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## Six month-dispute is settled:

# DOCKERS' VICTORY IN ROTTERDAM

Six months of hard struggle by dockers in Rotterdam's general cargo section paid off in early July with the conclusion of a new agreement which eliminates the need for compulsory redundancies.

The demand of the port employers that 350 dockers should be dismissed was what sparked off the dispute which has seriously disrupted the traffic in the World's largest port since the beginning of this year.

The new deal takes the form of an amendment to the 1985 'Van der Louw Accord', a 6 year agreement designed to provide job security for general cargo dockers.

Under the terms of the new agreement, which still has to be approved by a ballot of union members, up to 870 dockers will be able to take early retirement from age 56 (normal pension age is 65) between now and July 1991. Any docker taking advantage of this provision will receive a total of 85% of previous net wages financed partly by the employers, partly by the social security system and partly by a 1% levy on the wages of all remaining general cargo dockers for a maximum of 15 years.

On a second employer demand - for greater flexibility - some limited concessions have had to be made by the union. In addition to their normal annual leave, general cargo dockers currently benefit from 16 free days per year resulting from a working time reduction agreement. At present they can decide themselves when these days are to be taken, but the new agreement gives the employer the right, providing sufficient notice is given, to insist that 11 1/2 of the 16 days be taken when the workload is low. Six new combined job categories (crane driver-fork lift driver etc.) have also been agreed but these merely formalise arrangements which already exist in practice.

According to Kees Marges, who has just been re-elected as Vervoersbond FNV Dockers' Secretary for a three year period, the agreement represents a significant victory for the workers. "We have achieved the objective of no forced dismissals" he says " and the number of workers who will be able to benefit from the early retirement arrangements is so great that the employers have even agreed to engage some new young workers".

JULY 1987

# Polish challenge at ILO conference

Over 1,800 delegates from trade unions, governments and employers' organisations gathered from June 3 - 23 in Geneva for the 73rd session of the ILO's International Labour Conference.

This tripartite body is concerned with establishing and monitoring practical international standards for the workplace. This session was also addressed by Presidents Alfonsín of Argentina and Soares from Portugal.

The main work of the session consisted in preparations for the drawing up of two Conventions and Recommendations.

The conventions and recommendations being prepared for final drafting next year are on employment and social security policy and a revised ap-

proach to safety in the construction industries (a matter that the ILO last dealt with 50 years ago).

Resolutions were also passed calling upon governments to intensify their activity in support of the homeless in this, the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless and the session also marked the 40th anniversary of the ILO's adoption of Convention 87 on Freedom of Association.

Another resolution emphasised that governments should respect the rights of workers to freely choose their trade unions irrespective of local social or economic considerations.

On this point both the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and the World Confederation of Labour (WCL) jointly challenged the credentials of the Polish "workers'

delegation". The Polish government had in fact breached the ILO constitution in appointing the delegation, because the most representative trade union organisation in the country - the ICFTU and WCL affiliated Solidarnosc -- was not consulted about the composition of the delegation.

Lech Walesa, leader of Solidarnosc, was accredited to both the ICFTU and WCL delegations for the session, but the Polish authorities refused to allow him to leave the country.

A representative of the union did address the session, calling for Poland to respect the right of freedom of association and pointing out that despite their attempts to suppress the union, Solidarnosc still commanded the support of the majority of Polish workers.

## Union divisions weaken Fiji campaign

Despite assurances given by Fiji's Governor-General, harassment of trade unionists by the military continues to take place, according to sources on the island.

Divisions within the Fiji Trades Union Congress (FTUC) over the question of bans on cargo movements and air services have, however, seriously weakened the trade union movement's position of opposition to the overthrow by the army of Dr Bavadra's democratically elected government on May 14.

While some unions, including ITF affiliates, continue to support a strict continuation of the bans imposed by dockers' and aviation unions in Australia and New Zealand, others have been campaigning strongly for the lifting of the bans. At least one union leader has been a strong supporter of the coup and accepted office in the 'provisional' government formed by Col. Rabuka.

At a meeting of the FTUC Executive Committee held in Suva on July 4 a decision was reportedly taken on a majority vote by secret ballot to request Australian and New Zealand unions to lift the remaining import and export bans (those on foodstuffs, medical supplies and timber were already lifted on June 12). ACTU and NZFOL meetings scheduled for early July will review the situation in the light of the FTUC vote.

