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## Court victory for US union:

# MACHINISTS STOP LORENZO PLAN TO TRANSFER STAFF

Union busting airline chief Frank Lorenzo, whose Texas Air corporation has become the largest airline following a series of post-deregulation takeovers, has suffered a serious defeat at the hands of the ITF affiliated International Association of Machinists (IAM).

The union won two Federal court hearings - on June 24 and July 2 brought on behalf of its ground staff members in Eastern Airlines, now a Lorenzo subsidiary, against attempts by the company to transfer all its ground service staff into a newly created subsidiary Airport Ground Services (AGS). The move was viewed by Charles Bryan, President of IAM District 100 in Florida where the airline has its base, as a ploy to lower pay and conditions for IAM ground staff in Eastern without going through the bargaining process established by federal labour laws. "Had they succeeded in doing this you could have forgotten about organized labour in the airline industry" he said, commenting on the favourable summary judgement delivered on July 2.

The story began on June 24, when Bryan received a hand delivered letter from Eastern telling him that from midnight 94 of his members — baggage loaders, refuellers and cleaners — at Fort Lauderdale/Hollywood Airport would cease to be employees of Eastern and would be issued with new uniforms and placed on the AGS payroll.

Ever since he took over the Miami based carrier in 1986 Lorenzo has been trying to cut the 'high' salaries of the company's airport staff. Currently they earn between \$9 and \$17 an hour, compared with contract ground staff at his Continental Airlines subsidiary who receive around \$5.

The speed with which the decision was communicated left the union with no choice but to seek and obtain an emergency injunction from the Federal court.

In the cut throat world of US aviation post deregulation, airline subsidiaries are nothing new. The airlines that have survived the upheavals of the past few years are always on the lookout for ways of cutting costs and winning new business. Dallas based American Airlines for example has its own subsidiary AMR Services which offers ground handling services to other carriers, while at the loss making Pan Am Corporation, Pan Am World Services, which looks after both ground handling and airport security, is the only part of the company showing a profit. There can be little doubt that once successfully established Eastern's new subsidiary AGS would have been looking for new business from other carriers.

Once the IAM members had been removed from the Eastern payroll Bryan is convinced that they would have rapidly have faced a 'pay cut or bankruptcy' ultimatum from the company.

The company was at first reluctant to admit the scale of the change it was proposing. According to the union's lawyer it took until the beginning of July before Eastern admitted - in an affidavit signed by its Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Joseph B Leonard - that it intended to bring all 6,000 airport ground staff

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## AUGUST 1987

# Fiji trade bans suspended

Bans on cargoes and air services to and from Fiji have been temporarily lifted by unions in New Zealand and Australia following a joint meeting by the two countries' national trade union centres in Wellington on July 16.

An ACTU and NZFOL fact finding mission, which visited the Fijian capital Suva on 22 July issued a statement together with the Fiji TUC making it clear that full trade union rights in Fiji, as they existed before the May 14 military coup

have not yet been restored.

The political situation in the island state remains far from satisfactory. Deposed Prime Minister Dr Timoci Bavadra is reported to have agreed to participate in the work of the constitutional review committee, but reports of the Committee's proposals so far all include special apartheid style political rights for the ethnic Fijian population. Economic activity in Fiji has begun to pick up, with the harvesting of the sugar crop, but trade

union members are facing drastic pay cuts of 25% or more.

The country is still under the de facto rule of the army officers under Col. Rabuka who launched the May coup.

In a joint statement on May 14 the ACTU/FOL/FTUC mission stressed that the only satisfactory outcome for Fiji lies win a return to democracy under the existing constitution with the full restoration of all rights.

## Hundreds killed in Haiti unrest

Hundreds of people have been killed in Haiti during the last month as the general strike against the military government's hijack of the democratisation process continues.

The strike itself (see ITF News July 1987) has been very well supported, with all major towns effectively shut down, despite the fact that only 20 per cent of the Caribbean state's population is working.

But despite the clear message from the population that they want their country to return to democracy, the provisional government council (CNG), has responded to the protests with military force. Hundreds of people have been killed in the towns and villages by the army, which has moved in force against barricaded workers' districts.

Leading members of Haiti's Confederation of Autonomous Workers' (CATH), including general Secretary Gabriel Miracle, remain imprisoned without charge and the military still insist that the union is "dissolved."

Various reports also indicate that the infamous "Ton-Ton Macoute" thugs — who had been the personal army of deposed dictator Duvalier — are now back in business. In one village a Catholic church sponsored peasant meeting was attacked by a gang who killed at least a hundred villagers.

