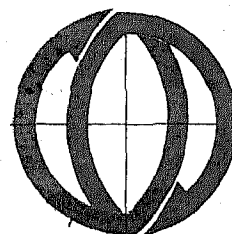


# ITF NEWS



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## VICTORY AT RADIO CONFERENCE

### ELECTRONICS OFFICERS STILL NEEDED TO RUN SATELLITE DISTRESS SYSTEM

The jobs of 20,000 radio officers were secured and greater maritime safety guaranteed for the future by a landmark decision of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) in Geneva on October 14.

The decision, taken at the World Radio Administrative Conference (Mobile Services) requires a Radio/Electronics Officer with either a 1st or 2nd class certificate depending on ship size and voyage to be maintained under the new Future Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (FGMDSS) system being introduced under the auspices of the International Maritime Organization.

As argued in a recent ITF publication (see *ITF News* September), the original proposals for the FGMDSS placed all the burden of maritime distress communication on largely untested, high technology systems and eliminating the skilled human operator entirely. Western governments and shipowners who supported, largely on economic grounds, the elimination of radio officers argued that duplicating systems on board combined with shore based maintenance would be sufficient to guarantee the System's reliability without needing anyone on board a ship who understood how it worked. The ITU decision, taken in the teeth of opposition from most Western countries, will now mean a major reassessment of the system by the member states of the IMO.

Although the right to send voting delegates to the Conference was restricted to governments, the ITF played a very active role in ensuring that seafarers' interests were taken into account in its deliberations. The ITF, which has observer status at the ITU, was represented by a high powered team of radiocommunications experts consisting of former UK Radio Officers' Union General Secretary Kevin Murphy, Don Dishinger from the US Radio Officers' Union, and Harvey Strichartz from the American Radio Association.

The ITF position has never been one of opposition to the new satellite based system, but it has always argued that there should be no compromise of existing maritime safety standards. By incorporating the requirement to carry a fully trained Radio/Electronics Officer, the ITU has ensured that someone will still be on board to operate conventional systems if need be and to repair the new systems when they go wrong.

The ITF, together with the governments of Greece, Spain, Turkey, Brazil and Argentina, put forward a compromise paper during the Conference which eventually gathered the support of 35 other nations. The supporters of eliminating the radio officer were chiefly the Western Europeans - the UK, France, Norway, Finland, Sweden, and Switzerland, eventually joined by the USA, Canada and Belgium.

The climax of the meeting came on October 14 with a long, acrimonious

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OCTOBER 1987

# Union rights threatened by new Fiji coup

Democratic and trade union rights in Fiji, already curtailed in the aftermath of the military coup of May 14, received a massive blow on September 25 when Colonel Rabuka, dissatisfied with the conciliatory outcome of negotiations in the Constitution Review Committee between deposed Prime Minister Timoci Bavadra and the country's former leader Ratu Mara, again seized power from the Governor-General and declared himself acting Head of State. In the period immediately following the second coup, draconian action was taken against trade union leaders. FTUC Secretary General James Raman and Treasurer Bob Kumar, former Labour

Minister Joeli Kalou and other union leaders were detained, along with a number of Supreme Court judges. The offices of a number of unions were occupied by military forces and trade unions were declared to have 'no legal status'. Waterside workers' unions in Australia and New Zealand, who had earlier called off trade boycotts of Fiji in response to a direct request from the FTUC decided, immediately following the September coup, to re-impose a total ban on trade with the country. On September 29, General Secretary Harold Lewis wrote to all ITF affiliates drawing attention to the embargoes imposed by transport unions in Australia and New Zea-

land with the support of those countries' national centres, and calling on all ITF unions which are able to do so to take similar action. Political developments since the coup have been extremely negative. Although, following the pattern of the earlier coup, those detained were quickly released, the challenge to the authority of Governor General Penilau led to his resignation in October, the declaration of a Republic, and the end of Fiji's membership of the Commonwealth. Statements made by Rabuka indicate his determination to install an Apartheid style political system guaranteeing power to the Fijian origin people and to reduce the trade union movement to a position of subservience to the government. Dockworkers' Union Secretary Taniela Veitata is reported to have accepted the position of Labour Minister in the military government which has now installed itself in power.

The ITF, in close cooperation with its Fiji affiliates, with the ICFTU and with the unions in Australia and New Zealand is continuing to monitor the situation in Fiji carefully. For the moment, and unless there is an improvement in the political and trade union rights situation there, movement of cargo and passengers to and from the island by air or sea looks like being severely disrupted.

## New Japanese union centre launched

November 20 will see a major step forward in the unification of the Japanese trade union movement. That date will mark the inaugural convention in Tokyo of the Japanese Private Sector Trade Union Confederation (RENGO).

The new confederation will replace the Japanese Private Sector Trade Union Council (Zenmin Rokyo). It will group together the private sector affiliates of existing national centres DOMEI and

CHURITSUROREN as well as a number of independent unions.

Further steps are planned to bring unions affiliated to the third national centre SOHYO into the new body and to expand it to include public sector unions within the next two years.

RENGO has already announced its intention to affiliate to the ICFTU. Several of its members will be ITF affiliates.

## ...ITF proposals win 34 vote majority after marathon debate...

Continued from page 1

debate that went till 11 p.m. Secret ballot votes were taken on three proposals; the first, representing the most hard-line Western position, was proposed by the government of Norway and envisaged the total elimination of Radio Officers, duplication of systems, no on-board maintenance and the retention of only a "General Operating Certificate" requiring minimal training and which could be held by any officer. This was heavily defeated by 57 votes to 21.

Secondly came a Western na-

tions' "compromise" which retained the idea of a 'general certificate' but also allowed a low grade 2nd class operating certificate which would include the ability to carry out limited maintenance. This too was defeated - by 42 votes to 35.

Finally, a vote was called for on the proposal supported by the ITF and most of the developing world. This called for a Radio /Electronics Officer's Certificate, either 1st or 2nd class, to be required on all

deep sea ships. This proposition received 56 votes in favour and 22 against.

The practical effect of this decision is that Radio Officers presently working as RO/REOs will be able to acquire the new certificates after a short conversion course. The ITF estimates that this means the retention of around 20,000 Radio Officers' jobs, and represents a major victory for the highest possible standards of maritime safety.

# Mergers strengthen South African T&GWU

The ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union (Tgwu) of South Africa is continuing the process of merging with other, related, unions, in line with the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) policy of one union per industry.

A special congress last June, originally planned as a Tgwu Conference, was opened up to other COSATU affiliated organisations in the transport, cleaning and security sectors. The conference, in effect, became a merger conference, where a new TGWU was formed, encompassing over 20,000 members in the three industrial sectors.

Most of the work of the Congress in Durban, which over 300 delegates attended, was devoted to practical arrangements for the fusion of the different Cosatu unions involved.

A lengthy debate ensued about whether cleaning and security workers should be in the same union as transport workers, or have a union of their own.

The majority of delegates felt that since all three industries were principally services, with many of the major employers in one sector overlapping as employers in another, it made sense to organise across these lines. The Safren group, for example, includes shipping (Safmarine), freighting (Renfreight), containerisation (SA Container Depots) and security (Fidelity Guards).

Cleaning and security workers are presently a poorly organised sector of the workforce, and the backup of the transport sector provides them with greater organisational strength and resources. Together, in South Africa, the three sectors provide the basis for the creation of a major, large industrial union of the type Cosatu is seeking to build. The potential membership of the three allied sectors is about 300,000.

The unions merging with the Tgwu at the Durban meeting were SASTAWU (South African Scooter Transport and Allied Workers' Union) with 1,000 members; CSAWU (Cleaning Services and Allied Workers Union) with 1,000 members; ACUSA (Amalgamated Cleaning Union of SA) with 900 members; SAAWU (SA Allied Workers' Union) with 1,500 members;

and Zakheni Transport & Allied Workers' Union with 3,000.

These mergers now put the Tgwu in good shape for the anticipated merger with SARHWU (the SA Railways & Harbour Workers' Union), which all sides hope will be effected within a year.

