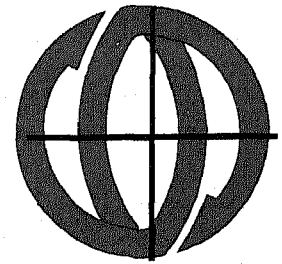


ITF NEWS



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High Court seizes union property and assets:

British seamen's union driven 'underground'

Mirroring the experience of independent trade unions in countries as diverse as Poland and Chile, Britain's National Union of Seamen was driven 'underground' in May when the High Court in London ordered the seizure of all its property and financial assets.

The Court decision, clearly demonstrating the repressive nature of the Conservative government's industrial relations legislation, came as the dispute between the NUS and P&O European Ferries entered its 14th week and NUS members working for other ferry companies had responded to the union's call for solidarity action.

The Court decision to "sequester" the union's assets followed a ruling secured by P&O's cross-Channel competitor, Sealink preventing the union from continuing with illegal 'secondary boycott' action. This consisted of union members working for Sealink and other companies refusing to cross picket lines established by their P&O colleagues.

Secondary action is illegal in the United Kingdom under laws enacted in 1980. Realising that imprisoning union officials for 'illegal action' normally generated widespread support from other trade unionists, the British government decided to adopt a different strategy, endeavouring to prevent unions which disobey court rulings from functioning by a combination of heavy fines and direct seizure of their assets by administrators (normally a firm of accountants) appointed by the Courts.

Smartly dressed accountants take over Maritime House

In the case of the NUS, officials arriving at Maritime House, the union's South London headquarters, on May 4 found a team of smartly dressed accountants opening their mail and requiring them to record their presence in a visitors' book. Initially allowed to use telephones and computer terminals, by the middle of the afternoon they found themselves forced out of the building altogether, while the sequestrators began to implement a programme of closing down all the union's local offices around the country. Bank accounts and other assets had already been seized and used to pay a fine of £150,000 imposed by the Court for violation of its order. Further fines and costs imposed by the Court were estimated by the end of May to total more than £2m. By the evening of May 3 the only union employees who were still receiving their salaries were the building caretaker and the telephone operator. Attempts a few days earlier to pay staff salaries in advance had already been frustrated by an application to the Court by the union's bankers, the Midland Bank.

During the period of the national strike called by the union, numerous shipowners throughout the country withdrew its recognition rights and in many cases used strike-breaking crews, many of them foreign, to operate ferry

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ITF Boomerang club grand opening (P 7)

...union warns ferry users "say no to P and O"

Continued from page 1

and offshore services. P&O resumed limited services in May using a combination of NUS members who had signed individual contracts with the company and unemployed seafarers who had responded to advertisements placed by the company in national newspapers.

The national strike and secondary boycott action ended after two weeks as a result of negotiations between the union and Sealink but P&O successfully applied to the Court to prevent the union from regaining control of its assets until picketing at Dover is reduced to the limit of six laid down in a government Code of Practice. At the end of May the NUS was still operating an 'underground' operation from a variety of private houses and other union offices, aware that any money collected to support its work risked also being seized by the Court.

Efforts to secure international support for the NUS during this period have been mixed. In response to a request received on April 28, the ITF informed its affiliates in France, Belgium and the Netherlands that the NUS was requesting them not to handle P&O ferries operating with non-union crews. Similar requests were passed on to the non-affiliated CGT in France, and via their international organisation FIOST, to the 'Christian' transport workers' union in Belgium. The NUS also organised its own direct contacts with some of the unions involved which resulted

in several meetings held in the Belgian port of Ostend in mid-May. Solidarity declarations from the French unions initially discouraged P&O from operating its most profitable route from Dover to Calais but efforts by the ITF-affiliated BTB and other Belgian unions to persuade their members to support the NUS were less successful. Eventually,

introduced by the Conservative government. These put at risk the funds and assets of any union in the UK which gave practical assistance to the NUS's 'illegal' action or which took similar 'illegal' action itself in support of the union.

Efforts are now concentrated in two areas. The first is to re-establish control of union assets (already seri-

...smaller crews are less safe...

however, reduced P&O passenger and freight services to both Zeebrugge and Calais were reintroduced by the company.

A further request from the NUS for support from ITF affiliates abroad was received on 17 May, following which ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis wrote to all ITF seafarers' and dockers' unions summarising the history of the dispute and passing on the NUS's urgent appeal for maximum support, of whatever kind was open to them, to bring P&O back to the bargaining table.

While support by French and Belgian dockers and seafarers undoubtedly delayed the introduction of the strike-breaking services, the ability of their unions to persuade them to take action against P&O was limited because of the lack of industrial support from other unions in the UK. This in turn has resulted from the draconian anti-union laws

ously depleted by fines and costs) by 'purging' the union's contempt of Court. Interestingly enough, while the original injunctions seizing the union's assets were granted in a matter of hours, the next hearing at which it may regain control of them has been deferred for several weeks as the judge concerned is taking a well-earned rest!

The second aim of the next phase of the union's campaign is to concentrate public attention on the safety implications of the massively reduced manning levels and increased duty times under which P&O is now sailing and to persuade ferry customers wherever possible to use its main competitor Sealink. The message from the NUS to union members and their families in the UK or in Continental Europe as the Summer Season approaches is — if you want to cross the Channel, say No to P&O!

South African unions prepare for June protest

South African trade unionists are mounting a campaign of resistance against the government's restrictions on anti-apartheid organisations and their plans to amend the Labour Laws.

At a special Congress held on May 14 and 15, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) decided to call three days of national peaceful protest against the bannings of and restrictions against

opposition organisations last February (covered in **ITF News** February & March/April 1988). These national days of protest will be the 6, 7 and 8 of June.

The Special COSATU Congress was attended by 1,500 delegates representing over one million trade unionists and was marked by a vigorous and open debate about the future strategy of the movement. Following the February bannings,

COSATU is left as one of the few representative mass organisations opposing apartheid (although legally restricted to only 'economic' issues), and the latest proposed amendments to the Labour Relations Act are a clear attempt to clip their wings.

ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis sent a special message of solidarity and greetings to COSATU General Secretary Jay Naidoo wish-

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General Secretary: **Harold Lewis**

Publications Officer: **David Cockroft**

International Transport Workers' Federation
Federación Internacional de los Trabajadores del Transporte
Internationale Transportarbeiter-Föderation
Fédération Internationale des Ouvriers du Transport
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...anti-apartheid conference to set strategy

Continued from page 2

ing the Congress "all possible success":

"On behalf of millions of transport workers throughout the world, I have great pleasure in sending the special national Congress of COSATU the warm fraternal greetings of the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF). We have a long and proud record of opposition to dictatorships and repression of every variety and therefore have a special understanding of COSATU's present situation. We have not the slightest doubt, however, that it will finally triumph and that a new, free South Africa will arise in which trade unionism will have a full and honoured role. To that great end, you can count on the ITF's continuing support and solidarity."

The Congress also decided to call a conference of a broad range of anti-apartheid organisations to focus on opposing apartheid repression.

COSATU also decided to mount a "concerted programme of action" against the restrictions and the Labour Relations Amendments. There will be demonstrations in all organised factories every Tuesday and they have decided to pursue the issue with managements "...warning them of the grave threat to industrial relations, and giving them notice that worker militancy around legitimate demands won't be curbed."

The meeting also decided to adopt a "declaration" re-affirming "our



Susan Shubangu, an organizer with the South African Transport and General Workers' Union, pictured with ITF President Jim Hunter at the Canadian Labour Congress Women's Conference earlier this year

opposition to 40 years of Nationalist Party rule" and pledging to "fight side by side until we are free from apartheid oppression and economic exploitation."

The mood of the meeting, according to COSATU, was "marked by a mood of worker militancy, and anger that the state has resorted to ever increasing repression to stifle the legitimate demands of the people."

The South African government is acting out of weakness, facing a

severe economic crisis and lacking general political support from the people.

