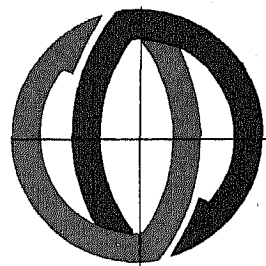


INFORMATIONS : NOTICIAS

ITF NEWS

NACHRICHTEN : NYHETER



NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1988

INSIDE

EB calls hazardous goods conference (2)
Appeal to Botha on SA death sentences (3)
Ndllovu faces terror charge (4)
African conferences :
women (5)
francophone unions (6)
Fiji - broken promises (7)
Union rights in Turkey (8)
French public sector strikes (9)

INLAND TRANSPORT

ITF meets truck makers (10)
Kings Cross fire - report (11)
London rail crash (12)

FISHERIES

French/Canadian dispute (13)

CIVIL AVIATION

Civil Aviation Week (14)
Eastern unions fight on (15)
Airline privatisations (16)

DOCKERS

Toxic waste trail (17)
New York tugs victory (18)

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS (18)

PEOPLE (19)

OBITUARIES (20)

SEAFARERS

Rio Conference report (21)
(Some) Radio Officers to stay (23)
Offshore safety - ITF demands (25)
New Ro Ro rules at IMO (26)
Flag Round Up (27)

TRAVEL BUREAUX

Thomas Cook deal (29)

UNIONS BREAK WITH SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT'S STRATEGY

8 MILLION WORKERS JOIN SPANISH STRIKE

For the first time in 54 years, a general strike took place in Spain on 14 December. Led by the UGT national centre together with the Comisiones Obreras (CC.OO) and supported by nearly every trade union the strike brought the country, and especially transport services, to a complete halt. Even the government had to admit that more than 2/3 of Spain's workers, over eight million, participated in the strike.

The strike took place in protest against the economic and social policies of the Socialist government of Spain led by Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez, a long time friend and supporter of Spanish unions. According to the ITF affiliated UGT Transport and Telecommunications Federation (FETC), the strike is technically a 'work stoppage' called with only one objective - to secure a significant change in the government's economic policies.

After many years of economic sacrifices accepted by Spanish working people in the interests of 'consolidating democracy' the unions have this time decided that things have gone far enough. The FETC, in a letter asking for the ITF's solidarity, points out that the only beneficiaries have been the employers and particularly the banks while unemployment in Spain has risen to be the highest in the European Community.

What brought matters to a head this time was the 1988 Budget discussion in which the government fixed impossible economic objectives (a rate of inflation of 3 per cent for the year when it was already at 5.3 per cent). This led to the resignation from Parliament of two key UGT leaders President Nicolas Redondo and Organisation Secretary Anton Saracibar. The government then proposed a plan to reduce youth unemployment which, in the unions' view, simply increased the marginalisation of the labour market. The government and Socialist party then launched a major campaign against union demands under the slogan "Us or Chaos".

In a message sent to Prime Minister Gonzalez on 9 December, ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis expressed disappointment at the government's reluctance to change its position:

"We deeply regret that your government's attitude should have led to a confrontation between the trade unions and the Socialist party which the UGT has supported so loyally over many years and especially during the dark era of dictatorship" he added, expressing the hope that a new understanding will soon be reached with the UGT on measures and policies which will meet the aspirations of working people in Spain.

SOUTH AFRICAN BUS DRIVERS ON DEATH ROW (3)

ITF hazardous goods meeting planned

Two major ITF international conferences — one on the transport of dangerous goods; the other on the implications of the completion of the European Internal Market — were fixed for 1989 by the October meeting of the Executive Board.

The meeting took place on 17-18 October in the South German city of Nuremberg at the invitation of the German Railwaymen's Union which was holding its Congress at the same time. Many members of the Executive Board were able to be present at the opening session of the GdED Congress, which was ad-

bourg, will bring together transport unions from both EC and non-EC countries. Unions not affiliated to the ITF but represented in the various Community institutions dealing with transport will be invited as observers. Preparations for the conference will be carried out by a small working group to be established by the ITF General Secretary in close cooperation with the Secretary of the Committee of Transport Workers in the European Community (the 'Brussels Committee').

The meeting heard a report of the sub-

Union of Seamen (Great Britain) and P & O European Ferries and appreciation was expressed on behalf of the NUS to ITF seafarer affiliates in other European countries for the solidarity which they had provided during the period when the NUS's assets had been seized by the British Courts. It was agreed to send a message of support to the 600 NUS members still on strike in Dover.

Discussion on the ITF's campaign against Flags of Convenience was dominated by recent legal decisions in a number of countries, some positive and others negative. Particular concern was expressed about the activities of a Philippine union known as ALU-PSU which had concluded large numbers of sub-standard agreements with shipowners, which were making legal action in support of ITF conditions for crew members very difficult. The PSU union, which was indirectly affiliated with the ICFTU in Brussels was also launching a major legal attack on the ITF's existing Philippine affiliate AMOSUP. After a detailed discussion the Board authorised the General Secretary to contact the PSU to demand that it stop its attacks on AMOSUP immediately and to express the ITF's resentment at the union's attempts to weaken the ITF FOC campaign.

Following a report on educational activities in Africa, Latin America and Asia/Pacific, the Board agreed to further study of ways to improve the representation of developing countries in the ITF's structures. New unions were accepted into affiliation from Togo, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Peru and Papua New Guinea.

36th Congress

Bro Luciano Mancini (CGIL Italy) announced to the Board that the Italian affiliates proposed that the 36th ITF Congress should take place in Florence, probably in October 1990. The Board accepted this proposal with enthusiasm and left it to the Secretariat, together with the Italian unions, to make the final arrangements.

The Board also agreed to convene a special European conference of ITF affiliates to discuss the implications for trade unions of the proposed completion of the internal market within the EC in 1992.

dréssed by ITF President Jim Hunter as well as by the German Transport Minister and the leader of the opposition Social Democratic Party.

Dangerous Goods

The EB meeting approved a Secretariat proposal to convene a special conference on the transport of dangerous goods, including toxic wastes, in the second half of 1989. The proposal was strongly supported by Board member Jonas Abam from the Nigerian Dockworkers' Union, some of whose members became seriously ill after handling Italian waste dumped in the port of Koko earlier this year. Representatives of other international organisations, including the International Chemical Workers' Federation and Greenpeace will be invited to the conference as observers.

Europe 1992

The Board also agreed to convene a special European conference of ITF affiliates to discuss the implications for trade unions of the proposed completion of the internal market within the EC in 1992. The Conference, which will take place from 5-7 April 1989 in Luxem-

stantial financial support given by ITF affiliates to Chilean railwaymen dismissed for taking part in strike action earlier this year, and of plans to hold a special railway symposium in Geneva in February 1990. A report was made on the conclusions of the Road Transport conference in Rio de Janeiro and on measures to boost ITF work in the urban transport sector. On civil aviation, there was a detailed discussion about the planned link up between SAS and Frank Lorenzo's Texas Air Corporation. The meeting also heard about the Civil Aviation Conference held in Tenerife and on plans for Civil Aviation Week (see separate story). Plans were also reported for an ambitious two year education programme for Caribbean dockworkers due to begin in 1989 with the support of the Norwegian trade union movement

The Board was informed that important changes had taken place in the structure of the Special Seafarers' Department at ITF headquarters which from now on will be integrated with the Seafarers' Section. A further report was made on the dispute between the National

General Secretary: **Harold Lewis**

Publications Officer: **David Cockroff**

International Transport Workers' Federation
Federación Internacional de los Trabajadores del Transporte
Internationale Transportarbeiter-Föderation
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CONDEMNED TO DEATH...

ITF unions appeal for clemency



These four men are now on death row in Pretoria, South Africa. They are, left to right, Johannes Buthelezi, William Khuzwayo, Bethwell Sabelo and Stanford Ngubo.

The ITF is issuing an urgent appeal to all affiliated and friendly organisations to petition the South African State President for the lives of four transport workers who have been condemned to hang.

The South African Chief Justice refused a petition on December 6 to appeal the death sentences passed on August 23 against Stanford Ngubo, Johannes Buthelezi, Bethwell Sabelo and William Khuzwayo.

Ngubo, Buthelezi, Sabelo and Khuzwayo were all condemned to death by the South African Supreme Court in Durban on August 23.

They were convicted of murdering a Durban South Putco Depot bus driver during the October/November 1986 Putco bus strike.

The state claims that Ngubo, Buthelezi and Sabelo — all members of the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) — hired Khuzwayo — an unemployed former TGWU member — to kill Retford Shezi, who was shot while driving a bus during the strike.

Despite conflicting evidence about the men's presence at the scene of the crime, the judge decided that Khuzwayo fired the four fatal shots that killed the driver. The judge felt that the fact that the three drivers did not pull the trigger did not make them any the less guilty.

Defence lawyers pointed out that there was conflicting evidence about whether Ngubo's car was at the scene of the crime or not (one witness, a teacher,

standing at the bus stop, noted a different registration number from that of another witness, Police Constable Mabhidia).

Stanford Ngubo also pointed out to the court that his car had been stolen at the time of the shooting and he had only recovered the car on 21 November, a day after the shooting. He had reported the theft of his car to the police station on the day of the theft. The judge rejected this evidence saying it was relatively easy to stage the theft of a car.

A firearm was found at the house of Bethuel Sabelo but it did not match up with the bullets and cartridges found at the scene of the crime.

Despite the obvious weakness of the case Durban Supreme Court Justice Van Heerden initially refused the men permission to appeal the death sentence.

The four men were then transferred from Durban to death row in Pretoria. Their lawyers petitioned the chief justice of the appellate division to reconsider van Heerden's refusal to allow an appeal on the death sentence.

The ITF launched a worldwide appeal in support of these four men. We initially asked affiliates to send messages of protest to the South African government supporting the appeal petition and to ask their national governments to appeal for the men's lives. We do not believe that the conviction is sound, and we utterly oppose the use of the death penalty.

The ITF has already received copies

of messages protesting the death penalty and calling upon the South African government to allow the four the right of appeal from the International Metalworkers' Federation (IMF), the International Union of Food and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF), the International Federation of Plantation, Agricultural and Allied Workers (IFPAAW), the International Confederation of Free Trades Unions (ICFTU), the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), the British Trades Union Congress (TUC), by all the French ITF affiliates (CFDT, Force Ouvrière, SNPL, SNPNC, SNOMAC and FMC), by the Dutch Vervoersbond FNV, the West German ÖTV, the British MSF, the US International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW), the Belgian BTB, and the Australian Transport Workers' Union. Many other messages have doubtlessly been sent.

Now that the petition to appeal has been rejected by the Chief Justice, all legal steps to save the men's lives have been exhausted. The only route left is to appeal directly to South African State President P.W. Botha for clemency.

ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis has issued a call for all affiliates to contact P.W. Botha and to ask their governments to join the call for clemency:

"We cannot stress how important it is to bring international pressure to bear in this case. The South African govern-

Continued on page 4

Trade union leader faces terrorism charge: South African state tries to fabricate ANC-COSATU link

Transport and General Workers' Union of South Africa first Vice President Alfred Ndlovu was in detention without charge since October 10, 1987. He was charged in June with terrorism and attempted murder. The state claims that he was involved in an attempted assassination and has harboured and assisted an ANC guerrilla. These fabricated charges are very serious because they represent an attempt to criminalise the trade union movement by drawing links between them and the armed activities of the ANC.

Ndlovu's trial began on 7 November and was set to last three weeks, but has now been postponed till early next year.

Ndlovu, who is married and has five children, lives in one of the Pietermaritzburg townships. He is a long-standing member of the TGWU and is respected as an influential and powerful leader in the Pietermaritzburg area. In addition to his TGWU position, he is the Natal regional Chairperson of the Congress of South African Trades Unions (COSATU).

Ndlovu was arrested on October 10, 1987 by the CID. He was told that he was to be charged with attempted murder but never appeared in court. Instead he was held in detention under section 29 of the Internal Security Act. This allows for interrogation, solitary confinement, no access to lawyers, family or friends, no study rights, and no reading matter. After ten months in detention, he was brought before the Pietermaritzburg Regional Court on June 17 1987. His family and lawyers were not informed that he was to appear in court.

The main charges against Ndlovu are terrorism and attempted murder.

The state claims that between June 1987 and October 1987, Ndlovu committed and planned acts of violence with the ANC. They claim he instructed people in the use of firearms and instructed four men to kill another man.

The state also allege that Ndlovu arranged accommodation, transport and food for an ANC member called Mjitha and assisted him in his work. They also claim that he encouraged people to leave the country to take military training with the ANC.

Under the attempted murder charges the state alleges that Ndlovu attempted to kill a member of Chief Buthelezi's Inkatha organisation by inciting four people to murder him. The state also allege that he tried to kill another 14 Inkatha members and that he conspired to kill another man.

The trial was postponed because the state witness who is supposed to give evidence on the connection between the ANC and COSATU has been hospitalised with heart problems.

The trial so far has consisted of state witness evidence against Ndlovu. Two state witnesses were TGWU members who worked with Ndlovu in the same depot. One TGWU state witness contradicted his confession when he gave evidence and the state are now considering prosecuting him as a hostile witness.

The other TGWU driver, Jeffrey Kheswa (formerly an emergency detainee for 11 months) gave state evidence which did not implicate anyone, and he was then released. A non-TGWU member of the community gave

very hostile evidence against Ndlovu, but it seems in such cases, the witnesses often claim some form of torture in detention.

It would appear that the South African government is most interested in pinning the charge of Terrorism on Ndlovu. They are less interested in the attempted murder charge. Terrorism carries the death penalty, and the main point of this trial is a disturbing desire by the state to establish direct links between the TGWU through COSATU to the ANC. The implications for the future of free trade unionism in South Africa are very ominous.

ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis has called upon all affiliates to send messages of protest to the South African government, and to send letters of support to Alfred in prison and to his wife.

His address is
Alfred Ndlovu:
New Prison,
Private Bag 9022
Pietermaritzburg 3200
Republic of South Africa

and his wife:
Mrs. Ndlovu:
c/o TGWU
PO Box 8131
Cumberwood 3235,
Republic of South Africa

Many affiliates have already written, and those that haven't yet are encouraged to do so. Further information on Ndlovu's trial will be published in ITF News.

...international action is crucial to save these men's lives

Continued from page 3

ment have shown that they respond if there is enough of it." said Lewis.

ICFTU General Secretary John Vanderveken has already telexed Botha to "strongly reiterate our appeal to you for clemency on humanitarian grounds."