Far from ridding the country of the evil influences of the overthrown dictator, the military appear to be working with the same old people. One of Duvalier's leading military men, General Regala, is still in

power, and a number of other powerful figures in the previous regime appear to be resurfacing. Amnesty International in their last report, indicate that torture and "disappearances" have not ended in Haiti with Duvalier's departure.

## Sudanese declare state of emergency

A state of emergency has been declared in the Sudan, suspending civil and trade union rights. The announcement from Sadek El Mahdi's government on July 25 comes in the face of a continuing armed rebellion in the South and severe economic problems.

The democratically elected government, which came to power following elections last May, inherited a legacy of decline from president Gaafar Nemeiry's regime — but they had promised to govern with full respect for human rights.

The state of emergency allows the government forces to arrest and detain persons without charge, to censor the press and ban strikes or demonstration. The regulations will be in force for at least a year, the government has said.

## ...Lorenzo vs. IAM

Continued from page 1  
throughout the Eastern Airlines system into the AGS subsidiary by the end of September.

Encouraged by their court victory, the IAM lawyer now intends to challenge an earlier Eastern subsidiary, Protective Services Inc. which employs 80 IAM organised security guards at Miami International Airport.

Although he has suffered a serious setback, virtually the first since his union busting takeover of Continental, it is unlikely that Lorenzo has given up attempts to cut pay and conditions for Eastern workers. The company plans to appeal the decision and is already asking the union to agree to pay cuts and work rule changes worth \$265 million. This is part of a company strategy aimed at cutting total

labour costs at Eastern by \$490 million.

The need for such swingeing cuts is far from obvious, given that Eastern made a net profit of \$2 million in the first quarter, despite the loss of key assets (including its lucrative System One computerised reservations system) to its parent Texas Air.

## Sierre Leone transport unions to discuss merger proposals

All four ITF affiliates in Sierra Leone are, according to Dock Workers' Union General Secretary F. Brima, actively considering merging into one large union representing all of the country's transport workers.

The unions now separately organise about four and a half thousand seafarers, dockers and road haulage drivers. They have asked the ITF for advice in drafting statutes for an amalgamated transport union.

## Gulf war crisis heats up

After years of murderous attacks on unarmed merchant ships by both sides in the Iran-Iraq war, world public opinion has finally focused on the Gulf as a result of the reflagging of Kuwaiti tankers to the US

registry and the subsequent mine damage to the VLCC *Bridgeton* (ex *Al Rekkah*).

With the US action at least drawing the attention of the warring countries away from other shipping, a slightly more opti-

mistic note was struck in the unanimous resolution of the UN Security Council on July 20 which called for a cease fire to be observed by both parties backed up by the threat of a possible mandatory UN arms embargo.

Despite Congressional opposition in the United States plans are still in hand to transfer more Kuwaiti ship to the US flag, taking advantage of a loophole in US maritime law which frees the owner from the obligation to use American crews. At the same time approval was given by the British government for the 26,139 dwt products carrier *Modhi* to transfer to the Gibraltar flag, and hence come under the protection of the small UK naval presence in the Gulf area.

It is interesting to note that the British government is apparently ready to provide naval protection for vessels registered in Gibraltar and other UK dependencies such as Bermuda and the Cayman Islands, in view of its refusal to take direct responsibility for marine casualties, for example, in the case of the Gibraltar registered *Syneta* which sank near Iceland last year.

Representatives of shipowners, bankers, insurers, freight forwarders and other organisations involved in shipping added their voice to the ITF's call for urgent UN action to stop the carnage in the Gulf area when a delegation from the International Chamber of Commerce met the UN Secretary General on August 5. The delegation's leader, Mark Muller (Netherlands) said that they had expressed to Mr Perez de Cuellar the business community's grave concern about the continuing unprovoked attacks on merchant ships in the Gulf.

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## No non-Norwegian ships on NIS register...yet

Despite a massive publicity campaign, the new Norwegian International Register (NIS) which came into operation on July 1 has so far attracted very few customers.

Norwegian government claims that 1000 ships are expected on the NIS by the end of next year compare with reports by ITF affiliates that 12 ships had joined by the beginning of August, 11 from the genuine Norwegian register and one from a flag of convenience.

