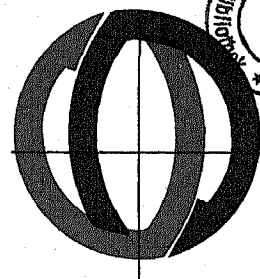


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ITF NEWS

NACHRICHTEN : NYHETER



JANUARY 1989

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IS CIVIL AVIATION SAFETY IMPROVING?

AIR CRASHES SAP PUBLIC CONFIDENCE

The grim events of the last few weeks of 1988 and the first few of 1989 thrust the issue of aviation safety into the world's headlines once more. Two major accidents involving severe loss of life — both in the UK — and a succession of near disasters involving mechanical faults made claims that the aviation industry's safety standards are improving look rather shaky.

The bombing, by as yet unidentified terrorists, of the Pan Am 747 which crashed on the Scottish town of Lockerbie on 21 December killing 258 people has already forced a major rethink of aviation security worldwide. Although the investigation into the attack is still under way, it seems clear that a bomb — probably only a few kilograms of high performance plastic explosive — was placed aboard the aircraft either at Heathrow Airport or in baggage transferred from Frankfurt.

Security at these two airports — among the toughest in the world — was clearly inadequate. Tougher measures, including longer check-in times and more delays, now look inevitable on most air journeys, and expensive new machines which can detect plastic explosive may have to be installed by airports.

In a letter to the ITF General Secretary, the President of the Independent Union of Flight Attendants, Margaret Brennan, called for urgent steps to improve airline security. Brennan, whose union represented the 13 flight attendants killed in the Pan Am disaster, called on the US and other governments to ensure that such a tragedy can never happen again. "This hideous crime must be avenged by new and comprehensive safety and security measures," she said, adding that "the most sophisticated detection technology must be used regardless of cost." In a reference to the security alert which was issued to US diplomatic personnel some 10 days before the attack but which never reached the ears of passengers or crew, Brennan also said "the Security Alert System must be improved so that all parties who can conceivably stop or detect such acts are armed with information. Leaving notification procedures up to bureaucrats or low level managers is placing our lives in jeopardy."

Concern already expressed by ITF aviation unions about cost cutting in airlines' maintenance operations took a new turn as a series of events followed the second, recent major crash. Official investigators have yet to determine the precise series of events which led to the crash of the British Midland Boeing 737-400 just short of the runway at the East Midlands Airport on 8 January. 46 people died and many more were injured as the plane — just 4 months old — crashed as it made an emergency approach after reporting an engine fire. Early reports indicated that both engines had failed but investigations then switched to the fire detection systems which may have given false

2 2776

Continued on page 2

FULL REPORT ON ITF CIVIL AVIATION WEEK (12-13)

BRAZILIAN UNIONS PREPARE FOR ACTION AS SUMMER PLAN CUTS INDEXATION

The two Brazilian trade union centres have buried their ideological differences in order to effectively fight the government's threatened de-indexation of wages.

After lengthy discussions the CUT and the CNT national centres, representing nearly 40 million Brazilian workers announced on January 12 that they would call a joint general strike if the government abolished the three-monthly wages indexation system, known as the URP.

With Brazil's latest annual inflation figure touching nearly 1,000 per cent, the indexation of wages is clearly a crucial issue for all workers.

Brazil's economy is in a serious mess, caused mainly by the huge sums owed to Western banks.

Sarney's response, announced three days after the union pact was agreed, is the "Summer Plan" — which replaces the now discredited "Cruzado Plan" of two years ago.

The Cruzado plan introduced a new currency—the Cruzado—one unit being equivalent to 1,000 of the old Cruzeiros and a "comprehensive" price freeze. Within six months the plan had failed, with inflation taking off again.

Now the "Summer Plan" brings in a "New Cruzado" — worth 1,000 of the old Cruzado's (or a million Cruzeiros — the notes are still in circulation). Prices

on 180 essential products are supposed to be frozen indefinitely, and the URP indexation is to be abolished. Sarney has said however, that there will be a one-off wage increase for all workers followed by negotiations with the trade unions. Additionally, the Federal government has announced its intention to balance the budget — by closing five government ministries and several state agencies and departments and dismissing an unspecified number of civil servants.

Whether the offer of negotiations with the trade unions will amount to anything is unclear — groups of workers (including auto workers in São Paulo) have already staged spontaneous walk outs in response to the new economic plan.

* Political violence against trade unionists in Brazil continues to be a serious problem. The assassination of the Ama-

zon Rubber Tappers union President Francisco Mendes Filho on December 22nd was a sad loss for the Brazilian and international labour movement.

Mendes, 44 years old, was internationally known for his vigorous campaign in defence of the Amazonian rain forests. The battle between the unionised agricultural workers of the Brazilian interior and the local landlords (who are often also the representatives of multinational interests) has been marked by a constant campaign of violence against trade unionists and peasant leaders. The ICFTU, in their 1988 worldwide survey of trade union rights violations, estimated that there were over 200 killings in 1987 in the rural sector. Most of these killings, say the ICFTU, "were committed by professional murderers hired by landowners."

SOUTH AFRICANS SEIZE ITF VIDEOS

South Africa may have agreed to withdraw from its illegal occupation of Namibia, but the apartheid state's security forces are still acting true to form.

The Finance Secretary of the National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW), Anton Lubowski, visited ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis last December. Lewis gave Lubowski the ITF's two video tapes (*Can you help us?* and *Runaway Flags*) to take back — but the security men at Windhoek airport confiscated them when Lubowski returned. We hope they enjoyed viewing this "subversive" material.

...new security measures are the best kind of vengeance

Continued from page 1

information causing the pilot to shut down his good engine while relying on the damaged one. Whatever actually caused the British Midland crash, it sparked off a series of tests on electrical systems of Boeing aircraft. These tests showed up a number of cases of faulty wiring in fire detection systems on 757 aircraft and brought to light criticisms of quality control standards at the Seattle factories of the world's biggest aircraft manufacturer, which has been trying to

boost production in the face of a massive boom in demand for new jets. Two more incidents — one in which an engine fell from an earlier model 737 in Chicago and another where metal fatigue blew a hole in the fuselage of a 727 — kept the giant plane maker in the world's headlines.

If the investigators do conclude that there was a simultaneous failure of both engines in the British Midland crash it will inevitably force a rethink of the relaxation of rules governing twin engine aircraft. ITF affiliates have already

expressed serious concern about the increasing use of jets such as the 767 on North Atlantic routes.