Meanwhile the economic situation on the island continues to deteriorate. Sugar cane workers have been refusing

to begin harvesting the crop and the sugar mills of the Fiji Sugar Corporation have been forced to close as a result. The Fiji dollar has been devalued by over 17%, and prices of holidays on the island slashed in a desperate attempt to persuade tourists to return. Although discussions between Dr Bavadra and the Governor-General are still taking place, there is little likelihood of them leading to the return to power of the democratically elected government. Instead a

number of proposals are being discussed which would give full political rights only to the ethnic Fijian population, leaving the Indians (a small majority of the total) as second class citizens in what amounts to a South African style 'apartheid' system.

The ITF, which views these developments with great concern, is keeping in close contact with its affiliates in Fiji, Australia and New Zealand and with the ICFTU about the situation in Fiji.

## Trade unions call for ban on South African coal imports

The ICFTU, ETUC and the Miners' International Federation (MIF) have called on world governments to stop the import of South African coal.

The call for an immediate ban on South African coal imports - which is seen as an essential element in any credible, effective policy of economic sanctions against the Pretoria regime - was made jointly by the three organisations during a recent meeting of the ICFTU Coordinating Committee on South Africa.

The three organisations deplored the refusal of the EC, which takes most of South Africa's coal exports, even to discuss a possible ban on imports of coal from the Republic, and are insisting that the subject of South

African coal be placed on the agenda of the next meeting of the Council of Ministers and that a complete, binding import ban be instituted without delay.

Coal exports are becoming increasingly important to the health of the South African economy. In return for coal, a number of countries supply South Africa with vital supplies of oil, despite the UN embargo.

Just over a quarter of South Africa's annual output is exported, largely to countries within the EC and Japan. In 1985, total coal exports of 44 million tonnes earned some \$1.3 billion in foreign exchange for South Africa.

# Haitian unions attacked by army

The people of Haiti, having overthrown the brutal Duvalier dictatorship, are now seeing their nation's tentative steps towards democracy and human rights crushed by their new military rulers.

As this ITF NEWS goes to press, the country is paralysed by a general strike, barricades have been erected in the cities, and the army is reported to have killed at least twenty people in violent clashes with demonstrators demanding the resignation of the military government.

Duvalier was overthrown by popular

agitation 17 months ago, and replaced by a "provisional" military council which proclaimed a restoration of human rights and a timetable for free and democratic elections.

Over 90 per cent of the voters endorsed a new constitution in a referendum last March.

The stage was set for free Presidential elections, under the supervision of an independent electoral council.

But on June 22, the military rulers issued a decree ignoring the plans of the electoral council. The election, they stated, would now be run by the

Ministry of Interior and Defence (in other words, the Army and Police).

The government's true face has been shown in its dealings with the Autonomous Confederation of Haitian Workers (CATH), which has called strikes over a range of social and economic demands, and in protest at the regime's backpedalling on democracy.

On the same day the military overruled the electoral commission, they arrested the leaders of CATH, including General Secretary Gabriel Miracle, seized the union headquarters by force and declared the union "dissolved".

These flagrant violations of Haiti's new constitution raise serious doubts about the military regime's true intentions.

Workers are now on strike all over Haiti demanding the resignation of the government and the restoration of democratic rights.

The army have responded by moving in force against demonstrators and workers' neighbourhoods — foreign press reports indicate that at least twenty people have been killed by the military, a figure which is bound to be higher when the final count is made.

ICFTU General Secretary John Vanderveken has lodged a formal complaint with the International Labour Organisation, and has called on the Haitian government to release the detained union leaders.

"We deplore this attack on trade union rights in Haiti, just as we deplore any attack on democratic rule," he said. "For the ICFTU, democracy and trade union freedom are inseparable."

## SHOOTING CONDEMNED

The assassination attempt on Giorgos Raftopoulos, President of the Greek General Confederation of Labour (GSEE) on 29 June has been condemned as 'a cowardly act and an assault on democracy' in a joint statement issued by the General Secretaries of the ICFTU and the ETUC.

Raftopoulos was attacked by gunmen allegedly belonging to an unknown terrorist group calling itself the 'Revolutionary Group of May 1'. He is recovering slowly from bullet wounds to the face and stomach and there are understood to be grounds for optimism about his medical condition.

## ICFTU SURVEY OF TRADE UNION RIGHTS ABUSES

More than 200 people worldwide were murdered during 1986 and early 1987 because of their trade union activities.

This is the shocking conclusion of the latest survey on violations of trade union rights published by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU).

Over the same period some 4,500 trade unionists were imprisoned: some for a few days, some for years on end, the report makes clear. Abductions, disappearances, torture, invasions of union premises and death threats are other elements in the repression of democratic trade union organisations the Brussels based organisation points out.

The 47 page report, which is available in English, French, German and Spanish, cites by name 55 countries where violations have taken place

Although the most serious cases occur in dictatorship countries (of both right and left) the report makes clear that some countries with a democratic tradition also have no qualms about attacking trade union rights.