The lengthy debate and discussion over the structure and membership of the newly enlarged union meant that discussion on a number of major resolutions had

to be left aside and referred to the 1st national Executive Committee meeting of the union. These were resolutions on working conditions of road transport workers, contract cleaners and security guards.

The congress elected Jane Barrett as General Secretary, Vivian Zungu as President, Alfred Ndlowu as Vice President, Solomon Mhlanga as Treasurer and Randall Howard as 2nd Vice-President.

## Jobs win in Malta

Following strong protest actions from the ITF affiliated General Workers' Union, which drew a determined statement of support from ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis, the Maltese government withdrew on 18 September proposals to dismiss between 5000 and 8000 employees of government departments, parastatal corporations and other commercial organisations under the effective control of the government. Faced with mounting international protests and strike threats

from the GWU, a four day negotiating session between union and government resulted in an agreement guaranteeing that no employee will lose his job.

In a statement issued following the conclusion of the negotiations, GWU General Secretary Angelo Fenech expressed particular appreciation to the international trade union movement for its solidarity which had been a major factor in boosting the GWU members' morale during the dispute.

## TRANSPORT UNIONS CELEBRATE

This autumn a number of ITF affiliates have been celebrating their anniversaries.

The first of these came on 9 September when the British **National Union of Seamen** marked its 100th birthday. The festivities continued over the next couple of weeks with a celebratory dinner and reception, at which scenes from the union's long - and often stormy - history were played out. ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis attended both functions together with other guests from the trade unions in Britain and abroad to pass on our warm congratulations and best wishes.

A couple of weeks later, on the 26th, came the turn of the Swedish **Commercial Salaried Employees' Union (HTF)** to hold its own celebrations, this time marking its first half century.

A new page in Swedish trade union history was written on Sunday 26 September 1937 when two unions

which at that time organised office workers came together to form the HTF, which in those first days already had a healthy membership of about nine thousand.

The union joined the ITF early on, playing an important role over the years, most recently through its President Lars Hellman, who has been Chairman of the ITF Travel Bureau Workers' Section for the past ten years. HTF officials also play a leading part in the work of the Civil Aviation Section.

The golden jubilee was marked by celebrations in Stockholm's majestic Concert Hall. ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis represented the Federation at the 50th birthday ceremonies.

The **Swedish Transport Workers' Federation (STF)** celebrated its 90th anniversary at its Congress in September. The Congress, at which Assistant General Secretary Graham Brothers represented the ITF, re-elected Johnny Grönberg as union President.

## Maritime Conference sets new ILO standards

Four new international labour standards designed to improve the protection available to the world's seafarers and an urgent appeal to governments to stop attacks on merchant ships were the main results of the 74th (Maritime) Session of the International Labour Conference which met in Geneva from 23 September to 9 October



**K Mols Sørensen, Chairman of the Workers' Group**

under the Chairmanship of Werner Dollinger (Federal Republic of Germany). The Conference - which brought together more than 1000 government, seafarer and shipowner representatives from 79 countries - is the sovereign decision making body of the International Labour Organisation - the tripartite United Nations agency responsible for social questions. The work of the seafarers' group at the Conference, was coordinated by the ITF whose affiliates constituted the majority of trade unions represented, but close cooperation was maintained also with worker delegates from countries in which the ITF does not have affiliates. ITF Seafarers' Section Chairman **K Mols Sørensen** was elected Chairman of the Conference Workers' Group and Assistant General Secretary **Åke Selander** served as Group Secretary. The Workers' Vice President of the Conference was **Mauricio Sant'Anna** (CNTMFA Brazil). Much of the political attention during the three week session focused on the situation in the Gulf.

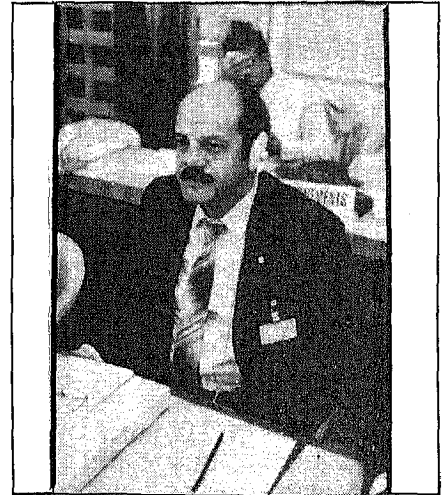
After long and difficult negotiations in the resolutions committee on which the Workers' Group

was led by **Aghis Tselentis** (PNO, Greece) agreement was reached on the amended text of a resolution, originally submitted by **Leo Barnes** (NUSI, India) which stressed that seafarers have an inalienable right to safe navigation in international waters, free from the risks of armed attack by States. It called on all 150 member governments of the ILO to exert both diplomatic and commercial pressure on warring states to stop them from attacking merchant shipping in international waters.

A resolution on the *HEALTH OF SEAFARERS AND AIDS* asked governments to make the dangers of AIDS more widely known to seafarers, to include information on AIDS in seafarers' vocational training programmes, and asked the ILO to conduct detailed studies on this growing menace; a resolution on the *RECRUITMENT OF SEAFARERS* condemned the growth of unregulated fee charging employment agencies for seafarers and asked governments to take action to licence such agencies; a resolution on *WELFARE ACTIVITIES* urged the ILO to give continuing support to the International Committee on Seafarers' Welfare and to strengthen the links between the two organisations.

A resolution on *CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT* laid special stress on the effects of economic and technological change in reducing manning scales and the consequent increase in fatigue for seafarers. It called for an ILO study on changes in the shipboard environment and for an early meeting of the ILO/IMO Joint Committee on Training to examine the question of fatigue in the manning and safety of ships.

One more general resolution dealt with the application of *MINIMUM STANDARDS ON BOARD SHIP* through the 'landmark' ILO Convention no 147, which extends the principle of port state control to social as well as purely safety matters. The resolution calls for more countries to ratify and apply the Convention and calls on the ILO to



**Mauricio Sant'Anna, Workers' Vice President of the Conference**

intensify efforts to promote it.

### NEW LABOUR STANDARDS ADOPTED

The most important aspect of the Conference was undoubtedly the adoption of six new international labour standards - four Conventions and two Recommendations - designed to improve the social protection available to seafarers on board ship and ashore. Despite pessimistic forecasts at the beginning of the Session all these instruments were adopted by an overwhelming majority vote during the closing sessions of the Conference, thereby significantly enhancing their chances of ratification by governments.

### SOCIAL SECURITY

Probably the most difficult of all the discussions took place in the Social Security Committee in which the workers' group was led by **Pat Geraghty** (Seamen's Union of Australia). Tough negotiations took place on the question of whether the flag state or the state of residence should determine what social security system a seafarer is covered by and on the issue of shipowners' liability for payment of wages, travel costs etc. in cases, for example, where a seafarer falls ill in a foreign port

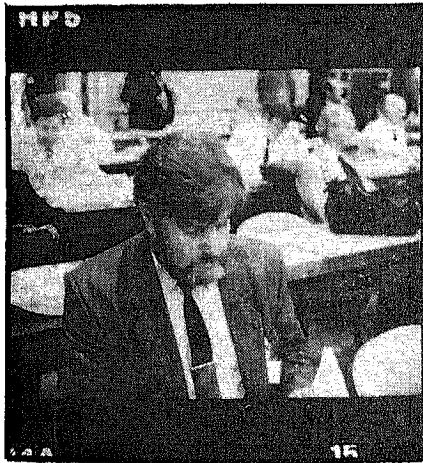
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# ...Social Security, Medical Care, Welfare and Repatriation...

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and requires repatriation. After several close votes, a Convention text was finally adopted which requires states to provide seafarers with social security protection not less favourable than that enjoyed by shore workers. States ratifying the Convention will be bound to apply either the minimum social security standards already laid down in Convention 102 or higher standards detailed in other ILO Instruments relating to at least three of the nine conventional branches of social security (medical care and sickness; unemployment; old age; employment injury; family; maternity; invalidity and survivors' benefit. The Convention leaves it to discussion between states to work out which jurisdiction applies to a seafarer, but maintains the principle that there should be no duplication of contributions or benefits under different countries' social security regimes.