The brutal repression of anti-apartheid forces is being pursued in the interests of capital who want political stability and high profits, even if it means a total attack on human rights. But workers and the majority of people remain steadfast and determined to end apartheid and exploitation and to establish a truly democratic order in our country," says COSATU.

Machinists mark first hundred years

This month was one of celebration for machinists in the United States as their union, the International Association of Machinists, marked its first hundred years.

Fittingly, the 100th Anniversary Convention was held in Atlanta — the city where it had all begun. It was here that 19 machinists had met in 1888 to found the union.

ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis came to Atlanta for the celebrations and in his address to the Convention passed on the warm-

est congratulations of the world's transport workers to the IAM on this auspicious occasion when it took a rest for a moment from its everyday activities to look back on the many successes of its first hundred years.

He pointed out that the IAM was older even than the ITF which had not come into being until 1896.

The General Secretary paid tribute to the role of the IAM — which had members in many of the ITF's industrial sections — in helping

forge policies for dealing with the great union challenges of this century. Just as importantly, it had always been in the forefront of those unions that had given much valuable assistance to less fortunate transport trade unionists worldwide in the very best traditions of the proud international workers' movement of which it was so vital a part.

The General Secretary concluded by wishing the IAM success and prosperity in its next hundred years.

Letter from jailed Malaysian union leader

This letter, reproduced in full, was written by the detained Malaysian trade union leader Dr. V. David to ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis.

David's detention (covered in *ITF News*, January 88) is now the focus for a growing movement of protest by ITF affiliates, many of whom have responded to the ITF's request to send messages of protest to the Malaysian government.

ITF Executive Board member Jack Otero, who is International Vice President of the Transportation and Communications International Union (TCU), has been actively campaigning for David's release. In addition to messages of protest, he issued a public call, in a letter to the *Washington Post* on April 11, for David's release. If Malaysia continues to imprison David, Otero says that the US government should terminate favourable trade privileges for the regime, cancel landing rights in US territory for Malaysian airlines and cancel all military and economic aid to the regime.

Members of the House of Representatives, referring to Otero's letter, have added their voice to these demands.

ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis, in responding to David's letter, has re-iterated the ITF's demand for his immediate and unconditional release from prison. "I would urge all ITF affiliates to do whatever they can to encourage Dr. David's release," he said.

Send messages of protest (with copies to the ITF) to:

Dr. Mahathir Mohammed
Prime Minister of Malaysia
Jalan Dato Onn
50502 Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia

You can also send messages of support to Dr. David himself:

Dr. V. David (1655/87)
Pusat Tahanan Perlindungan
34009 Kamunting
Taiping
Perak
WEST MALAYSIA

30 March 1988



My Dear Bro. Harold,

I am sure you are aware that I was arrested under the Internal Security Act (ISA), preventive detention without trial in a Court of Law, on 27th October 1987. After two months of detention in a Police Remand Centre, which is a lock-up cell, I was transferred to the Detention Camp, 180 miles away from Kuala Lumpur known as the Kamunting Detention Camp, in the town of Taiping on the 27th December 1987, where I am presently held under detention.

During the period of detention in the lock-up, the Police conducted interrogation mainly on questions on trade union activities, but later the charges were on other matters. The allegation levelled against me is that I am a national security risk. The charges are vexatious, frivolous, unprecedented, baseless and an outright abuse of Executive powers.

The Internal Security Act gives absolute mandate to the "Home Minister" to detain any political opponent without providing adequate grounds for the same. The ISA was introduced in Parliament in 1960 to replace the Emergency Regulations introduced in June 1948 when the nation was under the threat of Communist insurgency. When questions were raised in Parliament against the ISA, the then Home Minister assured the House that the provisions would not be used to stifle political dissent, but will only be applied against any Communist uprising which would pose a threat to National Security. Unfortunately, today, the ISA is used against political opponents, trade unionists, drug addicts, civil servants and anyone whom the Government wishes to detain but cannot find evidence to produce during an open trial in a Court of Law.

Being the General Secretary of the Transport Workers' Union, Secretary of the ITF Malaysian Council and the Secretary General of the Malaysian Trades Union Congress, I humbly appeal that the International Transport Workers Federation kindly take appropriate measures to seek my early release. It is now 5 months since I have been detained, with no sign of my release. The Prime Minister has refused to meet the ICFTU representatives, and only positive industrial efforts can move the Government to exercise fairness to me under the present circumstances. The ITF is at liberty to undertake any kind of measure to ensure my freedom. Your experience in the past with the Malaysian Government will remain fresh in your memory. An ultimatum would be necessary and followed by appropriate action.

I hope the International Transport Workers Federation will definitely move to uphold Human Rights and Civil Liberty at our shores.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. V. David
GENERAL SECRETARY

Sri Lankan May Day rally for democratic rights

The restoration of democracy and civil rights in Sri Lanka was one of the demands adopted at the Ceylon Mercantile, Industrial and General Workers' Union (CMU) May Day rally.

Thousands of Sri Lankan workers attended the rally of Sri Lanka's largest trade union (also the ITF's sole affiliate in the country), which adopted two major resolutions.

On the internal situation in Sri Lanka, the CMU noted that President J. R. Jayewardene continues to govern with the wide ranging, draconian powers of a State of Emergency, declared in 1982.

These emergency powers have prevented workers from "exercising their fundamental democratic rights, or (they) have been subjected to severe restrictions in the exercise of such rights." the resolution states.

Thousands of people, from all Sri Lankan communities, have been killed in the civil war, and many more have been displaced and detained without trial. Public demonstrations have been banned and attacked by the police.

The large scale actions of the state against the 'terrorist' threat in the North and East, in fact turned the conflict into a full-blown civil war, rather than suppressing the armed activities of Tamil groups.

Then, in July 1987, the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement resulted in Indian military forces entering the North and East of the island. These military operations have "rendered the armed Tamil groups, including the 'Tamil Tigers', ineffective militarily."

But the people of the North and East are "fearful or resentful of the

presence of Indian troops...while terrorist massacres and other acts of violence have prevented the resumption of normal administrative, economic or political activity."

The CMU states that the government's actions, which have resulted in the denial of basic democratic rights, have contributed to the growth of terrorism and political assassinations. The terrorism has "further undermined democratic freedom of action of the working class and other sections of the people, and violated human rights, and can in no way be condoned."

The CMU calls for the repeal of the State of Emergency, the Prevention of Terrorism Act and other repressive legislation as the first step to the restoration of democratic rights in Sri Lanka.

In order to achieve these goals, the CMU calls for all "working class forces to come together...and to bring together and give the lead to other exploited and oppressed sections of the people of Sri Lanka, to end the State of Emergency and to recover and reassert their fundamental democratic rights, in order to protect human rights and to secure peace and justice in this country."

To this end, the rally called for the active support of the international trade union movement and other organisations in other countries to assist them in their task.

Despite the severe and difficult political situation in their own country, the CMU members devoted as much time at their rally to expressing their solidarity with other groups of workers as they spent on their own situation. Remembering the true significance of May Day as "the day on

which workers assert their class demands and prepare for struggle in pursuance of them" the rally adopted a wide-ranging statement of solidarity.

They expressed their solidarity with the workers in Europe, North America, Australia, New Zealand and Japan in their battles against unemployment and in defence of their "hard won gains"; they stated their support for third world workers struggling for "elementary human and democratic rights, including trade union rights" and for their economic struggle against "low living standards"; and they also expressed their solidarity with the workers in the non-capitalist countries (Soviet Union, China, Eastern Europe) who are denied or restricted basic democratic rights - they declared their full support for "Solidarity" in Poland and welcomed the moves towards liberalisation in the Soviet Union "which may provide the Soviet and East European working class with opportunities for advancing independent democratic demands."

Specifically, the rally gave its "complete solidarity" to the struggle in South Africa against apartheid, denounced US aggression against the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua and condemned the "continuing occupation of Arab territories by the Israeli state and the brutal attempts of the Israeli armed forces to suppress the Arab people's uprising...and the struggle for self-determination of the Palestinian people."

Greetings were also sent from the rally to the ITF, and the other two International Trade Secretariats (Food and Building Workers) which the CMU is affiliated with.