Countries listed include South Africa where at least 3,400 trade unionists have been arrested and where 6 striking railway workers were shot during the recent SATS dispute; Brazil where 190 people, mostly representatives of rural workers' organisations, were murdered (the ICFTU believes by landowners' hired killers) in the first 8 months of 1986; and Chile where a demonstration in July 1986 left 8 trade unionists dead and 50 injured.

Moves back towards democratic rule in some countries have had little impact on their attitude to trade unions. More than 300 trade unionists

(members of DISK) in Turkey have been sentenced to prison terms of up to 9 years. In Paraguay the lifting of the state of siege on 7 April "makes no difference as long as General Stroessner remains in power". Murders of trade union leaders are still taking place in El Salvador and Guatemala the survey makes clear.

But the communist ruled countries are no better in their attitude towards independent trade unions. The new *glasnost* policy in the Soviet Union appears so far to have left untouched the "union's" role as an agent for the government to improve productivity. Nowhere is this more evident than in Poland where, despite an official amnesty, many Solidarnosc activists are still in jail.

Turning to Africa the survey names 14 countries where 'a single trade union structure has been imposed by means of legislation.' It also points out that many Arab countries ban trade unions outright and that violent suppression of strikes continues in Iran.

In Asia the ICFTU expresses concern about serious violations of union rights in South Korea. (The report was completed before the recent political developments in that country and the coup in Fiji.)

Important violations of the basic right to organise and bargain collectively are also noted in the United Kingdom (GCHQ employees) and the report criticizes hostile legislation in Canada and the Netherlands.

The survey is available from the ICFTU, Rue Montagne aux Herbes Potagères 37-41, 1000 Brussels, Belgium.

# Trade union educators' handbook

"Training the trainers" has long been recognised as a vital part of trade union education policy. Running seminars and courses for shop stewards and rank and file members demands a high level of skill on the part of union education officers. One way to

provide this is through intensive courses for trade union educators (as the ITF has done at Clyde Cameron College in Australia for its Asia/Pacific programme).

A second approach has been adopted by FIET, the international secretariat for white collar employees. In its recently published Handbook for Trade Union Educators, FIET provides detailed practical advice for union education officers, particularly those in developing countries. The handbook stresses the importance of education as a basic element in trade unionism, underlines the difference between

educating adult trade unionists and teaching schoolchildren, gives advice on working out union education programmes, and goes through the process of planning a trade union course (before the participants arrive; getting started; how to plan a study session; hints for teachers; studying in small groups; how to be a course leader).

Practical advice includes an outline structure for evaluating courses and guidelines for the preparation of financial accounts.

Enquiries to FIET, 15 Ave de Balxert 1219 Geneva, Switzerland.

## SWISS WORK WEEK CUT

The Swiss government has reduced the working week for public employees, including those in transport.

Modifications to the law on working times mean that the standard six day week has been cut from 42 hours to 40 hours with effect from the beginning of June.

This has been effected by a reduction in the average daily working time from seven hours and twenty minutes to seven hours.

A guarantee of sex equality in employment has also been added to the law, and daily rest periods have also been increased.

Switzerland retains one of the longest working weeks in the OECD, beaten only by Japan

## Boycott Californian grapes

The International Federation of Plantation, Agricultural and Allied Workers (IFPAAW) has asked other international trade union organisations, including the ITF, to inform affiliates about the boycott of California table grapes organised by the United Farm Workers of America (UFW).

The consumer boycott has taken a

firm hold in North America and as a result growers are now diverting grapes to European markets.

ITF affiliates are urged not to buy California table grapes in solidarity with a union that has fought over the years in defence of a group of seasonal, largely immigrant workers who have suffered extreme exploitation at the hands of the grape growers.

## INLAND TRANSPORT

### La Fraternidad celebrates 100 years

Railwaymen from all over Argentina spent the final week of June celebrating in both formal and informal fashion the centenary of their union, La Fraternidad, which has been affiliated to the ITF for the past seventy years.

ITF Assistant General Secretary Graham Brothers attended the commemorative ceremony held to mark the union's 100 anniversary and conveyed his congratulations and best wishes for the future. The ITF, he said, greatly admired the union for its courageous defence throughout its long history of the principles and tenets of free and democratic trade unionism.

Brothers had also been invited to deliver one of a series of lectures given by guest speakers during the week. He spoke on the vital contribution that the railways have to make to a transport policy operating in the public interest.

Other events which took place during the week included a special centenary exhibition of paintings, pho-

tographs and carvings by railway workers, a steam train with train staff and passengers in period costume and a grand open air fiesta in a Buenos Aires park, with showings of the union's specially commissioned film

on its 100 year history and a host of special events, including a marathon in which members of the union's executive took part and a 'Ferromatch' between teams from the various railway companies.