Within Norway interest has centred on negotiations between the Norwegian Shipping Employers' Association (ASO) and Norwegian seafaring unions about conditions which will apply to crews of NIS registered ships. The law setting up the new register lays down that the wages and working conditions on ships entered on the register "will be stipulated by collective wage agreement...concluded with Norwegian or foreign unions". Following the decision of the ITF Fair Practices Committee in June the unions have been

working to a September 12 deadline to find an agreement on procedures for setting wages and working conditions for non-Norwegian nationals on board the ships. An agreement in principle was reached on 2 July in Oslo for both Norwegian and foreign crews on board NIS ships. The agreement lays down:

- that the unions and shipowners recognise the need to recruit additional Norwegian seafarers for service in NIS ships;
- that Norwegian unions may negotiate for non-Norwegian crews
- that Norwegian union officials are allowed access to the ships on union business;
- that agreements may be concluded with non Norwegian unions for non Norwegian crews but that such agreements shall be negotiated between the owners organisation, the Norwegian unions and ITF affiliates in the crews' home country and shall be in line with ITF approved agreements.

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## ITF aids unions in Derbyshire probe

The ITF is giving financial support to the British maritime unions in order to assist their representation at the forthcoming *Derbyshire* enquiry.

The 169,044 tonnes deadweight ore/bulk/oil vessel sank without a trace, with the loss of 44 lives, on a trip from Canada to Japan in September 1980.

For six years' both British ITF-affiliates NUS and NUMAST fought for a formal investigation by the government into the

loss. The unions have been particularly concerned that the loss may well have been attributable to design defects and structural weaknesses.

With the loss last year of the *Derbyshire's* sister ship, the *Kowloon Bridge*, the British government finally conceded the need for an enquiry.

But it wasn't until this May that the government announced that senior Commissioner of Wrecks' Gerald Darling

would head up the enquiry team. Because of the pressure put upon maritime experts by the *Herald of Free Enterprise* enquiry (which has just concluded, and is covered in this newsletter), it now seems that the investigation will begin later this year.

The ITF's financial assistance will aid the British unions in raising a number of crucial issues of relevance to all seafarers' about the naval architecture of this ship.

# Townsend to blame for Herald tragedy

The Board and senior management of Townsend Thoresen are blamed for the loss in March of the Herald of Free Enterprise in the report of the official seven week inquiry into the disaster published on 25 July.

Mr Justice Sheen, the High Court judge chairing the inquiry, confirmed that the immediate cause of the accident had been the sudden inrush of water through the bow doors which had been open when the ship left port and the subsequent loss of stability, which led the ship to sink in under two minutes with the loss of nearly two hundred lives.

The inquiry found that the errors and omissions by the master, the chief officer and assistant bosun of the Herald amounted to serious negligence.

The master, Captain David Lewry, who had followed the usual company practice

of "negative reporting" - assuming that the ship was ready for sea in the absence of any adverse report, must, the report found, accept personal responsibility for the loss of his ship.

While recognising that he would continue to bear an enormous mental and emotional burden as a result of the tragedy, the Court suspended his Certificate of Competency for one year. Of the many faults which combined to lead directly or indirectly to the sinking that of the Chief Officer Leslie Sabel, as officer in charge of loading operations, in not ensuring the bow doors were indeed closed was the most immediate, the report finds. The court therefore directed that his qualifications be suspended for a period of two years, with a requirement that he undergo a medical examination before being allowed to return to sea.

In the case of assistant bosun Mark Stanley, who on his own admission had fallen asleep and missed the call to harbour stations, the Enquiry was not empowered to take any action although he pointed out in his report that the company retained the right to take disciplinary action against him.

The most serious conclusion of the enquiry was that the procedures which the officers and ratings concerned were following, although seriously defective, were in employed throughout the company's ferry fleet. According to Justice Sheen the company was "infected with the disease of sloppiness" from top to bottom. Its senior management had effectively abdicated responsibility for the safety of its ships and this was an impor-

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## ...Other states set to follow Norway's lead

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Following on from this agreement, a meeting has been provisionally scheduled for 19-21 August in Manila between the Norwegian shipowners, Norwegian unions, and the ITF affiliate in the Philippines who may be involved in supplying crews for the ships. A further meeting with Indian affiliates will take place on August 26. Problems may still arise, however, over agreements reached by Norwegian shipowners who are not members of the ASO. ITF policy established by the June FPC remains that any NIS ship not beneficially owned in Norway will be treated as flying a flag of convenience. Non federated NIS ships will also undoubtedly become the focus of action by UITF affiliates in the absence of a bona fide union agreement. Despite claims to the contrary, no foreign owned ship has so far been placed on the NIS.