"The challenge of change" — ICFTU Congress theme

Nearly 800 delegates from 109 countries attended the 14th World Congress of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) from 14-18 March in Melbourne, Australia.

The ICFTU groups together national centres worldwide, many of which various ITF affiliates are

also affiliated to. The International Trade Secretariats, like the ITF, are autonomous from the ICFTU, but are associated with the body and have some representation on the ICFTU Executive Board.

The main theme of the Congress was a debate centred round a document entitled "The Challenge

of Change" which discussed the need for unions to develop a clear analysis and trade union response to the growing internationalisation of the world economy. Along with this understanding, the Congress underlined the importance of finding new ways of attracting the

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...closer cooperation with ITSS agreed

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millions of unorganised workers in the world into trade unions.

ICFTU General Secretary John Vanderveken, who along with President Dr. P.P. Narayanan was re-elected at the meeting, stated that the Congress had been "by the far the largest in terms of attendance and representativity" that the ICFTU had ever had.

The debates, he said after the closing session, had mainly concerned how unions "have to adapt themselves to change, to adapt their methods of work to today's needs, rather than being on the defensive and reacting to change after it occurs, we must anticipate change and influence it for the general good."

Emphasis was placed on the need to improve communications and

the exchange of information between ICFTU affiliates and the International Trade Secretariats:

"Ideas and information need to flow more speedily between unions, through the ICFTU and its associated International Trade Secretariats...Our task would be to find mechanisms for closer cooperation with the ITSS and also to develop an "international reflex" among trade unions so as to have a quick international response to developments at national level or at the industrial level." said Vanderveken.

The question of improving recruitment procedures, education and training for unions was also high on the agenda.

Resolutions were adopted on a wide range of issues such as: privatisation, export processing zones, child labour, health and

safety, and positive action for women at the workplace (and in unions).

Human and trade union rights issues were also central to the Congress. Lech Walesa (President of Poland's Solidarity), and James Mndaweni (President of the South African National Council of Trade Unions) were both prevented by their governments from attending the meeting.

"In the future," said Vanderveken, "international work should be given real priority by affiliates, as there is no longer such a thing as a local dispute that is unconnected with international questions. That is the real message of this Congress and its real relevance to everyday trade union work and bread and butter issues."

DOCKERS

Montréal docks dispute stalemate

Work at the Canadian port of Montréal is being disrupted by a series of one day strikes as dockers take action in a long running dispute over job security and shift work.

These demands are central to the contract negotiations that have been continuing for the past year and a half and have just led to a mediator's report which has been rejected by the men's union - the Canadian division of the International Longshoremen's Association.

The maritime employers have accepted the recommendations and say they will only negotiate further if the union changes its attitude.

As the mediator has failed to propose sufficiently far reaching changes to the present system of shift working - this involves most of the seven hundred plus dockers working four different shifts each week, imposing an intolerable strain on both the workers and their families - the union says it

has no choice other than to turn the report down. An offer from the employers to take 259 dockers on to the job security programme, has also been rebuffed by the ILA as insufficient. Meanwhile, with the stalemate over negotiations, further disruption at the port seems inevitable.

Last minute deal on Japanese dock pay

A major dock strike in Japan, which would have seriously disrupted the country's import and export trade, was averted when the dock workers' union federation clinched a last minute deal on pay and hours for its 90,000 members. A deal on job security has also been hammered out though the vexed question of Sunday working, which the dockers have been resisting, remains to be settled.

OBITUARIES

We have just learned that **B L Sorah**, Secretary-Treasurer Emeritus of the US Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees

(BMWE) died on December 30 1987, after a long illness, at the age of 67. Sorah was BMWE Secretary-Treasurer from 1970 until his

retirement in 1982 when he was given his honorary title in recognition of his outstanding service to the union.

Boomerang grand opening

The latest ITF Seafarers' Centre was opened on March 25 in Sydney, Australia.

The "Boomerang Club", formerly the Mascot Bowling Club, is just five minutes by road from Sydney's main Botany Bay Container terminal and is within easy reach of Sydney's other main facility at Port Jackson.

The centre's official opening ceremony heard a speech by Australian Transport Minister Gareth Evans who welcomed ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis and thanked the ITF for its generosity in funding the new centre.

The Minister said that the new club, with its excellent facilities, was very much a place for seafarers to be with their mates — it would no doubt soon become a welcome haven for many an international seafarer. He hoped that the centre which he was proud to have been asked to officially open, would live up to its new name by granting the seafarers who used it many safe return voyages to enjoy all it had to offer.

ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis replied with a vote of thanks to Gareth Evans for his address and went on to tell the invited guests of some of the other welfare projects that the ITF was funding through the charities it runs for the benefit of the world's seafarers.

A speech of welcome on behalf of the Club was given by the Chairman of the Board, which will oversee the day to day running of the centre. He is Arthur Roberts, the retired General Manager and Chief

Executive of Container Terminals of Australia.

Officials of the new centre were pleased to accept the gift of a painting from the Merchant Service Guild which will grace its walls. On behalf of the Sydney harbour board, Mick Costello also made a presentation of a plaque as a housewarming gift.

Like its sister centre in Rotterdam, the Boomerang Club offers a full range of indoor and outdoor

General Secretary Harold Lewis as a member of the Board of Directors of the Club. Also on the Board are Tas Bull, General Secretary of the Waterside Workers, Federal Secretaries Mike Fleming (Merchant Service Guild) and Mike Chapman (Stevedoring Supervisors' Association) and Les Symes who has been for many years the WWF's local Foc inspector. The centre's treasurer is Roger Williams, a senior partner in a large firm of chartered ac-

*...a welcome haven for
the world's seafarers...*

sporting and recreational facilities open to seafarers of all nations. As well as first class outside facilities such as tennis courts, a large swimming pool and a large covered barbeque area, the centre, which occupies a three and a quarter acre site, also offers a forty seat dining room, a television/video room, a writing room and a library area. Other amenities include a kiosk where seafarers can buy basic essentials, banks of phones for seafarers to get in touch with families back home and a small chapel where visiting ministers from the Flying Angels Mission will conduct services.

The centre will have its own resident General Manager in the person of Roy Hansson who has many years of experience in the field of seafarers' welfare.

He will be backed up by the ITF

countants in Sydney.

The Boomerang centre is the second in a series of centres planned by the ITF. The De Beer centre opened in September of last year and is doing brisk business, and renovation work has begun on the Seafarers' House in Genoa which is being totally refurbished to the highest standards before opening for business. The ITF is also cooperating with the Japan seamen's union on the building of a much needed new welfare centre in the port of Tokyo.

These projects will eventually form the first link in a worldwide chain of ITF seafarers' centres where those who earn their living on the world's oceans will be able to come ashore for valuable rest and recuperation before rejoining their ships.

Japan Line Shipping crew strike

Japan Line Shipping crews went on strike earlier this month over plans by its financially troubled parent company Japan Line to transfer nearly one and a half thousand seafarers to other divisions. The men's union, the All-Japan Seamen's Union, claims that this amounts to technical dismissal.

The company then relented and invited a thousand seafarers to

tender voluntary resignations, in return for which Japan Line said it would re-employ around 400, find jobs for a further one hundred with affiliated companies and would assist the remaining five hundred in finding employment elsewhere within the group.

According to our latest information the strike has been temporarily suspended.

*JSU deep sea members are to receive an extra ¥7,250 a month — equivalent to a 3.17% increase — under the latest twelve month agreement signed with the owners. The union said it is disappointed that the rise is so low but accepts that the industry has been badly hit by soaring exchange rates. Ferry crews have already accepted increases totalling 5.91%.

EUSC ruling: victory for US unions

For many years the US government has been fooling people into believing that the US has a merchant fleet big enough to meet its strategic needs by referring to a phantom fleet of "American controlled" ships sailing under the flags of other nations. This myth has now been exploded thanks to tenacious action by the ITF affiliated National Maritime Union (NMU).