### Austrian drivers' training scheme

After years of effort, the Austrian trade union movement has at last secured a formal apprenticeship for road haulage drivers.

The Austrian trade union confederation, the ÖGB, actively supported by the road transport union HTV, has long been pressing for this change against opposition from the employers.

But now union, employers and government have reached an agreement and a change will be made in the regulations to allow the apprenticeship scheme to be introduced this Autumn for a five year trial period, which it is

hoped will then be made permanent.

Driver training will last for three years, during which time new entrants will be taught vehicle mechanics and basic vehicle repair skills and will become acquainted with customs formalities and safety regulations in addition to receiving hgv driver training on the various vehicle types.

After completing two years' training, aspiring haulage drivers will be able to take an intermediate qualification which will enable them to spend the final year working under supervision to gain the driving skills necessary for a licence to drive all vehicle classes.

# Solidarity action brings strike victory

A two week old strike by 1,500 Finnish road haulage drivers in the food distribution sector came to a speedy conclusion when the Finnish Transport Workers' Union (AKT) called out all its members in the ports in support.

The strike, which began on 3 May, cut off deliveries to Finland's two biggest supermarket chains as well as stopping the movement of meat and dairy products.

The strike was called because of a dispute over the implementation of the shorter annual working hours

agreement already negotiated at national level.

The employers wanted reduced hours to be taken in the form of a 12 minute earlier finish each day. The union had rejected this idea and had proposed instead that the extra time be allowed to accumulate and then taken as complete days' leave - a model which had already been adopted for all the other, larger groups represented by the AKT.

Faced with an escalating strike, the employers caved in and at the mediated talks held on 21 May agreed that

the accumulated time off should be taken two days at a time or added to other leave earned to give drivers two consecutive free days.

As part of the two year settlement reached during these negotiations, drivers' pay will be increased by 8.7% in two stages this year while in 1988 pay will rise in line with that in certain agreed industries.

A joint union/management group will also meet in January 1989 to compare pay rates over a three year period and to negotiate any adjustments that may be necessary to bring these back into line.

## Santa Fe/ Southern Pacific merger vetoed

The United States government has refused to reconsider a decision to bar the merger of the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific railroads.

The decision is a major blow to the two companies, who had been so confident of success that they had already re-painted rolling stock and begun to integrate operations.

The original merger was rejected by the Interstate Commerce Commission in July 1986 on the grounds that the

new company would constitute a limited monopoly, and the companies asked for a reconsideration — which was refused on June 30 this year.

The US\$6.4 billion deal involved integrating the two systems to create what would have been the USA's third largest railway network, with 49,000 employees and 53,900 km of track.

The two companies have effectively been operating as one company — the Santa Fe Southern Pacific

Corporation — since the end of 1983. Now they have been given 90 days to separate again.

The corporation made numerous offers to the ICC to get the merger approved, but none of them satisfied the Commission.

The corporation, which is now believed to be vulnerable to corporate raiding and possible take-over bids, have announced that they will not appeal the decision in the courts, and will comply with the ruling.

## Seine river explosion: gov't call for action

Following last month's collision on the Seine between two oil tankers, in which five seamen and a marine pilot lost their lives, the French government is to press the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) to require that all tankers over 5,000 gross registered tonnes be equipped with inert gas systems. This would require an amendment to the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Convention.

On 23 June, the Greek tanker *Vitoria* was on her way down the Seine to the sea after discharging her cargo of petrol at Rouen when she collided with the Japanese flag *Fuyoh Maru*, which had apparently encountered steering difficulties on her voyage up river and had veered off course.

The Greek vessel exploded and split in two after the accident, almost certainly as a result of the presence of

inflammable gases within her empty tanks. As she was well under the 20,000 tonnes limit at which an inert gas system is required she had no such system on board, which had it been fitted would probably have saved her from the violent explosion and the loss of life which ensued.

*Maritime safety expert Doug Foy analyses disasters at sea and their prevention in the current issue of the IFF Seafarers' Bulletin.*

## British campaign against truck rules

The British ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) has launched a campaign against European Community proposals to allow greater access to domestic markets by foreign trucks.

The EC proposals for road transport "cabotage" will increase the number of permits granted to foreign drivers by 40 per cent a year. Once inside another country these drivers will be allowed to make two internal trips be-

fore leaving.

British drivers feel particularly threatened by these proposals, because, they argue, their industry receives none of the subsidies or support common in other European countries, and their road tax rates are the highest in the Community. This, they point out, means that they will be unable to compete on an equal footing with drivers from other countries.