Meanwhile other maritime nations are casting envious eyes at Norway and trying to go down the same road. In late July the Danish government was reported as having given approval "in principle" to the establishment of a Danish International Shipping register (DIS). The plan, which is strongly opposed by Denmark's seafaring unions, is expected to free owners to employ foreign crews at low wages.

In Finland, government investment assistance to shipowners has been made conditional on acceptance by maritime

unions of a pay freeze and longer working hours. Negotiations between the Finnish Shipowners' Association and the unions have begun against the background of government insistence that cost savings made by owners should at least match the value of the financial aid on offer. In the past 12 months the strength of the Finnish flag fleet dropped from 80 to 50 ships as a result of flagging out and ship sales.

One of the biggest shipowners in the Netherlands, Van Ommeren announced plans in July to sell half of its fleet of bulk carriers and heavy lift vessels. The plan, fiercely opposed by the ITF affiliated FWZ, will cause 143 Dutch seafarers to lose their jobs and comes in the wake of acceptance by the union of mixed Dutch and foreign crews (ITF News July 1987). The ships will be sold to a Netherlands Antilles company Columbus Marine Lease and then chartered back to Van Ommeren. Although the company denies it, the FWZ believes that Columbus and Van Ommeren are linked and that the sale is a disguised attempt to 'flag out' the vessels.

In Belgium, shipowners, which have already received government approval to transfer to the new Luxembourg flag of convenience have also won a battle for financial support, believed to be in the region of \$34m over 2 years. If the aid package goes ahead, it will help preserve jobs for Belgian seafarers who have been

promised continued employment and preserved net wages when the ships transfer to Luxembourg, probably next year.

It is not just the traditional maritime countries which are feeling the pinch from the economic crisis in world shipping. According to the Indian Shipowners' Association, the total Indian fleet fell from 6.14 m grt in 1985 to 5.77m in 1986. More than 60% of the operational fleet is more than 10 years old.

After the Philippines the most important labour supplying country to flag of convenience fleets is Korea where, according to the authoritative Japanese shipping journal Kaiji Press, 42,514 seafarers were employed on foreign flag vessels in the period January to June 1987.

At a meeting held with the Polish manning agency Polservice at ITF headquarters on August 5, concern was expressed by ITF officials about the unrestricted marketing of Polish seafarers on Foc ships owned in countries with ITF affiliates. Polservice were warned that the wages and working conditions of such seafarers left a lot to be desired for example on issues such as repatriation, grievance procedures, and war risk... Particular concern was expressed about breaches of certification regulations by Polish officers' and the practice of requiring 'loyalty letters' to be signed in which Polish seafarers promise not to contact the ITF about their wages and conditions.

# Greeks and Cypriots hold strategy meeting

As part of the continuing process of consultations between Greek and Cypriot seafarers' unions, representatives of unions in both countries met in Piraeus on 9 July to discuss a strategy for dealing with the problems that arise for Greek and Cypriot seafarers from the flagging out of Greek ships to the Cypriot registry and the manning of these vessels by low paid foreign seafarers.

The meeting was headed by Homer Neocleous (Federation of Transport, Petroleum and Agricultural Workers, Cyprus) and Michael Zenzefyllis, (PNO, Greece).

The meeting stressed the need for urgent and decisive action at government level to ease the high level of unemployment that

seafarers in both countries were facing as the result of shrinking job opportunities.

The unions agreed to ask the governments of Greece and Cyprus to summon an early meeting of their shipping ministers and the unions to agree ways of protecting jobs for Greek and Cypriot seafarers aboard ships of both national flags.

## ...Herald of Free Enterprise enquiry

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tant cause of the disaster.

He was severely critical of several named directors and managers who had failed to react when serving officers reported deficiencies in standing orders, thus allowing a state of affairs to persist which led ultimately to the tragedy.

Complaints from serving officers that ships had proceeded to sea carrying passengers in excess of the permitted numbers were ignored, as were requests from masters that lights be fitted on the bridge to indicate whether the bow and stern loading doors were open or closed.

The Enquiry's action in penalising only the serving officers who had been bound by procedures laid down at senior level by Townsend Thoresen's management was criticised by Eric Nevin, General Secretary of NUMAST, which represented the Master and Chief Officer at the Enquiry. Commenting on the report he said "The scapegoat system is not what I recognise as British justice. Why should two officers alone be selected for punishment when there is a complex chain of responsibility for the disaster?"

He added that a wide range of institutions and organisations responsible for ship design and procedures and many groups, including unions, had not been forceful enough in the past in their criticism of the system.