This acceptance and promotion of the "runaways", coupled with their avoidance of U.S. taxes and labor and safety standards, has elevated them to the point where they carry in excess of 40 percent of U.S. imports and exports while US flag shipping carries around 4 per cent. The operators of these ships, in search of a cloak of respectability to carry on their operations, have even adopted the name "Federation of American Controlled Shipping".

MARAD (The US Maritime Administration) has published a 253-page book entitled "Economic Support Shipping" containing an assessment of the availability of shipping capacity to meet the

likely U.S. merchant shipping requirements in a military conflict. In its book MARAD states that the ships available - both US flag and requisitionable - were adequate to meet the need. The overwhelming number of ships in all categories needed would come from the "Effective United States Control (EUSC)" fleets which means, in MARAD's definition, that they are requisitionable.

For a number of years, the ITF-affiliated National Maritime Union of America (NMU) questioned the Maritime Administration's and the Department of Defense's assertion that American-owned "runaway" ships are requisitionable.

In 1986, the NMU filed a law suit against the Department of Transportation and MARAD asking the Court to rule that the EUSC program is unlawful and to grant an injunction stopping either body from claiming that foreign-flag vessels owned by foreign corporations are requisitionable by the United States.

The US Government chose to avoid the merits of the issue arguing instead that the NMU was not

affected by the decision and did not therefore have 'standing' to bring the law suit. United States District Court Judge Oliver Gasch agreed with this contention and dismissed the complaint.

In October of 1987 following up the NMU's law suit, US Senator Ernest F. Hollings requested a legal opinion from the Comptroller General about the President's powers to requisition ships in times of emergency.

In April 1988 the Comptroller General - the ultimate authority of what Congress meant or intended when it passed legislation - answered that these vessels are not requisitionable.

The immediate consequence of this ruling is that the number of ships on which U.S. defense planners can count as being available in time of an emergency has dropped by approximately 300.

This ruling represents an important step forward in the campaign of US maritime unions to force the Government to come to terms with the need for a substantial US flag fleet.

Union concern over future of New Zealand shipping

The future of New Zealand's maritime industry formed the main focus of a five day conference held by the New Zealand Seamen's Union in Auckland in late March.

The conference took the form of a seminar with presentations made by union, management and political representatives followed by question and answer sessions and debates on the issues raised.

The main elements of the government's maritime policy were spelled out by the Deputy Minister of Transport who described New Zealand's shipping as being under great pressure from Foc operators. He made it clear that little or no government assistance to the industry was to be expected and that the cost of shipping the country's goods would have to be brought down, no matter what the consequences for New Zealand's ships or its seafarers. The essentials of this policy were further elaborated by the senior civil servant responsible for ex-

plaining the government's policies and intentions.

The seamen's union representatives countered by asserting that both they and their fellow unions in the industry thought this approach was morally and politically unacceptable.

They stressed that the unions were quite prepared to move with the changing times and had already modified their policies and practices as the result of discussions with the government and owners in the past and would cooperate positively in negotiations on the industry's future.

But they felt they were owed an assurance that the fleet would survive and their jobs with it and that the government would not turn a blind eye to exploitation just to save costs.

The union has good reason to feel anxious as the New Zealand and Australian governments have recently been giving signals that the trans-Tasman trade, until now reserved largely for New Zealand

and Australian ships, will be opened up to Focs.

A fraternal address to the conference was given by Sam Jennings (General Secretary of the Waterside Workers' Federation). Speaking in his capacity as General Secretary of the newly created New Zealand Maritime, Transport and General Workers' Federation, which also includes dockers' and railmen's union in its ranks, Jennings pledged wholehearted support for the seafarers in their fight to defend their industry and its hard won standards.

ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis attended the conference on behalf of the ITF and traced the history of Focs and the ITF's forty year campaign against their use.

Dave Morgan, President of the Seamen's Union, was chairman and National Secretary Jim Woods took an active part in the conference, which as well as focusing on maritime policy also included discussions on collective bargaining and seafarers' training.

Germany urged not to join Foc league

The main event of this last month has taken place in Germany where the much-heralded second register so sought after by owners is now being discussed in parliament. Meanwhile, in Denmark, things are marking time while a new government is formed after the inconclusive general election.

The **Bermuda** register has reached 3.5 million tonnes gross for the first time as owners continued to transfer ships to the island – it has put on half a million tonnes in the past two months alone. The next step will be the extension of the SOLAS and MARPOL conventions to the island (these are also being extended to the two other British dependent registries Gibraltar and the Cayman Islands – in the latter case with effect from June) and when this has been done Bermuda intends to market its registry abroad in much the same way as it promotes the country as a centre for tourism and international business. Most of the new business has come from the large oil tankers that have been queuing up to join the registry, spurred on by the promise of protection from the British Navy's Armilla patrol in the Gulf. Bermuda has been a mite too successful in attracting new tonnage for the British government which is now backtracking and warning owners – especially Norwegian tanker owners – that UK Navy protection cannot be guaranteed.

The new president of **Cyprus** George Vassiliou is clearly worried that recent moves against the flag by the Turkish government could adversely affect business and as one of his first acts on being elected has appointed a shipping adviser, Zenon Katsourides. A week after taking office, Katsourides launched a drive to offer a wider range of peripheral services to the world's shipowners in a bid to boost the attractiveness of the flag – currently ranked number seven in the league table – and he is currently examining the proposals for a new Merchant Shipping Act drawn up by the outgoing administration.

In **Denmark**, plans for the introduction of a DIS on the lines of the

NIS in Norway had to be abandoned when a snap general election was called. It is unlikely that the owners will let up their pressure for a second register and so the new government when it is eventually formed will have to give the matter its priority attention. Meanwhile, the unions are girding

The ITF's monthly flag by flag roundup



themselves up for a second chance to persuade their legislators that this is not the right way forward.

The **French** government announced at the end of last month that it has paid out 400 million francs over the past two years under its merchant navy plan which has succeeded in keeping some shipping companies under the national flag. Companies must promise to keep their decision-making headquarters in the country as a trade off for government financial assistance in deals which have helped secure jobs for French seafarers. Nonetheless, the trend is still down, with the number of seafarers working on ships under the French flag falling from 14,380 at the end of 1986 to 12,420 at the end of last year.

The main event of this month has taken place in **Germany** where the draft legislation for the second register so attractive to owners was introduced in parliament. The bill has provoked a fierce reaction from the seamen's union ÖTV which denounced it as a declaration of war and a move to destroy German shipping and with it the jobs of 17,000 German seafarers. Transport spokesman and ITF Board member Eike Eulen said it was illusory to believe that the fleet under the new flag would be as effective as that under national German flag or that safety would

not be impaired. He accused the coalition parties of allowing themselves to be used as a willing tool of German owners who were solely concerned with being able to operate their ships under Foc conditions, with German seamen being replaced by cut price foreign crews at local rates of pay. Eulen called on the government to rethink its shipping policy rather than seek to join the growing list of nations offering Foc facilities. Meanwhile, with the draft legislation having received its first reading, the owners are seeking all the support they can muster and say they are looking forward with 'impatience' to parliamentary approval.

Owners switching to the growing **Isle of Man** registry which now has over four million deadweight tonnes on its books are increasingly deciding that they do not want to man their ships with British crews. In the latest move Canadian owner Misener Shipping, having received permission to register the 21,548 tonne *Selkirk* on the Island, has announced plans to crew it with Canadian, Indian and Chinese seafarers. In a bid to prevent the country from being declared an Foc, the Manx parliament is now planning to tighten up the registry, giving more powers to its maritime administration and expelling substandard ships from the registry.

Japanese shipowners have shown considerable interest in placing their ships under the NIS but until recently were prevented from taking this step because of difficulties regarding ship classification as their own society is not recognised in Norway. The Norwegians who are equally keen to obtain much valuable Japanese business have now suggested a way round this thorny problem by suggesting the Japanese be allowed to retain 'dual classification' of tonnage (using the Japanese classification society Nippon Kokan Kyokai alongside one of the seven NIS approved societies).