The TGWU is seeking to build a

strong alliance of interest groups within the road haulage industry with the trade unions to fight the new rules.

The Anti-Cabotage Campaign held a successful inaugural meeting on July 6 in Scarborough, England, which was addressed by TGWU National Officer for Transport Jack Ashwell, and Euro-MP Les Huckfield.

# German hauliers "socially irresponsible" act

The unilateral decision by the German road haulage employers' association to tear up the Collective Agreement that sets the working conditions of about 50,000 haulage drivers in the Federal Republic has been condemned by ITF Executive Board member Eike Eulen as 'a conscious bid to force a confrontation' with his union, the ÖTV.

The employers' action followed the failure of negotiations on the central question of driving hours and rest periods.

Eulen believes that the employers now intend to force an unacceptably long 84 hour working week on long distance drivers.

The union had said it was willing to permit the insertion in the agreement of a clause allowing daily hours to be extended in line with the new EC driving hours regulations that came into force last November. Its only proviso was that drivers should be offered 10 rostered free days each month, which, it argued, would not

involve the employers in any additional costs.

The employers continue to insist that daily working hours be increased from 12 to 13 hours three times a week and 15 hours again three times a week, a weekly total of 84 hours.

Attacking the employers' stance as "socially irresponsible", Eulen points out that truck drivers already suffer from stress and that such working hours would be a danger both to workers' health and to road safety.

## Inland waterway rights defended by owners

Inland Navigation operators in the Federal Republic of Germany have stated that they are opposed to any moves to open up their inland waterways to foreign boats.

Under the present rules all traffic east of the Dortmund/Hamm line is

reserved to West German registered vessels, while the mainly Rhine river trade which is west of the line is restricted to the Rhine states.

But these regulations are potentially under threat because of European Community moves to

establish freedom of transport within the member states.

The West German inland waterway operators' association — the BDB — has stated that free competition would be unfair to their members, because they lack the tax and subsidy benefits of other Rhine nations.

## ITF plans to promote public urban transport

Future ITF action to promote urban public passenger transport was discussed by the ITF's Urban Transport Committee when it met in Helsinki from 16 to 18 June, with members of the Committee suggesting that the campaign be tied in with the current

EC Environmental Year and that attention be focused on questions such as health, safety and working conditions and safeguards on new technology.

The meeting also decided to update the Bus 1980 survey on working conditions in urban transport and to set

up a working group, on which the PSI would also be represented, to coordinate the next campaign and look at the questions of new technology and health. S Weiss of the German Railwaymen's Union was elected Vice Chairman of the Committee.

## CIVIL AVIATION

### *Euro-Air policy founders on 'The Rock'*

The European Community's long march to a civil aviation policy is back at the beginning — frustrated, at the eleventh hour by the introduction of new voting procedures for EC decision making.

A complicated package of liberalisation in fares, routes and capacities, carefully tailored to achieve majority support, had finally, last month, appeared to achieve the unanimous support the package needed.

These measures, many of which were slated to come into effect from September 1, have now to be renegotiated from the very beginning.

The source of the dispute which led to this debacle is the status of Gibraltar — the rock ruled as a

Colony by Great Britain but claimed by Spain.

Bilateral negotiations on the future of the colony between the Spanish and British governments have been underway since Spain joined the European Community.

Spain requested that the airport in Gibraltar should not be included in the airline policy package, because to treat it as a UK airport would prejudice the outcome of these discussions. The British, who have different ideas about the discussions than the Spanish, rejected leaving Gibraltar out.

The entire package was approved then, but for the question of Gibraltar. But because unanimous agreement was

not reached by July 1st on the package, a new procedure must now be applied to the policy. This is because the Single European Act has now come into force — which outlines a new method of decision making that allows, for the first time, for a limited form of majority voting in Community decision making. This simplification, in this case, complicates matters, because the whole package must go back to the beginning, and be placed before the European Parliament.

The final package will probably survive the process in its present form, but it will now take at least a year for the decision making process to be enacted.

# US bill to safeguard employee rights

A new Bill approved by the US House of Representatives in June will give important new protection to employees in the event of airline mergers and acquisitions.

The Bill requires the Secretary of Transportation to make the imposition of labour protective provisions (LPPs) a condition of approval of airline mergers and acquisitions in all cases where it has been shown that a change of airline ownership would have an adverse impact on employees. The Secretary will also have to ensure that employee seniority is taken into account in all mergers.

Another significant feature of the Bill is that authority for mergers is to be taken from the Department of Transportation at an early date. Responsibility for ensuring protection of employee rights in takeovers is also to be transferred from the DoT to the Department of Labor - a more appropriate arm of government.