Coming just a few weeks after the ITF's "Civil Aviation Week" in which aviation unions stressed the dangers of unlimited cost cutting and deregulation, the recent wave of airline crashes demonstrates clearly the risks which are still associated with air travel and the need to ensure that the highest possible safety and security standards are adhered to both in construction and operation of civil aircraft.

General Secretary: Harold Lewis

Publications Officer: David Cockroft

International Transport Workers' Federation
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Internationale Transportarbeiter-Föderation
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French PM threatens to restrict strike rights

The French government has told the trade union movement that they will introduce legal limitations on the right to strike within a few months, irrespective of the results of "negotiations" they have invited the unions to participate in.

In a characteristically ambiguous statement during a television interview on December 18, Socialist Prime Minister Michel Rocard said that he believed he would have to legislate minimum services during strikes without a negotiated deal. A day later he tried to qualify his statement by saying that the spring parliamentary session was a long way away, that the government was going to discuss the issue with the unions and that "The Prime Minister would never wish to limit the

right to strike" — which, of course, is exactly what he had said he wanted to do the day before.

The entire French trade union movement have reacted swiftly to this threatened limitation of strike rights.

André Bergeron, leader of the Force Ouvrière Confederation, demanded that Rocard make clear exactly what he was proposing. A week later the public service federation of FO announced that it would not accept the government's "invitation" to discuss minimum services in the public sector. The union's position is that they can see little point in entering negotiations with an administration that has already stated that, if it doesn't get its own way, it will impose limitations by legislation.

The CFDT confederation announced that it was always open to discussion with the government, but is completely opposed to legal restrictions on the right to strike. According to Nicole Notat, deputy General Secretary of the CFDT, negotiations about required minimum services should properly be held on a case by case basis inside individual enterprises or services.

The Communist-led CGT Confederation has also rejected any limitations on the right to strike, along with the white collar CGC Confederation and other non-aligned autonomous unions. If Rocard has done nothing else, he has fostered a unique unity of opinion amongst France's diverse trade union movement.

Rocard also faces stiff opposition from the left of his own party, and from the Communists in the National Assembly. But he has already been assured of the support of much of the right wing opposition parties, who can guarantee him a parliamentary majority.

Free paper offer for ITF News readers

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions is keen to expand the readership of its fortnightly publication **Free Labour World** and make it more generally available to union leaders and activists worldwide.

Free Labour World is a lively magazine in tabloid format, illustrated (often in colour) and dealing with a wide range of subjects of interest to trade unionists. Recent issues have featured the reprieve of the Sharpeville Six and ICFTU action against the proposed new labour laws in South Africa as well as the latest ICFTU campaign against South African coal. There is also regular coverage of human and trade union rights issues around the world.

Affiliates who are interested in receiving it should contact the ICFTU directly at:

Rue Montagne aux Herbes Potagères
37 - 41

1000 BRUSSELS
Belgium

and state which language they require (English, French, German or Spanish).

UNION VICTORY ON YOUTH SCHEME

Bowing to union pressure Spanish Prime Minister Felipe González has agreed to scrap the controversial youth employment scheme that had been one of the factors in last month's 24 hour general strike of Spanish workers (see November/December issue of **ITF News**).

The government had been planning to reduce youth unemployment by paying employers to take on the 800,000 school leavers who would be

coming on to the labour market in the next three years. The young workers would have had short term contracts and would have received only minimum rates of pay.

Meanwhile, there is a strong probability of renewed industrial unrest following the collapse of talks on 26 January when the government's "final" offer of a Pta 344 bn package over two years was rejected by the unions as representing less than half the total sum they were seeking.

FISHERIES

HUGE CUTS IN NORTH SEA QUOTAS

Fishermen with the European Community have been hit hard by the latest reductions in the Community quotas for the North Sea.

After much wrangling and dissension, European fishing ministers approved massive cuts in the 1988 Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for cod and haddock. The North Sea cod TAC is to be cut by 20 per cent next year to 118,700 tonnes and the haddock TAC by a huge 60 per cent to 62,500 tonnes.

These huge cuts have been ordered because of scientific reports to the European Commission that state that there are too many boats in the North Sea chasing too few fish. Scientists claimed that there was a very real danger of overfishing depleting the haddock stocks. Ministers have agreed to review scientific evidence at their mid-year meeting next June, with a view to expanding the TAC figures if the situation appears to have improved.

Ministers have made no provision whatsoever for the Community fishermen who will bear the brunt of these cuts. Bob Allan, chief of the Scottish Fishermen's Federation has called for government aid to the fishermen. "You can't run an industry on this basis," he said.

KARIN B UNLOADS ITS DEADLY CARGO

The first of the ships chartered by the Italian government to bring highly toxic waste back from Nigeria where it had been illegally dumped by an Italian businessman has at last been successfully unloaded.

The *Karin B* began offloading its cargo in the Tuscan port of Livorno just before Christmas. The ship had arrived in the port in late September and had been waiting at anchor until detailed arrangements could be finalised for safe disposal of its hazardous cargo.

Dockers handling the ship wore protective clothing and face masks as they unloaded the drums of chemicals. Discharge of the ship was completed by mid-January and some consignments have already been moved from the port to Modena for incineration.

A second ship on charter to the government — the *Deepsea Carrier* — is expected to unload shortly in the port

of Taranto.

Meanwhile, Angola is set to become the next struggling African nation to accept industrial toxic wastes from the EC in a deal soon to be finalised on a \$2 billion contract for the disposal of 5 million tonnes of industrial waste.

The ITF has been invited by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to play an active role in the preparation of a Global Convention on

the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Waste. The Convention is due to be finalised at a diplomatic conference in March in the Swiss city of Basle. Transport unions, through the ITF, will be presenting their views on the occupational hazards which occur and will be pressing for a major role to be allocated to trade unions in the implementation of the Convention at national level.

ITALIAN DOCK SCHEME UNDER THREAT

Italian dockers began a 4 day strike early in January in protest at attacks by the government and port employers on the Italian dock labour scheme. The scheme, which limits cargo handling work to registered dockers organised in co-operatives, is under pressure from the Merchant Marine Ministry which wants stevedoring and warehouse work to be done by workers who are not members of a co-operative. The Ministry is also reported to have ordered the privatisation of specialised terminals in Genoa, Olbia, Livorno and Piombino.