The new register in the tiny landlocked state of **Luxembourg** which was due to open for business in April 1988 has once again hit prob-

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Philippines drops controversial AIDS tests

Following strong protests from seamen's unions and shipowners, the Philippines government has dropped a controversial plan to introduce AIDS clearance certificates for all foreign seafarers visiting its ports regardless of their length of stay.

The new regulations, which were due for introduction on 18 April, would have required all foreign crewmen to carry an AIDS clearance certificate which they would have had to show to immigration officials, or they would not have been allowed to disembark.

Seamen without certificates would have been confined on board under guard as would tran-

siting seamen without clearance.

Vessels not complying with the new requirements would have been fined if the master was unable to produce a valid reason for not complying with the regulation.

While seafarers' unions are clearly very much in favour of health and safety regulations those with members likely to be affected — led by the unions in Hong Kong — had argued that the proposed regulations, which were introduced at very short notice, were ill thought out and virtually impossible to comply with — a position which was supported by the owners.

A number of shortcomings were

mentioned, including the fact that there was no information available as how long the certificates would be valid for. An additional difficulty was that where certificates were issued by private rather than governments doctors these would have had to be authenticated by the Philippines embassy or consulate in the country concerned.

According to documents sent to a company belonging to the Hong Kong Shipowners' Association from their agents in the Philippines only one private doctor in Hong Kong was authorised to issue certificates. Given the number of seafarers involved, this was patently inadequate.

...Panama calls free flag "summit"

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lems and is not now likely to be in place before the beginning of next year. ITF objections notwithstanding, the registry, once it opens, is likely to attract keen interest, particularly from Belgian owners.

The FWZ seafarers' union in the **Netherlands** is deeply concerned by the fact that more and more leading Dutch owners are seeking to flag out their ships, with the consequent loss of Dutch jobs. The union took strike action against Rotterdam based Primlaks last month following the announcement of company plans to flag out its remaining 10 Dutch registered reefer ships to Cyprus with the loss of just over two hundred jobs as Filipino seafarers are brought in to crew the ships. Union Secretary Ed Sarton said he could see no financial justification for the ship sales as the reefer market was enjoying a boom. Last year, Primlaks sold 6 ships and re-registered them in Cyprus and 50 Dutch nationals were made redundant.

The new international **Norwegian** registry NIS, which will be scrutinised once again by the ITF Fair Practices Committee at its meeting next month, got off to a slow start but has now begun to attract attention from the world's

shipowners. Interest has grown in the first three months of this year and ships are now apparently joining the NIS at the rate of one each working day with the result that the registry is fast approaching the 200 ship mark. The gross tonnage under the new registry now totals some 5.7 million. Norwegian companies operating chemical and gas ship fleets have been leading this exodus to the international flag, with most of the new tonnage coming from Liberia.

The **Pakistani** National Shipping Corporation, which now has 26 ships of 416,000 deadweight tonnes, is set to receive a boost to its fleet under the country's latest five year plan, with the planned addition of 18 new ships. These will include five containerships to enable PNSC to carry up to 40% of available cargo in the main liner trades and two bulkers to allow it to participate more in the transport of bulk and semi-bulk cargoes. The Pakistani government has also taken a policy decision to open up shipping to the private sector and the necessary guidelines are being formulated by the Ministry of Communications.

Panama, one of the first Focs, is seeking to counter the threat from the growing proliferation of off-

shore registries by inviting the established convenience nations to a summit in New York later this year to discuss their future strategy for holding on to their existing business and winning new tonnage against the increased competition. The conference call comes from Julio Chanson, the newly appointed Director of the New York office of the country's Directorate of Maritime Affairs.

Swedish seafarers like many of their counterparts elsewhere in Europe are coming under increasing pressure from owners looking for smaller crews as a means of cutting fleet operating costs. The ITF's maritime affiliates in the country are currently assessing the results of a nine-month study by a firm of international management consultants — H B Maynard — commissioned by the Shipowners' Association. This has come up with a flexible 'core crew' concept involving radical crew cutbacks (on some container ro ro ships crews would be halved) as a way of reducing company costs by an estimated \$75.6 million a year. Essentially, the plan proposes the use of more highly trained 'all rounders' able to take on a range of tasks, backed up by shore based staff brought on to ships for limited periods.

Air Nauru pilots strike for union recognition

The ITF and IFALPA have responded positively to a call from Air Nauru pilots for international support in a dispute over non-recognition of their union – the Nauru Airline Pilots' Association which has now led to an indefinite strike from 24 May.

Frustrated in their individual efforts over a number of years to end a pay freeze unilaterally imposed by management in 1981, the pilots of Air Nauru met and decide to form a union at the beginning of this year with the aim of pursuing their pay claims collectively.

The meeting elected an executive and officials, and Captain Reid, who had been with the airline since 1974, was elected to the post of union secretary.

On behalf of the union, Captain Reid then sought talks with the Chief Secretary on their long overdue pay claim.

The men who pilot the carrier of this tiny but exceedingly prosperous Central Pacific island republic are in the main Australians or New Zealanders. None of them actually come from Nauru itself.

Air Nauru had traditionally linked its pilots' salaries to those paid to their counterparts in the Australian airline Ansett, with Air Nauru pilots receiving the Ansett rate plus three per cent.

But since 1981 the pilots have been denied any pay increases. Individual pilots had contacted the airline asking what was happening on their pay but most of these letters either went unanswered or they were told that the matter was under review. But this 'review' never seemed to make any progress!

By this year the pilots' patience had begun to wear exceedingly thin and so their officials wrote to the Chief Secretary asking for a meeting. When he received no reply he followed this up with a further letter and when this produced no results he turned to the His Excellency President Hammer de Roburt - he also acts as Minister for Civil Aviation - asking him to intervene.

Eventually, on 18 April, the Chief Secretary replied to the effect that he was willing to meet Reid and one

or two of his colleagues but as public servants *not* members or executive officers of any association.

The government of Nauru bases its case for refusing official recognition of the new union on two grounds – the Conditions of Employment of Air Crew and the Public Service Act.

The Conditions of Employment explicitly state that air crew must not remain or become members of a union "whose purpose is to represent aircrew in matters of rates of pay or working conditions".

In imposing this restriction, the Conditions of Employment are at odds with the Constitution of Nauru which guarantees freedom of association unless this right is waived in writing. The union admits that individual pilots did sign away their rights by putting their name to their contracts but argues that they were pressured into signing and were at no time informed of their rights under the Constitution. Moreover, as most of the union's members no longer have current contracts they do not consider themselves bound by this clause.

The Public Service Act forbids public servants from taking part in strikes that interfere with or prevent carrying on of parts of the public service. Here again, the union argues that as most contracts have expired the pilots cannot properly be viewed as being covered by the Act.

Meanwhile the union has been seeking to enlist the support of the elected members of parliament in an open letter explaining the background to their pay dispute with the airline. The letter points to budget appropriations passed by parliament to allow parity with Ansett to continue, though this money had never been passed on to the pilots. The pilots said they were now demanding that these pay promises be honoured, including the money owed since 1981.

The letter pointed out that Nauru's foreign pilots had been erroneously led to believe that unions were illegal on Nauru. Most of those signing the original con-

tracts had commented on this denial of trade union rights but no one had sought to set them right on this.

The union's open letter went on to express growing concern on the issue of aircraft safety within Air Nauru:

"The previously disorganised operations of Air Nauru have recently become blatantly, frequently and repeatedly in breach of normal safety and operational requirements to the point where the pilots are gravely concerned for safety of the airline. Breaches of safety are occurring to such an extent that the Association considers that it only a matter of time before an Air Nauru aircraft is involved in a major incident or accident".

Union fears that its actions to obtain justice for its members would have repercussions proved only too realistic when Captain Thomas J Reid, the Secretary to the union was dismissed on 18 May without any reason being given.

The summary dismissal of the union's chief officer brought matters to a head and Air Nauru's pilots have now called an all out strike. They are insisting that the strike will continue until Captain Reid is reinstated, the union is recognised and discussions are held with its representatives on the pilots' grievances.