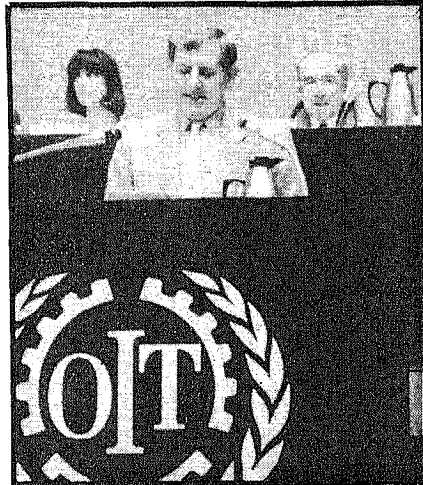


**Sven Erik Nylund,  
Medical Care Spokesman**

## MEDICAL CARE

A Convention was also adopted by the Conference in the field of Health Protection and Medical Care on board ship. The Medical Care Committee workers' group was led by **Sven-Erik Nylund**, Finnish Ships' Officers Union. The Convention aims at providing seafarers with health protection and medical care, comparable to that generally available to shore workers. As well as laying down the principle that health care shall be provided free-of-charge to seafarers on articles, the Convention guarantees them the right to visit a doctor in ports of call and stresses

the need for the development of health promotion and education programmes. It lays down that all ships shall carry a medicine chest, appropriate medical equipment and a medical guide and that states shall provide round the clock medical advice by radio or



**Eric Nevin, Welfare  
spokesman**

satellite communication free of charge to all ships irrespective of flag.

It requires all ships with 100 or more seafarers engaged in international voyages of more than 3 days' duration to carry a medical doctor as part of the crew. For all other ships it lays down the levels of training for the crew member or members in charge of medical care on board and for other crew members who may need to intervene in medical emergencies. At the insistence of the workers' group, the text requires practical training in a hospital casualty department and training in life saving techniques such as intravenous therapy.

It provides that all ships should, whenever possible, go to the aid of other ships requesting medical help. Hospital accommodation shall be provided on all ships of more than 500 gross tonnage engaged in voyages of more than 3 days, it also specifies, adding that such accommodation should be suitably equipped and be designed to facilitate consultation and the giving of medical first aid.

The Convention also recommends a number of areas in which closer cooperation should take place between states to promote better health care for seafarers.

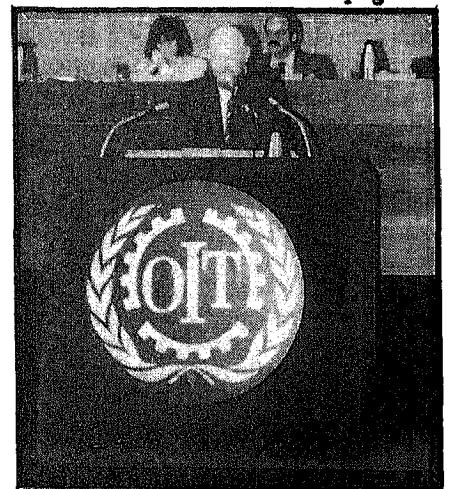
## WELFARE

The Welfare Committee, whose Workers' Group was led by **Eric Nevin** (NUMAST, Great Britain), adopted a Convention laying down the clear responsibility of governments to ensure that welfare facilities and services - including cultural, recreational and information services - are provided and financed both in appropriate ports and on board ship. It also adopted a Recommendation which refers to the special needs of seafarers for example in war zones and suggests the setting up of welfare boards to ensure coordination between different seafarers' welfare services. The Committee also adopted a resolution calling on the ILO Joint Maritime Commission to examine the provision of welfare services for seafarers' families.

## REPATRIATION

The Committee on Repatriation was involved in some hard bargaining before it finally agreed on the text of a new Convention supplemented by a (non binding) Recommendation. The workers' side on this question was led by **John Newman**, of NUMAST Great Britain. Some concessions were necessary on the very favourable position achieved at the Preparatory Technical Maritime Conference in May 1986, in the face of strong shipowner and government resistance. The provision limiting tours of duty before repatriation to 6 months was amended to a compromise position requiring repa-

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**Åke Selander speaking on  
behalf of the ITF**

# Urgent action plea by Swedish shipping industry

Some 200 representatives of the Swedish shipping industry, government officials, Parliament, the navy and other sectors of industry met in Stockholm on 14 October to discuss two sets of proposals designed to save the Swedish merchant fleet from extinction. The proposals, put forward by the shipowners and by the Swedish white collar union federation TCO were very similar in content. The situation is so desperate that differences between employers and unions have been reduced to a minimum. The shipowners' ideas obviously concentrated more on the internationalisation of manning and management of the fleet, while the TCO ideas were concerned much more with changes in

investment rules, and changes in tax rules affecting seafarers and shipowners, but there was broad agreement on the strategic need to keep a substantial Swedish flag merchant fleet.

Other features of the union proposals included: reduced social security contributions; renegotiation of the Sweden/USSR bilateral cargo agreement; and the initiation of discussions with other Nordic governments on a common Nordic shipping policy. Firm action by the Swedish government in international fora to attack the use of flags of convenience was also urged, including the non ratification of the UN Ship Registration Convention. A new international

convention to stop the supply of second hand tonnage which does not meet international maritime safety standards was also demanded.

During a panel discussion, the Swedish transport minister appeared largely unresponsive to the industry's demands, agreeing merely to enter into discussions on tax relief for seafarers on long distance voyages. ITF Assistant General Secretary Åke Selander who attended the meeting warned, in his speech, of the increasing use of the bareboat charter device to circumvent ITF policy on flags of convenience and urged the Swedish government not to fall into the same trap as other governments by relying on "offshore registers".

## "...riding roughshod over unsuspecting seafarers"

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triation after no longer than 12 months. While this may look long to traditional maritime countries with high labour standards, for many developing countries, and particularly Focs it represents a major step forward.

The new Convention lists the destination to which seafarers may be repatriated - including the place at which he entered into the engagement; the place laid down in a collective agreement; his country of residence or any other place which is mutually agreed at the time of engagement. It places the obligation to arrange repatriation and to bear the costs firmly on the shipowner, but it also lays down that if the shipowner fails to meet those obligations responsibility rests with the flag state. If that state also fails to meet its obligations, the seafarer's state of residence or nationality may also intervene.

The Conference also adopted a resolution urging governments to take steps to expedite legal procedures in cases of abandonment of seafarers, and particularly the sale of arrested vessels, so as to enable the swift repatriation of stranded seafarers and the payment of their wages.

### ITF STATEMENT

While the work of the Committees was going on, the Plenary Session of the Conference debated the Report of the ILO Director General on the current state of the world's shipping industry. Intervening in the debate in the name of the ITF, Selander stressed the importance of retaining specialised and separate consideration of the maritime industry within the overall structure of the ILO. He pointed out that governments, shipowners and seafarers have a collective responsibility to act together 'to bail out an ailing shipping industry and to rid it of the parasites who managed to crawl into it while it was taking in water. "By parasites", he added, "I am, of course, referring to the monkeys on the back of the seafarer, alias the unscrupulous manning agents who are riding roughshod over poor unsuspecting seafarers, mostly from the developing countries". Those shipowners who allow such manning agencies to train their seafarers have committed a grave error of judgement, he suggested.

He also referred to the constant reduction in manning scales and warned of the serious effects in terms of fatigue for those left on board. Selander also urged that more attention be devoted to expanding the social side of Port

State Control. On Seafarers' Welfare he referred to the work of the International Committee on Seafarers' Welfare, of which he is current Chairman and he informed the Conference about the opening of the ITF Seafarers' Centre in Rotterdam and of plans for similar centres in other key ports.

In his speech to the concluding session of the Conference, K Mols Sørensen expressed the satisfaction of the Workers' Group with the outcome of the Conference. Budgetary limitations had stretched the interval between maritime sessions to 11 years and it was unlikely that there would be another this century. Both for him and for John Whitworth who chaired the Employers' Group, therefore, this would be their last appearance at the ILO rostrum. Massive changes were taking place in the structure of the industry and it would undoubtedly look very different by the time another Maritime Session was convened. Thanks to the spirit of cooperation and compromise which had prevailed during the meeting, he suggested, seafarers had a set of new international instruments which should be of considerable help to them and he appealed to governments to ratify and apply the Conventions adopted as quickly as possible.