UK dockers under fire from right wing campaign

Right-wing pressure groups in the United Kingdom have been intensifying their pressure on the Thatcher government to scrap the National Dock Labour Scheme. The Scheme, originally set up in 1947 and modified several times since, decasualised the industry. Under it, all decisions relating to hiring or transfers of registered dockers have to be approved by a joint management-union board and employers are prevented from implementing compulsory redundancies. Mrs Thatcher, who has shown no lack of enthusiasm in attacking union rights in other industries, still shows some reluctance to scrap the Scheme. The main reason for this is the strong stand adopted by the ITF-affiliated Transport & General Workers' Union, which has made it clear that any such moves against the Scheme would provoke a nationwide dock strike.

Some free market factions in the Conservative Party are prepared to take this risk however, and are urging the government to take the plunge. At a conference in November organised by the right wing Centre for Policy Studies a number of extravagant claims

were made for the economic benefits which would result if Britain's ports were "freed" from the Scheme's shackles. One estimate even suggested that abolition would create 50,000 new jobs — an astonishing figure in the light of the fact that there are less than 10,000 registered dockers left in the whole of Great Britain.

With considerable courage the TGWU Docks Secretary John Connolly (who is also the Chairman of the ITF Dockers' Section) attended the CPS conference and put up a strong defence of the Scheme which had enabled a cut in the dock labour force from 80,000 to 10,000 over 40 years to be achieved with minimal social hardship.

In December the climate for the scheme worsened with a number of companies in Glasgow attempting to load scrap metal on to ships without using registered dockers. A series of legal moves to prevent this action — which would represent a serious breach of the legally-binding Scheme — were instituted by the union's lawyers. Sensing a major battle ahead, the union's Docks and Waterways Confer-

ence decided, at a meeting held on 21 December, to ballot all 10,000 registered dockers on strike action against breaches in the Scheme. On past precedents the dockers will vote solidly for action. As the Thatcher government approaches its 10th anniversary, it remains to be seen whether it is prepared to face what could quickly become its most serious industrial dispute.

SUPREME COURT REFUSES TO HEAR 50 MILE PLEA

In what may be the final round in the long lasting fight over the controversial "50 mile" rule, the Supreme Court in January refused the ITF-affiliated International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) leave to appeal against a decision to strike the rule down. The decision, taken in 1987 by the Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) and upheld by the US Court of Appeals, ruled illegal the contract clause which reserved all container stuffing and stripping within 50 miles of an ILA port to ILA dockers.

130 die in Bangladesh rail crash

Over a hundred and thirty people died and more than a thousand were injured — many very seriously — when two crowded express trains — one coming from Dhaka the other from the port of Chittagong — crashed head on at Tongi, seventeen miles from the capital on 15 January in Bangladesh's worst ever train disaster. Three coaches were thrown off the tracks in the collision. Most of the dead and injured were office workers commuting to jobs in the capital. A national day of mourning was declared for the victims and their relatives.

An Inquiry Commission under a high court judge will investigate the causes of the disaster and his report is expected by the end of the month.

The ITF sends its deepest sympathy to the families of all those who died in this terrible tragedy, together with best wishes for the recovery of the many injured.

The disaster which deeply affected the entire Bangladeshi nation was made even worse by the fact that it comes at

ITF BUS WORKING CONDITIONS SURVEY

Important new data on operating and working conditions for bus drivers are to be found in a new survey just published by the ITF. The survey, prepared by the ITF Road Transport Workers' Section, looks at private and public bus undertakings in 18 countries from Australia to Zimbabwe. Topics covered include manning (one man operation); ticketing; working hours; and rest and duty periods. The percentage of women bus drivers varies drastically, the survey demonstrates. In Australia, Austria, Germany, Italy, Swaziland and Zimbabwe some transport companies employ no women drivers at all, while Denmark and Sweden recorded figures of between 15 and 30 per cent. Social provisions, including sickness benefit, are also covered in the survey, copies of which are available on request from the ITF in London.

a time when Bangladesh has been suffering many grave natural disasters, in which many thousands of its citizens have already lost their lives.

The ITF's Asia/Pacific Inland Transport Committee when it meets in Australia in the middle of next month will have rail safety high on its agenda.

Meanwhile, an internal inquiry into the Clapham rail crash just before Christmas (see our last issue) in which 34 people lost their lives has confirmed that defective installation of signalling

equipment was probably to blame for the tragedy. The new equipment had apparently been installed in such a way that it interfered with the fail safe mechanism which should have stopped all further trains after the first train stopped by switching signals to red.

The report of the internal inquiry has been made available to Anthony Hadden QC who is heading the public inquiry which has held its first preliminary hearing. Formal hearings start on 20 February.

Rawu News shows the way for new union papers



RAWU News

Bulletin

JULY - SEPTEMBER 1988 VOL. 1 NO. 3

QUARTERLY NEWS BULLETIN FOR RAILWAY WORKERS UNION (K)



The Union Officials together with the Branch representatives inspecting some of the Slums at Alibi River. All these Slum Dwellers are too small to accommodate a bed.

The Railway Slums Must Go

In one last effort, we discussed at length and discussed the matter of reconditioning the Railway Slums. We have done with the Management made physical impossible in most of the slums. In the case of Malindi slums, there seem to be no relation when the Malindi Slum Dwellers started building such to replace the houses and slum them.

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1988 saw three issues produced of 'RAWU News' — the new, professionally produced journal of the ITF-affiliated Railway and Allied Workers' Union of Kenya. The News Bulletin, edited by RAWU General Secretary Raphael Okang'a, came into existence following the ITF African Regional Research and Publications Seminar held in Dakar in November 1987. The journal gives industrial information as well as union news and is written both in English and Swahili. ITF Research and Publications Secretary David Cockroft, commenting on the RAWU initiative, said "This journal, produced by a union in a developing country without any external help, shows what can be done if union leaders are committed to improving communication. The ITF is examining ways of helping RAWU continue to produce it. In the meantime, other unions thinking of launching their own publications should take a good look at 'RAWU News.'"

AIRF — an important force in Indian trade unionism

One of the ITF's largest and oldest affiliates, the All India Railwaymen's Federation (AIRF), held its 62nd Convention last November in Bombay.

Over 850 delegates attended the Convention, representing the 13 affiliated sections of the Federation with a total membership of over 900,000.

The opening session, on November 16, was a mass rally attended by over 50,000 railway workers and chaired by AIRF President Umraomal Purohit.

ITF Asia/Pacific Secretary Mo Hoda addressed the opening session, complimenting the AIRF on their steadfastness in protecting and safeguarding the interests of their members and for their contribution in promoting international solidarity through the ITF since their affiliation in the 1920s.

The AIRF was a pioneer of the Indian trade union movement. It emerged at the same time as the anti-colonialist National Movement and many of the prominent leaders of that struggle had, at one time or another, close links with the AIRF.

