February 1987, under an agreement expiring in January 1988; engineer and navigating officers, 400 kr per month on 1 May, with a further 300 kr per month on 1 January 1987, under an agreement expiring in December 1987; road haulage drivers, 2.46 kr per hour backdated to January.

OBITUARIES

Ahmadou Sima, General Secretary of the ASECNA Workers' Union of Senegal, died on 7 June.

Maarten Bolle, who as General Secretary helped rebuild the Public Services International after the end of the Second World War, died in Santa Cruz, California on 19 April.

Antonio Janeiro, President of the Portuguese office workers' union SITESE and one of the principal figures in the Portuguese UGT died suddenly on 18 June.

Frank Cousins, who died on June 11, was well known throughout the ITF's membership for many years. He was ITF President twice: from 1958 to 1960 and from 1962 to 1965. He was elected to the ITF Executive Board in 1956 and received the ITF Gold Badge in 1965. He continued to serve the ITF as Vice-President from 1968 until the 1971 Vienna Congress. He was also for many years an active member of the ITF's Road Transport and Civil Aviation Sections.

He began his working life as a miner, but in the depression of the 1930s left the mines to become a long distance lorry driver. With that job began his long

association with the Transport & General Workers' Union (T&GWU). He was first national officer for the union's road transport section, then General Secretary from 1956 until his retirement in 1969. From 1964 to 1966 he gave up responsibility for the day to day running of his union on his appointment to the British Labour government as Minister of Technology. He was also for many years a leading member of the General Council of the British TUC.

Frank Cousins' contribution to the defence of transport workers' rights and to the effectiveness of the ITF will long be remembered.

INLAND TRANSPORT

British Rail admits discrimination

A comprehensive report which draws a picture of systematic discrimination against women by British Rail was published by the Equal Opportunities Commission in June. This found that less than 7 per cent of British Rail's workforce were women (just under 9,000 out of a workforce of approximately 150,000) and that the few women who were employed tended to be in traditional low pay jobs such as clerical work and carriage cleaning. Women were particularly poorly represented in skilled grades and in management: for example,

at the time the survey was conducted (1983/4) there were only 7 women train drivers, 64 guards and 37 signalmen, while only 2 senior managers (out of 593) were women.

The survey found a marked reluctance on the part of BR to allow women to train as apprentices. Adverts placed in the press often specified male applicants despite the existence of equal opportunities legislation. There was also indirect discrimination against women, with a number of practices such as promotion based on length of service,

word of mouth recruitment and height requirements leaving women at a clear disadvantage, together with a reluctance to adapt working conditions to enable women with family responsibilities to take up rail employment.

To its credit, BR has reacted to the report by appointing its first equality officer and has overhauled its equal opportunities policy. It now needs to take further measures to ensure that more women are encouraged to take up a life on the rails, with positions of responsibility in line with their abilities.

US rail clerks sign new pact

A measure of the prevailing industrial climate in the United States is the fact that it has taken the ITF-affiliated Brotherhood of Railway, Airline and Steamship Clerks (BRAC) nearly two years and hundreds of hours of tough bargaining to conclude a new contract for its 70,000 members working on the nation's railroads. The new agreement,

reached in mid-April and since ratified by the union rank and file, has been described by President Richard Kilroy as 'the best we could get for the times'. It provides for general wage increases of 6.5 per cent over its four-year term, as well as lump-sum payments totalling \$975 (which are worth another 6 per cent) and

cost-of-living adjustments every six months. A lump-sum payment of \$565 has already been paid out to BRAC members in lieu of backdating to the end of June 1984 when the previous contract expired and the long and wearisome round of negotiations began.

ITF BOATMEN CONFER

ITF Inland Navigation unions held a one day meeting at the beginning of June to make preparations for the next Session of the ILO Inland Transport Committee, which will deal with social and legal protection of inland transport workers as well as the employment effects of new technologies in transport. Since these questions are of common concern to all three of the inland transport sectors: railways, road transport, and inland navigation, the meeting agreed to recommend that a special ITF working group be set up to coordinate the preparations for the ILO meeting.

Following a statement by M del Pozo (Argentina), who expressed concern at the number of deaths by drowning among inland boatmen in Latin America, the Section has asked inland navigation unions for statistics on fatal accidents, with a view to developing policies to improve the industry's safety record.

Japan Railways snub enquiry team

A visit to Tokyo by a top level three man enquiry team set up by the ITF was cancelled only a few days before its scheduled departure date at the beginning of July when both Japan National Railways (JNR) and the Japanese government made it clear that they were not prepared to discuss with the team the controversial decision to 'break up' the Japanese national railway system.