# ILO Minimum wage increased to \$286

During the ILO Maritime Session in September/October a series of detailed negotiations took place between a small group of shipowner and seafarer representatives in preparation for the 25th Session of the ILO Joint Maritime Commission which met on Tuesday 6 October. The JMC has a unique structure in the ILO since it is comprised of shipowners and seafarers alone, without the participation of governments. Two important issues were placed before the October meeting - the revision of the "ILO Minimum Wage" and the addition of new Conventions to the Annex of Convention 147 (Merchant Shipping (Minimum Standards) 1976).

## ILO MINIMUM WAGE

The seafarers' group, led by Kees Roodenburg (FWZ, Netherlands) and with technical back up from Rich Burger (NMU, United States), had a difficult time in negotiating an increase in the "ILO minimum wage". This is a figure, expressed both in dollars and pounds sterling, and laid down in the ILO Wages, Hours of Work and Manning (Sea) Recommendation 109 adopted in 1958, which represents the international minimum recommended monthly wage for an Able Seaman. Periodically revised by decision of the JMC the ILO Minimum has stood at \$276 since 1980. While it does not have the force of law, the ILO Minimum exerts a powerful influence on wages in the world's shipping industry. Many governments even of labour supplying countries insist on the figure being written into seafarers' employment contracts, and those shipowners who pay below it are readily identified as the dregs of the market.

Challenging calculations made by the ILO secretariat which seemed to justify leaving the figure at \$276, the seafarer representatives produced more up to date calculations which, in their view, justified an increase to around \$312. The shipowners, many of whom are opposed to the very idea of an international minimum wage, stuck firm to the \$276 figure through several marathon negotiating sessions. Eventually, with a deal struck on all other items the shipowners at the 6 October meeting reluctantly conceded an in-

crease to \$286 with the £ sterling figure raised to £176 to take account of the massive currency movements since 1980. The JMC meeting also agreed to ask the Governing Body of the ILO to set up a small bipartite wage committee so that in future the ILO Minimum could be adjusted without a full meeting of the JMC, and asked the Secretariat of the ILO to study alternatives to the current wage adjustment system which takes account only of price and currency movements.

## NEW ADDITIONS TO 147

The second major item considered by the JMC was additions to the Annex of Convention 147. While this sounds like a highly technical issue, it is in fact of crucial importance to seafarers, particularly those who serve on Flag of Convenience ships. Convention 147 is the only ILO instrument which gives states the right to check that decent labour standards are being observed on board ships visiting their ports, irrespective of the flag they fly. Only Conventions included in the Annex to 147 can thus be subjected to Port State Control. Both sides of the JMC agreed to recommend that an early ordinary session of the International Labour Conference adds the following four Conventions to 147:

Seafarers' Identity Documents No 108 (1958)  
Continuity of Employment for Seafarers No 145 (1976)  
Annual Leave with Pay for Seafarers No 146 (1976)  
Accommodation of Crews (Supplementary Provisions) No 133 (1970)\*  
\*Subject to its coming into force.

## NEW COMPOSITION OF THE JMC

At its meeting on 8 October the Conference, in plenary session, approved the following new membership of the seafarers' side of the JMC as selected by the Conference Workers' Group (ITF members are marked with an \*):

### REGULAR MEMBERS

*Nakanishi\** (Japan); *Zerzefyllis\** (Greece); *Drozak\** substitute *Wall\** (United States); *Matskevicius* (USSR); *Zhang* (China); *McCluskie\** substitute *Neutn\** (United Kingdom); *Aasarød\** (Norway); *Guidi\** (Italy); *Oca\** (Philippines); *Barnes\** (India); *Sant'Anna\** (Brazil); *Narelli* substitute *Péhourtq\** (France); *Franco Garcia\** substitute *Azcúe Manterola* (Spain); *Benze\** (FR Germany); *Sørensen\** (Denmark); *Geraghty* (Australia); *Van Cant\** (Belgium); *Kuhn* (German Dem. Rep.); *Sozo* (Yugoslavia); *Samaha* (Egypt).

### DEPUTY MEMBERS

*Petronio\** (Argentina); *Boyle\** (Canada); *Lindstrom\** (Sweden); *Mpwu* (Zaire).

## ITF to probe fatigue and stress on board ship

An in depth investigation of stress and fatigue on board ship, and strong pressure on the International Maritime Organization to examine its effects on Maritime safety, are being planned by the ITF Seafarers' Section.

In early September an ad hoc ITF Working Group on Stress and Fatigue met in Stockholm. It decided to ask affiliates to assemble cases where reduced manning and increased fatigue, particularly amongst watch keepers has led to accidents at sea in time for the ITF to submit them to the next session of the IMO's subcommittee on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping.

The STCW committee which meets in London from 11-15 January

next year, will conduct a detailed examination of governments' own casualty records to try to determine what percentage were attributable to fatigue. The ITF will also submit a more comprehensive paper to the IMO's full Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) requesting that the subject be placed on the agenda of the IMO/ILO Joint Committee on Training.

In view of the continuing pressure to cut labour costs on board ships including experiments such as the single look out at night, these moves are designed to highlight the serious risks not just to seafarers' health but to the safety of their vessels of excessive workloads and inadequate manning scales.

# "Filthy" crew conditions on Gibraltar flag ship

Conditions on foc ships are frequently the worst to be found in any working environment - ashore or afloat. But for seafarers forced to spend twenty four hours a day at their place of work it is clearly of very great importance to their well being to say nothing of their safety that high standards be maintained.

This is why the visits made to foc ships by full time union inspectors working on the ITF's behalf are a vital strand in the foc campaign.

A particularly bad case - the Gibraltar registered *Jay Bola* - recently came to the notice of an inspector from the British National Union of Seamen (NUS) in the Thames port of Gravesend, following crew complaints to the ITF of

**"...the food was covered in green mould"**

unsafe conditions and poor crew accommodation.

NUS official Brian Allen went aboard the *Jay Bola*, which is owned by Jay Ship Limited of London, on 16 September to investigate.

There he found the messroom and galley in a state so filthy as almost to beggar description.

The crew, he said, were actually eating the food from what passed for a fridge despite the fact that it was completely covered with green mould. He told them not to eat any more of it and meanwhile undertook to contact the port health authorities on the crew's behalf.

By the next day, the health authorities had condemned the small amount of food on the ship and instructed that it was to be dumped. An order was given that adequate new food supplies should be put on board for the crew.

A further follow up visit to the ship was made by Allen in the evening of the 17th. The cook said that new stores and fresh fruit had been supplied, sufficient to last through the weekend, but that the captain had said that the mouldy

bread - taken on board in Cape Town - must be eaten first!

Attempts by Allen to interview the captain and get answers to this and other questions proved to no avail as he seemed to spend very little time aboard.

While living conditions on the *Jay Bola* were bad, that was not all the crew had to complain of.

Rates of pay were woefully low, with junior officers being paid US\$ 600 per month. Moreover, this was not a basic rate, but an all in rate taking in overtime hours, leave pay and other allowances. In the deck department and engine room, the rate was a mere US\$225, once again an all-in figure. From time to time, the master would pay overtime when he saw fit, at an insulting 75 cents an hour.

Crew members sailing into the Gulf war zone also had a clause in their contracts stipulating that the owners were not responsible for any consequences arising out of the vessel's presence in the war zone.

On the morning of 19 September, no doubt as a result of the investigations Allen was making on the ship, the Filipino crew of the *Jay Bola* were informed that they had been discharged. They were given thirty minutes to get off the vessel. Air tickets were provided to get them back to Singapore where they had joined the ship, not to their homes. This was likely to cause them additional difficulties as they would not be permitted to land in Singapore as they were not resident there and would need through tickets to Manila before being allowed by the British emigration authorities to even leave London.

Further efforts by Allen resulted in his getting together officials from the Department of Trade and Industry for a thorough investigation of the state of the vessel itself, making use of ILO Convention 147 on sub-standard ships. As this inspection was to take place on Monday the 21st, Allen advised that the crew members be sent back to the ship.