The AIRF has many achievements to its credit. Not long ago the union secured a system of Productivity Linked Bonus (PLB) payments for its members. In gaining proper grading, job security and workers' rights, the AIRF has often been the pacesetter of Indian trade unionism, particularly with regard to central government employees.

On the broader social front, the AIRF and its affiliated unions have always positively responded to national tragedies like floods, droughts, earthquakes and the like. The AIRF unions have also campaigned against women's oppression and the dowry system.

Anti-labour climate

The Convention met amidst a general political and economic environment in India that can only be described as anti-labour and pro-management. The general attitude of the government towards the unions is reflected in the restrictive, anti-union proposals envisaged in the Industrial Relations Bill (see ITF News September 1988).

This government attitude is reflected in a wide range of issues. The government has ignored the pressing need to restructure the grades of workers on the railways (something that must be

done because of the recent merger of various pay scales and local reorganisation).

Despite an agreement to increase the numbers of public holidays for railway workers from nine to twelve a year, the government hasn't acted. They are also operating an effective recruitment ban — vacancies, if they are not left empty, take an incredibly long period of time to be filled. This results in avoidable public complaints, inefficiencies and overtime working.

Average working hours for running

staff are over 10 hours a day. Indian Railways are a growing network, and the pressures of expansion make working life more difficult for operating staff and also threaten the safety of the system.

The government is also constantly attempting to transfer as much railway work as they can to private contractors. "This is throwing poor workers to the wolves in the garb of contractors," says the AIRF in a special Convention statement and "it is fraught with the dangers of unsafe working."

SWISS SAY NO TO 40 TONNE TRUCKS

Demands by the EC for 40 tonne lorries to be allowed on the roads of Switzerland were high on the agenda of the second annual meeting of the national drivers' committee of the ITF-affiliated road transport workers' union VHTL when it met in Berne on 19 November.

The Commission's objective is that the intra-EC lorry weight limit at 44 tonnes should also apply in the Alpine transit countries of Switzerland and Austria. Faced with implacable opposition from the Swiss government and people, the Commission negotiators last year proposed a compromise under which 40 tonne lorries would be permitted on a limited 'corridor' through the country.

The position of the Swiss government on lorry weights has always been clear: it totally rejects any increase in the current 28 tonne limit.

As reasons for its opposition to an increase in lorry weights it cites the already overcrowded Swiss road network, the need to safeguard the environment against any damaging vehicle emissions and the clear dislike of local communities of any increase in heavy goods traffic on motorways.

The ultimate solution in the government's view is a "rail bridge" through Switzerland with EC lorries and their cargoes in transit through Switzerland being carried on trains, thus taking the burden off the roads entirely.

However, this would require the construction of a new rail route which would take at least fifteen years to build, far outside the EC's 1992 time

frame. It would also be more expensive for the lorry operators.

In the interim the Swiss government suggests that as a sign of its goodwill towards the EC it would be prepared to accept the carriage of containers in transit by rail probably on the Lötschberg-Simplon line.

This exposé of government policy on lorry weights was given to the meeting by Rudolf Bärffuss, an official in both the Foreign and Transport Ministries. He stressed how important it was that Switzerland should act in a spirit of unity with the European community of nations by bringing this provisional transit route into effect without delay.

The official Swiss government stand was endorsed by the union delegates attending the Berne meeting in a unanimously adopted statement in which the national drivers' committee declared itself totally in favour of the retention of the 28 tonne limit, welcomed the clear position of the government and pledged itself to resist any pressures for an increase to 40 tonnes and for the lifting of the lorry ban at night and on Sundays.

The committee also welcomed the government's commitment to a new rail transit corridor which it felt was essential if Switzerland was properly to fulfil its function as a transit country. Meanwhile, the role of combined transport should be expanded to offer transit traffic a swift and efficient passage through Switzerland, with measures being taken to look after the needs of drivers at loading and unloading points and on trains.

CARDIAC ALERT FOR SWEDISH TRUCKERS

Swedish professional drivers are at much higher risk of dying of heart disease than are other Swedish workers of a comparable age, according to the findings of a ten year study of 1,731 drivers.

The study was conducted by Gudrun Hedberg of the Institute of Social Medicine at Umeå University in cooperation with heart specialist Karl Anders Jacobsson and covers the years 1974 to 1985.

Whilst conducting her investigations Ms Hedberg found a high turnover among drivers. Though there were clearly a number of reasons for this, with many drivers simply moving on to other jobs, she discovered that many drivers were compelled to retire early because of heart and circulatory disease. The fact that drivers have to undergo a medical examination before

being granted a licence and are thus in good health when entering the profession is an indication of the serious health problems brought on by stress at the wheel.

Her findings challenge the common perception of heart disease as the 'executive's disease'. She points out that drivers are in danger of falling victim to stress illnesses because they have little say in how their work is organised and must carry out certain tasks within a given period.

She believes that this type of stress could be a greater risk factor in the development of heart disease than so called 'executive stress'. For company executives, though they are undoubtedly subject to extreme work pressures, are able to exert considerable control over their work tasks.

Ms Hedberg's hypothesis is supported by the fact that many professional drivers die of heart disease caused by a narrowing of the arteries, for which stress is known to be one of the causative factors along with smoking, high blood pressure, increased cholesterol levels and a sedentary occupation.

Ms Hedberg now hopes to establish the relative importance of these risk factors by following a group of 400 drivers and then advising on appropriate preventive action. While much can be done to encourage drivers to smoke less and follow a more sensible diet, it may well prove difficult to devise ways of reducing the extreme fatigue that many drivers admit to after a day's work as this is often the result of external factors such as poor traffic planning for which outside agencies are responsible.