The three man team, selected by the ITF to prepare an objective report on the likely impacts of the JNR plan from the operational, financial and social viewpoints, was made up of: Mr Keith Hunt who recently retired from the position of Senior Vice President of Canadian National Railways (CN); Lord McCarthy a well known British industrial relations expert; and Mr Geraldo Von Potobsky from Argentina, a lawyer and former chief of the Freedom of Association and International Labour Standards branches of the ILO.

Faced with a refusal of the key decision makers in Japan even to discuss the future of the rail network, the ITF decided to cancel the team's visit. "This only confirms what we already suspected - that JNR and the government are determined to break up the railways and neutralise the railway trade unions irrespective of the effects on workers or passengers" said ITF Railway Secretary Graham Brothers in a statement following the cancellation decision.

SEAFARERS

FPC warns Korean agents

Dockers' and Seafarers' delegates gathered in London in June for the annual Fair Practices Committee (FPC) meeting which directs the work of the ITF Special Seafarers' Department (SSD).

A busy agenda was dealt with on June 3 and 4th -- with decisions and discussion covering the whole range of the campaign against Flag of Convenience (FOC) shipping.

The FPC reviewed the ITF's list of which countries are deemed to be providing flag of convenience services. At this FPC the Caribbean island of Saint Vincent was added to the list, while decisions on two other flags were deferred: Antigua and Barbuda's status was referred to the joint dockers' and seafarers' section conference at the ITF's Luxembourg Congress in August, as was the Isle of Man -- the ITF Secretariat and the British NUS and NUMAST affiliates were asked to consult on the latter. The Seychelles flag, no longer offering FOC services, was removed from the list.

The most heated discussion of the meeting centred around the growing concern with double bookkeeping and crew cheating on Korean manned FOC ships. With Special Seafarers' Department figures showing that nearly half of the ships issued last year with Blue Certificates -- which indicate that an FOC is covered by an ITF-acceptable collective agreement -- were of Korean origin, the question of whether or not many of these crews are being cheated is obviously a very serious one.

What is clear is that in a number of cases Korean Seafarers on ships with current Blue Certificates have been intimidated into accepting sub-ITF rates of wages.

During the debate it was proposed that all Blue Certificates on Korean manned ships be withdrawn -- a drastic move that was opposed by the ITF Korean affiliate FKSU, who appealed for the chance to go home and see what they could do to better the situation.

Eventually the meeting unanimously agreed to ask the FKSU to approach their government with a view to replacing the

present system of manning agencies with an equitable and honest system of Seafarers' hiring halls. The situation will then be reviewed at the Luxembourg Congress.

The FPC also approved the text of a revised version of the standard ITF collective agreement for FOC ships which will come into force at the end of this year. The final decisions on the wage rates will be taken later this year.

The meeting adopted a resolution put forward by the Greek seafarers' union (PNO) which called for urgent direct negotiations between the Cyprus union and the PNO on securing jobs for Greek seafarers on Cyprus flag ships owned in Greece.

The growing problem of the undercutting of ITF rates by labour

supplying state trading countries (where the ITF has no affiliates) was also discussed. A motion from the Swedish Seamen's Union was passed, calling upon the ITF Secretariat to draft proposals for the next Fair Practices Committee meeting on this difficult problem.

On a more positive note, the meeting approved a ground breaking agreement concluded by the All-Japan Seamen's Union covering non-Japanese seafarers aboard Japanese owned FOCs as well as the so-called "maru" ships which fly the Japanese flag but have been previously outside the scope of the JSU collective agreement. This agreement will more than double the wages of thousands of seafarers serving on these ships.

ITF buys Rotterdam Centre

The De Beer Seafarers' Centre, centrally located in Europoort, Rotterdam (Netherlands), and an internationally renowned meeting place for seafarers from different parts of the world, has been saved from closure by the intervention of the ITF. Following an approach from its Dutch affiliate FWZ, the trustees of the ITF 'Welfare Fund' agreed earlier this year to purchase and renovate the building, which includes meeting rooms, swimming pool, tennis courts and many other social facilities. The building has now been acquired by a trust which includes representatives of the FWZ and the ITF, and work on a major programme of renovations has begun.

New Indian seafarers' grouping

Two ITF-affiliated Indian seafarers' unions have come together to form the Indian Seafarers' Federation.