When he arrived he found the crew sitting on the quay having

being refused entry to the ship by the new master who had taken over command on the Saturday just after the crew had been dismissed.

Allen told the master that he disapproved of the way in which the crew had been treated and that the vessel was likely to spend a long time in the port of London until living conditions were improved and it was fully seaworthy.

The master disclaimed any responsibility for the state of the ship and washing his hands of the crew, advised Allen to contact Captain Mehta of Jay Ship who had given instructions that the crew were not to be allowed back on board.

Lengthy discussions with the company followed and it was eventually agreed that the men be paid wages until they reached the Philippines and that the necessary flight tickets would be issued. Accommodation would be provided at company cost until a suitable flight could be found.

Meanwhile, the DTI inspection of the ship revealed a deplorable state of affairs and remedial action was ordered before the vessel would be allowed to set sail.

The company was required to improve the existing seating in the messroom and provide additional seating sufficient for all the crew to be seated at one time, something that had not been possible before. The messroom and galleys must also be cleaned and painted throughout.

The new radio officer, appointed to replace the previous officer who did not hold a British certificate, was given instructions that all radio/navigational aids and instruments that were not working should be repaired or renewed.

Eleven of the twelve buoyancy tanks in the lifeboats were condemned and defects were also found in the lifeboat suction pumps, while one lifeboat was discovered to have no compass.

Conditions like these, and callous disregard for the interests of the seafarers are by no means exceptional amongst owners and operators of flag of convenience ships, as the ITF's postbag demonstrates daily.



# Three years of pain for FOC crewman ends with ITF aid

Three years of intense pain for a seafarer on a German owned Flag of Convenience ship, brought on by unsafe working conditions and inadequate medical care, was finally ended recently as a result of ITF intervention.

McLawrence Glynn (known to his friends as "Mack"), a 33 year old seafarer from Orange Grove, St. Vincent, was in almost continuous pain following an incident aboard the Honduran flag *ASD Hektor* in May 1984.

The ship was in Puerto Rico, and Mack, a deck rating on very low pay rates was moving a large, heavy oil drum when he suffered a sudden, violent pain in his abdomen - almost certainly a hernia - brought on by overwork and by being ordered to move an object that was too heavy for one man to handle.

What followed is a classic example of the behaviour of many flag of convenience operators towards the seafarers they exploit. The Mate promised to seek medical attention for Mack, but this wasn't done either in Puerto Rico, or in the next port of call, Aruba, or in the following one (Costa Rica).

In pain and desperate for medical attention, Mack sought out his own doctor in Costa Rica. The doctor examined Mack, and sent the Captain a note and an X-Ray recommending 16-17 days' leave and an operation the next day. The mate told the doctor he could not spare Mack, and that, anyway, the medical treatment was too expensive!

Eventually, after the intervention of the shipping agent in Costa Rica, Mack was taken to hospital and operated on immediately.

Unfortunately, his problems didn't end there. Because of the long period of time between the initial accident and his treatment, and due to medical incompetence in the hospital where he was treated, Mack's condition deteriorated after the operation, and he continued to be in severe pain.

Unable to work, and responsible for bringing up three young children on his own Mack eventually turned to the ITF for assistance. Following an appeal from his solicitor, the ITF agreed to pay for Mack to be flown to England from St. Vincent last month. He was

treated by a specialist at the Dreadnought Seafarers' section of St. Thomas' Hospital in London. After initial tests Mack was operated on, and the surgeons were able to separate incorrectly mended adhesions inside his abdomen - parts of his skin had become attached to the inside of his abdomen.

He spent 16 days in St. Thomas, and then went to convalesce at the Merchant Seamen's War Memorial Society farm in Surrey.

Mack flew back to St. Vincent in mid-October, a happier and healthier man than he had been for three years.

"I was in a very bad condition for three years, in extreme pain," he

told *ITF News*, saying that he hoped to be able to get back to work within a month or two.

"I already feel so much better," he said, "I feel as if I am back to full strength."

For the moment he is going home to Orange Grove and his three children. Mack hopes to get work at sea, but the employment situation in the Caribbean remains very poor.

"It's very difficult to find work in St. Vincent," he said, "But I will find something, I hope."

He's thankful for the support of the ITF, and makes a special point of thanking the nurses in the Dreadnought wing for what he describes as the "excellent care" they gave him.

## FOC/offshore war hots up

While many of the more established convenience registries have suffered from the increased competition as new registries have come on the scene in recent months, **Bermuda** seems to have been something of an exception.

It had its most profitable year in 1986, earning almost \$1 million net according to Transport Minister Sidney Stallard. Most of the new business - 41 new ships joined the register during the year - came from British owners flagging out.

Meanwhile, the SOLAS and MARPOL conventions (dealing with safety and pollution respectively) are likely to be extended to the island soon and the government has indicated that once this happens it will market its registry abroad in much the same way as it promotes Bermuda as a centre for tourism and international business.

Not far away, **Panama** - the second largest FOC registry - under its new director, is set to launch a vigorous marketing campaign with the aim of becoming the world's number one.

Measures are also planned to improve the country unenviable safety record by requiring vessels over twenty years old to undergo inspection before admittance to the registry. However, the country's 550-strong inspectorate is likely to be stretched to the limit by the new demands created by in-

creased inspection of vessels and the ITF remains sceptical that any real improvements will be achieved.

New standards of certification - long overdue - are also being introduced but it remains to be seen whether they will be stringent enough to meet the high demands on ship's crews on increasingly sophisticated vessels.

The ITF's Fair Practices subcommittee, which met in Geneva on 3 October agreed to keep the **Norwegian** International Register (NIS) under review for Norwegian owned ships. Foreign owned ships will continue to be treated as flying a flag of convenience.

There is an obvious link between recent events in Norway and plans for a new **Danish** register, now well advanced. Draft legislation will be brought before the parliament this autumn and the country's international register could well be in place by early next year.

The authorities are hoping that the register - like its NIS counterpart - will help stop Danish-owned tonnage being sold off or switched to foreign flags. In the first six months of this year, more ships left the register than in the whole of 1986.

Opposition to the DIS is being mounted by the seafaring unions who argue that an international register will depress pay and lose

continued on page 10

# Bareboat charter laws create new type of FOC

continued from page 9

them jobs.

Elsewhere in **Sri Lanka** radical changes in the shipping laws are planned to make it easier for foreign owners to flag in, with a new law allowing parallel registration of vessels under bareboat charters.

The government hopes that these steps will help reduce the country's pool of surplus labour as at least half of the crews on Sri Lankan registered ships must be nationals of the country.

In **France** meanwhile, eight shipping companies have agreed to keep their decision-making headquarters in the country and to

## Dockers aid crew strikes

The ITF campaign against Flag of Convenience shipping is intensifying. As an increasing number of shipowners resort to the cutthroat tactics of flagging out, ITF unions are taking whatever action they can to curb crew exploitation.

One of the more positive developments in the campaign is the increasing level of action by crew members, who, despite intimidation from shipowners and manning agents, take strike action which can then often be backed up by solidarity action.

A recent example of this growing trend was the Greek owned *Alexandras Grace*, which was delayed in Le Havre at the beginning of September, when the Filipino crew took strike action, and were supported by the local dockers.

A French court supported the crew action, following clear evidence that the men were living and working in appalling conditions and had not been paid for many months. A settlement was reached, with further outstanding claims for the crew being considered now by a court in the Philippines.

maintain a combined operating fleet of 120 ships in return for government financial assistance totalling 100 million French francs (US\$16.3 million) provided under the country's merchant navy plan - now one year old.

The companies have undertaken to provide jobs for 1,040 seafarers as well as to purchase five ships and 5,000 containers as part of the agreement, which also obliges them to keep 30 ships under the French flag.

Another three companies are currently engaged in talks with the government, while eight companies have given notice of their intention to apply for structural aid and a further five applications are currently being processed.

In a move which will mean serious job losses for Dutch seafarers, the leading shipping company Van Ommeren in the **Netherlands** has been given official permission to sell five of its eight ships and make 143 seafarers redundant.