The Bill has been warmly welcomed

by US aviation unions who have been fighting ever since deregulation for employee rights to be routinely protected in takeovers. Since the DoT took over after the demise of the Civil Aeronautics Board, which regularly

imposed such conditions, it has taken a much harder line towards airline workers.

No date has yet been fixed for the introduction of the Bill in the Senate, the next step.

## IAM win biggest-ever air representation vote

In the biggest airline trade union representation vote in the USA's history, the ITF-affiliated International Association of Machinists (IAM) have won the right to represent the employees of Northwest Airlines.

The election resulted from the merger of Northwest and Republic Airlines, and was to decide the representation of 15,000 employees who work for the new carrier. Along with the 5,500 mechanics already under IAM contract

at Northwest, the union now represents 20,000 workers at the Minneapolis-based carrier.

Victory in the National Mediation Board's postal ballot for the IAM is all the more impressive, since the union represented only 14 per cent of the staff before the vote.

IAM Transportation Vice President John Peterpaul has hailed the victory as a vote of confidence in the professionalism of his union.

# Airports for sale in latest UK privatisation

Airports are the latest targets for the British government's continuing sale of state assets.

The British Airport's Authority (BAA), which runs the London airports and the main Scottish ones, is to be wholly sold off to private interests in a special share offering that closes on July 16.

Fifty per cent of the shares will be available to members of the general public, 25 per cent will be reserved for financial institutions and the remaining 25 will be sold by a special tender auction.

This auction is an attempt by the government to avoid the criticisms made of all their previous privatisations, where share prices have rocketed in the first weeks of trading bringing windfall gains for investors. Opposition politicians have pointed out that this means that state assets have been sold at deliberately low prices, robbing the taxpayers of their true value.

The share price for BAA is generally considered to be low by independent financial sources. The 75 per cent of

shares offered to institutions and individuals are on offer at £2.45 apiece — most analysts expected a price of between £2.50 and £2.70 a share.

But the shares on sale by tender will be allocated to the highest bidders, in descending order of amount offered. This, the government hopes, will prevent a rapid rise in the value of the shares when they are traded. However, should the difference between the tendered share prices and the ordinary shares be too great, they will be open to the same criticisms as before.

# Singapore, New Zealand sell airline shares

The Singapore government is proceeding with the gradual privatisation of the flag-carrier Singapore International Airlines (SIA).

The government's stake in the airline, through a holding company called Temasek, now stands at 63 per cent.

At SIA's Annual General Meeting, plans will be outlined for a gradual re-

duction in that holding to 30 per cent — a phased reduction, with 5-10 per cent of the shares passing into private hands each year.

The government is also expected to relax the restrictions on foreign ownership of SIA shares. At the moment there is a limit of 20 per cent, which is held by foreign interests, this will almost certainly be increased, perhaps to as much as 49 per cent, at the Au-

gust meeting.

The New Zealand government has announced that it will sell off 25 per cent of the shares in the state-owned Air New Zealand. The Minister of Civil Aviation has not announced a date for the flotation, saying he wants to wait until the share price is best. There are no plans to sell any more than 25 per cent of the shares in the future.

# DOCKERS

## National strike vote in Britain

British dockers are voting this month on a proposal for a national dock strike starting August 14.

The 13,500 Dockers — members of the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) — are being balloted following the breakdown of negotiations between the union and the Clyde Port Authority in Scotland.

The Authority is planning to close the Greenock Container terminal on

August 14th, and they have proposed to break established agreements for UK docks (embodied in the National Dock Labour Scheme) by putting the registered dockworkers into the unregistered, casual dock labour pool.

While the port employers appear unhappy with the prospect of a national strike — they have altered their offer to the dockers concerned three times in as many weeks — they appear committed to casualising registered

dockers.

John Connolly, TGWU National Officer for Docks (and ITF Dockers' Section Chairman) warned at the recent ITF Dockers' meeting that the Ports were a target for the privatisation obsessed Thatcher government, and that dockers were expecting a major confrontation within the next year.

The strike ballot results will be known by the end of July.

## New contract for US West Coast docks

A new labour contract for West Coast dockers in the United States was agreed between the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) and the Pacific Coast port employers earlier in July.

Pay increases of between 5 and 10 per cent on the current rate of \$17.27

an hour have been agreed for unionised dock labour but under a new two tier structure the pay of non unionised casual workers (employed only at peak periods when union hiring halls are unable to meet the demand for port labour) will be cut to \$14 an hour.

Casuals have traditionally been paid the same as union members, but have not received the fringe benefits, including pensions and medical coverage, that are currently estimated to cost employers a further \$17 an hour.

The agreement has still to be ratified by the membership.