Commission proposes 'vignette' for road taxation

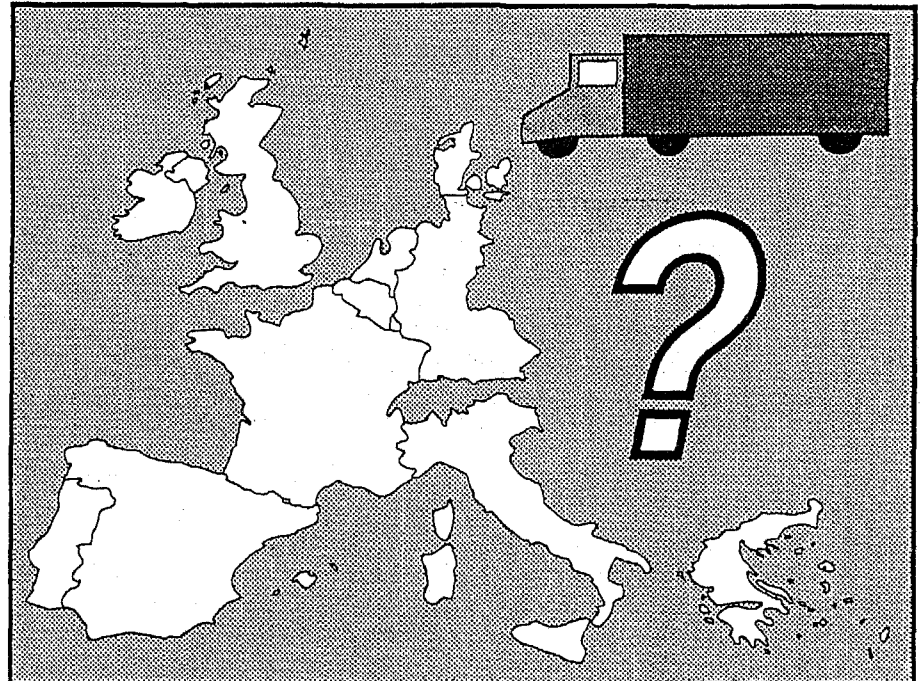
One of the many contentious issues in the European Community's efforts to create a single internal market by the end of 1992 is the question of truck taxation.

The issue is an example of the many conflicting interests and practical problems that remain as serious obstacles to the single market principle.

According to the European Commission, "Different levels of vehicle taxation between member states pose one of the major problems to the development of a single European market for road transport. It tends to distort competition and has led certain individual member states to threaten national measures against lorries from other Community countries."

Not only do different states have different rates of vehicle taxation, they use different methods for assessing tax; different criteria, in terms of weight and size, play their part, and different combinations of direct (vehicle based) and indirect (tolls and user fees) taxation exist.

With the aim being that Community trucks should have unhindered access to the single market, the problem is that states who charge higher vehicle taxes object to having to give free access to vehicles paying lower taxes. The Ger-



mans, for example, state that their taxation makes a contribution to the infrastructural maintenance of the road system, and that it isn't fair that operators should be able to use their system without making a contribution (particularly since some of the lower taxation countries charge tolls that have to be paid by German drivers).

There is the danger of the development of a system of 'plates of conven-

ience' where companies register their trucks in the Community country with the lowest taxation and then ply their trade all over the Community.

The concept, however, of standardising taxation across the Community is clearly absurd. Unless all conditions and all taxes were brought into line with each other (which would virtually

Continued on page 8

...combating the "distortions of competition"

Continued from page 7

involve the imposition of a unitary central state), it is practically unfair to try and standardise only one set of taxation. The United States of America, generally considered to be a single market, has different road and vehicle taxes in different States.

The European Commission have now floated a new idea for truck taxation in the Community. Com (88)683 — a Commission 'Communication' proposes the following:

The first stage is to agree upon a common method for calculating the national tax on trucks. This, they propose, would be by weight, so reflecting the wear and tear caused by each individual vehicle on the roads. Once this has been agreed, all other changes, the Commission proposes, would be frozen until January 1, 1993.

At that time, the proposal says, a new Community system would be introduced that would take into account the use trucks make of roads in other Community member states.

Trucks travelling outside their country of registration would have to have a "vignette" whose price would vary between states and depend on the weight of the vehicle.

The proposal offers a three step method for calculating the cost of the vignette:

1. Every state would fix a standard rate for each truck weight category

based on the cost of wear and tear caused by the vehicle. This infrastructure cost would be "calculated on the basis of detailed surveys of typical lorry use."

2. Then the states would deduct from the set rate of the vignette their own, already established, infrastructure charges that are made in the form of national truck taxes, road tolls and excise duty on fuel. The commission doesn't advance a scientific basis for calculating this figure. After deducting the already charged infrastructural costs from the agreed rate of the vignette, states would have the magic figure for their own national vignette. This would be sold to drivers of that state.

3. Any truck using Community roads outside their own country of registration would have to display the vignette, "which would show that it had made up the difference between the infrastructure cost and the various charges which had been paid."

The price of the vignette would vary, then, depending on the level of truck taxation in a given country. High tax countries like Germany or Britain would pay less than low tax countries — "It is even possible that they would not be required to pay anything extra" says the Commission. It's even possible that the cost of the vignette could be negative, but the Commission doesn't seem to envisage paying driv-

ers to visit other countries...at least not yet!

The Commission states that the "important feature of the vignette system is that it would ensure that lorries in each member country met their share of the damage they cause to the roads in the Community and, thereby, eliminate the distortions of competition."

The "distortions of competition" would hardly be eliminated by this measure alone which seems to promise that the present wranglings between states over truck taxation will be transferred into arguments about the value of the vignette and the apportioning of tax by each state to their own infrastructure. Important issues, such as the proportional burden of infrastructural costs borne by commercial goods transport versus passenger transport, and individual car operators and even the question of what constitutes infrastructural maintenance and what is simply embellishment are all still unresolved.

From the trade union perspective, the major "distortions of competition" which need to be tackled are the disparities in wages, working conditions and social benefits available to drivers from different countries. So long as employers are capable of transferring operation to countries where these social and wage costs are lower, they will surely be distorting the vision of a united European market.

PEOPLE

Dr. V David, who was released from prison by the Malaysian authorities last June after eight months in detention, was re-elected Secretary General of the Malaysian TUC at its recent Convention.

Karel Van Miert, a Belgian and President of the Flemish Socialist Party, has been appointed as EC Transport Commissioner and took up his duties at the beginning of the year. He succeeds Stanley Clinton Davis whom the British government decided not to nominate for a second term despite an excellent track record as Commissioner. Van Miert has considerable

experience of the workings of the EC, having been in administrative charge of the private office of the Vice President of the Commission. He is also the author of a number of publications on the EC. A convinced European, he was for six years a member of the European Parliament and is a former Vice-Chairman of the Confederation of Socialist Parties of the EC. Van Miert now faces the difficult task of assuming responsibility for transport policy in the run-up to 1992.

Samuel Skinner has been appointed by incoming US President Bush to the post of Transportation Secretary. Skin-

ner brings to his new job the practical experience gained as chairman of a major public transportation system in Chicago — the second largest regional transport authority in the United States. Skinner has run the Chicago authority for the past four years and thus has wide experience of the road and rail freight industry.