Currently one flight, piloted by the union's chairman Captain Tate is grounded in Hong Kong, another is on the ground in Melbourne and a third is undergoing maintenance in New Zealand.

The union has contacted the Chief Secretary asking for reassurances that rumours that union chairman Captain Tate is to be dismissed are false and offering to accept mediation in the dispute.

Faced with this refusal on the part of the authorities on Nauru to recognise the union, Captain Reid has sought the support of the ITF – Reid is a former member of one of the ITF's Australian affiliates – and IFALPA which it wishes to join.

Reid has also approached avia-

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Asia/Pacific aviation unions discuss privatisation

Aviation unions in Asia and the Pacific met in Terrigal near Sydney, Australia for a four day seminar from 21 to 24 March to discuss how best to face the growing challenge from airline deregulation and privatisation which now threatens to gain a foothold in the region.

It was appropriate that the seminar should take place in Australia where government plans for the partial privatisation of Qantas and a possible merger with Air New Zealand have been very much to the fore in recent months.

The seminar was attended by over fifty delegates, observers and experts from fourteen countries in the region and was opened by the Australian Minister of Transport Peter Morris.

Also present representing the ITF were Asia/Pacific Secretary M S Hoda, Aviation Secretary Pio Albanesi and Bruce Deahm, the Region's Civil Aviation Committee Chairman, who chaired the seminar.

Expert assistance was provided by Avishai Gil, the ILO's Air Transport Industry specialist, who presented a comprehensive background paper that stimulated much thought-provoking discussion of the issues among the delegates.

The aviation union delegates presented country reports, ena-



bling a detailed impression of the state of the industry in the region to be built up piece by piece.

A small drafting committee elected from among the seminar participants worked hard on drawing up a set of conclusions, which were later adopted by the full meeting as a statement of the ITF position on deregulation and privatisation.

The statement pointed out that the Asia/Pacific region was particularly vulnerable to the growing trend towards an unregulated aviation industry as the struggling economies of most of the countries in the area were totally unable to accommodate full scale deregulation and competition.

The establishment of joint ventures with companies from the developed world whose interests might not be the same as those of the Asian and Pacific host nations was another difficult area, with developing nations running the danger of losing control over their own airlines.

Drawing on the lessons of the American experience with deregulation the statement went on to list the safeguards that the ITF considered were necessary to ensure that the adverse effects of deregulation and privatisation on workers in the region were minimised.

These include:

- * prior consultation and participation of the trade unions, when deregulation is being planned;
- * the incorporation of labour protective provisions into deregulatory legislation;
- * stock ownership plans to enable workers and their unions to participate effectively in the determi-

nation of company policy in privatised airlines;

- * union representation on airline boards; and

- * measures to ensure that staff training standards are not impaired.

The statement also proposed that new airlines be unionised as soon as they were set up as a means of avoiding the growth of a major non-unionised sector.

Mention was made of union fears with regard to falling safety standards and the effects of deregulation on levels of service and the depressing of the conditions of workers in the industry. Strong opposition was expressed to reduced crew complements and the casualisation and the contracting out of work.

In response to a request from the unions in the countries concerned two resolutions were adopted—one calling on the ITF and its affiliates to keep a close eye on the situation in Fiji and especially that of the trade unions following the second coup and the second deploing the denial of trade union rights within the Indian airline Vayudoot and urging the ITF to take the necessary steps to ensure that the company's pilots were permitted freedom of association.

At the close of the meeting a new regional industry committee was elected, with Bruce Deahm of Australia being re-elected to the chairmanship and David Eyre of Fiji and Mihir Bandyopadhyay of India being elected as co-vice-chairmen.

The report and conclusions of the Terrigal Seminar are available on request from the ITF Headquarters.

...solidarity with Air Nauru crews

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tion and maritime unions in both New Zealand and Australia and obtained firm promises on solidarity action.

Action to date taken by the ITF includes a letter to the government protesting at the line they have taken and asking them as a member of the international community of nations, if not of the ILO, to abide by Conventions 87 and 98 and to enter into direct negotiations with the union.

Federal safety probe at Continental and Eastern

Embattled Frank Lorenzo, the Texas Air supremo, is facing another battle - this time from the Department of Transportation which in an unprecedented move has launched a wide-ranging fitness probe taking in both Eastern and Continental Airlines.

Announcing the investigation which will last thirty days the DoT said it was concerned about the continuing pattern of fines and safety violations at Eastern as well as the "apparent insensitivity" of some Eastern officials to FAA safety requirements. Continental was being included in the investigation, the DoT added, because of the close links between the financing and management of the two companies and the DoT's concern about the financial viability of Texas Air as a whole.

In effect the DoT is questioning the company's fitness to run to the two airlines and it could well decide to revoke Texas Air's right to operate the two airlines. Lesser sanctions than decertification also exist - the DoT could appoint a 'czar' to oversee the company's finances or it could force the company to divest itself of either Eastern or Continental.

Any of these courses of action would be a serious if not fatal blow to Lorenzo who is already in deep trouble on a number of fronts. He has been trying to underplay the potential seriousness of the official action against him by saying that he welcomes the investigation.

The announcement of the federal investigation coincided with the imposition by the FAA of a \$823,000 fine on Eastern for outstanding safety violations and the ordering of a check on all its 267 aircraft. (Some Eastern planes have already been taken out of service and will not be allowed to return until essential maintenance on them has been completed.)

An alarming catalogue of incidents illustrating the total lack of concern for air safety at Eastern has been building up over recent months. One Eastern plane flew 511 flight over five months last year in an unairworthy condition - it had a missing drain tube in an engine.

Lax maintenance standards are

becoming increasingly common in US aviation and are one of the unwelcome spinoffs of deregulation and the recent spate of mergers. Airlines fighting for their lives are simply not prepared to spend enough on maintenance to ensure airworthiness.

The FAA had since decided to extend its scrutiny to Continental after running a computer check and finding that Continental had

numbers, creating a pilot shortage. In the last fifteen months between seven and eight hundred pilots have left the company or given notice because they fear for their futures with the airline. Although Eastern has hired new pilots in an attempt to meet the shortfall it still does not have enough pilots and is being forced to cancel flights. This is causing potential

... 'frivolous law suit, top to bottom' — ALPA President...

about \$1m in outstanding penalties.

Stung by this latest blow to his pride and prestige, Lorenzo, never a friend of the unions, filed a \$1.5 billion law suit in a Miami court against the pilots' and machinists' unions and their local branches at its Eastern subsidiary on 6 May accusing the union and its branch officials of a string of fatuous charges - including racketeering, extortion, fraud and defamation - aimed, according to Lorenzo, at destroying the company prior to wresting ownership and control themselves. ALPA President Captain Henry Duffy said the suit was an attempt by Texas Air to shield itself from negative publicity and was a "frivolous lawsuit, top to bottom".

The suit is in direct retaliation for the unions' successful lobbying on safety which led to a TV exposé and calls from congressional leaders for the investigation now taking place.

The Texas suit accuses the unions of laying false charges on safety standards, slowing down operations, intimidating bankers and other lenders and demoralising Eastern's employees.

This latest reprisal tightens the screw yet further in what has been one of the most vicious US labour disputes of the past decade. But the tide does at last seem to be turning in favour of the unions as Lorenzo has been blocked in numerous attempts to ride roughshod over the unions at Eastern.

Meanwhile, pilots are leaving Eastern Airlines in increasing

passengers to stop flying Eastern and to look for a more reliable alternative.

The financial difficulties at Eastern are not easing and the company has just announced that it will be transferring workers and sharply limiting hiring this summer to avoid layoffs. It has also cut flights from its southern hub in Atlanta.

'Safety czar' call from presidential panel

A presidential aviation panel called last month for major changes in US air safety regulations including the appointment of a 'safety czar' and surprise airline inspections. A major overhaul was needed if the system was to meet the demands posed by future growth of the industry and technological change, the Aviation Safety Commission decided. In its report, the Commission called for an independent Federal Aviation Authority headed by an administrator appointed by the president for a fixed term. Under the present system the FAA is part of the Department of Transportation and its administrator reports to the transportation secretary.