Stanford Ngubo is a longstanding

member of the TGWU and a PUTCO busdriver. He is married with three children.

Johannes Buthelezi is also a PUTCO driver, longstanding TGWU member and shop steward. He has been married twice and has 11 children.

Bethwell Sabelo is also a PUTCO driver and longstanding TGWU driver.

He is married with 6 children.

William Khuzwayo is an unemployed former busdriver who has been a member of the TGWU. He is unmarried and has three children.

**PW Botha's telex number is
(095) 322158 pres1 sa.**

ITF African women's conference

An urgent call for women to be integrated into the trade union movement at all levels comes from the first African Women's Conference of the ITF.

Women delegates from ITF unions in sixteen different countries throughout the continent had gathered in Nairobi on 3 October for the five day conference organised by the ITF's African representative Ben Udogwu.

The conference was the latest of a number of highly successful meetings the ITF has held recently in Kenya. The valuable cooperation offered by both the government and the Kenyan Labour Centre COTU, which provided leading speakers for the opening session, did much to raise the standard of debate and enhance the value of the conference to delegates, for many of whom this was their first experience of an international meeting of trade unionists. Further valuable assistance came from the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), the development agency based in the Federal Republic of Germany.

The conference was officially opened by Francisca Otete, who chairs the Caretaker Committee of the leading Kenyan women's organisation Maendeleo Ya Wanawake and is also a member of the Public Service Commission. Others who addressed the session included COTU Secretary General J J Mugalla and COTU's women's affairs coordinator Mary Wakofu.

The ITF's Ben Udogwu and local FES representative Herman Matusch also gave speeches of welcome on behalf of their respective organisations.

Valuable input also came from Mrs J Alogo of the Kenyan union of Posts and Telecommunications, former trade unionist Mrs Mwangi, currently an official at the Ministry of Labour and Dr Tiyanbe Zeleza, a lecturer at the Kenyatta University and author of a FES-commissioned book on women in the Kenyan union movement.

The business of the meeting was conducted in both English and French to enable the maximum number of delegates to play an active part in the group discussions which formed an essential part of the proceedings, an objective which was furthered by allowing the chairmanship of the main sessions of the conference to rotate



among delegates.

National papers were submitted by the various delegations to the conference on topics such as: the role of women in the industrialisation process and their integration in development; the pay and working conditions of women in industry; maternity protection; and participation of women in the development of African trade unions.

The conference recognised that women along with children were often excluded from the benefits of development programmes and that as a group women had traditionally been excluded from education while their important role within the family and the community had been undervalued.

The trade unions in Africa had regrettably done almost nothing to promote equality between men and women with the result that women were excluded from decision-making within the movement, while at work their pay lagged far behind that of their male counterparts. The work of rural women in boosting food production was disregarded and the living and working conditions of women generally were appalling and dehumanizing.

The conference concluded its deliberations by asking for help from the ITF and its African affiliates in counter-

ing these basic inequalities which were often deeply embedded in the culture and traditions of the African nations.

In particular, the ITF was asked to step up its programme of educational activities and training in the region, thus giving the women of Africa a chance to improve their standard of living and play an active part in the development and industrialisation process.

The conference also called on the ITF to assist the integration of women into the trade unions and to remove the current obstacles that prevented them from playing a proper role at all levels of the movement and excluded them from effective participation both nationally and internationally.

These demands were backed up by a plea for union participation in grass roots literacy programmes for women and for union action to outlaw sexual discrimination at the workplace. Practical measures recognising the special needs of women in the workforce were also requested such as the holding of union meetings during working hours; the introduction of maternity leave in countries where this did not already exist; and the setting up of day care centres for the children of working women.

ITF FRANCOPHONE AFRICAN SEMINAR

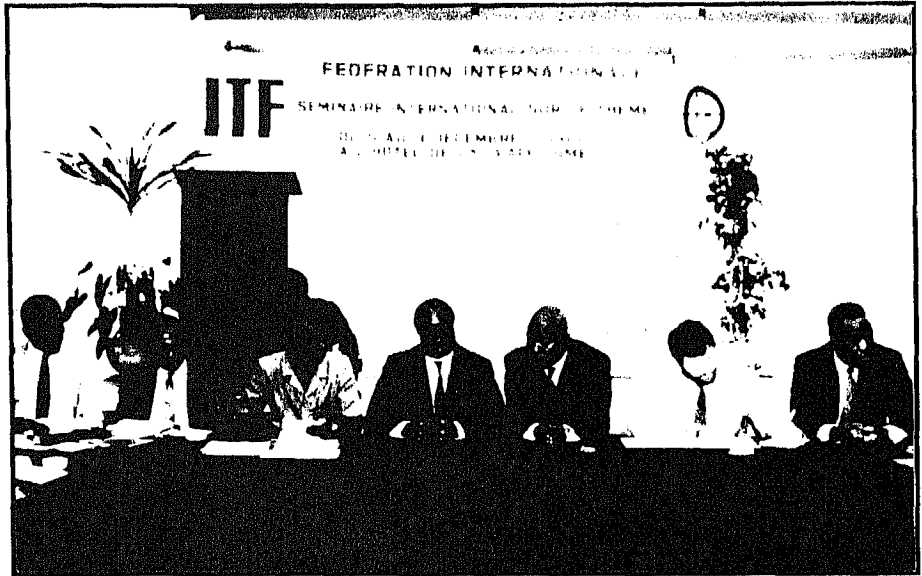
The first ever international seminar for ITF affiliates in French speaking Africa took place in Lomé, Togo from 5 to 9 December 1988. The seminar, which dealt with Labour Economics brought together transport union leaders from affiliated and friendly unions in seven African countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroun, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Togo. It was sponsored jointly by the ITF and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

The opening session was addressed by representatives of the Togo Transport Minister and the CNTT national trade union centre as well as by ITF Research & Publications Secretary David Cockroft who directed the seminar jointly with Ben Udogwu, ITF African representative and Koko Fantognon, ITF coordinator for francophone Africa.

Following an exposé on the ITF and its activities, participants discussed Africa and the world economy, the role of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, the problem of unemployment in African countries and the monetary system, (most of the countries represented are part of the West African Monetary Union).

Lecturers also covered problems experienced by negotiators at enterprise level, the role of public authorities in industrial relations in francophone African countries, and wage determination. A final session dealt with the history and development of the African trade union movement.

A final resolution drafted by seminar participants expressed appreciation for the high quality of the lectures and discussions and called on African states to improve cooperation so as to remove many of the economic instabilities which had been referred to during the week. In particular they demanded that transport workers' trade unions should be much more closely involved in the elaboration of national and international transport planning. The ITF was requested to intensify its education programme in francophone Africa and it suggested the foundation of a Trade Union Training Institute to provide regular training for trade union officials and shop stewards. Non-affiliated unions from Mali, Cameroun and Burkina Faso were congratulated on their attendance and recommended to affiliate to the ITF as soon as possible.



In response to a request from the ITF General Secretary the seminar participants addressed a special appeal to South African president P W Botha to spare the lives of four TGWU member (see separate story).

During the course of the seminar a special meeting was held of trade unions organising employees of ASECNA, the intergovernmental company which provides air traffic

control, meteorological and other aviation services for 14 French speaking African countries. The delegates proposed the establishment of an international federation of ASECNA employees within the ITF's structures and requested assistance from the ITF for the convening of a preliminary conference of the federation in Dakar, Senegal which is also ASECNA's headquarters.

US unions, civil liberties groups join to oppose random testing

Transport unions in the United States have joined forces with civil liberties groups to fight deeply unpopular plans — details of which were only announced by the government after the presidential election was safely out of the way — to introduce random drug testing of transport employees.

The plans will affect around four million transport workers in all branches of the industry from airline pilots, to drivers of subway trains, buses and truckers and engine drivers, ie those employed in what the government regards as safety-sensitive jobs.

The transport unions say that while they have no real objections to pre-employment checks for possible drug abuse or for testing after serious accidents to help pinpoint the cause, they are totally opposed to a scheme which they see as an invasion of the privacy of the individual and an attack on civil liberties. They also feel that the

scheme will not help in the battle against the problem of drug and alcohol abuse at the workplace which has the full support of the union movement.

Under the scheme, due to be introduced in December 1989, employers will have to arrange for the testing of their employees. Independent laboratories will be used for the tests and employees will have a fifty fifty chance of being selected in any given year.

Employees who tested positive would only be reinstated when they had received treatment and could pass the test while employers who do not comply with the requirements in respect of their employees would be fined between \$1000 and \$10,000 depending on the seriousness of the offence.

The focus now seems likely to switch to the courts as the unions challenge the plans on constitutional grounds.

Fiji: broken promises on union rights

The Fijian government's promises to restore trade union rights have proved to be empty and hollow.

None of the steps promised to the international trade union delegation last January (see story below) have transpired, and the Fijian "Minister for

Employment and Industrial Relations" and onetime leader of the Fijian registered dockers' union Taniela Vietata has demonstrated a total apathy and lack of interest in living up to any of the personal assurances he made.

The Fijian trade union movement

continues to suffer under the weight of repressive regulations — and Fiji's new draft constitution actually makes official the loss of trade union rights.

Vietata undertook to discuss the restoration of trade union rights with the cabinet. If he has, nobody else in Fiji has heard about it.

The delegation was particularly concerned with two restrictions the government had placed on trade union freedoms. These were the requirements to give notification to the police of union meetings and obtain written approval for travel outside the country.

Vietata assured the delegation that accepted trade union freedoms would be respected.

On the question of police notification of meetings, Vietata claimed that this was merely a formality and that simply notifying the police was all that was necessary to comply with the regulation.

In fact, the police do not seem to agree with Vietata's interpretation and they have continued to insist on formal applications prior to meetings. Union leaders are also still required to seek written approval from the authorities if they wish to travel outside the country.

The FTUC wrote to the Ministry for Home Affairs about these issues and asking what had happened to the assurances given to the international mission.

The government replied, last May, that all industrial matters would be "settled through proper legislative procedures." The Minister for Home Affairs also undertook to recommend to the Cabinet the establishment of an independent agency to examine and rectify trade union complaints.

The Minister's proposal for an "independent" body was that it should have an equal number of employers and unions represented with himself as Chairman and his staff as secretariat. The FTUC suggested that a truly independent Chairman should be selected, but they have received no reply to this suggestion, more than six months later.

The Minister for Home Affairs also promised also said he would bring for attention and early action of the Cabinet the review of all industrial relations

Government 'Emergency measures' remain in force one year later

A year ago the military government of Fiji promised that it would restore basic human and trade union rights.

The democratically elected government of Timoci Bavadra was overthrown by a military coup in the May 1987 led by Colonel Rambuka.

The seizure of power, and suspension of Fiji's democratic 1970 constitution, was accompanied by the wholesale suspension of civil rights.

In response to appeals from Fijian trade unions, ITF affiliates in Australia and New Zealand implemented an air and sea trade boycott against the island. This action received the full backing of the ITF and other affiliates in the region.

The bans were relaxed a month later, and was then lifted due to divisions within the Fijian trade union movement about whether the boycott should be pursued.

A joint delegation from the Australian and New Zealand labour centres went to Fiji in July 1987 to meet with Fijian Trade Union Congress (FTUC) and review the situation. At this time, between the first and second coups, the deposed Prime Minister was still participating in a consultative process with the new military leaders and it appeared possible that democracy might be restored. The delegation and the FTUC recommended that the trade bans should be lifted, noted that full trade union rights were suspended and called for a full restoration of democracy.

Then the second coup came on September 25. Draconian measures were taken against FTUC leaders, and trade union offices were occupied by the military. The military government announced their intention of declaring a republic, annulling the constitution and establishing an apartheid-style racially segregated form of government.

A high level trade union mission sponsored by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and the Australian and New Zealand centres was then organised.

This delegation, which included the ITF Asia/Pacific Secretary Mo Hoda went to Fiji from January 13 to 16 this year. There they met with self-styled "Employment and Industrial Relations Minister" Taniela Vietata — long known in ITF circles as the leader of the affiliated Fijian Registered Port Workers Union.

The situation in the country was drastic. Freedom of the press was suspended, over 150 people, including leading trade unionists, were in emergency detention. Trade unionists were required to seek written permission to hold union meetings or travel abroad.

The delegation urged the government to restore these rights, and they received assurances that when the "emergency situation" had passed these rights would be respected.

Because of these promises, the delegation recommended that the suspension of the aviation and maritime bans by the Australian and New Zealand unions should continue so long as there was a speedy return to democracy and the restoration of full trade union rights. A year later (see main story), it is clear that none of these promises have been kept, nor does the government have any intention of restoring genuine democracy. It may be time to reconsider the international trade union movement's position.

Continued on page 8

Turkey must restore trade union rights

The ITF-affiliated Turkish Railway Workers' Trade Union, DEMIRYOL-IS, held a successful seminar for 78 branch officials at Side-Antalya from 31 October to 3 November 1988. The principal theme of the seminar was "Trade Union Rights and Freedoms and the Problems of Workers".

The meeting discussed developments in the Turkish economy; wages and income distribution; foreign capital; privatisation and contract labour practices. Graham Brothers, ITF Assistant General Secretary, presented a talk on Railwaymen's trade union rights in Europe and Harold Dunning, formerly in charge of the International Labour Organisation's Workers' Relations Branch, spoke on ILO principles and standards.

In his address to the opening session of the seminar Mehmet Açidereli, President of DEMIRYOL-IS, noted that violations of trade union rights in Turkey placed the country in a very difficult position in international relations. Turkey had applied for full membership of the European Community, but restrictions on trade union rights and freedoms constituted a greater obstacle to Turkish membership than economic and social differences, he said.

Turkey is the only European country which has banned civil servants from joining trade unions and which has not ratified ILO Convention 87. The responsibility for the recent deterioration in democratic rights and living standards could be clearly traced back

to the military seizure of power in 1980, which led to the silencing of broad segments of society and blocking of the means to demand justice.

Sevket Yilmaz, President of TURK-IS, the Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions, strongly criticised the Turkish Government for promoting inflation as a deliberate instrument of government policy to weaken the trade unions. While the true annual rate of

inflation in Turkey has reached 85 per cent, the Government claims it is 35 per cent and only permits pay negotiations in the public sector based on the lower figure. He felt that considerable improvement was necessary with respect to the restoration of human, democratic and trade union rights before Turkey could be considered as qualified for membership of the European Community.