Erich Steinbach of the Austrian Railwaymen's Union retired at the end of last year. Steinbach has been for many years a member of the Committee of the ITF Road Transport Workers' Section and is a former deputy on the Railwaymen's Section Committee.

HUGE LOSSES IN COASTAL SHIPPING

The last few months have seen an appalling toll of maritime casualties in the coastal and passenger sectors.

Following the loss of the Sulpico lines *Doña Marilyn* in the Philippines on October 25, with an undetermined loss of between 300 and 800 lives (see ITF News November/December 1988), there have been seven major casualties worldwide — three in the Philippines, and one in Bangladesh, Brazil, China and Guatemala (see chart).

What these casualties have in common is the generally poor condition of internal and coastal shipping in much of the developing world.

Poor conditions predominate with ageing tonnage being kept in service beyond its lifespan, and companies eager to make a profit at the expense of proper safety precautions and without adequately trained staff,

The skipper of the Brazilian pleasure craft that sank off Copacabana beach on December 31, the *Bateau Mouche IV*, was, for example, a former car mechanic who had no master's certificate or qualification.

Political corruption is also a serious problem, where companies may find it

UNION ACTION STOPS FOC

Union action brought a swift halt to a plan to use a flag of convenience, Filipino-crewed ferry in the Channel trade between England and France.

The 1,600 tonne Cypriot-registered *Beaverdale*, owned by the French transport and distribution group CAT, began sailing in early December from Le Havre to Southampton.

The Le Havre section of the ITF affiliated Maritime Union of the CFDT protested to the company and were told, incorrectly, that the vessel has "ITF approval" to sail the route. No such "approval" exists or was granted.

The French seafarers and dockers took industrial action against the *Beaver-*

RECENT COASTAL AND FERRY CASUALTIES

DATE	NAME	COUNTRY	INCIDENT	CASUALTIES
Dec 5	<i>ROSALIA</i>	PHILIPPINES	SANK IN STORM	400 DEAD 10 SURVIVORS
Dec 15	FERRY	CHINA	CAPSIZED	55 DEAD, 7 MISSING 125 SURVIVORS
Dec 18	<i>RCJ</i>	PHILIPPINES	SANK BETWEEN ISLANDS	51 DEAD, 2 SURVIVORS
Dec 27	<i>HASAIL</i>	BANGLADESH	COLLISION - SANK	150 PLUS DEAD, 43 SURVIVORS
Dec 31	<i>BATEAU MOUCHE IV</i>	BRAZIL	SANK OFF BEACH	109 DEAD, 40 SURVIVORS
JAN 1	<i>JUSTO RUFINO BARRIOS II</i>	GUATEMALA	OVERCROWDED SANK IN BAY	70 PLUS DEAD, 48 SURVIVORS
JAN 3	<i>JEM II</i>	PHILIPPINES	CAPSIZED	60 PLUS DEAD, 130 SURVIVORS

easier and cheaper to bribe officials than to maintain their vessels properly. Reports indicate that Brazilian officials took bribes to allow the *Bateau Mouche IV* to sail severely overcrowded. The endemic corruption of the Philippine maritime authorities is legendary.

But the problems of the coastal marine industries in these countries cannot be put down solely to local inadequacies. Insufficient facilities and cor-

ruption are symptoms of the problem, not their cause.

The fundamental problem lies in the enormous debts owed by developing countries to Western banks. The Asian Development Bank has recommended that the Philippines' inter-island shipping industry, which consists of several thousand craft, many individually owned, with the 200 larger vessels being controlled by some 20 larger companies (like Sulpico lines), should be rationalised and concentrated into the hands of a few companies. Naturally, such a recommendation is not welcomed with glee by the many companies themselves, and the only way such a rationalisation could be effected would be if the government itself were to take a direct hand in the reorganisation of the industry — through a strict regulatory regime and, perhaps, direct state ownership.

None of this can happen without the necessary funds, and, because of the general economic crisis, this just isn't available.

With the mounting toll of casualties, some form of international initiative is required. The International Maritime Organization currently has a two month fact finding mission visiting the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia. Whether these nations will be able to act on their recommendations remains the major question.

dale, preventing it from leaving Le Havre for four hours.

Sam McCluskie, General Secretary of the ITF affiliated British National Union of Seamen, immediately pledged his union's support for the French action:

"This is another example of the way shipping companies are trying to gradually bring in foreign seafarers on UK services," he said.

The NUS said that they would do everything they could do to support the French action.

Within days, the company suspended the service, saying that they had intended to introduce a French crewed vessel in the new year anyway.

ENTIRE BELGIAN FLEET TO SWITCH FLAG

Belgian shipowners reached agreement with the government on 31 December on measures for the transfer of most of the country's eighty strong fleet to the Luxembourg flag when it is set up, probably in April or May. Sixty ships are expected to switch flag immediately the new register opens for business, led by the ships of the country's largest shipowner Compagnie Maritime Belge (CMB) which plans to transfer all but one or two of the seventeen ships in its fleet. In return for government approval, the companies have undertaken to keep on 1,800 Belgian seafarers and have pledged to create a further 250 jobs over the next three years as operations expand. Belgian companies claim that by moving to the Luxembourg flag they will save 20 million francs (\$540,000) in annual operating costs per ship. Meanwhile, the plans for a Luxembourg registry have already attracted interest from a number of other European countries. The ITF remains opposed to its use by non-Belgian owners (see *ITF News* November/December 1988).

The state owned Brazilian general cargo line Lloyd Brasileiro faces privatisation or closure under the government's latest austerity plan (see item elsewhere in this issue) which requires it to be sold to private interests within 90 days or else shut down. Lloyd Brasileiro, which currently has debts of \$400m, has been struggling throughout the 80s. It is unlikely that any private carrier could absorb debts of this magnitude and therefore its future must be in grave doubt. At the same time the government also announced its intention to abolish the maritime regulatory agency Sunamam.

The Canadian government's proposals for the introduction of a second register — contained in a Ministry of Transport discussion paper — have come under fire from the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway, Transport and General Workers (CBRT), which has a

substantial seafaring membership. CBRT (and ITF) President Jim Hunter has written to the Director of International Shipping Policy at Transport Canada saying that his union was "against the creation of a second registry as a means of re-establishing a

these collaborative efforts, will allow one of its shipping specialists to be seconded to the area to help the shipping companies exercise their rights under the Liner Code.