The Rotterdam Labour Court has ruled that the sale is genuine and not a disguised attempt to flag out, rejecting the argument of the ITF-affiliated FWZ that there was a link between Van Ommeren and Columbus Marine Lease of the Netherlands Antilles to which the ships were being sold.

The handover of the first of the ships - the *Mijdrecht* - to Columbus is already underway. The ship will be chartered back under a three year agreement and will be crewed by eight Dutch (and one Filipino) officers and 13 Filipino ratings - a reduction of one in the total crew complement compared with operation under the Dutch flag. The other four vessels are to be sold before the end of the year.

Again in the Netherlands, reduced crew ship trials have begun - with the cooperation of the FWZ - on the Nedlloyd 1,800 TEU container ship *Clarence* and the Shell Tanker carrier *Sericata* (84,000 deadweight tonnes).

Counting cooks and stewards, these ships normally sail with a crew of 19, but this has been reduced to 15 (seven officers, six

ratings, one steward and one cook) for the six month trial period, which should enable the ships to be operated more cost effectively and hopefully keep them on the Dutch register.

Holland is only one of a number of countries that have been holding trials with smaller crews. In **Japan**, for example, crew complements of only 11 will be carried on 12 ships in trials beginning in November which will continue for a year, while in **Taiwan**, the Evergreen Marine Corporation has disclosed that it plans to operate its next generation of container ships - for which orders will be placed in the next two or three years - with a 9 man crew. Evergreen's GX type ships are now manned by the smallest crews in the world, but modifications to the next generation containership - notably the concentration on the bridge of main engine control and clerical functions and the reassignment of board duties - is expected to enable crewing to be cut even further.

A rare victory has been chalked up by the **Swedish** Seamen's Union, which has successfully persuaded Argonaut Shipping to keep Swedish crews on three tankers, the *Electra* (Liberian flag), *Argo Aurora* (Liberian flag) and *Nike* (Singapore flag) - part of a ten vessel fleet Argonaut bought from Zenit between June and October last year.

The dispute was sparked off when Argonaut replaced the Swedish crew on the Singapore flag *Minerva* with seafarers from Singapore. Industrial action - not necessarily confined to the four ships - was threatened by the union if a similar crew switch took place on the three vessels mentioned.

The *Minerva* is to be sold shortly but the union has won the right to crew the vessel in the interim.

Meanwhile, Argonaut has given an undertaking that its management company Nordia Shipping, in which it has a stake, will continue to employ Swedish crews as long as it owns the ships.

This means a total of 90 jobs for Swedish seafarers on the three ships.

# Tension still mounts in Gulf conflict

The already grave danger to seafarers on merchant ships in the Persian Gulf has escalated in recent weeks, culminating in the missile attack by Iran on the US flag tanker *Sea Isle City* (ex *Umm Al Maradem*) in Kuwaiti waters on 16 October - the first direct attack on a Kuwaiti-owned vessel protected by the US Navy in the Gulf.

The *Sea Isle City*, owned by Chesapeake Shipping, was one of four reflagged Kuwaiti vessels which had arrived in Kuwait under US escort earlier in the week, although significantly she did not have the protection of the US warships which were waiting as

agreed outside the country's territorial waters at the time of the attack.

At least 18 crew members were injured in the attack, a number of them seriously, as one missile struck the crew quarters. The ship's American captain, who was among the injured, later underwent emergency surgery lasting several hours.

Damage to the vessel, which was extensive, is estimated at about US\$ 10 million.

In retaliation, four US destroyers attacked and destroyed an Iranian offshore oil installation, 120 miles

east of Bahrain, on 19 October. The Americans claim that the platform has been used by Iran as a base for speed boat attacks by Revolutionary Guards, who were given a 20 minute warning to leave before the shelling began. The US also claims that radar surveillance of Gulf shipping is being conducted from the platform.

The American attack on the oil platform has prompted fears that this will herald a new round of attacks on merchant shipping in the Gulf. The already nervous atmosphere on tankers sailing Gulf waters is likely to become even more tense as a result.

## DOCKERS

### ILA re-opens East Coast contract after legal ban on 50 mile box clause

A decision by the US Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) to declare illegal the "50 mile" clause in the ITF affiliated International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) contract has provoked a sharp reaction from the union. The FMC ruled in August that the 15 year old clause, which reserves all container stuffing and stripping within 50 miles of any ILA port on the US East or Gulf coasts for ILA members, was illegal. The union, which has announced that it will appeal the FMC decision up to the

Supreme Court if necessary, has invoked a clause in its 3 year contract with the port employers allowing it to terminate the contract if any part of it "be declared unenforceable by any decision of any Court or Administrative Agency".

ILA President John Bowers handed in the required 60 day termination notice on September 15. It will expire on November 14. "Our task now is to find some alternative solution which will afford both ILA membership and their employers the protection

which the Federal Maritime Commission's order presently denies" Bowers said.

Shipping companies have long tried to eliminate the 50 year rule, negotiated by former ILA President Teddy Gleason, to give job security to ILA dockers.

By provoking an end to the contract which is less than a year old, with the possibility of industrial action if a satisfactory solution is not found quickly, they may find they have bitten off more than they can chew.

## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

3-4 November	Executive Board	London
24-25 November	Ground Staff Technical Committee	Eastbourne
3-5 December	Asia/Pacific Regional Conference	Tokyo
17-20 December 1988	Maritime Policy Committee	Baltimore
22-24 February	Asia/Pacific Seafarers' Committee	Kuala Lumpur
15-16 March	Executive Board	Oslo
30-31 May	Dockers' Section Conference	Rotterdam
1-3 June	Fair Practices Committee	Rotterdam

## ITF sponsored study on driver fatigue published

Driver fatigue and its effects on road safety were amongst the subjects discussed by the Section Committee of the ITF Road Transport Workers' Section when it met in Zürich (Switzerland) on 29 and 30 September.

A study on the Relationships between Road Transport Working

Conditions, Fatigue, Health and Traffic Safety commissioned by the ITF from the Traffic Research Centre of the University of Groningen was submitted to the meeting.

The Committee agreed to authorise the publication of this study and its distribution to ITF

road transport unions. The ITF will draw the attention of governments to the dangers inherent in the long hours worked in the industry and urge international institutions to act on its conclusions.

"Plate of convenience" vehicles also came under the spotlight, with delegates expressing concern at the growing trend of companies seeking to reduce operating costs and escape social and legal obligations by registering their vehicles in countries such as the Isle of Man and more recently Luxembourg. German vehicles were also reported as having been re-registered in Portugal and Denmark.

Europe, however, is not the only region to be affected. A Zimbabwean delegate indicated that a Zimbabwean company had dismissed 200 local members of the Transport and General Workers' Union on forming a company in South Africa, replacing them by Zimbabweans who were not covered by the regulations of either country and paying them at rates below the South African minimum. In one tragic case, the widow of a driver had been refused compensation as all parties had denied liability.

The "plate of convenience" issue will now be taken up within the EC Joint Committee on Road Transport while the Section's Steering Committee will be asked to propose counter measures.

Other subjects dealt with by the meeting included new communications and data processing technology, the problems associated with the excessive hours worked by private sector bus drivers, trends in owner operation and the design of driver cabs.

Albert Eggl - a member of Swiss parliament, who as a former trade union official was once a member of the Committee - also addressed delegates on Swiss transport policy in the light of the country's role as one of Europe's principal transit nations.

## Frankfurt railway rally planned for 1988

Railway workers throughout Europe are being asked to take part in a mass rally provisionally set for 19 March 1988 in the West German city of Frankfurt.

The call comes from ITF railway workers' union representatives

could be achieved given the political will and a positive attitude towards the industry and pointed to the success of the Swiss Rail 2000 concept - a striking example of what could be achieved when deliberate measures were taken to promote the expansion of the railways.

Other European nations were urged to follow the Swiss lead and subject transport planning to a thorough-going reappraisal, giving top priority to extending and modernising the railway networks.

The rail union leaders pointed to the folly inherent in the EC decision to liberalise the transport market by 1992, which would create additional difficulties for non EC transit countries such as Austria and Switzerland and would have negative effects on both the environment and those working in the industry.