HEALTH AND SAFETY FOCUS ON TOXIC WASTE HANDLING

The transport of toxic waste, control of major chemical hazards, asbestos and nuclear safety were all major items on the agenda of the second session of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) International Trade Secretariat (ITS) Working Party on occupational health and safety which took place in Washington D.C. from 24-26 October. The working party brings together health and safety experts from national trade union centres and international trade secretariat to discuss current health and safety problems facing trade union members worldwide. The ITF was represented at the meeting by Research & Publications Secretary David Cockroft.

One of the key topics reviewed in Washington was the ICFTU's education programme on safety and health. Major projects aimed at training na-

tional safety and health experts are under way in India, Thailand and Malaysia and others are planned in the near future. Plans were announced for a regular ICFTU Health and Safety Information Bulletin which will summarise legislation and trade union action in a form which can be directly used by negotiators. Health and Safety Guides are also in the course of preparation on Asbestos and on Safety in the Nuclear Industry.

Special attention was paid to the problems of chemical safety (the Working party was set up in the aftermath of the Bhopal disaster). Draft ICFTU guidelines on the prevention of chemical disasters were reviewed at length and will shortly be published. Group members were also informed

Continued on page 9

... "any discussion of this draft Constitution is prohibited"

Continued from page 7

procedures, laws and decrees. The unions have heard nothing more of this promise.

The Minister also promised to reactivate Fiji's Tripartite Forum, a body with government, employer and union representation. The employers have also supported its revival, but no action has been taken.

The Labour Advisory Board had a new membership appointed by the government in May 1988, but it has never met. The government has also failed to reactivate the wages councils

— which set minimum wages for non-organised workers. The government has appointed some of the councils, but none have ever met.

The government has now revealed that they have very little interest in restoring genuine trade union rights or democratic liberties. The Interim Government published a draft Constitution on September 23 which has been strongly criticised by the opposition.

The new constitution proposes a racially segregated voting system and parliament that will give an apartheid style automatic majority to the ethnic Fijian community. The draft also es-

tablishes that the republic will uphold the "teachings of Jesus Christ" — clearly a discriminatory move in a country where only a minority are Christians. There are no guarantees of any trade union rights in the draft.

The deposed democratically elected Prime Minister, Timoci Bavadra, who is an indigenous Fijian, has objected to the manner in which the Constitution has been formulated, its provisions and its implications.

Because the June 1988 Internal Security Decree is still in force, any discussion of this draft Constitution, or expression of opinion on it, is prohibited.

French workers demand end to austerity

Like their counterparts in Spain, French workers, particularly in the transport and public sectors, have been demanding an end to the policies of economic austerity that have seen national economic growth without any equivalent rise in workers' earnings. These demands have been reflected in a massive wave of strikes that have touched almost every part of the economy.

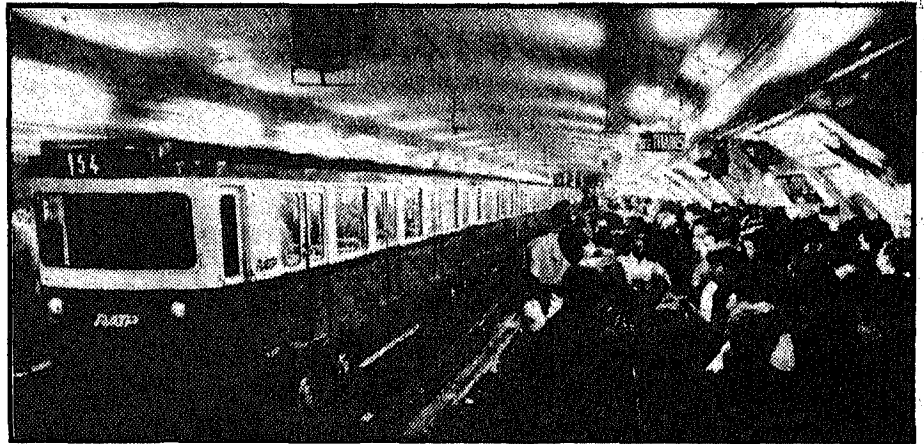
Five years ago, Western European governments and employers were busily "rationalising" and cutting back — workers were told that in economic bad times, they couldn't expect to see real wage increases or improved benefits. Many jobs were lost, and unemployment continues to be a serious problem in much of Western Europe.

But the economic situation isn't desperate any more. Company profits are soaring (thanks in large part to rationalisations, workforce reductions, improved efficiency and low wage increases), and many European workers are starting to demand their fair share of the economic expansion.

When times are tough, the workers are the first to be told to tighten their belts. Now they are being told, by French Prime Minister Michel Rocard and Spanish Premier Felipe Gonzalez, that they must wait just a little bit longer for the good times.

The reaction has been a wave of grassroots led strikes, many of which have taken official union leaderships by surprise.

French workers have undergone an "important reawakening" during the present strike wave, according to Jean Zaoui, Assistant General Secretary of the ITF-affiliated FGTE-CFDT transport federation. The link between strikes in different sectors lies in this



new opposition to the austerity policies imposed by managements and public authorities.

"All these actions are driven by workers' demands concerning purchasing power, jobs, working conditions and the improvement of security and comfort for passengers," said Zaoui.

Both employers and the government bear the responsibility for the length of the strikes, according to the CFDT. Employers have refused to negotiate with the unions, and the government insists on imposing "unacceptable" financial restrictions on the public sector that prevent local managements from having any leeway.

All sectors of French transport have been touched by the strikes — the Paris commuter rail system (RATP), Air-France and the SNCF state railways. Throughout the country there have also been "numerous local actions" involving truck drivers.

Most of these strikes have been long by French standards — longer than three weeks. They have also involved unprecedented levels of inter-union competition. In the RATP, the CFDT, the ITF affiliated Force Ouvrière (FO)

and the autonomous unions have acted together (but without the Communist-affiliated CGT). In Air France the ITF affiliated autonomous unions representing pilots, ground staff and flight attendants, the CFDT and the CGT acted together (this time, however, without the FO).

According to the CFDT, the CGT, in many of conflicts, have broken from the unity of the other unions and pursued a policy of "no concessions" in spite of the what the rest of the workforce wants. The government has tried to portray the strike movement as a CGT inspired political movement, which it is clearly not.

Victories appear to have been won by the Paris RATP and many other urban transport workers, where both FO and the CFDT have accepted substantial pay increases and improvements in working conditions.

The government have also hinted that they may restrict the right to strike in the transport sector, requiring a "minimum service" to be maintained. The unions are "totally opposed" to any such restriction on the right to strike, says Zaoui.

...Working Party on occupational health and safety

Continued from page 8

that the International Labour Conference which meets in June 1989 will have 'safety in the use of chemicals' as one of the main items on its agenda. Unions should do everything possible to encourage the drafting of effective ILO standards on chemical safety.

Chemical waste dumping and trans-

port were also the subject of a special discussion. The ITF was able to inform other participants of its intention to sponsor an international conference on dangerous goods transport and the other organisations present pledged their support and assistance. Current moves within the United Nations to establish international regulations on the illegal

traffic of toxic and dangerous wastes were also reviewed. Finally the Group members reviewed the problem of AIDS in the workplace. Education to prevent the spread of AIDS had to be complemented by effective policies to protect those infected by the HIV virus from unjustified discrimination at the workplace it was agreed.

ITF meets with truck manufacturers

For the first time ever a meeting took place in Paris on 25 October 1988 between ITF road transport trade unions and representatives of the International Organisation of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers (OICA), the truck manufacturers.

The main purpose of the meeting, requested by the ITF, was to explain to the manufacturers ITF affiliates' opposition to the introduction of vehicles with short drivers' cabs and where the sleeping compartment is placed on top of the cab — the so-called "top-sleepers".

The ITF Road Transport Workers' Section believes such cabs not only represent a deterioration in the driver's working environment but also present additional dangers to their occupants. The ITF urged the OICA to support union proposals to amend the European Community's rules on vehicle dimensions in order to incorporate minimum lengths for both day and sleeper cabs. The OICA stated that their members did not wish to manufacture short or top-sleeper cabs; such cabs were mainly the product of independent coachbuilders. The OICA felt that it could be possible to reach agreement on the internal ergonomic dimensions of cabs, but this would take a considerable time.

The meeting also discussed the proposed revision of the UNEconomic Commission for Europe's rules applying to the impact-resistance of truck cabs. The ITF noted that a Swedish proposal for the revision of these rules (Sweden already has stricter standards) had identified two aspects requiring attention — increased cab resistance to frontal deformation and as a protection in roll-over accidents. The manufacturers did not envisage any special measures in these respects,

The manufacturers said that in another area of concern — protection of the cab from penetration by the load from the rear — a number of countries already had standards and the Federal Republic of Germany intended to forward a proposal to the International Standards Organisation (ISO) for rules

on the securing of loads.

The ITF informed the OICA that the ITF Road Transport Workers' Section had voted during its Conference in Rio de Janeiro in October 1988 almost unanimously for the compulsory fitting and wearing of seat belts in commercial vehicles.

The meeting also discussed a number of improvements in cab design and equipment that had been proposed by drivers in the ITF's Survey of European Drivers' Vehicle Preferences, published in 1987. These improvements concerned the fitting as standard of night heaters, air conditioning, heated mirrors and audible reversing warnings. The manufacturers agreed

to provide calculations on what the cost would be of fitting such devices as standard.

The ITF stated that standardisation of the positioning of controls and instruments in the cab would be a positive contribution to greater road safety. With drivers driving various makes of vehicles, it was important for them to be able to locate controls instinctively in whichever vehicle they were driving, particularly in an emergency. The OICA pointed out that this question was being discussed within the ISO's Standards Committee and suggested that the ITF place proposals before the ISO in order to achieve the desired objectives.

London underground management: 'fundamentally in error' over fire

Damning criticism of the poor standard of management and organisation of London Underground and its parent company London Regional Transport is made in the long-awaited inquiry report into the fire at London's busy King's Cross station on the evening of November 18 when it was published last month, almost a year after the tragedy in which 32 people lost their lives.

The report's author Desmond Fennell QC, said that London Underground managers were "fundamentally in error in their approach" which was to regard fires as an occupational hazard. They had allowed themselves to be lulled into a false sense of security because no previous escalator fire had caused a death and they had failed to learn the lessons of earlier fires on the Underground system because there was no mechanism for appropriate consideration of the findings of inquiries.

Many of the shortcomings at King's Cross station had already been identified in these reports and it was LT's failure to implement the recommendations they contained that lay at the heart of the disaster, Fennell found.

Amazingly, this was because in a system that carries many millions of

passengers each day no one person was charged with overall responsibility for safety.

Instead each divisional director assumed responsibility for his particular division but even then concerned himself only with the safety of staff. Apparently, London Underground did not realise that the Health and Safety at Work Act also imposed a responsibility to ensure the safety of passengers!

It is to rectify this glaring omission that Fennell, in a key recommendation, urges the appointment of a non-executive director with special responsibility for safety to the Board of London Underground. The report further urges that he should have direct access to the chairman and be granted the power to call for such reports, logs and correspondence relating to safety as he sees fit.

It is hardly surprising given this fierce indictment of the management style on the London Underground under the Thatcher government's "make it pay" philosophy that Sir Keith Bright, Chairman and Chief Executive of London Regional Transport, the Underground's parent body, chose to submit his resignation on the eve of publication. Early

Continued on page 11

...King's Cross fire enquiry report

Continued from page 10

the next day, Tony Ridley, chairman of the London Underground followed suit.

Fennell says that there seemed to be a genuine belief among those in charge on London Underground that in the event of a fire there would be sufficient time to evacuate passengers safely but it is hard to see how this belief can be reconciled with the fact, admitted by Fennell, that staff were not trained in fire fighting and that they were encouraged to downplay the potential seriousness of fires by referring to them as 'smoulderings', a practice which encouraged them in the mistaken belief that small fires were unlikely to get out of hand.

Addressing himself to the particular circumstances of the King's Cross fire, Fennell says that this lack of training left the staff 'woefully ill equipped to meet the emergency that arose'.

The report paints a frightening picture of utter confusion below ground on that fateful November evening with staff struggling to help the fleeing and badly burned passengers as best they could, sometimes through locked corridors to which the keys were only found after an agonising delay.

No one appeared to be in charge; communications between staff was poor and there was no proper liaison with the rescue services, who, with hindsight, were called out too late; extinguishers could not be found because they were hidden behind hoardings and sprinklers were not turned on in the confusion; there was no pre-existing plan for evacuating the station in the event of fire; and there was a general failure to appreciate the severity of the disaster as it developed from a small fire to a devastating flashover that engulfed the entire ticket hall.

Fennell rightly stresses that none of the staff should be blamed for anything that happened that dreadful night. For the staff were in their own way just as much the victims of the lack of training as were the passengers caught up in the fire as it became an inferno.

The report pinpoints the cause of the blaze as being smoker's materials (probably a match) dropped on to the grease and dirt that had accumulated below a wooden clad escalator at the station and says that the flashover, which led directly to the many deaths,

was the result of a previously unknown phenomenon — the so-called 'trench effect' — which was confirmed on scale models used in experiments conducted by the Health and Safety Executive.

An indication of the extent to which standards have deteriorated over recent years as the result of the deep cuts in subsidies to public transport ordered by the Thatcher government is the fact that Fennell makes a total of 157 recommendations.

On escalators, the report recommends urgent action on the replacement of wooden skirting boards and risers as part of a programme for phasing out the superannuated wooden escalators still found in many parts of the Underground system. This is coupled with demands for more efficient cleaning of escalators to prevent the build up of litter and grease and dirt as well as for linear heat detectors on escalators and smoke detectors in machine rooms, with automatically activated alarm systems and sprinklers.

On safety management, the report advocates the establishment of a system for auditing the effectiveness of the safe operation of the Underground. In a recommendation welcomed by the rail unions, it says that trade union participation in internal inquiries should be encouraged, that unions safety representatives should be appointed to a network of safety committees covering all stations and that there should be increased employee participation in safety programmes. It also recommends the consideration at director level of internal inquiries into accidents and the remedying within six weeks of defects found by annual fire inspections.

On the question of general staff training the report recommends the introduction of station instructions — agreed with the Fire Brigade — for use in emergencies and their incorporation into station staff training programmes of continuous instruction in fire and safety matters. Refresher courses on dealing with station emergencies — repeated every two years — are also advocated for management and supervisory staff.

On equipment, regular examination of fire fighting devices is strongly urged, as is the clear marking of fire

hydrants and the establishment of clearly marked rendezvous points for emergency services and assembly points for staff at each station on the Underground system.

In a section covering the Railway Inspectorate Fennell calls for the provision of adequate staff and the adoption of a more vigorous approach to the discharge of the Inspectorate's duties on London Underground.