Hawaii jet incident underlines case for cabin crew licensing

Only one stewardess was left to cope alone with the terrified passengers on Aloha Airlines flight 243 from Hilo on Hawaii Island to Honolulu on Oahu on 28 April when the roof was partially ripped off as it flew at 24,000 feet over the Pacific Ocean and the aircraft began to lose pressure. The entire roof from the front passenger door to the wings simply disappeared, the damage extending right down to seat level.

It was thanks to her superb professionalism and presence of mind in circumstances she could never have imagined even in her worst nightmares that a horrifying event did not become an utter disaster, with many lives lost.

Despite the fact that she had been blown off her feet when a third of the roof went stewardess Michelle Honda, 14 years with Aloha, immediately went into the emergency routine that her training had prepared her for in the event of a sudden rapid decompression.

According to her testimony she remembers being on the floor, crawling up the aisle rung by rung, telling passengers to put on lifejackets. Even from the floor, holding on with desperately firm grip to avoid the danger of being sucked out of the plane, she helped passengers frozen with fear in getting out their lifejackets.

Her next job was to prevent the passengers from panicking as they saw the open sky after the roof had peeled off. She remembers looking up into people's face from the floor trying to reassure them that the pilots had the situation under control, even when she did not know whether the controls had been fatally damaged in the incident.

Later she tried to establish contact with the cockpit by radio but the line was dead and realising that hysteria could well set in among the passengers she again tried to calm and reassure them.

One of the attendants unknown to her had been sucked out of the plane while another had been badly hurt and was lying unconscious with severe head injuries on the floor of the cabin and efforts had to be made to move her to safety.

Barely able to move against the wind Ms Honda tried desperately to keep her breathing shallow as she could not get to an oxygen mask and feared she would pass out.

Amid vapour and flying debris — she described the experience like being in a blizzard with the air thick with paper, fibreglass etc —

rible experience she had just undergone, she continued with her duties by assisting in the emergency evacuation while the injured stewardess disorientated and bleeding was taken to hospital.

The actions of Ms Honda in her skilful handling of a serious emergency bear out the ITF case that flight attendants have such vital

...aboard plane with gaping hole, lone cabin attendant calms passengers...

she grabbed the arms of passengers to reassure them, all the time trying to keep well away from the dangerous gaping hole.

When it became clear that the aircraft was going to make an emergency landing on the island of Maui she tried to issue the standard warning to passengers to assume the correct body position but the debris pushing at her throat meant that no sound came out.

Even when the plane had landed, though clearly shocked by the ter-

safety responsibilities for passenger safety that they should be internationally licensed. No one doubts that pilots should be licensed but when it comes to cabin attendants they are seen in a different light and the importance of their emergency duties, which — as is so dramatically shown in this case — can be the key to survival for hundreds of passengers, is all too often underplayed.

The ITF in putting its case before the licensing panel of the International
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US controllers set organising goals

An organisation campaign among America's air traffic controllers was given top priority by delegates attending the three day inaugural convention of their union, the National Air Traffic Controllers' Association, attended by over 200 controllers from across the United States.

To help in this, controllers have until June of this year to enrol as charter members which will entitle them to special lapel pins and engraved membership cards.

Addressing the convention, National Coordinator John Thornton outlined the union's successes over the past eighteen months and listed the key areas to which it will be devoting its attention in the coming months. NATCA will be calling on the Federal Aviation Administration to restore reporting immunity to controllers (this was the situation before the 1981 strike and Reagan's firing of the

striking controllers) as well as asking for more controllers (there are over 40,00 less controllers now than in 1981 through traffic has increased by 30 per cent and 2,000 of these are older controllers eligible for retirement) and new equipment. The union is also seeking controller representation on the National Transportation Safety Board's investigation teams.

The meeting overhauled the union's constitution and discussed legislation and bargaining goals. Elections are to be held this spring for the union's president, vice president and executive with the results being expected in June.

In his address, pilots' President Henry Duffy promised the union ALPA's support in its organising efforts while former PATCO President John Leyden explained to delegates the history of controller union representation.

...inadequate safety checks failed to reveal fatal cracks

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tional Civil Aviation Organization in Montreal has called for an international standard of competency in safety training for the profession.

The ITF brief refers to the increasing sophistication of international commercial jet travel and the consequent need for the highest levels of professional competence among those on duty in the cabin who are entrusted with responsibility for the safety of the travelling public.

On a specific point of direct relevance to the Hawaii jet incident, the ITF licensing proposal refers to the need for competent cabin staff to take authoritative leadership in the event of an emergency to prevent chaos and panic which could result in large loss of life. This requirement was if anything even more important in the present case as there was only one person available to take sole charge of the passengers and ensure their safety and it is important to realise that there could be other emergency situations where the number of

attendants available could well be far less than the official crew complement.

The ITF believes that only if cabin attendants are licensed can the travelling public be sure that the cabin crew who look after them have the necessary knowledge, proficiency and competence.

Lower safety standards

The Hawaii jet incident, which involved a 19 year old Boeing 737 which had made almost 90,000 landings, also seems to confirm fears that safety standards in US aviation are less stringent than they were before deregulation — a fact that should give members of the public flying on older aircraft cause for considerable concern.

Inspections ordered by the FAA on older aircraft of the same type (ie those that have made over 55,000 landings) after the incident revealed cracks that should have been found when it last ordered similar inspections last autumn.

Had these earlier checks been carried out with the proper stringency it is certain that the damage

to the Aloha Airlines Boeing (the cause has not yet been established but is thought to be metal fatigue) would have been revealed and that it would have been withdrawn from service for repair.

Had this happened sixty passengers and the crew of the jet would have been spared an experience from which none of them had expected to emerge alive.

An FAA order banning these aircraft at flying above 23,000 feet (the danger of a rupture occurs at 24,000 ft where the difference between internal and external pressures can cause a weakened fuselage to burst open) until they have been checked should prevent further such incidents. However, in a regulated industry further checks would not have been necessary because adequate safety checks would already have been made and would have identified the potential danger site at an earlier stage and would have allowed the vital corrective action to be taken.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

27-28 June	Research and Publications Meeting	London
20-21 Sept.	Rhine-Main-Danube Working Group	Strasbourg
28.-30 Sept.	Civil Aviation Section Conference	Tenerife
4-6 October	Road Transport Section Conference	Brazil
18-19 October	Executive Board	Nuremburg
30 Nov.-2 Dec.	Seafarers' Section Conference	Brazil

STOP PRESS! (for story see page 4)

We have just heard that Malaysian trade union leader Dr. V David has been released from jail. His release has no doubt been influenced by the powerful trade union protests at his continued detention. However, we are told that he is restricted to the immediate area of his home. We hope this remaining restriction on his liberty will be removed soon.

Chile national rail strike

What started as a short half day warning rail strike on 7 April in protest at the plans of the Chilean government to privatise the state railways took on a more serious character when the rail management retaliated by sacking 73 railmen, 17 of them union leaders.

Among those dismissed was José Criado, President of the Chilean National Federation of Railway Workers' Unions as well as the Federation's General Secretary Ceferino Barra and its Director Guillermo Munizaga.

The dismissals sparked off an all-out strike - the first national stoppage in the Chilean public sector since the Pinochet regime came to power. In striking the railwaymen have thrown down a challenge to the government and have demonstrated the importance they attach to keeping the railways in the public sector.

Public sector strikes are illegal in Chile. Only private sector strikes are permitted and then only following the breakdown of negotiations.

With no pay coming in life was very difficult for the workers and their families. Soup kitchens were set up by the Federation in all the main rail centres but food was hard to come by.

Their plight was relieved by the generous financial assistance made available by ITF railmen's affiliates in response to a call from the ITF for help in providing the hard pressed strikers and their dependants with food and other basic necessities.

Meanwhile, the ITF and its railwaymen's affiliates are sending messages of solidarity to the union assuring it of continuing union support and are keeping up their pressure on the Chilean government to reinstate all the railway workers.

...first national public sector strike since Pinochet seized power...