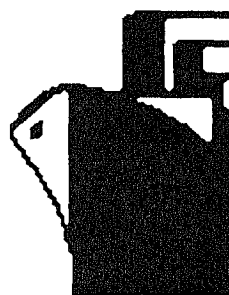
Pressure will be on the incoming EC Transport Commissioner Karel Van Miert to push ahead with the second phase of the European common maritime policy dealing with measures designed to increase the competitiveness of the EC fleet. Though the Commission's proposals have still not been made public, they are widely believed to include cuts in seafarers' taxes and social

security payments and financial help with the costs of repatriating ship's crews. Shortly before the Commissioner took office, shipowner and seafarer representatives meeting in Brussels in the Joint Committee on Maritime Transport decided to put forward their own alternative proposals in what amounts to a clear message of dissatisfaction over the lack of progress within the EC. These will be discussed at a Joint Committee meeting next month.

The vigorous campaign conducted by the German seafarers' union ÖTV against plans by the ruling coalition to introduce a second German register suffered a serious setback when the bill setting up the GIS was adopted in the Bundestag on 9 December. However, the union is still refusing to accept defeat as inevitable and now takes its case to the West German Constitutional Court where it will seek a definitive legal opinion on whether the proposed register can be reconciled with key clauses of the Grundgesetz (constitution).

In a comment on the parliamentary decision, ÖTV President Monika Wulf-Mathies referred to it as a "flagrant interference" with German labour law and collective agreements, adding that it paved the way for owners to behave

The ITF's regular flag by flag roundup



Canadian Flag Deep Sea Fleet". Hunter said that though at first glance proposals to take Canadian seafarers employed on second register ships out of taxation seemed generous, by not paying taxes these seafarers would lose out on entitlement to unemployment insurance, pension and holiday benefits. Hunter's letter reinforces the views expressed in a resolution adopted by the CBRT Convention in September rejecting a second registry plan.

After decades of rivalry in which they have lost ground to foreign lines which have taken over most of the Caribbean basin's valuable cargo business, regional shipping companies in the Caribbean have decided to join forces for the first time to ensure that they get a fair share of trade to and from the area. Four companies are behind the venture, led by the powerful West Indies Shipping Corporation (WISCO) which is owned by 10 of the 13 members of the regional economic grouping CARICOM. Other companies which are cooperating with WISCO are the state owned Shipping Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago; Guybulk (a joint venture between the Guyanan government and a Norwegian company); and Jamaica Merchant Marine, provided the latter can be saved from bankruptcy. It is hoped that UNCTAD, which is known to be sympathetic to

Continued on page 11

...New Zealand unions campaign to save shipping

Continued from page 10

like late 20th century "colonial masters" towards their foreign crews. German seafarers and their families, she said, were gravely disappointed in their government who they felt had sold their jobs down the river.

The ÖTV intends to mount a further challenge when the bill comes before the upper house (the Bundesrat) in early February. Meanwhile, it has renewed its earlier call for round table discussions on German shipping involving representatives of the coastal states, shipping economists, owners and unions to thrash out the issues involved and help avert the impending catastrophe.

Bermuda and the Isle of Man have become the first **British dependent registers** to be given an official classification under the government's scheme for updating the registries in the so-called Red Ensign group — at just over thirty six and a half million tonnes the world's fifth largest. Both have been placed in the highest category, which allows them to take on vessels regardless of size. The government will now turn its attention to other dependencies such as Gibraltar and Hong Kong.

Britain may soon be supplying officers to the British crown colony of **Hong Kong** which is having difficulty in finding certificated officers in sufficient numbers to man its ships while the UK has a surplus of highly trained officers many of whom are out of work or have had to turn to shore based employment. They are expected to be keen to take advantage of the new employment opportunities in an expanding centre like Hong Kong while the colony would undoubtedly benefit from access to such high calibre officers.

Plans for the extension of the **Japanese maru ship system** — at present limited to the cabotage and short sea trades where about a third of vessels are maru ships with foreign crews — to some ocean-going ships are likely to be strongly opposed by the All-Japan

Seamen's Union (JSU). The plans would involve further job losses at a time when more and more Japanese owners are flagging out. The outline proposals, which would permit foreign crews to be hired on these ships for the first time, come from the Japan Council for the Rationalisation of Shipping and Shipbuilding Industries and are known to have the backing of the Ministry of Transport.

At the beginning of 1989 the **Dutch** government introduced a series of measures aimed at improving the competitiveness of the national fleet. Chief among these is a reduction in income tax liability of crews, with 35 per cent of income being exempted from tax.

The **New Zealand Seamen's Union** has launched a Save the Shipping Corporation campaign coordinated by a full time union organiser to rally support against the sell off of the New Zealand Shipping Corporation (NZSC) (see ITF News, October 1988). Union members have been out on the streets urging the public to resist this latest attempt to dispose of state owned assets and explaining why continued state ownership of the NZSC is so important. Among other events in the campaign, the union occupied the NZSC's Wellington boardroom, shipboard meetings have also been held, while banners and placards opposing the sale have been hung over ship sides and throughout both islands rallies and leafleting sessions have informed New Zealanders of the threat to the country's vital seaborne trade. The union also commissioned its own public opinion poll which found that most New Zealanders were against the sell off and even those in favour would only support a sale to a New Zealand buyer. The campaign culminated in a national stoppage over the privatisation issue which halted the NZSC fleet shortly before Christmas.

The date for the receipt of bids has now passed. Offers to buy are understood to have been received from the Australian National Line and the Italian company Lloyd Triestino, as well as

two British shipping groups. The ANL bid has apparently been rejected out of hand by the New Zealand treasury though the ANL is lobbying strongly for it to be reinstated.

Meanwhile, with classic ill-timing, the NZSC has put two of its container ships — the *New Zealand Pacific* and the *Forum New Zealand* — under the Hong Kong flag, renamed them the *Tui* and the *Weka* and offered the 128 officers and ratings re-employment on altered terms. The *Tui*, crewed with British officers and Spanish ratings, is being picketed at Auckland by former crew members who have refused an offer of re-employment with a smaller crew. The seamen's unions have sought redress from the courts, alleging that the NZSC was operating an illegal lockout and had failed to give the necessary 14 days notice of industrial action. The unions have also asked the court to order the company to reflag its ships back to New Zealand and reinstate previous crewing conditions. It is thought likely that the *Weka* will also be picketed when she arrives back in New Zealand any time now.