Finally the report says that LRT and London Underground should be required to report progress on carrying out these recommendations in the annual reports of London Regional Transport, the London Regional Passengers' Committee and the Railway Inspectorate.

However, the fear remains that with a management that sees its job as making money rather than running a service for Londoners many of these recommendations will lay unheeded. Indeed, first indications are that plans to install high ticket barriers as part of a new ticketing system that would make escape in the event of fires exceedingly difficult will not be abandoned as a result of the experience at King's Cross. Nor is the programme of savage staff cutbacks at stations likely to be in any way affected by the findings.

The confidence of the travelling public has been badly dented by the King's Cross fire and will not easily be restored. We owe it to those who died that future tragedies are averted.

ARGENTINIAN RAIL WORKERS WIN BIG PAY RISES

Argentina's railway workers have won a pay rises of 20 per cent covering the last three months of 1988 following a seventy-two hour strike at the beginning of November. The pay rises conceded by the government to these and other public sector workers in the wake of considerable industrial unrest will help offset the ravages of inflation which in August this year reached a peak of 30 per cent a month though they represent a serious breach of government pay guidelines imposed that month in a bid to keep price rises in check.

Union congress stresses environmental concerns

by Bent-Are Jensen,
Editor of the railway workers' journal
"Jernbanemanden"

Protection of the environment was the central theme at the Congress of the 13.000 strong Norwegian Railwaymen's Union held in Oslo from Monday 24 October to Friday 28 October 1988

Just before the Congress, the Railwaymen's Union contacted two of the largest and most reputable Norwegian environmental organisations — *Natur og Ungdom* (Nature and Youth) and *Norges Naturvernforbund* (the Norwegian Federation for the Protection of Nature). These two organisations aim to reduce private car use and give priority to public transport. They have expressed their interest in common action with the Railwaymen's Union.

The Congress decided unanimously to grant a sum of NOK 40,000 to the two organisations.

International greetings

ITF President Jim D. Hunter speaking on behalf of the guests from nine different countries at the Congress emphasised the positive impact of the railways on the environment:

"The world is not a bottomless pit with unlimited natural resources to extract and use without future consequences for society," he said.

Criticism and flowers

"First, I was strongly criticised for four hours and then I got flowers," said William Engseth, Minister for Communications, when his wife called him to ask how he had been received by the Congress.

The criticism arose from a decision of the Norwegian Parliament in June to close most of the branch lines in the rural districts. Railway workers won't easily forgive this decision and the Minister for Communications had to hear their protests.

The Congress welcomed some positive measures, however. In next year's draft budget, some money has been allocated to strengthen the intercity traffic and local traffic around the capital. One and a half million people — out of four million in Norway — live in the Oslo region.

Support for the Labour Party

Despite criticism of the government's transport policy, the Congress decided to vote NOK 150,000 to the Labour

Party for the 1989 election campaign.

This decision was received with great pleasure by the Norwegian Prime Minister, Gro Harlem Brundtland. She also stated that she was very happy to see how strongly the Railwaymen's Union was engaged in the protection of the environment. Ms. Harlem Brundtland is also President of the World Commission on Environment and Development.

Power to women

The Prime Minister heads a government with a record number of women as Ministers (50 per cent). But at the Congress, she was decidedly in the minority. The Norwegian Railwaymen's Union has only a 13 per cent female membership, and among the delegates to Congress only eight per cent were women.

There are no women among the union

officers in Oslo. The six union officers in the administration were all re-elected unanimously. The only difference is that they now have new titles which do not say whether they are men or women

Facts about Norway and the Norwegian railways:

Surface of the country: about 387.000 km²

Population: 4 million inhabitants

Capital: Oslo, one and a half million inhabitants

The average length of railroad per inhabitant: 1 meter

{Other European countries vary between 0.2 and 0.7 m.}

2,500 km of the railways are electrified.

33 KILLED IN BRITISH COMMUTER CRASH

Just after eight o'clock on the morning of Monday 12 December two crowded rush hour trains collided just outside London's vast Clapham Junction station — one of the world's busiest. A third — empty — train then ran in to the two damaged trains.

The force of the collision crushed many of the coaches and tragically 33 passengers lost their lives in what was Britain's worst train accident for twenty years. The driver of the first train was uninjured but the driver of the second train was killed outright.

While the causes of the crash have yet to be established, a fault in the signalling system appears to be behind the accident. What is known is that the driver of the first train had left his cab to use the wayside telephone after the signals in front of him had unexpectedly changed from green to red. It was while he was trying to find out from the signal box just what was wrong that the second locomotive ploughed into the back of his stationary train.

The extent of the loss of life — made even more poignant in the run-up to Christmas — came as a great shock to the British public. A Public Enquiry with wide ranging powers has now

been established and it will have to find answers to some crucial questions.

Most important of all is whether this sort of accident was bound to happen sooner or later. The British railway unions believe that the problems of British Rail stem from a chronic lack of investment in the system as the government cuts back subsidies and urges the network to prepare itself for privatisation.

The result is a railway system starved of money. The Clapham signals which date back to the 1930s are only now being replaced and at a pace dictated by the available cash rather than considerations of safety. Vital equipment which boost increase safety margins is available but not in use simply because it costs too much.

Incredibly enough the trains concerned were not equipped with radio equipment. As several British Rail officials have already pointed out, a radio would have enabled the driver of the first train to report the signal fault immediately to his controller and obtain the necessary advice. He would

Continued on page 13

British prepare to privatise railways

The British Conservative government, apparently planning to remain in power indefinitely, is now making plans to privatise British Rail.

This proposal to sell off the national rail service looks certain to feature as an election pledge in the next General Election, which must be held before 1992. The Conservative Party appear confident enough of victory to be laying plans for their fourth term in office.

While the government is clearly determined to sell BR (along with any remaining state owned assets), there is considerable disagreement about how it is to be done.

The most alarming proposals come from two far-right "think tanks", the Adam Smith Institute and the Centre for Policy Studies. These groups specialise in agitating for "radical" right-wing ideas, and the Thatcher government has an unfortunate record of taking them seriously.

Both groups are advocating the break-up of BR into separate regional companies and the creation of a separate "track authority" that would own the rails but not the rolling stock. This

body would then take competitive bids from independent train operating companies to run routes and services.

These proposals have already drawn fire from BR management (who otherwise appear to support the general idea of privatisation.)

The government is already preparing BR for privatisation. They are starving the network of money, and forcing massive fare increases on the railways. It is estimated that most passenger fares will have doubled in two years.

It is also reported that the government has ordered BR to close more than 1,600 km of track, mainly in rural areas.

This represents a ten per cent cut in the system's track, and it will have a devastating effect on the many smaller communities who will lose their "unprofitable" rail services. The government has said that they will replace the services with buses — but such replacement services, in the past, have provided an inadequate level of service and are usually closed within a couple of years (once again, because they are unprofitable).

The Conservative Transport Minister Paul Channon openly admits that these closures are being planned in order to present an "attractive package" to potential purchasers.

The actual cost savings of these closures will be minimal to BR. They are being browbeaten by the government into following orders.

The management of BR have provided a half hearted resistance to these closure plans, and they have said that they oppose the idea of the system being broken up into separate companies — they would rather that the whole network were privatised as one company.

The influential and prestigious Jane's World Railways has criticised the privatisation plans.

In the latest edition's foreword, editor Geoffrey Freeman Allen, says that with privatisation "any lingering hope of a balanced national transport policy would vanish."

He attacks the right-wing proposals to fragment BR, saying that such proposals would return railway operations to the early 19th century."

...enquiry must consider effect of overcrowding

Continued from page 12

not have had to leave his train and in all probability the accident would not have happened.

Other questions raised by the crash include the serious overcrowding on rush hour trains into London.

This is also a problem of major concern to the rail unions. For though they have never argued that overcrowding

is in itself dangerous, it inevitably adds to the toll of dead and injured when an accident occurs. The Inquiry will have to determine whether, for instance, passengers who were standing up were more at risk than those who had been able to find a seat. The Government will need to come up with the money to rectify any safety deficiencies identified by the Inquiry. The possible privatisation of the railways will now also

presumably be overshadowed by the huge amounts of compensation which British Rail (which has already admitted liability) will have to pay to the injured and the relatives of the dead.

In a tragic irony the accident happened on the very day when the ITF affiliated railway unions were busy leafleting stations in London in protest at overcrowding as part of their Better Rail campaign.

FISHERIES

France and Canada agree on fishing dispute mediator

The French and Canadian governments have agreed on an independent mediator to settle the long running fishing rights dispute between the two countries.

Talks between the two countries over the territorial fishing rights of the French possession of St. Pierre-et-Miquelon broke down last September

(see ITF News, September 1988), and the French demanded the issue be sent to international mediation.

The two governments have agreed that Enrique Iglesias, former Uruguayan Minister for Foreign Affairs, will now mediate in the dispute.

The conflict centres on the question of sovereignty in the rich fishing banks

around the entrance to the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The French have refused to accept Canadian limitations and fishing quotas in the Gulf because they say that their islands are sovereign French territory — a claim the Canadians have refused to accept. As a result, French trawlers are currently banned from visiting Canadian ports.

ITF civil aviation week

As the United States aviation industry stumbles into the tenth year of deregulation, the ITF has launched a global campaign for a new regulatory framework in civil aviation that rejects unfettered deregulation but acknowledges the need for a flexible structure that accommodates the needs of airline passengers and employees.

In the USA, independent industry analysts, members of Congress and passengers have all come to agree with the aviation trade unions in pronouncing the 1978 deregulation act a failure. Ten years on, US deregulation leaves a bitter legacy of broken promises:

PROMISE: Deregulation would unleash greater competition and passenger choice.

FACT: There are now fewer airlines in the USA than before deregulation, hundreds of communities have entirely lost their air services and many cities have been reduced to hub airports controlled by regional monopolies.

PROMISE: Deregulation would lead to lower air fares.

FACT: There was an initial drop in fares, but now the new regional monopolies are free to charge whatever they like. Fares are now rising faster than at any time in US aviation history (the trend from the 1930s, in real terms used to be down) — at Trans World Airlines' "hub" of St. Louis, fares have risen three times the rate of inflation this year alone. Most deep discount fares have disappeared and the average passenger now pays more.

PROMISE: Deregulation and competition would provide a better quality service.

FACT: Anyone who has flown in the USA recently knows the reality. Few scheduled flights leave major airports on time, and changes in frequency,

type of aircraft, stops and fares happen up to the departure time. Perhaps the most disturbing fact is the documented deterioration in the margin of safety of passenger carrying airlines in the USA. Reductions in maintenance staff and a new "do only the minimum required" philosophy have significantly eroded the quality of airline safety. Mechanics have been fired

regulation by 1993. The emergence of the new US mega-carriers has already had a destabilising effect on world aviation, as carriers in the rest of the world rush to merge and forge alliances in order to survive the new order. Governments in the developing world are also being pressured by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank to deregulate and privatise.

This is why the civil aviation unions affiliated to the ITF have launched this campaign. With the slogan "deregulation—no thanks" the campaign unites aviation workers all over the world — in the USA, the aim is to establish a new regulatory framework, in Europe and the rest of the world to prevent the errors of US deregulation from being repeated.

Organised labour was one of the first victims of US deregulation. The attacks on wages, working conditions and the number of jobs in the USA have been relentless. Union busting tactics and strong arm management techniques have replaced what was once a model of industrial relations harmony.

The opposition of the aviation unions to the worldwide deregulatory wave stems from more than self interest as trade unionists, however. We believe that the chaos of deregulation can only benefit a small minority. Governments, passengers, airlines and trade unions have a common interest in seeing a safe, efficient and inexpensive aviation system that guarantees that the industry as a whole will be able to expand and flourish into the next century.

This requires a co-operative effort between airlines, governments, passenger organisations and trade unions to establish a dynamic balance between

Continued on page 15



from their jobs for being too diligent. Air traffic control standards have still not recovered from the mass dismissals of PATCO members in 1980. This deterioration is clearly illustrated by the rapid rise in recorded Near Mid Air Collisions (NMACs) from 311 in 1982 to 1056 in 1988.

Ironically, while opinion swings against the deregulation experiment in the USA — re-regulation is now clearly on the cards — the rest of the world is dangerously teetering on the brink of deregulating. Following last year's air "liberalisation" agreement a discernible lobby within the European Community is calling for full blown de-

Eastern unions fight Trump sale

On 18 November the embattled unions at Frank Lorenzo's Eastern Airlines filed a suit in the District Court in Washington seeking to block the projected sale of the company's lucrative East Coast shuttle to New York property developer Donald Trump (see last issue of *ITF News* for story).

The unions allege in their deposition that the sale, which was announced in October but is not yet completed, violates federal labour law in that it represents a substantial change in Eastern's operations at a time when the company is still locked in protracted contract negotiations with its staff.

Commenting on Lorenzo's tactics, pilots' union chairman at Eastern Captain Jack Bavis said: "It is obvious that the Texas Air management at Eastern has no interest in preserving Eastern as a major force in the aviation industry", adding that "they have done nothing but squeeze out assets over the last two years."

This latest action in the US courts forms part of an existing suit in which the unions are seeking to stop Lorenzo from cutting back operations and laying off 4,000 workers.

The future of the beleaguered airline — it lost \$113 million in the third quarter — is once again on the line.

Earlier this autumn it seemed that Carl Icahn, who already owns Transworld Airlines, was a serious contender for Eastern but talks with Lorenzo broke down and he pulled out. However, industry sources say that he might well make a new offer for the airline soon.

This might seem odd in the light of the fact that Lorenzo declared on 7 November that the airline was no longer for sale. But the unions say that this

was just Lorenzo's way of putting a damper on press speculation about the future of Eastern after it got out of hand.

A number of options for the future of Eastern are known to have been discussed, including the selling of the company to the unions in conjunction with another buyer or giving the unions a minority stake in a spun off Eastern.

Victory at Air Malta

Employees of Air Malta authorised their union — the GWU — to take strike action against the carrier when they attended a mass rally in mid-October after the breakdown of lengthy contract negotiations. Fearing the disruption that the first strike — scheduled for that afternoon — would inevitably cause, the aviation minister called GWU General Secretary Angelo Fenech to an urgent meeting on the morning of the 15th. This led to the immediate resumption of talks with the airline management under the union's transport secretary Tony Zarb and the conclusion within hours of a new collective agreement, backdated to 1 April. Benefits won by the GWU for the airline employees include phased pay increases over the three year term of the agreement as well as major improvements in working conditions at the carrier.