"Only in terms of attention to duty in a rushed situation caused by the failure of those august bodies did two officers and one rating have involvement in that chain. Why then should just those two officers be singled out, apparently in order to purge the guilt of a whole community which has failed?"

The second half of the inquiry report - 69 pages in all - is devoted entirely to a series of recommendations for changes in shipping policy, design and regulations.

The recommendations are divided into three sections: short term, medium term,

and those connected with future ferry design.

The short term recommendations are mostly concerned with safety. It is suggested that:

- indicator lights be fitted to all superstructure doors, as well as sea doors and that an entry be made in the ship's log before sailing on the conditions of the lights.
- close circuit television should be fitted to monitor vehicle decks and the condition of all doors.
- automatic draught reading equipment of approved design should be fitted and

vehicle decks above the waterline.

It also urges a study of various types of watertight bulkheads, recognising that the subdivision of the long vehicle decks has an important part to play in improving survivability in the event of an accident.

The report expresses concern that there has been no specific investigation of the safety of ro ro ships by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and urges an urgent clarification of a conflict between IMO and other regulations. It also calls for immediate consideration to be given to the phasing out of ships built before 1980 (a substantial part of the fleet)

*"Why should two officers alone be selected for punishment when there is a complex chain of responsibility for the disaster?"*

Weighbridges should also be considered immediately as a way of providing masters with accurate figures for freight weights on board ship.

• self maintaining watertight emergency lighting should be installed with regular routine checks made of the condition of such lighting

• a standardised industry wide approach to escape windows should be adopted. These should be reliable and uncomplicated and operable from inside or outside the vessel.

Recommended action in the medium term is concentrated on measures to improve the stability of ferries and to give masters better guidance on safety tolerances.

In the longer term, the report calls for an increase of about 3 feet in the height of

unless they can be modified to meet more recent standards.

Reaction to the report's recommendation has been swift. The British government intends to make it a criminal offence for a ferry to proceed to sea with its doors open. The Transport Minister has also announced that random safety checks on ferries will be stepped up and that the government is to investigate the possible introduction of airline style boarding cards for ferries to cut down on overloading. Ferry operators have all agreed to take immediate steps to install indicator lights, closed circuit television, emergency lighting and escape doors as called for in the Enquiry's recommendations. Safety of Ro Ro ferries is also being urgently studied by the IMO's Maritime Safety Committee.

# Port State Control in Europe continues to expand

Port State Control — The idea that coastal states should act together in order to establish certain minimum standards on board the ships that enter their ports — is now a welcome fact of life in 14 European states.

Members of the "Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control" which was signed in Paris in 1982, these states maintain an inspectorate in all the member states, co-ordinated by a secretariat in the Netherlands with access to a computer database of ship information.

The states base their inspections upon a number of IMO and ILO standards — including the 1966 International Convention on Load Lines; the 1978 Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), the 1974 International Convention for the safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) and, sometimes, the 1976 ILO Merchant Shipping (Minimum Standards) Convention No. 147.

They have the power to detain ships found to be in breach of these Conventions, ordering repairs to lifesaving equipment, improvements in sanitary conditions etc. before the ships are allowed to leave port.

The activities of the MOU Inspectors are certainly welcomed by Seafarers' unions — since they represent a serious attempt to tackle the problem of substandard shipping. Although, with the exception of ILO 147, most of these Conventions do not address social and economic conditions of the crews.

However, ITF Inspectors have found that sub-standard wages and working

conditions are often linked to abuses of safety conventions and other rules — and, in a number of cases, ITF inspectors have been able to gain time for a crew in dispute by notifying Port State Control of various deficiencies on board a ship.

The long-term aim of the Port State Control agreement is to undertake an inspection of 25 per cent of all ships calling in European ports. This, the Secretariat claims, would actually — due to cross trading and the like — mean that 75 per cent of all ships visiting member ports would be inspected on an annual basis.

In their latest annual report, published on July 14, the figure of ships inspected has reached 23 per cent. This is up from 20.4 per cent in 1985 and 19.7 per cent in 1984. A total of 11,740 inspections were carried out on ships from 116 flags — which is nearly 1,000 ships more than the last report predicted.

The actual number of ships detained due to serious deficiencies has gone down however, from 476 in 1984, 256 in 1985 to 307 last year.

The most number of deficiencies detected were in life-saving appliances (43.38 per cent of the total) followed by firefighting equipment (31.57), general safety violations (25.28), propulsion and auxiliary machinery (22.62), and ships certificates (17.98) — the general category of "crew" comes in at 7.69 per cent.