The four unions agreed that only a modern well-run railway industry is capable of surviving. The rail leaders therefore called on other European rail unions to join them at the rally in urging the need for a new European transport policy more closely geared to the needs of railway workers and the general public.

**"The Swiss Rail 2000 concept - a striking example of what can be done"**

from Germany, Austria, Luxembourg and Switzerland who met in Sierre, Switzerland, last month for their regular annual discussion of problems common to railway workers in all four countries.

The meeting - one of the last to be chaired by outgoing Swiss rail union (SEV) President Jean Clivaz before his move to head the Swiss Postal and Telecommunications Authority (PTT) - concluded that only policies involving the extension and modernisation of the railway system stood any chance of coming to grips with the increasingly international character of the problems the industry is now facing.

The union leaders said much



# US unions bid \$750m for Southern Pacific railroad

A group of railway unions has put in a formal bid for Southern Pacific, part of Santa Fe Southern Pacific, the second biggest rail company in the United States.

The union bid, worth US\$750 million in cash plus more than \$800m in debt assumption, comes from the Railway Labor Executives' Association (RLEA) which

represents 17 rail unions with members among the railroad's 26,000 employees.

The unions have said that they will take over all Southern Pacific's debt and other liabilities and agree cost savings that will include cuts in labour costs.

The offer comes in response to the government-ordered break up of

the company in the summer (see July issue of *ITF News*) and just in time for the mid-October deadline for the receipt of bids.

The unions have indicated that Southern Pacific's management will be submitting a separate but parallel offer to the SFSP rail board and that the two groups were still working towards a joint offer.

## CIVIL AVIATION

# Boeing sues FAA over 747 door blocking

In a decision which shocked aviation unions and air safety experts, the Boeing Corporation, manufacturers of the 747 'Jumbo Jet', began legal action in September against the US Federal Aviation Administration for its refusal to allow the company to block off the two over-wing emergency exits in the new generation 747-400.

Boeing was told by the FAA earlier this year that the 400 series must have the same number of exits as existing models. Not satisfied, the company is now contesting that decision through the San Francisco appeal court.

Boeing's move has been strongly criticised by the ITF-affiliated Association of Flight Attendants which together with the pilots' union ALPA led earlier US union efforts to frustrate Boeing's efforts to cut corners on safety. It is also being opposed by the ITF's Civil Aviation Section.

When the sealing up of the doors on existing 747s was first proposed, for purely economic reasons, ITF affiliates mounted a strong campaign in ICAO and at national level to ensure that governments opposed the changes.

Opposition also came at that time from the US National Transportation Safety Board as well as bodies representing the interests of airline passengers.

Flight attendants who had been in B 747 crashes where escape from the aircraft had been difficult were able to convince many national au-

thorities that the long distance (of 72 feet) between emergency exits resulting from the loss of the overwing doors could make the difference between life and death for passengers seeking to escape toxic fumes in a fast spreading cabin fire.

In 1985 FAA Administrator Donald Engen refused to allow US airlines to remove overwing exits from existing B747 models despite earlier approval given by the FAA's regional office in Seattle.

Airlines in most other countries, whose aviation authorities normally follow the FAA's lead for US built aircraft, dropped plans for modification of their B 747 doors or even brought the two exits back into commission. Only British Airways and KLM still operate with

the doors out of action.

In a comment on Boeing's latest action, AFA President Susan Bianchi-Sand said: "It's shocking that a corporation of Boeing's stature would sue the government to reduce passenger safety."

AFA Director of Air Safety Matthew Finucane believes that by acting now Boeing is seeking to exploit the fact that the FAA has not yet finished the rule-making process setting a maximum safe distance between the passenger and an exit.

The Boeing case, according to Finucane, will be that although the government thinks removing the doors is unsafe it is technically legal until there is a new rule.

"That kind of argument is an insult to every American who flies", the AFA's Director of Air Safety adds.

## Safety fines league table

Airlines cutting corners to save money is a feature of deregulation. In the latest league table of offenders, Eastern Airlines takes the unenviable lead with fines totalling US\$9.5 million for safety violations in the eighteen months between January 1986 and June 1987.

Pan Am came second with \$1.9 million in fines, followed by Lorenzo's Continental with fines of well over eight hundred thousand dollars.

# NEW 35,000 STRONG SUPER UNION FOR US CABIN CREW

Plans for a merger between two major US cabin crew unions should come as welcome news to the nation's flight attendants who have seen a sustained onslaught on their living standards from the airlines in the wake of deregulation.

Plans are at an advanced stage for the creation of a new union with a membership of 35,000 from the merger of the 23,000-strong ITF affiliated Association of Flight Attendants (AFA), with members drawn from United and eleven other US airlines and the Association of Professional Flight Attendants (APFA) which organises roughly half that number at American, the USA's second largest airline.

The new union, which is subject to approval by APFA members within 30 days, will be known as the Association of Flight Attendants International (AFAI).

It is hoped that the independent cabin crew unions within Continental, TWA and Pan American will also join the AFAI in due course.

AFA President Susan Bianchi-Sand, who will be the president of the new merged union, looks forward to a future in which flight attendants are no longer divided by the colour of their uniforms or the name of the carrier they work for. She also stressed the need for a return to "pattern" bargaining in which pay, benefits and work rules are comparable in most carriers - a

strategy that should be easier to push through once attendants are organised in a single bargaining unit.

APFA President Pat Gibbs, predicting that the merger would be approved by her members, said affiliation with the AFA would strengthen the APFA's bargaining position with American. The union has been embroiled in a lengthy - and to date unsuccessful struggle - with the carrier over the ending of the two tier wage system and has recently had a new pay contract forced on it by American. This has sparked a series of union actions, notably the "informational picketing" of institutional investors in the American parent, AMR Corporation.

## Deregulation is anti-people says airline chief

*"Deregulation has proved to be far more anti-labor - anti-people, to be more precise - than anyone dreamed. A disturbing trade off occurred. Passengers won low fares, but part of their gain came at the expense of the people who provide airline service."*

These are not the words of a union leader. They come from Robert Crandall, Chairman of American Airlines, indicating that even some top US airline executives are at last becoming aware of the drawbacks of deregulation.

Speaking at a Joint Conference on Air Transport Labor Relations in Washington, attended by unions, business and government leaders, Crandall called for action to give airline workers greater job security. "Management must understand that the periodic layoffs of days past are no longer acceptable and that substantial cuts in either income or benefits simply cannot be tolerated by employees who have built lifestyles and undertaken obligations on the basis of their present compensation programs," he said.

What was needed, he said, was a new spirit of labor/management cooperation, with managers acknowledging that in return for their commitment and hard work, em-

ployees were entitled to a share in company profits once an adequate return on capital had been assured.

Crandall roundly attacked the anti worker policies of Frank Lorenzo's Texas Air Corporation, saying it was "outrageous" that Continental made no provision for employee pensions and ran no medical plan for retired staff.

The American chairman also criticised the US government for awarding lucrative routes to companies such as Continental and Eastern - part of the Texas Air empire - which operated notoriously unjust labour policies. The government should take companies' labour relations policies into consideration before rewarding them in this way, he added.

Crandall's remarks were warmly endorsed by William W Winpisinger, President of the ITF affiliated International Association of Machinists (IAM) in a speech to the same gathering. Winpisinger said "I think it's time for all of us, labor, management and government, to join forces to make it clear that our society will no longer tolerate an airline, or any company, abusing its employees in order to beat the competition."

He reminded the conference that the IAM had warned from the outset that the impact of deregulation would be "cruel, predatory, dehumanizing and demoralizing".

And so it had been. 27,000 IAM members had had their lives and jobs disrupted by the mergers, acquisitions, route transfers, bankruptcies and cost cutting drives that had followed on the heels of deregulation.

In a fierce attack on Lorenzo's anti worker tactics, Winpisinger accused the Texas Air supremo of pitting his "sub-standard and sub-scale" Continental employees against IAM organised Eastern employees so as to force down pay, hours and standards at his Eastern subsidiary.