...campaigning activities throughout the world

Continued from page 14

regulation that guards the safety and stability of the industry and flexibility that allows for growth and change.

Civil Aviation Week, which marks the start of our campaign, aims to reach out to passengers, governments and airlines so that we can begin the crucial task of restructuring the rules of the aviation industry in a sensible fashion. We don't claim that we have all the answers, but we believe that the time is ripe to begin discussions on the future of the industry.

The ITF has produced a special *Civil Aviation Bulletin* in English, French, Spanish, German and Swedish which is targeted at all those involved or concerned with the industry. Tens of thousands of these bulletins, along with nationally produced campaigning materials, are being distributed in every

Continent.

A vast number of different local activities are taking place during the week: badges, stickers, posters and pamphlets are being produced and distributed in Australia, the USA, France, Belgium, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands, Canada, Denmark, Portugal, and Italy.

In Spain the week coincides with a nationwide General Strike on December 14, and the civil aviation unions will be distributing materials and publicity in the strike-bound airports. In Spain and Portugal, television debates between the unions and government representatives on air policy are scheduled. Unions in the Federal Republic of Germany, Portugal, Denmark and the USA will be holding special meetings with government or legislative representatives to commu-

nicate their position on deregulation.

In Belgium the Secteur Aviation Civile de la Centrale Générale des Services Publics (CGSP), in addition to a meeting with the Communications Minister and the wide distribution of multi-lingual pamphlets, will be hosting an ITF European Press Conference on December 15 in Brussels. ITF officials will also be meeting the European Transport Commissioner.

Unions are also sending special letters, based on a commonly agreed ITF draft, to governments and consumer organisations explaining the aims of the week. Bulletins and letters have also been distributed to key delegates at the UN International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) in Montréal, Canada.

Full report on the week's activities in next issue of ITF News.

Mega-carrier for Africa by the 1990s

Within eight years, all African airlines are set to merge into one gigantic mega-carrier designed to deal with the increasingly sharp competitive environment of global aviation in the wake US deregulation and the creation by 1993 of the European single market.

The decision of 38 African transport ministers to establish a multinational airline will be implemented in a three-phase, eight year long programme.

Over the next two years, African airlines will exchange information on each airline's volume and facilities. There will also be a study of the viability of creating a hub and spoke system of airports, with certain gateway airports being designated to take feeder flights from their region.

Phase two, over three years, should see the countries committing their airlines to a joint operation of compatible and international routes. There will also be a pooling of certain aspects of airline operations including: insurance; spare parts purchase; aircraft leasing; and common designation of flights. There will also be a sharing of fifth freedom market access rights and a common pooling of revenues and costs.

Finally, in the last three years, the aim is to integrate the separate airlines into one carrier. Participating nations will exchange fifth freedom rights without exception.

This far reaching re-organisation of African aviation is very welcome. In order to cope with the new climate in

world aviation, African airlines must work towards integration. African transport ministers have long recognised this.

In November 1984, a special conference of African governments and airlines meeting in Swaziland adopted the Mbabane Declaration which called for a greater sharing of fifth freedom rights and a study of regional airline resources with a view to developing closer integration between regional carriers. Now, faced with the prospect of the new European and American mega-carriers carving up world aviation between them, the African nations have taken the most logical step to ensure the survival of their industry.

Airlines for sale as global privatisation gathers speed

The current wave of airline selloffs and privatisations seems to be gathering pace as the shake up in ownership of the world's major carriers continues apace.

In a move which has attracted a great deal of interest, the New Zealand government has decided to sell off 70 per cent of shares in the national carrier Air New Zealand.

Two international groups have already entered the fray with rival bids for the maximum 35% foreign stake in the company that will be allowed in order to protect the airline's landing rights in other countries.

One bid is led by the expansionary British Airways, backed by the New Zealand investment bank DFC and a Japanese company specialising in tourism, EIE Development Ltd.

In the competing line-up the Australian airline Qantas has teamed up with American Airlines and the Japanese carrier JAL and involving the New Zealand financier Sir Ronald Brierley.

If this latter bid were successful it would give Air New Zealand access to one of the world's largest computer reservations systems owned by American as well as to the new joint computer reservation system Fantasia operated by JAL and Qantas.

In addition at least 30 per cent is being offered to the public and the staff of the airline while the remaining 35

per cent will be placed with the major New Zealand institutions.

In the first significant privatisation of a large carrier in Latin America, the Mexican government has sold the reorganised national airline Aeroméxico (now known as Aerovias de Mexico) for \$340 m as part of its accelerated programme of privatisation prior to the inauguration of President Carlos Salinas de Gortari the beginning of December. The next target could well be the other national company Mexicana which is heavily in debt.

The majority stake in Aerovias has gone to the consortium, which includes the country's largest private sector shipping group Transportación Marítima Mexicana — itself one of two companies making a bid when Aeroméxico was declared bankrupt last April — and a number of leading industrialists. They have been joined by the government-controlled bank Bancomer, which intends to purchase a part of the consortium's stake for resale to smaller investors.

The remaining stake goes to the powerful pilots' union, which also showed an interest in the airline earlier in the year.

Elsewhere in Latin America confusions reigns, with the bid by SAS for a stake in Aerolíneas Argentinas now close to failure after pressure from

opposition parties in the Argentinian parliament opposed to a partial sale to foreign interests and British Airways pulling out from participation in Lan Chile at the eleventh hour as changes in the rules imposed by the Chilean government on its sale of a 32.7% per cent stake in the company ruled out a number of bidders, among them the country's private airline Ladecco. Plans for the disposal of Lan Chile have not been abandoned and parliament has just approved new privatisation legislation that will permit 51% of the airline to be sold early in the new year.

In the United States, Tiger International, the giant air cargo and trucking group is in the sights of corporate raider Saul Steinberg, chairman of Reliance Group Holdings. Steinberg has been eyeing the company for some time and has already made two proxy bids. The airline group, whose subsidiary Flying Tiger Line is the world's largest scheduled all cargo carrier, is currently earning good profits and according to some analysts could show further gains in 1989.

Meanwhile, the Finnish government has decided to reduce its stake in the national airline Finnair from 76% to 70% through a Fmk 255m share issue, paving the way for a listing on the Helsinki stock market, possibly next

Continued on page 17

US FAA orders strengthening of 737 fleet

Following the dramatic accident involving the blowout as the result of metal fatigue of part of the roof of an Aloha Airlines jet over Hawaii last April (see May 1988 issue of *ITF News*) the US Federal Aviation Administration has issued an order requiring extensive strengthening of the country's ageing fleet of B 737s.

The jet involved in the Hawaii incident was nineteen years old and had made almost 90,000 landings. Five American airlines operate 737s of a similar age and it is to prevent a repetition of a chilling accident which could so easily have ended in disaster, that the new rule is being proposed.

Airlines will be required to replace existing fuselage rivets with improved rivets to offer greater protection and until these structural modifications have been carried out the aircraft will be required to observe an altitude restriction of 26,000 feet to reduce stresses on the fuselage.

While the new rules — with which

companies have between six months to four years to comply according to number of flights flown by the aircraft — apply only to aircraft operated by US airlines the FAA hopes that foreign airlines will see the point of the FAA's plans and agree voluntarily to undertake the necessary work on their aircraft.

Detailed inspection of aircraft after the Aloha incident revealed cracks on a number of older aircraft — the most serious on a B 737 of Continental

Airlines — that routine inspections had failed to uncover.

The FAA say that the new rules mark a change in policy towards seeking to come to grips with key weaknesses in the design of the earlier 737 models that become more acute with age. Similar rules are likely to be extended to other aircraft that started coming off the production line twenty five years ago as a way of ensuring the continuing safety of the older B 727 and 747s still in active service.

...airline privatisations

Continued from page 18
year.

There are currently 1,500 shareholders in the airline including insurance companies, banks and government-controlled companies. Of the shares on offer, 150,000 have been reserved for Finnair staff.

* In a move that could foreshadow the emergence of a single European booking system, the Dutch airline KLM has announced plans for the pooling of flight information between the Galileo computer reservations network — of which it is one of the leading members — and the rival Amadeus network.

DOCKERS

Toxic waste trade — regulations urgently needed

A call for a major international convention to control the growing and largely unregulated trade in toxic waste in the wake of the *Karin B* affair (see July/August and September issues of *ITF News*) came from the outgoing EC Transport Commissioner Stanley Clinton Davis speaking in London in November.

He rounded on those member countries of the EC who had dragged their feet on Community legislation to deal with the problem of hazardous waste until the full glare of publicity had fallen on the *Karin B* as it was turned away from port after port this summer.

It was totally unacceptable, he said, for the countries of the developing world to be used as a dumping ground for wastes produced in the industrialised nations. Safe disposal might be expensive but we had an overriding duty to ensure that proper measures were taken to protect the environment from such a potential time bomb.

Issues such as these could only be

dealt with effectively on an international scale by an international convention work on which should begin as soon as possible, the Commissioner concluded.

The German seafarers' union ÖTV has reacted with understandable rage to the perils — still not fully understood — to which her unscrupulous owners put the crew of the poison ship *Karin B* as they sought to ensure that the toxic waste produced by Italian industry and dumped in Nigeria was returned to that country for safe disposal.

ÖTV transport spokesman and ITF Board member Eike Eulen said that the crew would have been well within their rights in walking off the ship before it even began its long voyage back from Africa to Europe.

He accused the ship's owners — Bockstiegel — of total disregard for the health and well being of the crew. It was outrageous, he said, that the owner and the ship's captain should

have allowed the badly leaking drums to be loaded at all. The regulations demanded that the cargo be packed in tightly sealed drums but according to information from the crew the drums were giving off vapour as they were being loaded and this had circulated in the ship via the air conditioning system.

Crew members had developed a number of symptoms including sickness, breathing difficulties, joint pains and dizziness and there must be fears of possible long term health problems arising from the long contact with a variety of highly toxic materials.

As if all this was not bad enough the *Karin B* was seriously undermanned, though the ÖTV say this was not all that surprising as the company apparently has something of a reputation in shipping circles for sailing its ships shorthanded. In this case a seven man crew was on board as opposed to the

Continued on page 18

Court orders rehiring of sacked tugmen

A US court has ordered the reinstatement of 1,200 sacked tugmen in the nine month old New York tug dispute.

The order to reinstate the strikers at their old wages and working conditions at six companies and fire any strikebreakers came in November from US District Court judge John Keenan. The case was brought by the men's

union, the ITF affiliated International Longshoremen's Association (ILA).

An accompanying order was expected to cover the remaining 800 strikers at the remaining companies.

The strike began last February after negotiations for a new contract between the union and the companies broke down. The employers were seek-

ing a major reorganisation of working conditions and substantial cuts in wages and benefits — changes described by ILA Local 333 President Albert Cornette as a "return to 1938" and a blatant attempt to smash the union. While the court ruling is clearly a setback for the employers, the issues at stake in the dispute still remain unresolved.

New safety rules for British dockers

The first new safety rules for dockwork in Britain in over fifty years are now being implemented.

The *Docks Regulations 1988*, agreed in the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) after lengthy discussions between the port employers and the ITF affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union will begin to come into effect in January 1989.

Major changes have taken place in the waterside working environment since 1934, when the last set of rules

were agreed, and the new guidelines deal extensively with the health related hazards of these new operating procedures. For example, according to the HSE, the most significant causes of death and serious injuries in the ports recently have been mechanical vehicle accidents.

Many of the new regulations are concerned with safeguarding dock workers driving vehicles or mechanised cargo handling equipment. The

new regulations also provide, for the first time, minimum standards in lighting, and the embarking of passengers and crew. They require employers to provide protective head gear and high visibility clothing. There are also requirements covering the safe entry to confined spaces.

The new regulations are in line with the International Labour Organisation's Convention 152 on Safety and Health in Dock Work.

...waste ships wandering the world

Continued on page 19

recommended crew for a ship of its size of eleven.

Meanwhile, the 1,600 grt *Makiri*, which is registered in Cyprus, became the fifth ship in two weeks to be arrested for being involved in the illegal export of toxic waste from Italy (see also story in last issue of ITF News).

The ship was held as it put in to the

Greek port of Piraeus on 24 October for allegedly carrying toxic waste under false bills of lading from Venezuela to Syria.

The complex saga of the *Makiri* is somewhat difficult to unravel but it would appear that transport costs of the waste on board the *Makiri* were being met by the Italian government after the vessel had been chartered by an Italian

waste broking company named Jelly Wax.

Jelly Wax had acquired a tract of land in Venezuela to dispose of Italian waste originally dumped by the *Lynx*. However, when the Venezuelans found out that what they thought were chemical products were in fact toxic wastes they demanded that the wastes be removed from Venezuelan soil.

It was here that the *Makiri* came in.

Elsewhere, the *Felicia* — in an odyssey that has now lasted well over two years — has changed its name once again — this time to the *Felicano* — no doubt in a bid to escape notice.

If so, it has been no luckier than before as the port of Singapore denied it entry in November. The port authority says it will not be permitted to berth and discharge its cargo of toxic ash until the authority is convinced that it would be safe to do so.

Mystery still surrounds the ship with the environmental pressure group Greenpeace claiming that it may even have secretly offloaded its cargo citing changes in the ship's draught as the reason for its suspicions.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

18 Jan	Road Transport Steering Cttee	Antwerp
20-22 Feb	Asia/Pacific Regional Cttee	Australia
23-25 Feb	Asia/Pacific Inland Transport Cttee	Australia
23-25 Feb	Asia/Pacific Seafarers Cttee	New Zealand
21-22 March	Executive Board	Paris
5-7 April	Conference on Completion of the European Market "1992"	Luxembourg
22 -23 May	Dockers' Meeting	London
23 May	Seafarers' Meeting	London
24 May	Joint Seafarers' & Dockers' Meeting	London
24-26 May	Fair Practices Committee	London
19-21 Sept.	Railwaymen's Section Conference	Spain

PEOPLE

Sidsel Bauck was elected to the presidency of the Norwegian Commercial Employees' Union (HK) at the union's congress in October. She succeeds **Kåre Hansen** and is the first woman to head the union.

ITF Executive Board member **Arend Drenth**, who has been President of the Dutch Transport Workers' Union FNV since 1981, is leaving the presidency and handing over to 40 year old **Ruud Vreeman**, a member of the union executive since last year and previously chairman of the dockers' section. In making his decision, Drenth who took over the job at a time when the union was deeply divided said that his task of healing internal wounds was now completed and it was time to put the union in the hands of a younger man. A vigorous 50, he clearly still has much to give and moves with the new year to Eindhoven where he takes on his new duties as the FNV's head district official. Drenth was first elected to the Board at the ITF's 1983 Congress in Madrid and re-elected in Luxembourg for a second term of office. ITF Dockers' Section Secretary David Cockroft attended the farewell reception given for Drenth by his union in Amersfoort on November 17. He paid tribute to Arend's major contribution in building up the union and to the many friends he had made during his service on the Executive Board.