Specific breakdowns within these figures on violations within flag states are not given. But within the top eighteen offending flags, familiar foci such as the Cayman Islands, Malta, Gibraltar, Cyprus and Panama all feature.

The report states that the secretariat have decided not to issue a "blacklist" of offending ships — and detailed information, at a price, is only available to flag states about their own ships upon request.

The inspectors are linked to a computer system in France that keeps up to date files of inspections and, from last year, allows inspectors to use electronic mail to send messages to each other warning of specific ships or requesting immediate information. This electronic networking is linked with a series of seminars and training sessions for inspectors which is all designed to closely harmonise the operations of inspectors in different countries.

While there would appear to be a slight decrease in the number of sub-standard ships discovered by the inspectors last year, the MOU Secretariat point-out that some sub-standard shipping may now be avoiding European ports and going somewhere else. Clearly Port State Control needs to grow to cover more countries if it is to have a significant impact on the world fleet.

Contacts are underway between the MOU secretariat and the US, Canadian and Japanese authorities. Already there is an agreement of co-operation between the European states and the US Coast Guard, and the secretariat appears optimistic about Canada and Japan.

*The 14 states participating in the Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control are Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Ireland, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain and Sweden.*

## PEOPLE

Shannon Wall, President of the US National Maritime Union, is this year's recipient of the prestigious Admiral of the Ocean Sea award.

John Bowers has taken over the reins of the US International Longshoremen's Association from the union's long time president Thomas W (Teddy) Gleason, who retired at the

union's convention in Bal Harbour Florida in July. "After 24 years working with a legend like Teddy Gleason there won't be many changes", was Bowers' comment on his election as the head of the east coast union. Delegates to the convention gave Gleason a standing ovation and awarded him the title of President Emeritus in recognition of his many years of service.

Gleason, despite his 86 years, has made it clear that he does not intend to quit just yet and that he will be active in the battle to stop waterfront jobs from being lost to non union labour. J H ("Buddy") Raspberry was elected by the convention as General Vice President and Donald J Carson Executive as Vice President, succeeding Bowers.

# INLAND TRANSPORT

## ITF African "Northern Corridor" road unions pledge solidarity

The first-ever meeting of ITF African road transport unions in the "Northern Corridor Zone" has produced a firm pledge from all of the unions involved to co-operate closely and give each other "concrete solidarity."

The "Northern Corridor Zone Meeting" was held in Nairobi on the 15th and 16th of July, presided over by General Secretary J.N. Malii from the Kenyan Transport and Allied Workers' Union (TAWU). ITF and friendly unions from Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, and Tanzania all attended the meeting.

The delegates declared their "readiness for concrete solidarity between all transport trade unions within the Northern

Corridor Zone, namely, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Zaire and Burundi."

The meeting also called for a greater attention to health and safety issues in the road transport industry.

They called upon Road Transport Operators in the Northern Corridor to "cooperate with the trade unions in establishing health and safety standards and to monitor such standards. The delegates also called for the governments in the area to ratify ILO Convention 153 on "Hours of work and Rest Periods" — as a "crucial step towards promotion of better health and safety in the region's road transport industry — in the meantime, delegates recommended individual unions to include health and

safety measures within collective agreements.

The meeting also discussed the often cumbersome frontier crossing procedures in the region and urged the governments in the Corridor Zone to review procedures "so as to remove bureaucratic strains which frustrate drivers and cause delay of goods in transit".

Discussions were also held on the question of banditry and armed attacks on drivers in the region. The delegates commended the efforts of some governments in the region in combating banditry and declared "the readiness of Transport Trade unions in the region to co-operate with the authorities in the anti-bandit campaign"

## London/ Paris high speed train gets green light as Chunnel deal signed

As part of the final agreement to go ahead with the fixed-link tunnel between England and France, the British government has agreed to a special high speed train service between London and Paris.

This concession from a normally anti-railway government represents a major boost for plans to develop an integrated European network of high speed trains.

When the tunnel project was first agreed, the French wanted the British to agree to a high speed TGV-type train link between Paris and London, which would have involved building new track in both countries.

But the British railways, faced with an ever-decreasing level of investment from their government, have taken a different route in high speed train development that the rest of Europe — by working within the limitations of existing track.

The British government, which only reluctantly agreed to the tunnel being rail rather than road, was not willing to make any promises about upgrading or relaying track to allow high-technology trains.

The French government, on the other hand, have always been confident that the British will eventually be convinced to change their minds.