The national strike was eventually called off on 30 April under the terms of an 'act of compromise' signed by the Minister of Transport.

While most of the strikers were reinstated without reprisals, 101 workers who made up the first group to be dismissed were excluded from this provision. None of the 17 sacked union leaders won reinstatement.

Their cases are now being reviewed on a case by case basis by a special committee which has been set up and on which the unions are represented with the right to vote.

It is also feared that the state railways will dismiss a further thousand employees.

It could well take some time before all the workers get their jobs back as according to the latest news reaching us at ITF headquarters only 3 of the 17 dismissed union leaders have won reinstatement.

The Federation's President José Criado is planning to attend the ILO General Conference at the beginning of June to explain the railwaymen's case and it is hoped that the international attention that the matter will receive could assist in bringing about a satisfactory conclusion.

The ILO has already received a complaint from the ICFTU over the dismissals which it has denounced as a serious violation of trade union rights.

Malaysian railmen seek hard news on rail privatisation

Malaysian railwaymen have become increasingly concerned over recent months that their union - the Railwaymen's Union of Malaya (RUM) - is not being kept informed of the progress of the government's plans for the privatisation of the railways.

There are clearly many questions that they want RUM to raise at the highest level about these plans which will have such a direct bearing on their future livelihoods, particularly as the interim report on privatisation is known to be in the government's hands.

A government press statement appeared in the New Straits Times last month stressing the positive benefits of privatisation for workers, customers and management. The union has welcomed this as a statement of the government's intent and a good starting point for talks with the officials of the transport ministry.

In seeking talks, the union is responding to a resolution passed by an extraordinary delegates conference earlier this year mandating it to seek a meeting with the Minister of Transport so as to ob-

tain full details of the plans and their likely impact on pay and conditions of service of active railmen as well as on the pensions of retired rail workers.

The union is now awaiting a reply on its request for a meeting. If it goes ahead, as we hope it will, RUM's leaders will also be seeking clarification as to when the final report on privatisation will be made available to it, as well as assurances on the extent to which RUM will be consulted throughout the privatisation process and what negotiating machinery will be set up for railmen after privatisation.

Rail promotion plans discussed in Vienna

Future ITF activities to promote the railways as an environmentally sensitive transport mode were discussed by the Committee members of the ITF Railwaymen' Section when they met in Vienna on 4 May.

Two possibilities were put before the meeting:

- * a set of exhibition coaches fitted out with publicity material that would tour major regional centres in a number of countries over a period of months; or

- * the hosting of a symposium on the benefits of the railways nation-

ally and internationally with the participation of leading figures in the industry.

It was agreed that Committee members would let the Secretariat know their preferences after which a working party chaired by ITF Assistant General Secretary Graham Brothers would be set up to finalise plans for whichever type of action was eventually decided on.

The meeting sent a message of support to the railwaymen of Chile in their current dispute (see separate item) and backed this up by a

message to President Pinochet calling on him to reinstate those rail union officials who had been dismissed and thus ensure respect for essential trade union rights.

Other subjects discussed by the members of the Committee included the publication by the ITF of statistical information on railway developments and new developments with regard to technology on the railways.

It was decided that the next Section Conference would be held in Spain in September next year.

TRAVEL BUREAUX

ITSs agree on more international travel trade cooperation

International cooperation in the travel industry took a step forward this month following a meeting of top officials of the three Internationals active in this field.

The meeting which took place at the headquarters of the Foodworkers' International IUF in Geneva, was attended by ITF Travel Bureau Section Secretary Pio Albanesi and

Section Chairman Lars Hellman of the Swedish union HTF.

Also present were IUF General Secretary Dan Gallin and Guy Ryder, Industry Section Secretary of the white collar workers' International FIET.

The officials discussed the problems the industry and travel trade unions were facing and decided to set up a joint working group on

tourism coordinated by IUF General Secretary Dan Gallin.

The first task of the group will be to prepare a joint document outlining current union concerns for presentation to the inaugural meeting of the ILO Committee on Hotels, Catering and Tourism which is being held in December of next year.

FISHERIES

Pay hike for Canadian freezer trawler and scallop fishermen

Hard bargaining has brought major gains for scallop fishermen in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia under a new two year contract giving them ten per cent pay increases and banning sailings on Saturday or before noon on Sunday. Under the contract crew members at sea for more than 28 days in the harsh winter months of January through

March will receive a bonus of \$15 a day and there are other gains relating to life insurance cover and the qualifying period for holiday pay.

Bonus pay for Christmas Day

The men are members of local 611 of the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway and Transport Workers as are the fishermen and process-

ing crew on the factory freezer MV *Cape North* of Lunenburg who have won an identical pay rise plus fringe benefits estimated at a further two per cent over two years. The trawler crews will also get 40 pounds of fish per trip for their own use and receive bonus pay of \$250 if they are at sea on Christmas Day.

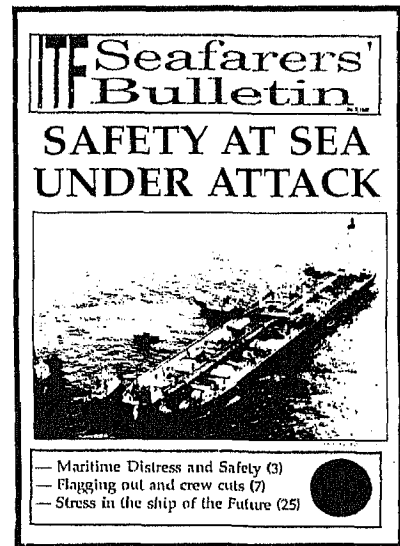
NEW ITF PUBLICATIONS

The latest edition of the ITF Seafarers' Bulletin - the 3rd - is now out, with the international round up of news and analysis of trends in shipping over the past year that is winning the publication more and more readers among those with an interest in the maritime industry.

This issue deals extensively with the growing concern about increased levels of stress and fatigue among seafarers as more of the world's shipowners flag out and crew sizes are cut back. Major features in the current issue include: the global maritime distress and safety system, casualties to ro ro ships and ITF guidelines on manning and watchkeeping.

Maritime affiliates will shortly be receiving their copies for distribution.

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



VERKEERSKUNDIG STUDIECENTRUM
Traffic research centre
rijksuniversiteit groningen nederland

Relationships between Road
Transport Working Conditions,
Fatigue, Health and Traffic
Safety

VK 87-01
Drs. F. Van Ouwkerk

A study commissioned by the
International Transport Workers' Federation

Regulations governing hours and rest periods for professional road transport drivers in Europe are systematically ignored, endangering not only their own safety but also that of other road users.

This is the alarming conclusion of a report entitled Relationships between Road Transport Working Conditions, Fatigue, Health and Traffic Safety carried out by the Traffic Research Centre of the University of Groningen in the Netherlands at the request of the ITF.

The report analyses a wide range of studies on working conditions, fatigue and health and safety carried out by occupational health experts in Europe, Australia and North America.

The Dutch researchers conclude that drivers work longer hours, with not enough time for sleep and have health problems associated with the stressful pattern of their working lives.

The report is published in English, French, German, Spanish and Swedish and has been distributed to drivers' unions, members of parliament and road safety experts throughout Europe with the aim of persuading those responsible for road safety and driving regulations to take immediate action. Further studies are planned by the ITF in an effort to make road transport a safer and more attractive industry in which to work.

The first edition of the ITF Inland Transport Bulletin has just come out and copies are being dispatched to affiliates. General readers will find much of interest in this new publication, which deals with recent developments and trends in road and rail transport worldwide. The publication provides interesting insights into the effects on transport workers of plans for a unified transport policy in the European Community by 1992. Other articles show how the microchip revolution is transforming road transport and the implications for consumers and workers in both the road and rail sectors of the worldwide trend towards privatisation and deregulation. The issue also takes in the remarkable success story of Switzerland's Rail and Bus 2000 project and includes an in-depth feature on the UN Decade for African Transport, an ambitious programme aimed at coming to grips with the continent's transport needs.



Copies of these three publications may be obtained on request from ITF headquarters.