One of the leading Japanese figures in ITF circles of the past few years — **Kazukiyo Doi** — retired from the presidency of the All-Japan Seamen's Union at the JSU's 49th Congress in Tokyo in early November. Doi has been chairman of the ITF Asia/Pacific Regional Committee — the body which coordinates activities in this vast region — and in this capacity has helped ensure the success of the most significant ITF venture in the region for many years — the 5-year trade union education programme. This has been in addition of course to the enormous input he has made to the work of the Seafarers' Section over many years. As he enters this new stage of his life all his friends in the ITF wish him a long and happy retirement. Doi is succeeded as JSU President by



Ruud Vreeman
New President of Vervoersbond FNV

Shoshiro Nakanishi who serves on the Asia/Pacific Seafarers' Committee of the ITF Seafarers' Section as well as on its Training Committee. **Shinji Osawa** and **Tetsuji Kobatake** were also elected as Vice Presidents by the Congress.

Jacques Gerritse, secretary-treasurer of the Dutch Seafarers' Federation FWZ has decided to take early retirement after twenty eight years service with the union. Gerritse will be especially remembered for his work in the area of seafarers' training and for his

contribution in establishing and extending the system of works council representation in the industry. In recent years he has masterminded the arrangements under which the ITF has supported the purchase and modernisation of the 'De Beer Seafarers' Centre in Rotterdam. Within the ITF, Gerritse has played a very active role in the work of the seafarers' section over many years and he will be much missed.

ITF Executive Board member **Ernst Haar** retired from the presidency of

Continued on page 20

...Nevin to retire from NUMAST

Continued from page 19

the German Railwaymen's Union (GdED) at the union's Congress in October in Nuremberg. Haar who has led the union for the past nine years, will continue to defend the interests of the country's railmen in his capacity as a member of the German Bundestag. His union has also asked him to continue to serve as a member of the ITF Executive Board until our next Congress in 1990. His successor as President is **Rudi Schäfer**. The union congress also elected **Dr Rolf Hofmann**, head of the organisation and education department of the union, as a GdED vice president for the first time, taking over the post previously held by Schäfer.

Jean Kaspar has succeeded **Edmond Maire** as leader of the French CFDT trade union confederation after the latter stepped down after seventeen years in the post. Kaspar is a 47 year old examiner from Alsace and the former leader of the *Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne* (Christian Youth Movement).

We offer warm congratulations to **Walter Kolstad** on his election to the presidency of the Nordic Transport Workers' Federation. Kolstad is president of the Norwegian Transport Workers' Union.

British officers' union leader **Eric Nevin** has announced that he is not to stand for re-election as General Secretary of NUMAST when a ballot is held for the post under new government rules which require General Secretaries to stand for re-election after serving five years. Eric, who is 57, has led the union since 1974 and has been a prominent figure within the British Trades Union Congress. He has campaigned vigorously to ensure that officers received the highest possible standard of training and of welfare and pension provision and in defence of the safety of life at sea throughout the thirty years of loyal service he has given to the union. This is reflected in the wide variety of positions he holds in bodies associated with the industry, including those of vice chairman of the Merchant Navy College and the Merchant Navy Training Board and in his presence on the governing bodies of a wide range of merchant navy institutions and charities. Internationally he has represented officers' interests at both the IMO and the ILO, most recently as welfare spokesman at the 74th Maritime Session of the ILO last year. It was Nevin who was the driving force behind the merger that brought the previously independent officers' union within the umbrella of NUMAST.

NUMAST's current deputy general secretary **John Newman** will take over

the union's top post in August of next year. His was the only name received when nominations for the post closed at the end of November. John will bring twenty five years of experience with the union to his new post.

Richard Rosser is the new General Secretary-elect of the British Transport Salaried Staffs' Association. Rosser, who is 44, and was previously a TSSA Assistant General Secretary, takes over from outgoing General Secretary **Bert Lyons** when he retires next May. Rosser has been a full time TSSA official for the past twelve years, first as Research Officer and then Finance and Organising Officer before taking over his present post.

Bruno Trentin has succeeded **Antonio Pizzinato** as Secretary General of the CGIL, Italy's largest trade union confederation representing over four and a half million Italian workers. Trentin is 62 and the former leader of the powerful metalworkers' union.

Oscar de Vries Reilingh has been appointed Director of the European Regional Office of the ILO. He is succeeded as Director of the ICFTU Geneva Office and Secretary of the Workers' Group of the ILO Governing Body by **Eddie Laurijssen**. **Guy Ryder**, formerly of FIET, has been appointed as Laurijssen's Deputy.

OBITUARIES

George Petchey, Assistant General Secretary of the British National Union of Railwaymen (NUR), died suddenly on 3 November, aged 60. George was elected to his present post in March of last year after having served as an NUR divisional officer for ten years.

Olle Rytterbrant, a highly talented journalist and editor who worked extensively for the trade union movement in his native Sweden, died on 21 November in Stockholm, at the age of 70. To his friends in the ITF Olle will be remembered best as the editor of

Transportarbetaren — the magazine of the Swedish Transport Workers' Union. He worked on the magazine from 1964 to 1971 editing it with great flair and then left to take up a post in the press office of the LO trade union centre. In 1978 — by now a vigorous 60 — he returned to the transport workers and resumed his duties as editor until 1983. Even after he had officially retired he continued to write many thought provoking articles for the magazine which were always well received. It was in retirement too that he undertook the daunting task of editing the extensive memoirs of Charles

Lindley — the union's legendary founder and stalwart of the early days of the ITF — which appeared in book form in time for the Transport Workers' 28th Congress in 1987 and have attracted considerable attention from trade unionists throughout Scandinavia. At the time of his death Olle was busy at work on a history of the first hundred years of the Transport Workers. Olle was a mine of information about the history of the labour movement in Sweden and will be greatly missed by his colleagues who frequently drew on these great resources for their own work.

ITF seafarers' conference

The distinction between genuine flags and flags of convenience is becoming increasingly blurred as shipowners from developed countries search for new ways to cut costs. This was abundantly clear from the debates which took place at the ITF's Seafarers' Section Conference held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil from 29 November to 2 December.

The Conference was attended by 85 delegates from seafarers' trade unions in 31 countries. Its opening session was addressed by the Mayor of Rio de Janeiro and by Mauricio Sant'Anna, President of the Brazilian seafarers' union which hosted the conference. In addition to hearing a report on the activities of the ITF Seafarers' Section in the two year period since the last Conference, the meeting held two major debates: one on recent maritime policy issues; the other on maritime safety. A number of key decisions were taken during the conference.

Singapore and Philippines

The Conference endorsed a decision by the Fair Practices Committee Subcommittee which met in Bombay in November to delete Singapore from the ITF's list of countries offering FOC facilities with effect from 1 January 1989. This decision, which was not supported by all delegates, was made subject to a number of outstanding conditions being satisfied. The Conference recognised that many Singapore flag ships are genuinely owned by Singapore citizens although a significant number remain under foreign control. From now on, Singapore flag ships will be examined on a ship by ship basis to see whether they are genuine or not. Ships owned outside Singapore will still be subject to action under ITF FOC policy if the unions in the country of ownership request it.

With regret the Conference felt obliged, at the same time, to add the Philippines to the FOC list. Although there are also many small ships genuinely owned in the Philippines operating under its flag, in the past few years the register's tonnage has come to be



dominated by foreign, mainly Japanese, owned ships. The owners of these vessels have been taking advantage of the 'bareboat charter' arrangements whereby a ship can transfer flag temporarily, while retaining many legal ties (e.g. registration of mortgages) with its existing flag. Owners have blatantly abused the Philippines bareboat charter laws, which were originally established to help develop a genuine Philippine shipping industry, to evade the ITF's policy. The failure of the authorities to come up with adequate schemes to stop the abuse of the system means that from early next year the Philippines will be listed as an FOC and ITF affiliates will do their best to ensure ITF acceptable agreements for the crews concerned. As with all other FOC registers, ships which are shown to be genuinely owned in the Philippines will be exempted.

Non domiciled seafarers

The increasing complexity of the maritime industry was once again demonstrated when the conference discussed the problems of discrimination against non-domiciled (ie foreign) seafarers on board national flag (non FOC) ships. ITF policy which called for second class wages and conditions to be phased out had formally expired in 1986 and a new policy needed to be drafted. Meanwhile the growth of 'second registers' where discrimina-

tory conditions are the norm but where the ship still flies the flag of a traditional maritime country has created a whole new nest of problems. Many affiliates, particularly those like the ÖTV in Germany which is currently fighting against the introduction of a second register, were against any modification in the ITF's tough stance against any system which pays two people differently for doing the same job on board the same ship. A draft policy statement was discussed by the conference but was referred for further discussion by the section's Maritime Policy Committee.

Beneficial Ownership

The discussion on the definition of *beneficial ownership* was also closely tied up with FOCs. Under ITF policy, a ship is deemed to be using an FOC if the beneficial ownership rests in a country other than that of its registration. For vessels which are FOCs, the policy allows the union in the country of beneficial ownership to claim negotiating rights. It is easy to see therefore that deciding who is the beneficial owner of a vessel is of central importance. In these days of joint ventures, multinational shipowning companies, bareboat charters, consortia etc. it is not always simple to decide on the nationality of a ship's owner. A first

Continued on page 22

...German unions to ask for second register to be declared FOC

Continued from page 21

draft of a new definition had been prepared by the ITF's legal advisers. After detailed discussion, the paper was referred for further discussion to the next meeting of the Fair Practices Committee.

East Bloc crews

International politics doesn't often intrude into the debates at Seafarers' Section Conferences, which tend to deal overwhelmingly with direct industrial questions. In one field, however, the two questions are increasingly overlapping. The so called "trade unions" in certain Eastern European countries, chiefly Poland have been blatantly collaborating with the government owned crewing agency to offer cut price crews for FOC vessels and have conspired to intimidate crew members to hand back extra wages gained as a result of ITF action. This raises a particularly thorny problem for the ITF which goes wider than the interests of the seafarers' section. The ITF needs to make it clear to these organisations that they should stop misbehaving without compromising the broader policy of the ITF and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions against multilateral contacts with East bloc "unions". In Poland the situation is even more difficult because of the ITF's commitment to support the free trade union Solidarnosc which is still outlawed by the government which supports, finances and staffs the "official" unions which are causing all the trouble. Not surprisingly the Conference didn't feel itself competent to make a final decision on this question. It noted with approval that an agreement had been reached with unions from Yugoslavia under which Yugoslav owned and manned FOC vessels could be covered by the Yugoslav collective agreement provided payments are made to the ITF "Welfare Fund", and it asked the ITF Executive Board to look into the political implications of any meeting between the ITF and Polish 'unions'.

Second Registers

The Conference heard reports from unions in Norway, Denmark and Germany about the 'second registers' es-

tablished or being established in those countries. Problems which had arisen between the Norwegian and Spanish unions about manning NIS ships were debated at length. The DIS was reported to have taken around 95% of existing Danish flag vessels plus about 20 which had been under FOC. Agreements had been reached with Philippine and Singapore ITF affiliates for these 20 vessels and so far there was no threat of job loss for Danish seafarers. The ÖTV representative told delegates of his union's total opposition to the law on the second German register (GIS) currently going through Parliament. Discriminatory wage rates would be paid on board the ships and there was no guarantee of trade union representation for the foreign crew members. The ÖTV would be asking the ITF to add the GIS to the list of FOCs in due course.

The Conference endorsed the principles relating to second registers already adopted by the FPC in June 1988. These expressed the ITF's opposition to the concept but laid down the minimum conditions under which they were to be acceptable. The final decision on whether or not they are to be treated as FOCs rests with the unions in the country concerned.

Under the heading of 'Maritime policy' the conference also discussed cargo reservation, where it heard that the UNCTAD review conference in Geneva had been a complete shambles. It was agreed that a working group should meet to draft a new ITF policy on cargo reservation and the UN Liner Code. On Port State Control, the conference heard a report on the progress made by the Secretariat of the Paris Memorandum. The ITF's priorities now are to extend the concept of PSC to as many new countries as possible and to secure the inclusion of ILO standards in the PSC inspection process. The conference heard that discussions were going on with the ILO and the PSC Secretariat about how this is to be done.

The second half of the Rio debate concerned itself with a range of Maritime Safety issues. The first of these was fatigue and manning. Some criti-

cisms were made here of existing ITF policy on watchkeeping and several amendments were proposed on behalf of engineer officer unions. The ITF's representatives at IMO were also given full authority to continue pressure to prevent the loosening of watchkeeping rules to allow a sole look out at night. On manning, there was a vigorous discussion about the desirability of making changes to the ITF's recommended manning scales which are applied as part of the FOC policy. Several delegates suggested that the manning scales, adopted in 1983, no longer reflected normal practice in the industry. Against this it was argued that FOC vessels should be better manned than national flag ships on which safety standards were better enforced. A decision on whether to alter existing policy was left to a special joint session of the ITF Manning and Training Committees which will be convened during 1989.

Cruise Ships

The conference ratified the work of the ITF Cruise Ship Working Party which had drafted a new collective agreement to be applied to the 'hotel' personnel on board FOC cruise ships. The new agreement, which would provide a guaranteed minimum monthly wage for a waiter/steward of \$649, will form the basis of a renewed campaign by ITF affiliates, particularly in the US and Caribbean, to organise cruise ship workers. The meeting also heard reports on the new GMDSS and offshore policy (see separate articles).

As the regular flag round up carried in ITF News shows clearly, the shipping industry is in a state of continuous turmoil. Although the ITF Seafarers' Section Conference only meets about every two years, the topics which it discusses will be the subject of almost continuous review in a network of special committees and working groups established by the Section. The decisions by the conference demonstrate that the ITF is prepared to be flexible in response to change but that it will never abandon its basic commitment to defend the interests of seafarers from every part of the world.

Maritime safety: most ships will keep RO

Years of acrimonious debate about the future of the maritime safety communications system have been concluded with an international compromise that will see the majority of the world's ships retain trained radio officers. At least 12,000 of the 20,000 serving radio officers in the world will be kept to work with the new system.

An extended meeting of the International Maritime Organisation's Maritime Safety Committee in London from October 24 to November 11 dealt with the implementation of the new Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS).