This is shown by the projections for TGV services through French Northwest corridor and onto Brussels and Amsterdam. All these plans are dependent not only on the tunnel but on passenger load calculations

that assume the existence of a high speed link with London.

High speed trains also make a crucial difference on the London-Paris route — once the journey time dips below three hours the high speed train is in a position to compete directly with flying journey time.

The agreement between the two governments, made at the final ratification ceremony of the treaty to build the tunnel, doesn't quite go as far as the French (or

Belgians and Dutch) would like — but it is a significant step in the right direction.

New track will be laid in France and "upgrading" will occur on the English side that will allow special TGV-type trains to run at full speed until they reach England, where, on the modified track, they will still run faster than they otherwise would have.

This agreement should bring London-Paris under the three hour barrier, and will allow the Northwestern TGV plans to proceed.

## ÖTV urges tighter controls on German private bus operators

The ITF affiliated German road transport workers' affiliate, the ÖTV, is seeking urgent action to improve the unacceptably low standards and poor working conditions within many private bus companies operating in the Federal Republic.

At a recent press conference introducing a union brochure drawing attention to the comparative lack of safeguards for the protection of the travelling public, ÖTV transport spokesman and ITF Executive Board member Eike Eulen called for much tighter controls, particularly on small operators who undercut reputable companies' fares by relying on poorly trained drivers working excessive hours, putting

themselves and other road users at serious risk.

To improve standards, Eulen advocated more roadside checks by inspectors of tachographs and drivers' record sheets.

He also suggested that companies be required to keep drivers' record sheets available for scrutiny for a period of one year to ensure that EC regulations on drivers' hours were not exceeded.

As a final sanction, Eulen argued that operators should lose their licences if they impose journey times on their drivers which force them to cut back on rest periods and ignore speed limits to get passengers to their destination on time.

## Two week strike adds 600 workers to Bombay dock labour scheme

A sixteen day strike of 600 gearmen, carpenters and other stevedoring employees which paralysed cargo movement in the port of Bombay ended in victory on 31 July when, after three days of talks in New Delhi, the government conceded a union demand that the workers be included in the local port labour scheme. Integration of the workers into the scheme,

which will guarantee them job security, is expected to take about three months.

Dockers in other Indian ports were alerted to the dispute by S R Kulkarni who leads the Bombay dockers and is also President of the All-India Port and Dock Workers' Federation and agreed not to handle cargoes diverted from Bombay. The ITF also asked its dockers' affiliates

in Sri Lanka and Pakistan to provide solidarity support to with their Indian colleagues.

The registration demand was backed by the Bombay Dock Labour Board which before the strike had adopted a unanimous resolution recommending the government to include the 600 men in the scheme.

## Hours guarantee as Vancouver box clause ends

Dockers in Vancouver, Canada are to lose their container clause in exchange for a five year working hour guarantee.

The contract container clause gave dockers the right to stuff and strip any container that was destined to go to more than one owner within a 50 mile radius of the port. Its elimination is part of a package in-

cluded in the ruling of industrial inquiry commissioner Joseph Weiler, whose six month inquiry ended with a report in mid-July.

In exchange for giving up the container clause, the dockers are given a five year work guarantee against any reduction in hours.

The ruling also sets up a joint training

and productivity fund which will be financed by a levy of \$10 per container handled over the 1987 levels, paid by the British Columbia Maritime Employers' Association. Half of these funds will be paid to longshoremen dispatched to perform container handling work, and the other half will be used to pay for a joint training and productivity scheme.

## Marseilles dock jobs deal

The number of dockers in the French port of Marseilles is to be cut by 25 per cent.

This follows an agreement, reported in Lloyd's List, between the Dockers' Union, the Stevedoring companies and the port authority to reduce the number of dockers working in the port from 2,000 to 1,500.

Dockers over the age of 55 will be offered early retirement, those between 50 and 55 are to be offered paid retraining leave and

those under 51 will be offered voluntary redundancy with payments of FF200,000 (US\$53,000).

Final acceptance of the agreement is still pending the conclusion of negotiations, expected by the end of this month.

Similar agreement have already been reached in Dunkirk and Le Havre where 500 and 3000 jobs have been lost respectively.

## Rotterdam stevedoring companies to merge

Hard on the heels of the settlement in the general cargo section of the port of Rotterdam (see ITF News July 1987) comes the news that two of the stevedoring companies at the centre of the dispute - Muller-Thomsen (a subsidiary of International Muller) and Multi Terminals - are to merge later this year.

Details of the merger have not yet been released but are expected to involve reductions in the new joint workforce.