# SEAFARERS

## ITF AID TO RO-RO SAFETY STUDY THAT OWNERS REFUSED TO HELP

The ITF has come to the aid of a maritime safety study that shipowners have been too tightfisted to support.

Their reluctance to assist this study of ro-ro safety is all the more surprising in the wake of the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster.

British Maritime Technologies Ltd. (BMT) was originally commissioned to research the reasons for the European Gateway sinking in 1982.

They conducted a technical investigation into the sinking and produced a report in 1985. The paper concluded there was every reason to believe a similar accident could happen to a passenger vessel in the future. In an ominous warning that wasn't heeded, it stated that:

"If a fully loaded passenger ro-ro fer-

ry" was involved in a similar accident, there would certainly be "a catastrophic loss of life."

BMT, an independent body without direct government funding, then wrote to 24 companies who operated ferries in European waters, saying that more research was needed into ro-ro safety. In order to cover the costs of this study, BMT suggested that each company could support the project with a donation of £10,000. Not a single company expressed any interest.

After the loss of the Herald — the very catastrophe BMT had warned was possible — they wrote again, this time to 26 operators and the UK Department of Transport. Only one Scottish operator replied this time,

and then with only qualified approval. The government replied that they would support the study only if there is enough support from the operators.

In response to an appeal from the General Secretary of the ITF-affiliated UK officers' union NUMAST, the ITF has offered to provide up to £30,000 to BMT, providing the study goes ahead.

The ITF is also contacting other ITF affiliated maritime unions to solicit their support for the project.

If the study goes ahead it will identify and quantify existing ro-ro risks (such as flooding), look at counter-measures and provide design guidance for the future.

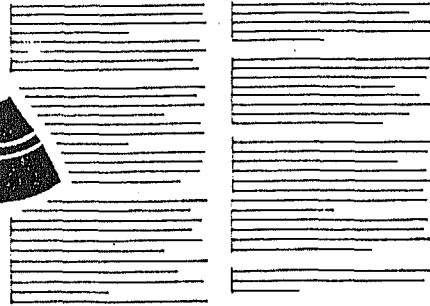
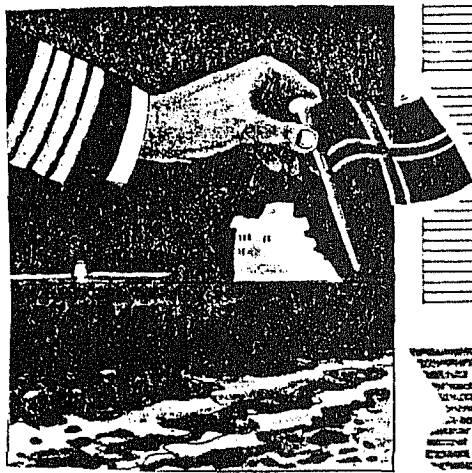


# Norway register adds new twist to crew cost cutting spiral

Seafarers' unions in the traditional maritime countries have had yet another bad month as shipowners desperately search for ways of slashing est from other countries' shipowners in the NIS has been so great that the ITF was forced to issue a statement reiterating the Fair Practices Committee

looking for lower crewing levels and a move away from the current 50/50 split between time on board and time ashore towards a ratio of 2:1. Negotiations with the ITF affiliated seafarers' unions on these issues are continuing.

Barber International proudly introduce You to the Norwegian International Ship register



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International

Norwegian ship managers were quick off the mark with their publicity

manning costs.

The new Norwegian International Register (NIS) came into being on 1 July with 23 ships from Bergesen's fleet apparently being amongst its first customers. As ITF News' went to press, no official word had been received from Norwegian unions about the progress of discussions about negotiating rights for foreign seafarers on NIS registered ships, but the inter-

decision that any non-Norwegian owned vessel which transfers to NIS will be treated as an Foc by ITF affiliates.

Meanwhile in Finland negotiations are under way in response to shipowners' demands for reductions in manning costs of up to 40%. Part of this saving they are asking the government to fund through subsidies and tax concessions, but they are also

Agreement is reported to have been reached early in July between shipowners in the Netherlands and the ITF affiliated seafarers' union FWZ. Once again government tax breaks are part of the deal, but the most controversial element is so called 'mixed manning'. This means that both Dutch and Asian ratings will be able to work together on the same ship at different wage rates. This will lead to a significant increase in the number of non Dutch seafarers (currently just over 1,000 out of a total workforce of 10,000) aboard Dutch vessels, but the agreement guarantees that there will be no compulsory redundancies and that shipowners will find alternative employment if necessary for displaced ratings.