This meeting drew up changes to the IMO International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) that would allow the GMDSS to be implemented.

The new system incorporates the use of satellite and land-based new technology communications systems to replace the existing radio network.

ITF unions, along with many states, have consistently had serious doubts about the effectiveness of the new system and the speed at which certain western nations want it to be implemented.

The high costs of the new systems, and the fact that many poorer nations would be dependent on untested, complicated machinery manufactured in the west, coupled with the undeniable fact that the present lifesaving system works well, caused many states to oppose the western plans for this system.

Central to these plans was the high technology nations' desire to eliminate the radio officer from the safety system. In order to justify the huge costs of installing the new equipment, they proposed that the new system could be operated by any officer.

This led to what became the central disagreement over the GMDSS — equipment maintenance. The "western camp" (including the major FOC registers) proposed that GMDSS equipment should either be duplicated or triplicated to cover for breakdowns, or that maintenance should be conducted onshore.

Both of these proposals, of course, involved even more expenditure. Shore

Continued on page 24

RADIO OFFICER OR NOT?

Countries with ITU Reservations

Register	Nº. Ships	tonnage
Australia	709	2,365,923
Austria	32	201,251
Bahamas	572	8,962,892
Belgium	344	2,118,422
Canada	1,225	2,902,394
Denmark	1,240	4,501,727
Finland	259	837,952
France	930	4,506,227
FR Germany	1,233	3,917,267
Iceland	396	174,550
Israel	66	545,642
Liberia	1,507	49,733,615
Malta	356	2,685,888
Monaco	<i>No ships over 100 GRT</i>	
Netherlands	1,265	3,726,464
New Zealand	133	336,808
Norway	2,078	9,350,330
Panama	5,022	44,604,071
Singapore	715	7,208,974
Sweden	633	2,116,079
Switzerland	25	259,427
UK	2,947	16,386,533
USA	6,442	20,832,137
Total	28, 129	188,274 573
The Rest (No Reservation)	47,551	215,131,506
World Total	75,680	403,406,079

37 per cent of the world's shipping, nearly 47 per cent of the Gross Registered Tonnage is covered by Reservations and may potentially sail without Radio Officers.

Source Lloyd's Register of Shipping 1988 Statistical Tables,

Note: Register totals include colonies, dependent territories, second registers (ie UK includes Isle of Man, Gibraltar, Hong Kong, Cayman Islands, Bermuda, Turks and Caicos).

Individual reservation administrations are free to interpret the regulations in many different ways — It is likely that many will leave the choice of on board/shore based maintenance or duplication to individual shipowners — It remains to be seen whether all their fleets will eliminate on board maintenance and the RO/REO in all their ships.

...questions remain about maintenance facilities

Continued from page 23
based maintenance facilities and duplicate equipment would be yet another purchase developing countries would have to make from the rich nations.

Changes to SOLAS and radio regulations required the GMDSS issue to be taken before the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) — the UN body with overall responsibility for radio and telecommunications matters.

A World Radio Administrative Conference (Mobile Services) was held in Geneva in October 1987. Seventy-eight nations attended the meeting, with the ITF represented as official observers.

The ITF joined forces with the governments of Greece, Spain, Turkey, Brazil and Argentina to press for the inclusion of a Radio Officer/Radio Electronics Officer (RO/REO) in the new system. The Western nations (the UK, France, Norway, Finland, Sweden, the USA, Belgium and Canada) insisted on eliminating the radio officer. After many hours of debate, late in the evening of October 14, a series of secret ballots was held on three propositions.

The two western backed propositions fell, and by 56 votes to 22, an ITF backed proposal that a 1st or 2nd class certificated RO/REO should be carried on board all deep sea ships was passed.

The defeated minority, however, did not accept defeat with dignity. This decision should have settled the matter, because the ITU is supposed to have overall authority in this matter. Had the western proposals been passed, the rest of the world would certainly have been forced to accept the result.

Instead, immediately after the Geneva ITU meeting, 23 nations (see separate chart for list) announced their formal "reservations" against the decision on RO/REOs.

"Reservations" on international treaties are a recent and hotly disputed matter. Essentially international law allows states to opt-out of certain clauses of an international treaty through reservations in limited situations. Their reservations, for example, should not be incompatible with the overall object and purpose of the treaty. It is also highly questionable whether the ITU Radio Regulations is the type

of treaty states should be able to make reservations on. Unfortunately, international law remains imprecise and effectively unenforceable on such matters.

And so the stage was set for this most recent IMO meeting. From the start it became clear that neither side would be able to prevail at this meeting. There were only 66 voting states present (less than at last year's ITU meeting) and a 2/3 vote would have been required for either side to impose its position on the other.

A reluctant compromise was finally proposed and agreed by the governments.

What this compromise means in a nutshell is that, for those countries who have not made a reservation to the ITU decision (63 per cent of the world's ships), the ITU Regulations will apply for deep sea trading. For those countries that have taken a reservation, the administration has three maintenance options—onboard (with an RO/REO), on shore or duplication. In most deep sea trading they will be required to have two of these three options. Their choice will also be subject to the availability of shore based maintenance facilities — so, in some areas, the absence of shore based maintenance may require these states to carry an RO/REO.

It will be up to the administrations to apply this choice. They may, perhaps,

leave the selection of maintenance methods to shipowners — given the cost of both duplicating equipment and maintaining shore facilities, there may well be a number of radio officers kept on vessels of these registers.

The result is clearly not entirely what the ITF sought, but we can take some solace from the fact that the majority of the world's ships will continue to have qualified personnel on board in charge of the distress system.

In the years up to 1999, as the new system comes into effect, there will be close scrutiny of the effectiveness of the minority non-RO/REO ships. One of the most critical issues will be where coastal maintenance facilities will be located. Ships sailing without RO/REO's must have both duplication and access to shore based facilities. Since most nations in the world are opting for on board maintenance, it will be up to the minority to put coastal maintenance stations in place. The IMO will also have to decide how near a ship's trading route must be to a coastal station to qualify under the rules.

Having two world distress systems, one with and one without radio officers is a far from sensible idea, but it will allow us to objectively determine, from casualty and safety records, which is the safest. The ITF, and most maritime administrations, continue to believe that human beings are the most reliable element in any safety system.

UN liner code conference fails

The three week conference called by the United Nations in November in Geneva to review the UN liner code broke up inconclusively after much of the time available had been taken up by a protracted procedural argument over voting rights.

The code, which seeks to give a bigger share of world shipping to the developing nations, is now fourteen years old and the aim of the conference had been to undertake a detailed review with the aim of bringing it into line with the demands of present-day shipping.

The group of 77 developing nations had resisted demands from the developed nations, the Eastern bloc and

China that would have given one vote to each of the one hundred plus countries represented at the review conference. Instead it wanted voting to be restricted to the 71 countries that had ratified the code, most of which are from the developing world.

The main aim of the developing nations at the conference had been to achieve the extension of the 40-40-20 cargo sharing formula of the code to non-conference lines which they see as an obstacle to the development of their own domestic shipping companies. However, this met with fierce opposition from the developed nations on the grounds that it restricted shippers' freedom of choice.

ITF calls for improvements in offshore safety

The need for major improvements to ensure the safety of personnel on offshore rigs following the Piper Alpha disaster was the main topic under discussion at the meeting of the ITF's Offshore Steering Group when it met in Rotterdam on 17 and 18 November.

In a major review of *ITF Safety and Training Policy* for the industry, the members of the Steering Group made three key recommendations for changes to the policy based on the particular circumstances of the disastrous explosion and fire on the Occidental rig in July which claimed 167 lives. Delegates pointed out that there had been an unacceptably high casualty toll in lives and installations since offshore oil and gas exploration and exploitation began at the beginning of the seventies.

The first of the recommendations concerned the need to keep accommodation and recreational facilities on offshore rigs totally separate from production and drilling areas either by means of 'floatels' or bridged accommodation units. Norway and Denmark were among the leading oil producing nations already insisting on separating living and production areas by blast- and fireproof bulkheads, it was pointed out.

The meeting urged that these updated standards should apply to all new rigs and that existing units should be surveyed to ascertain whether they could be adapted along these lines.

The Steering Group also called for a totally independent national safety inspectorate for the industry in the light of reports that in Britain and the Netherlands a single agency is responsible for both production and safety — a situation that could lead to a conflict of interest.

The fact that many offshore workers - including those in Britain - had no automatic right to representation on safety bodies for the industry led to a third recommendation: - that governments and oil companies should respect workers' rights of organisation and allow them to be represented as of

right on bodies that dealt with safety and environmental issues offshore.

The meeting also agreed to refer for further study draft proposals for an ITF economic and social policy for the offshore industry and draft guidelines on working conditions for offshore diving personnel.

Luxembourg unveils plan for 'Euro-FOC' shipping register

After a lengthy pregnancy Luxembourg is almost ready to give birth to its very open own shipping registry. The tiny landlocked mid European state currently has one ship on its books and the nearest seaport is more than 400 Km from its borders, but it is now keen to become a major force in the world maritime industry. After lengthy discussions and dozens of rumours, the Luxembourg government has now circulated a draft law establishing what looks very much like a European FOC.

The authors of the new law are clearly aware of the stigma which attaches to the term 'Flag of Convenience' and are anxious to avoid it if possible. Their new register will, they say, be 'competitive but respectable' and will act within the principles of the Treaty of Rome. They view the new Luxembourg flag as a way of halting the decline in the European merchant fleet. Before that claim is taken seriously it will be necessary to know just how 'European' these new Luxembourg flag ships will be and how the new register matches up to the established method of judging whether a registry is genuine or not.

The first test is *ownership*. Like other FOCs, shipowners will not need to be citizens or residents of Luxembourg to register their ships there. They need only set up a 'brass plate' company to do the job for them. Luxembourg, long a banking centre and tax haven for foreign capital, has countless law firms ready to provide this service. There is no evidence that the beneficial owners of the vessels need to be European.

The second test relates to *crewing* of vessels. Clearly the register will only be attractive to shipowners if they can use it to hire cheap crews.

The new law looks set to accommodate them. Not surprisingly Luxembourg is not bursting with qualified seafarers so owners will not have to hire Luxembourg nationals. Nor will they (with the exception of the Master) be obliged to use EC nationals on board Luxembourg ships. Even more worryingly, Luxembourg, an EC member and a signatory of the European Social Charter, appears to have no intention of guaranteeing trade union rights to "its" seafarers.. The document introducing the draft law establishing the flag merely states that the shipowner *may* (not *must*) conclude a collective agreement with the representative union organisations in Luxembourg. It says nothing about unions from the crew supplying countries. It is hard to understand how negotiations with a Luxembourg organisation would get off the ground since, not being a maritime nation, Luxembourg has no seafarers' union. To get round this obstacle the draft law suggests that the right to represent seafarers may be granted or acquired, ie the union concerned must satisfy the authorities that

Continued on page 27

Brazilian seafarers victory after 23 day strike

Brazilian seafarers belonging to the ITF-affiliated CNTTMFA called off a 23 day old strike against vessels of the state-owned Docenave shipping company on 9 November when the owners finally gave in to their demands regarding the labour benefits guaranteed under the new federal constitution. Earlier in the strike, the owners had conceded the union's claim for a 73.5

per cent pay rise first awarded to other company crews last February. While some points remain to be clarified, seafarers' union president Mauricio Sant'Anna says he is satisfied with the outcome. He has also expressed his thanks to ITF seafarers' affiliates for their support and assistance during the three week strike which laid up almost all the company's dry bulk ships.

1987— worst year ever for marine deaths

Last year more lives were lost at sea than in any other peacetime year, according to Lloyd's Register.

Most of the figure of 3,841 deaths for the year 1987 comes from the sinking of the Philippino ferry *Dona Paz* in

which 3,132 people died. Another 193 lives were lost with the sinking of the British ferry, the *Herald of Free Enterprise*.

The actual number of ships lost — 219 — fell to the lowest since 1961.

These ships had a total gross tonnage

of 1.28 million — whilst 2.56 million tons and 265 ships were lost in 1986.

A quarter of all the tonnage lost was in the Gulf — where eight ships totaling 324,777 tons went down.

New IMO rules for ro-ros agreed

The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) has agreed on a set of significant changes to the regulations relating to roll-on, roll-off passenger ferry safety.

These new rules are a response to last year's *Herald of Free Enterprise* sinking. Agreement came at October's IMO maritime safety committee meeting, which has approved a series of amendments to the IMO Convention for the

Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS 1974) which are expected to enter into force on April 29, 1990.

Under the new regulations, electronic loading and stability computers must be installed on board ro-ros to assist masters in determining the loaded condition of the vessel prior to sailing. Cargo loading doors must now be closed before departure and a log entry made to this effect.

In order to ensure that ro-ro's stability is not adversely affected by changes in weight (such as structural alterations) a new regulation requires a special survey to be carried out on all passenger ships at least every five years.

Additionally, new passenger ships — ro-ro or not — constructed after April 29, 1990 will be required to be able to remain afloat and stable after a collision.

...the Master is the only member of the crew who has to be an EC national

Continued from page 25

it has some sort of link with seafarers' unions. If this link is a reference to the ITF it is unlikely to be well received by seafarers' unions.

As far as *working conditions* are concerned, the proposals say that "Seafarers from developing countries must be guaranteed wages and working conditions which are honourable and at least equal to those in force in their country of origin." There are, however, some proposals which ensure that wages are not lower than the Luxembourg's 'minimum social salary' and which guarantee paid leave, overtime payments, and food and accommodation quality.

According to the draft law, the new register will save a 'certain number' of European seafarers' jobs, though it carefully does not say just how many. Presumably one per ship since the Master is the only member of the crew who has to be an EC national. Indeed, the statement on jobs is directly contradicted by the reference in the preamble explaining the reasons why the register is being established to the 'great flexibility' it offers regarding the nationality of crews.

It seems hardly likely that, with absolute freedom to recruit whoever they like, owners will opt for European seafarers when they are only too well aware that crews from the Far East and other areas of the world can be had for far less money.

Other attractions of the new flag include exemption from the requirement to pay taxes — this is justified by the rather quaint argument that as Luxembourg does not have a coastline to maintain it does not need to levy taxes! Nor will seafarers' pay be taxed under the proposals.

It is clear that the document's authors believe that the Luxembourg flag will halt the decline in the European fleet, even that it will act in some way as a European flag. Unfortunately, as has already been demonstrated, there are precious few guarantees that the ships will either be owned by or manned by Europeans.