Earlier plans by Pakhoed, Muller-Thomsen and Seaport Terminals to merge into a new Triton consortium were abandoned following fierce union opposition to the large scale dismissals that would have followed the merger, effectively sabotaging the 1985 Van der Louw agreement designed to provide job security for general cargo dockers.

## 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    | International Labour Conference (Maritime) | Geneva    |
| - 9 October     | Road Transport Committee                   | Zürich    |
| 29-30 September | Executive Board                            | London    |
| 3-4 November    | Asia/Pacific Conference                    | Tokyo     |
| 3-5 December    |  |           |

## Nigerian pay strike ends

A ten day strike by dockers belonging to the ITF-affiliated Dockworkers' Union of Nigeria ended on 11 July when their claim for a rise in pay from 6.71 to 8.85 Naira a day was referred to arbitration under the labour minister.



## British Airways bid for British Caledonian goes to Monopolies Commission

In a move which stunned the European civil aviation world, British Airways announced an agreed merger bid worth £237m for its main competitor British Caledonian in late July. The bid, which may give the combined company 90 per cent of the scheduled services operated by

British airlines comes in the face of continuing heavy losses by British Caledonian which is the major operator at London's second airport Gatwick.

The British government announced, on August 6, that the proposed bid will be subject to a review from the Monopolies and Mergers' Commission — a government body will hear submissions from different interested parties on whether the bid should go ahead or not. The Commission has the power to overrule the bid, or to set conditions on the merger (for example, by removing certain routes from the new company).

The two companies, the unions and a number of government members of Parliament had called upon the government not to refer the bid to the Commission. Both airlines originally claimed that the deal would be canceled if referred to the Commission, because of the long delay — usually six months — taken by the body to reach a decision.

But the government has ordered the Monopolies and Mergers Commission to produce a ruling on the merger with three months — and now British Airways have said that their offer still stands. British Caledonian have said that they will "probably" co-operate with the enquiry.

British Airways' bid has to be seen as part of the worldwide restructuring of the airline industry in the wake of deregulation in the United States. Although the merger talks between SAS and Sabena launched earlier this year did not show any

results, it is well known that most European airlines are looking around for commercial partners. The need for market power will become even more important should the European Commission succeed in its current legal actions designed to break down the established system of fare and capacity sharing. British Airways Chairman Lord King said that pressures from the US market were crucial, where the top seven domestic carriers were now all larger than BA in terms of passenger kilometres carried.

The unions representing British Airways and British Caledonian employees, through their negotiating body the National Joint Council for Civil Air Transport, issued a statement on 17 July welcoming the merger. The union statement acknowledged that the growth of the US 'mega carriers' had made such a merger almost inevitable and welcomed the British Airways statement that any job losses would, as far as possible, be carried out voluntarily and in line with the "generous practices and procedures that have been developed over the years within British Airways".

The other independent UK airlines are strongly opposed to the merger which they see as giving the combined airline a dominant position in the British air travel market. They are demanding that if the plan goes ahead, substantial numbers of the routes allocated to BCal be redistributed to other carriers so as to guarantee competition.

### Airlines in computer reservations link up

British Airways, KLM, Swissair and United have agreed to merge their computer systems to create yet another mega-network that they hope will dominate the global computer reservations market.

The four have invited other airlines to join them — but SAS, Lufthansa, Iberia and Air France have already agreed to set up the "Amadeus" system.

This latest scheme will cost up to \$120 m in software and related costs to unify the computer operating systems presently used by the four airlines.

It is expected to be fully operational by the beginning of 1988.

# FISHERIES

## SPANISH/MOROCCAN FISHING PACT EXTENDED

Spanish fishing boats will be able to continue fishing off the Moroccan coast thanks to a last minute extension of the Spain-Morocco Fishing Agreement.

The agreement, which gives Spanish boats access to the Tuna and Sardine rich seas off the Northwestern coast of Africa, expired at the end of July, but has now been extended to the end of the year.

The original deal was negotiated before Spain's entry to the European Community last year. Now any new arrangement must be negotiated with the EC in Brussels.

Discussions between the Moroccan government and the Community faltered over a number of issues. The Moroccans, emboldened by Spain's own campaign to regain sovereignty over the British colony

of Gibraltar, have suggested that they wish to link progress in the Fishing treaty to the status of Spain's two enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla on the Northern Moroccan coast.

Morocco also wants a broader agreement from the Community on matters of trade, migrant workers and access to European markets for Moroccan agricultural products.