A similar 'split manning' deal is reported to have been struck in Great Britain by the officers' union NUMAST and Canadian Pacific shipping for ten of its fleet of 30 bulk carriers. The deal, which follows industrial action on several of the ships, provides that British senior officers will be retained but junior officers will gradually be replaced by foreign seafarers - probably Indians. The company has agreed that there will be no compulsory redundancy at least until the end of 1987. Under the company's original proposals job losses would have been 76 but this has been reduced to between 40 and 50.

Also in Great Britain the ratings' union NUS has reached agreement on limited crew redundancies in the tanker fleet of Esso Petroleum and Mobil, the only oil majors still using British flag vessels. 20 jobs at Esso and 14 at Mobil are to go through voluntary redundancy schemes.

Finally in Sweden the Swedish Seamen's Union has expressed strong opposition to plans by the shipowners' association to commission a feasibility study into operating ocean going vessels with a crew of eight. Similar experiments in Japan and Norway are reported in the current issue of the ITF 'Seafarers' Bulletin'.

## Offshore flags worry 'traditional' Focs

Panama now has 60 million tonnes of shipping on its register, having gained 280 new vessels of 3.9m tonnes in the first four months of this year, and putting it on target to beat Liberia into second place and become the world's largest shipping register. In the 6 years since 1981 the Panamanian flag has grown from 33.9 million to 60 million.

A small group of islands off the South American coast which are formally part of the Netherlands, is poised to become a fully fledged flag of convenience, offering bargain base-

ment tonnage fees. According to Lloyds List the Netherlands Antilles will offer 'open register facilities' at \$0.25 per gross ton subject to a minimum of \$600 per ship. This low rate is seen as a response to the competition which traditional flags of convenience are facing from the new "offshore" registers.

This will not pose any new problems for the ITF since its Fair Practices Committee has for years included the N.A. on the ITF list of countries offering flag of convenience facilities.

# Indian seafarers want UN Gulf convoy

Delegates attending the biennial general meeting of the National Union of Seafarers of India (NUSI) in Bombay in May expressed grave concern at the growing number of attacks on vessels in the Gulf. A resolution was passed by the meeting acknowledging the efforts of the ITF to ensure the safety of seafarers and their ships in the war torn Gulf area and calling on the United Nations to provide a security convoy to protect neutral merchant shipping.

The meeting also welcomed the measures agreed by the Indian parliament earlier this year to help stem the rapid decline of the country's merchant fleet and urged the government to ensure that these were implemented without delay.

Other resolutions adopted by the meeting urged the speeding up of allotments to seafarers' families, legal action to ensure that seafarers' claims were met first when companies went into liquidation and the opening up of promotion to petty officer from within the ranks. Delegates also called on the government to accelerate its plan for the expansion of Indian tonnage so as to create more jobs for Indian seafarers and advocated stricter government regulation of recruitment agencies to ensure that only bona fide

seafarers were engaged.

The meeting elected Doctor Shanti Patel as the next President of the

NUSI while Leo Barnes was confirmed in his position as the union's General Secretary and Treasurer.

## Seafarers' Bulletin no 2 published

The second issue of the ITF Seafarers' Bulletin is now available. This 34-page publication provides a global round-up of news, information and analysis of interest to everyone working in seafaring. This edition includes a special report on the history of the ITF's campaign against Flag of Convenience shipping, and a detailed analysis of casualties at sea by an eminent maritime expert.

Affiliates who have not already received copies for distribution should contact the ITF.

The English language version is already printed, and Spanish, French, German, Swedish, Greek, Korean and Chinese editions are in production at the moment.

## PEOPLE

Former Vice President of the German Railwaymen's Union Rudi Kobilke has been appointed to the Board of the German Federal Railways (DB). He takes over the seat vacated by Heinz Frieser, also ex GdED, who has just retired. Rudi Schäfer has been elected to succeed Kobilke as rail union Vice President.

Roger Deschamps, Foc Inspector in France since 1979, is retiring.

Deschamps, from the Maritime Section of the ITF-affiliated FGTE CFDT, has visited nearly 200 ships in his duties, and has travelled thousands of kilometres going from one French port to another.

Neil Milligan, currently Assistant General Secretary of the British Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF), has been elected to succeed Ray Buckton

as General Secretary when the latter retires in October.

John Pidcock has been elected as the new federal organiser of the Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia.

Larry Smith, Assistant General Secretary of the British Transport and General Workers' Union, has been elected President of the transport section of the EC Economic and Social Committee.

## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

1-2 September	ITF/UIC meeting	Paris
15-16 September	Rhine/Main/Danube Working Group	Nuremberg
22 September	Seafarers' Section Conference	Geneva
24 September- 9 October	International Labour Conference (Maritime)	Geneva
29-30 September	Road Transport Ctee	Zurich
3-4 November	Executive Board	London
3-5 December	Asia/Pacific Conference	Tokyo