So far most of the discussions about the Luxembourg fleet have centred on the desire of Belgian owners to avoid the tax and social costs of operating in Belgium. They have promised the Belgian seafarers that reflagging to Luxembourg will allow them to con-

tinue to employ Belgian seafarers with the same after-tax pay and similar working conditions and social security cover. This arrangement led the ITF Fair Practices Committee in Rotterdam in June 1988 to add a clause to the new ITF policy on second registers allowing Belgium and Luxembourg, which have long been closely linked in an Economic and Monetary Union, to be treated as one country for the purposes of the policy. At the same time, the FPC made it quite clear that if the Luxembourg register admits ships which are beneficially owned outside Belgium or Luxembourg and if it permits crewing of those ships by non EC seafarers, it will be treated as an FOC by the ITF. Some of the legal provisions may well mean that it would be a 'first class' FOC with better safety and social standards than many of its competitors, but as recent experience has shown only too clearly, if an FOC becomes too respectable and thus too expensive, it attracts few customers. This position has been communicated to the Luxembourg government in a series of meetings. There is nothing in the new proposed law to change the ITF's stance.

Latin American flagging out increases

More and more countries in Latin America are flagging out. Even those countries that have been among the sternest critics of the open register system have not been excluded from this trend.

This is the main finding of an analysis of Latin American tonnage carried out by the Buenos Aires based Iboamerican Institute of Merchant Marine Studies published in November.

The analysis shows that the number of national flag ships owned by both state-controlled and private-owned shipping companies in the region has remained stable for the past two years and that the area of growth has been among ships registered under foreign flags.

Half of the flagged out tonnage, the Institute says, belongs to state-owned companies. This amounts to 52 ships totalling 1.2 m tonnes. The list is headed by CN Mambisa of Cuba with 27 foreign registered ships, while Docenave of Brazil has 8 ships, ELMA of Argentina, Empremar of Chile and CPV of Peru each have 2.

Private companies operate rather more but smaller ships — 77, again totalling just under 1.2 m tonnes — other than under the national flag. Leading private companies in Peru, Chile and Mexico are among those who have flagged out.

A number of reasons are given in the study for this trend, including the need for heavily indebted Latin American nations to be able to offer financial guarantees to foreign yards on newbuildings and the ability to trade more widely, particularly in view of the US trade embargo against Cuba.

Some 95 per cent of Danish tonnage (270 ships of 6.2 m deadweight tonnes) has transferred to the new Danish register — the DIS — in its first three months of operation and twenty ships that had previously been flagged out are in the process of transferring to the register.

The Finnish government is cutting aid to shipowners next year after their

failure to take up the full allocation available during the first year of a state subsidy scheme to owners in the highly competitive Baltic and North Sea trades, who make up the bulk of the national flag fleet. The Finnish flag fleet has decreased by some seventy five per cent since 1981 to around 50 ships of 550,000 tonnes and the owners' association fears further erosion

passing of a statute that would turn foreign seafarers working on ships under the new register into "the latter-day equivalent of galley slaves". She appealed to MPs to vote against the bill because of the scandalous way in which the government was seeking to solve the problems of German shipping at the expense of the jobs of the country's seafarers. Those behind the proposals

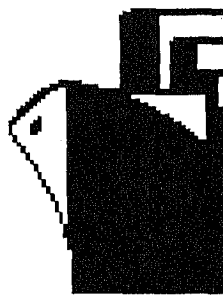
were, she said, fully prepared to set aside German labour law and ignore the federal constitution, turning German ships into a "no man's land" where vital protective provisions did not apply.

Support for the ÖTV's position has come from the the Committee of Transport Workers' Unions in the EC which, at the mid-November

meeting of its Presidium, condemned the German initiative as "completely unacceptable". In a statement calling for urgent action from the Council of Ministers to halt the disastrous decline in the national fleets of EC member nations, the Presidium promised its full backing for the ÖTV's principled and determined stand.

In a bid to brighten up its somewhat tarnished image, the British colony of Gibraltar — with the help of the UK government — is to relaunch its flag as an international ship register under the British flag. The aim is to improve the register's poor safety record by imposing a fifteen year upper age limit on ships, employing British surveyors and bringing the register under the SOLAS, MARPOL and Load Line conventions from December. NUMAST Deputy General Secretary John Newman has accused the British shipping minister of spending time and energy trying to prop up and confer respectability on a small enclave pretending to be a maritime nation while failing to take measures that would help the genuine British flag compete against such "phoney Foc boltholes". Newman said he hoped that the relaunch

The ITF's regular flag by flag roundup



— with owners switching their ships to other Scandinavian countries — unless more effective counter measures are taken to put Finnish shipping on an equal footing with its near neighbours.

In the run-up to the vital parliamentary vote, the German seafarers' union ÖTV has stepped up its campaign against the federal government's proposal for a second shipping register. Twenty five employees' council members working for a number of German shipping companies staged a hunger strike in early November which succeeded in winning much public sympathy for union opposition to the government's plans. ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis was among the many who sent the hunger strikers messages of support and solidarity. The ÖTV has followed this up with a three week campaign tour of 50 towns and cities during which it aims to build on the growing public awareness of the threat posed to the jobs of Germany's 15,000 merchant seafarers. At a rally in the ÖTV's headquarters city of Stuttgart President Monika Wulf-Mathies told those who had gathered to give the seafarers a grand send-off that the union would be mobilising its considerable resources to prevent the

Continued on page 28

...Marshall Islands — yet another new FOC

Continued from page 27

meant that prompt action would at last be taken to improve crew conditions on Gib-registered ships. A division of Wallem Ship Management has been engaged to manage the newly re-launched register in a joint venture with the colony's government and has offered the prospect of talks with the unions on crew conditions. There are currently one hundred plus ships totalling just over three million tonnes on the register, the intention being to double this figure within two years.

The British government has agreed to make more money available to boost recruitment of merchant navy officers. Six million pounds has been set aside for 1989 and 1980 with the aim of attracting up to 350 officer cadets a year, encouraging in-service ratings to qualify as deck or engine officers and allowing existing officers to study for higher certificates. The scheme honours the commitment in the 1988 Merchant Shipping Act to officer training and is expected to cut the net cost of training officers by half.

Commenting on the package, NUMAST Assistant General Secretary Brian Orrell said it was probably "too little too late". Newly trained officers could find themselves with no job to go to if companies persisted in employing foreigners as junior officers, he added. Despite these serious reservations, Orrell said that NUMAST welcomed the campaign as it recognised the need for recruitment initiatives.

Meanwhile, Transport Secretary Paul Channon has agreed to a meeting to discuss a plan of action for the British shipping industry drawn up by owners, unions and maritime organisations and coordinated by the British Maritime League. The plan calls for the introduction of a national industry policy and advocates a series of measures to help get the industry back on its feet. These include: investment incentives (notably special income tax and social security regimes for seafarers on British flag ships) and more money for

education and training together with the speedy adoption of EC measures to improve the competitiveness of British owners.

The Maltese government has adopted new shipping legislation amending the 1973 Merchant Shipping Act as part of plans to promote the island as an off-shore financial centre. The changes will allow registration of oil rigs and ships under construction as well as temporary access to the register by ships on bareboat charter. Lower registration fees are due to be announced shortly. The Maltese registry has grown from total tonnage of one and three quarter million tonnes at the beginning of 1987 to over three million gross tonnes today — the main growth being in Greek-owned ships.

The Marshall Islands; the former US trust territory and now independent Pacific Republic, became in October the latest unlikely new Foc register. The first two ships to join are two former Liberian registered ULCCs — the *Embassy* and the *Grand* — operated by the US Majestic Shipping Corporation. The islands have close economic and defence ties with the US under the islands' fifteen year old Compact of Free Association and local maritime commissioner Howard Zeder is marketing the new venture by stressing the advantages of "an alternative register closely linked to the US without the prohibitive cost" and indicating that ships seeking to join could expect substantial discounts. The new register is closely modelled on that of Liberia though much cheaper. It has already been added to the ITF's list of Foc registers.

The Singapore marine department cut its maximum fees by about eighty per cent in October to Sing\$ 100,000 (\$US 49,000) in a bid to attract more giant gas, oil and bulk carriers on to the register. Older ships already operating under the Singapore flag will also be

exempted from the register's fifteen year rule when they are transferred to new ownership. Subject to certain conditions being met, the ITF has agreed to remove Singapore from its list of Foc vessels from January 1 next year.

Support for a new register Spanish registry has come from Spain's recently installed Minister of Transport José Barrionuevo though it is unlikely for political and legal reasons that it will be based in the Canary Islands as owners had been asking but more likely in the North African enclaves of Ceuta and Mellila. Meanwhile, the Spanish fleet continues to shrink at an alarming rate. It has fallen by 20 per cent in the last two quarters and now stands at 3.4 m tonnes, down a million tonnes in six months.

The Swedish government is divesting itself of Uddevalla Shipping, with the sale of its fleet built at the now closed Uddevalla yard expected to raise Skr 800 m (\$132m). The leading Swedish companies Bilspedition (the overland group now seeking to expand further into shipping following its recent acquisition of Cool Carriers and Transatlantic) and Nordström and Thulin — are taking stakes of 14% and 11.5% respectively in Uddevalla together with four insurance companies and institutions who between them will acquire 16% of the former state-owned company.

The US giant Carnival Cruise Lines last month became the world's biggest cruise operator after its decision to buy the travel and tourism arm of Holland America Line (HAL) — one of the industry's top five — for \$625 million in a deal which is expected to be finalised by mid-January. The acquisition of HAL will put Carnival, with just under a quarter of the global cruise berth total, way ahead of its nearest industry rival P&O and does much to compensate for its earlier failure to win control of Royal Admiral Cruises (see last issue of ITF News).

Philippine inter-island shipping casualties mount

The Philippine's government has banned 40 ships from putting to sea and has prohibited one company from carrying passengers following the second major ferry disaster in a year.

The National Telecommunications Commission issued the ban on 40 inter-island ships after discovering that their radio licences had expired or that they had deficient communications equipment.

Philippine's President Corazon Aquino indefinitely suspended the passenger operations of Sulpico Lines on November 2 pending a full enquiry of the company's safety record.

The Sulpico owned 2,855 ton ferry, the *Dona Marilyn* sank in late October in the middle of Typhoon Ruby with a loss of more than 300 lives.

Last year another Sulpico Line's inter-island ferry, the *Dona Paz* sank (see ITF News January 1988) with the staggering loss of 3,132 lives.

After that tragedy, Capt Greg Oca, President of the ITF affiliated Associated Marine Officers and Seamen's Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP) called for a special government commission to tackle the ailing inter-island industry. His call was not followed up by the government.

The Sulpico suspension (which still allows them to carry cargo) comes after disturbing revelations about the state of the 22 year old ferry. The Japanese classification society Nippon Kaiji Kyokai suspended the *Dona*

Marilyn's classification 19 months ago because the owners had failed to carry out the necessary surveys. There are also serious questions about why the owners allowed the ageing ship to sail into a Typhoon. Surviving passengers said that they had pleaded with the master to take shelter in an islet till the storm passed, but the ship only sheltered for an hour and then sailed back into the storm. Some survivors also said that the ship's engines failed during the accident.

This most recent affair highlights the very serious problems of the Philippine inter-island shipping industry and its appalling safety record.

The Philippines is a vast archipelago state without an extensive road network. Air travel is relatively expensive, and most islands are too far apart to justify bridge or tunnel building. Shipping, then, is crucial to the country's internal transport.

This industry consists of several thousand craft, often individually owned. There are 200 larger vessels, like the Sulpico ships, owned by 20 different shipping companies.

The industry is plagued with problems ranging from decrepit vessels to corruption. The safety record is terrible. During the 1980's alone Philippine's inter-island shipping has been involved in five of the world's worst shipping disasters. Over 6,000 lives have been lost in these major accidents.

In addition to these major losses, there is the year by year toll of small craft sinkings, which probably accounts for another 2-300 deaths per year.

Crewmembers on domestic ships are not trained, examined or licenced in accordance with international standards, according to AMOSUP. The union has called for the application of the IMO's Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW 1978) to underpin a domestic certification and training programme that could ensure the reliability and competence of inter-island seafarers. Additionally the union has called for an increase in the abysmally low salaries of inter-island seafarers.

The government's Maritime Industry Authority (Marina) has pledged itself to try and improve the safety record of the inter-island industry. Along with the Sulpico enquiry and the recommendations of the seafaring unions there appears to be a basis for some positive improvements. However, the Philippines' impoverishment (they are one of the largest third world debtor nations) severely limits the government's ability to tackle the root problems of the industry. New vessels and training, combined with proper rates of pay for Filipino seafarers are simply not affordable in the present circumstances. But without them, more losses like the *Dona Paz* and the *Dona Marilyn* seem inevitable.

TRAVEL BUREAUX

Union agrees to performance-related pay structure

An innovative package of performance-related pay increases has been agreed between the British Thomas Cook's Travel Agent and the ITF affiliated Transport Salaried Staff Association (TSSA).

The package, covering 6,500 staff at the company, involves radical changes in job structures and evaluation and a phased 11.5 per cent pay increase.

All staff at Cook's will receive a flat six per cent increase, with a further 5.5 per cent shared out according to performance next March. The next pay settlement, in January 1990 will be

entirely based on performance.

The TSSA will negotiate the overall value of the next settlement, but the amounts awarded to individuals will be performance related.

Under a new job evaluation scheme, which is part of the package, the existing 16 job grades at Cooks will be reduced to seven. Evaluation of the importance of various jobs is to be replaced by assessments of personal qualities and skills.

These individual appraisals will be carried out annually in advance of the pay increases. Individuals will be

appraised on a commonly approved system of criteria that will judge individual initiative and job performance.

Finally, from next March onwards, the company will implement a plan of personal development assessments. Employees' skills and assets will be evaluated to decide whether they are being employed fully or in the right job. Leadership skills, and involvement in activities outside the office, will be taken into account in these assessments. Each individual will then be given a "personal development level".

ITF NEWS

*wishes all its readers
fraternal greetings of the
Season and all the best for
the New Year*

ITF TIES AND T-SHIRTS NOW AVAILABLE

Stylish Ties and T Shirts bearing the ITF logo are now available from ITF Headquarters. The T shirt is available in one size only - extra large. This not only makes it suitable for well-built men but also provides a fashionable 'loose fitting' garment for women trade unionists. The tie (also in one size only!) is Burgundy coloured, patterned with the ITF logo in blue and green and the initials 'ITF' tastefully embroidered in blue near the bottom. The prices (including postage and packing) are :

Ties £6 or US \$10

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