In a clear statement of intent, Winpisinger said the unions in their struggle with Lorenzo might become bloodied but would not bow to him. While the airline unions were prepared to compromise if they had to, they would never capitulate.

However, the latest financial results from American Airlines - the second largest operator in the US - have proved disappointing. It remains to be seen whether Crandall will live up to his words about aviation workers' rights.

# Last minute pay deal for Wardair flight attendants

Canadian flight attendants working for Wardair are voting now on a new contract hammered out between management and the union in a mammoth, forty hour last ditch negotiating session.

The dispute, highlighted in September's **ITF News**, had appeared set for a major confrontation between Wardair and the ITF affiliated Airline Division of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE). Government arbitration had been called for by both

sides and the company was already in the process of training strikebreakers.

The central dispute was the existence of a two tier wage scale, with different rates of pay for scales A and B, which the union had been forced to concede in past contract negotiations. The union wanted to see the two scales eliminated and turned into one unified scale, while the company were proposing to freeze scale A and lengthen scale B – in effect saying that, in future,

all flight attendants would be on scale B.

The deal, which is now being recommended for acceptance by the CUPE negotiating team, does not eliminate the two tier scale, but it sets up the possibility of merging the two scales in the next contract.

The 39 month contract agreement increases the bottom of scale B by 13 per cent, and reduces the number of increments in the scale to five years. Scale A is reduced from the present twelve years to seven years, with a four per cent increase, plus additional increments throughout the contract. This means that the top of the B scale (\$CAN27,61 an hour) will coincide with step two of the A scale – making a merging of the scales a practical concern for the next contract.

In effect, then, the union have turned the company around, from an initial position where the scale differences were going to be emphasised, and they have achieved sizeable increases in most flight attendants' rates of pay.

They have also made the company withdraw a number of unacceptable non-monetary demands. A proposal that criteria for uniform and dress regulations would be removed from third party arbitration and left solely to the company to determine has gone, along with a proposal that new flight attendants would have to live within 100 km of their home base. Additionally the company have agreed to a meeting with the union every three months to iron out outstanding disputes.

The union negotiating committee are recommending acceptance of what they describe as a positive agreement, and members are voting on the deal at the moment.

## UK and Canada sign liberal air agreement

The British and Canadian governments have finally agreed on a successor agreement to the 1949 air services agreement, which entails a major liberalisation in air traffic between the two countries. The general agreement covering air services between the two countries, originally signed in 1949, was last ratified in 1981. In September 1986, the UK government gave 12 months' notice of termination of the agreement.

The dispute between the two countries hinged on "fifth freedom" rights that allow carriers to pick up passengers in another country and carry them on to a third destination. The British were upset by the number of fifth freedom passengers Air Canada were picking up in London for their onward flights to Far Eastern destinations such as Singapore and Bombay. The British at first demanded a reduction in the number of passengers that could be picked up by the Canadians this way (an interesting hypocrisy given the UK's alleged keenness on liberalisation within the European Community), and then replied by demanding greater fifth freedom rights through Canada to the USA and the Caribbean.

The Canadians were unhappy to do this while bilateral agreements gave British Airways the rights to fly to various Western Canadian destinations which the airline was not taking up. Air Canada was still required to pool revenue with BA for its flights from these destinations, even though they were the only ones flying the routes. In the end both sides have opted

for a new deal which marks one of the most "liberal" transcontinental agreements to date. From now on any UK or Canadian airline will effectively have the right to fly to the other country and fix their tariffs within a very wide fare zone. Under the agreement each side is granted free access to all airports in the other country for long haul flights, and is allowed to determine its own capacity for these routes according to bilateral agreements. Fares will be left up to the airlines to determine within a set range, which will be further loosened after an 18 month review period. Airlines will also be free to determine their own cargo rates.

Air Canada retains its fifth freedom rights for ten flights a week between the UK and Bombay and Singapore, while the UK gets the same rights for 14 flights a week through Canada to the USA, four flights a week to Mexico, the Caribbean and Central America and two flights a week through Vancouver to New Zealand and the Pacific.

## OBITUARIES

**Elizabeth Pinnington**, who worked as a cashier in the Finance Department at ITF headquarters during the 1950s, died recently, aged 73.

**B. Dharma Rao**, General Secretary of the Visakhapatnam Port Employees' Union, died suddenly on 9 September, at the age of 59.

**Eli Oliver**, former Research Director of the then US Brotherhood of Railway, Airline and Steamship Clerks (BRAC), died on 28 July, aged 88.

After leaving BRAC Oliver retained close links with the railway unions during a long career as a consulting economist.

## TRAVEL BUREAUX

### First Spanish national travel agency agreement signed

A major breakthrough in the conditions of staff employed in travel agencies throughout Spain has been brought about with the conclusion - by the ITF-affiliated FETT-UGT - of the first nationwide collective agreement for workers in this sector.

Five large employers' organisations are signatories to the agreement, making it one of the most comprehensive of any reached in the travel trade where agreements usually cover only a single employer.

The agreement, which lasts for two years, has retroactive effect to the beginning of 1987.

A salary scale has been established, ranging from a basic 39,633 pesetas a month to a maximum of 84,552 pesetas. To these rates are to be added Christmas and other monthly bonuses and long service payments etc.

Annual working hours of travel bureau staff are set at 1,800, and in an industry where weekend working and some night work is not unusual, it is significant that the agreement gives workers an entitlement to 26 free Saturday mornings a year (27 in 1988) and makes generous provision through premium rates for work performed between 22.00 and 07.00.

It has been agreed between the parties that overtime working should be kept to a minimum, to be permitted only in certain emergency situations - the aim of this clause being to boost the number of jobs at a time of high unemployment.

Employees are guaranteed annual leave of 30 days (to include four Saturdays and Sundays) - a fortnight of which must be granted during the traditional holiday

months of July, August and September - and must be told at least two months before their leave is due which dates they have been allocated. Agencies will also be required to operate a leave rota to ensure fairness in the timing of staff leave.

Paid time off is also permitted for personal reasons such as marriage, death or serious illness of a spouse, for study purposes and for the performance of public duties.

Other clauses of the agreement cover retirement (compulsory at age 65, although this may be lowered - with the consent of both parties - to 64); death in service; measures to alleviate the effects of the introduction of new technology; trade union rights within undertakings; and the establishment of a joint committee to oversee the implementation of the collective agreement.

# Tjaereborg for sale

One of Scandinavia's biggest travel companies - the Tjaereborg-Sterling Airways group - is up for sale.

From humble beginnings - Tjaereborg was set up by the Danish parish priest Eilif Krogager, to provide coach tours to Spain for his west Jutland parishioners - the group has been built up over the

years into a highly profitable concern with an annual turnover of over \$450 million dollars. Its Sterling airline subsidiary flies one and a half million passengers each year.

A number of potential buyers have already emerged, led by the Scandinavian airline SAS, which

already operates Vingresor - the region's biggest inclusive tour operator. Other interested parties include the Danish shipping line A P Møller, with its charter arm Maersk Air and a Swedish property, hotels and travel concern - Stockholm-Saltsjön - which owns a 40 per cent stake in the Swedish charter airline Transwede.

## PEOPLE

The white collar International FIET elected a new president at its August Congress in Lomé, Togo. He is **Bengt Lloyd**, President of the Swedish Commercial Workers' Union (HF). Lloyd succeeds Tom Whaley of the US United Food and Commercial Workers' Union.

The Congress awarded Whaley its highest distinction, the FIET Gold Badge, in recognition of the outstanding contribution he had made to the work of the International over many years.

FIET General Secretary **Heribert**

**Maier** was re-elected for another four year term.

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**Enrique Venturini**, General Secretary of the Marine Electricians' Union of Argentina, has been made Director of International Labour Affairs within the Argentinian Ministry of Labour and Social Security.

**Ray Buckton** retires this month after seventeen years as General

Secretary of the British Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF). Over the years Buckton has contributed greatly to the work of the ITF Railwaymen's Section, both within the Committee of the Section, as a member of the Sub Committee dealing with the working conditions of railway staff and more recently as a member of the Working Group on New Technology. He is succeeded by **Neil Milligan**, formerly the union's Assistant General Secretary.