Meeting on June 19, the Maritime Union of India (MUI) representing officers, and the National Union of Seafarers of India (NUSI) representing ratings, elected an Executive Committee and officers for the new federation and issued a statement of joint policy.

ITF Seafarers' Bulletin launched

The first of a new series of regular ITF bulletins has just been published. Called the *ITF Seafarers' Bulletin*, it contains news and views on a wide range of current issues of importance to seafarers and others interested in the maritime industry. It also gives news of ITF activities for seafarers and an insight into how the ITF's campaign against flags of convenience works. Copies are being widely distributed to trade unions and individual seafarers, and can be obtained on request from the Research and Publications Department at ITF Headquarters.

DOCKERS

DOCKERS' CONFERENCE DEBATES NEW CARGO HANDLING METHODS

The ITF Dockers' Section conference which took place on June 5-6, 1986 in London was attended by delegates from unions in 25 countries. The meeting was chaired by Section Chairman John Connolly (TGWU, Great Britain).

Among the topics discussed by the meeting was a Madrid Congress decision which called on the ITF to seek the re-opening of discussions on ILO Convention 137 (Social Protection of Dockworkers) and its accompanying Recommendation. While generally happy with the terms of these two ILO instruments, dockers' unions have long been concerned that they do not contain an adequate definition of "Dock work" and "Dockworker", a fact which is being used by governments to escape from their

responsibilities. The Conference was informed that the ILO was reluctant to devote Conference time to single sector instruments, or to re-open instruments adopted relatively recently. Even more importantly however, if these two instruments were re-opened, employers and governments might well succeed in watering down many of their more progressive elements. The Conference agreed to contact the ILO pointing out the problems which dockworkers have with the present definitions (which leave everything to national law), but not to seek the formal re-opening of the instruments at this stage.

The Conference also had a lively discussion on recent developments and trends in the port industry during which delegates reported extensively on the position in their own countries on

questions such as new cargo handling systems and the growth of inland container terminals or 'dry ports'. The ITF Secretariat was instructed to draw up a detailed work programme on these issues for the next Dockers' meeting in Luxembourg in August.

The Conference also decided in response to an appeal from dockers' unions in the Caribbean area, to strengthen the ITF's programme of regional activities for dockers' unions. During the course of the meeting, Harold Lewis, who has up to now combined responsibility for the Section with his work as General Secretary, informed the conference that he had asked David Cockcroft, the ITF's Research and Publications Officer, to take over responsibility for the Dockers' Section within the Secretariat.

PEOPLE

Björn Bergman was elected to the presidency of the Swedish Supervisors' Union (SALF) at its recent Congress. He succeeds Stig Öhgren who has now retired.

Shirley Carr was elected the first woman President of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) on May Day, during the CLC's 30th Anniversary Congress in Toronto. Ms. Carr, who comes from the Canadian Union of Public Employees, has been CLC Secretary-Treasurer since 1984. The outgoing President Dennis McDermott had stepped down on being appointed as Canada's ambassador to Ireland.

Moss Evans has retired from the presidency of the International Federation of Chemical, Energy and General Workers' Unions and been succeeded by Nils Kristoffersson, the General Secretary of the Swedish

Factory Workers' Union and an ICEF Vice-President, who will hold office until the next ICEF Congress.

Franz Hums took over in June as Vice-President of the Austrian Railwaymen's Union in succession to Erich Steinböck, who has retired.

Bill Morris became Deputy General Secretary of the British Transport and General Workers' Union in June. He is vice-chairman of the ITF's Urban Transport Committee and an active member of the Road Transport Workers' Section. The outgoing Deputy GS is Alex Kitson who has retired after fifty years on the union scene. (He was also General Secretary of the Scottish Commercial Motormen's Union which merged with the T and G in 1971.) Within the ITF, Kitson has made a significant contribution to the work of the Road Transport Workers' Section, as well as serving for many years as one of

the Federation's lay auditors.

The British National Union of Seamen executive, meeting after its biennial conference held in June, decided to appoint Jim Slater as its new full-time president. The only other president in the union's almost one hundred year history was its founder Havelock Wilson. The conference decided to hold new elections for the NUS's top posts but Slater, who has been NUS General Secretary for the past twelve years, was ineligible under union rules to stand on this occasion. Elections for his successor are being held this summer, with the result announced in the autumn.

Robert Zehenthofer was confirmed as President of the Austrian Transport Workers' Union (HTV) at the union's recent Congress. Zehenthofer had been acting President of the union since the untimely death of its previous President Fritz Kornfeil in 1983.