A total of sixty five ships joined the **Norwegian International Register** in December — a record monthly total. Most of these were Norwegian owned and were switching from the major convenience registries. After a slow start, the current boom in registrations seems set to continue — owners of a further 69 ships have already embarked on the NIS registration process in the first two weeks of this year. Until now few foreign owners have joined the NIS but their reluctance is likely to be overcome after the Norwegian government said it would be introducing legislation excluding NIS registered ships from requisitioning in a national emergency. Japan is one of the major shipping nations interested in the NIS to have been put off by the emergency regulations. At the beginning of 1989, there were 430 ships on the register of 20.2 million tonnes. Over 4 in 5 of these had switched from foreign flags and had at least some Norwegian involvement; only twenty five were completely foreign owned.

CIVIL AVIATION

CIVIL AVIATION WEEK

The ITF's World Civil Aviation week, from 12 to 17 December, was a unique example of co-ordinated trade union campaigning activity on four continents. This week marked the first time that ITF affiliates took joint action in their own countries around the common theme of "deregulation — no thanks".

Centrally, the ITF produced a special Civil Aviation Bulletin devoted to the issues of deregulation which was distributed throughout the world in all ITF languages during the week. The ITF Civil Aviation Secretary Pio Albanesi participated in a European press conference in Brussels on December 15 organised and hosted by the ITF affiliated CGSP/FGTB. He also attended and spoke at an Italian trade union seminar on aviation policy.

The real success story of the week was the national activities organised by affiliates in their own countries. In a number of countries, the ITF civil aviation unions produced their own campaigning material which was distributed to aviation workers, the travelling public, industry heads and government ministers. They succeeded very well in commu-

Desregulamentação do espaço aéreo gera protestos

O ALERTA para os perigos da anulação da desregulamentação do espaço aéreo das Comunidades Europeias constitui o objectivo central da semana mundial da aviação civil, que hoje se inicia. Coordenada pela Federação Internacional dos Transportes (ITF), com sede em Londres, a acção é...

menor, a qualidade do serviço prestado é pior, as tarifas são altas, há falta de segurança e de serviço.

Les syndicats du transport aérien refusent la déréglementation

Du 12 au 17 décembre, la Fédération des travailleurs des transports (ITF) organise une semaine mondiale de l'aviation civile pour opposer à la déréglementation qui se développe dans le transport aérien mondial.

Les syndicats redoutent que la liberté totale accordée à l'importation de transport de passagers, à n'importe quel prix et à n'importe où, n'aboutisse à diminuer les salaires et à aggraver les conditions de travail des travailleurs du monde aérien. C'est pourquoi les syndicats FO, CFDT, SNPL (pilotes-autonome), SNOMAC (mécaniciens-autonome) et SNPNC (hôtesse et steward-autonome) ont lancé, le 12 décembre, une campagne sur le thème « Déréglementation? non merci ».

Chambon, secrétaire NPNC a rappelé que l'airline, qui date de 1945, a vu sa qualité de service et sa sécurité se dégrader.

De ce dernier point de vue M. Chambon a dénoncé la compagnie Charter Aéromaritime, filiale d'UTA, qui a créé cette « machine à guerre contre ses salariés », mais aussi la filiale Eurobird-France d'UTA et l'illisible Interair d'Air Inter. Cette déréglementation ne dispose plus d'une desserte régulière) et la concurrence (autrement dit les transporteurs sauront plus de 90% du trafic). Quant aux salariés, ils ont essuyé cent quatre-vingt-sept banqueroutes de compagnies aériennes dont les plus sévères celles de Braniff et de Continental ont amené le licenciement de plusieurs milliers de salariés. M. Deslandes (CFDT) a souligné que l'intérêt de tout est une démocratisation effective du transport aérien en Europe par une baisse des tarifs mais sans dégradation de la qualité de service et sans déréglementation sociale.

Les dangers de la déréglementation

Des syndicats, représentant notamment le personnel navigant, ne veulent pas en Europe d'une déréglementation à l'américaine.

L'AVIATION CIVILE EN BOUT DE PISTE

Du 12 au 17 décembre, mobilisation syndicale pour préserver l'emploi, garantir la sécurité et assurer les services.

Trabalhadores estão contra liberalização da aviação

SEMANA MUNDIAL DE LA AVIACION CIVIL DEL 12 AL 17 DE DIC. 88

PARA la máxima seguridad una mejor relación calidad-precio un servicio impecable a los pasajeros

POR un personal competente

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nicating the trade union message about deregulation to the general public, both through press coverage and direct publicity. Of course, this didn't happen in every country — or even the majority of countries with ITF affiliates. There certainly could have been more advanced planning and a greater co-ordination of regional initiatives, particularly in the developing world. But this was a unique international trade union action, and it has demonstrated that when civil aviation unions work together across national boundaries to get their message across, their voice is stronger and more effective. In Argentina, the

Continued from page 12

Asociación Argentina de Aeronavegantes produced a special leaflet on deregulation which was distributed at airports along with flowers (the union's traditional mark of a 'peaceful protest'), a letter to the government and a press release were also issued: "We had a fair coverage by the press," says Lilly Morgan, the union's press officer — despite the fact that certain "ever merry fellow citizens in uniform" were also attempting to stage a coup at the same time.

In Australia, the Federated Clerks' Union sponsored a special advertisement in the national press and affiliates issued press releases which received favourable coverage by the media.

In Belgium, there was the ITF European press conference, which received wide coverage in both French and Flemish newspapers and radio. The CGSP produced a specific pamphlet for airline workers and a glossy quadrilingual leaflet (in Flemish, French, English and Spanish) which was distributed to passengers at Brussels airport.

In France, the Transport Federations of Force Ouvrière, and the CFDT, the flight attendants SNPNC, the mechanics SNOMAC, and the pilots' union SNPL jointly produced a wide range of pamphlets — to transport users and civil aviation workers. 18,000 copies of the ITF Civil Aviation Bulletin were distributed amongst French civil aviation workers, along with explanatory pamphlets on the activities of the ITF. A special poster was also produced, along with a number of placards. A joint letter about the aims of the week and aviation policy was sent to Transport Minister M. Delabarre. A press conference was organised in the SNPNC building, with sympathetic news coverage by five of France's leading newspapers. At Paris' main Charles de Gaulle airport, union members with banners and placards leafleted passengers entering the security area.

SNPNC General Secretary Michel Abraham has sent a full report of the activities in France to the ITF. He feels that the week wasn't fully successful — the Minister of Transport did not respond to the unions' request for a special meeting, and press coverage was limited to the newspapers. "We have the feeling that this campaign should have been more carefully prepared and a longer notice given." says



French aviation workers distributing campaign material at Charles de Gaulle airport

Abraham.

In Great Britain, NALGO produced an impressive centre spread on deregulation in their weekly NALGO News — which is distributed to all their members. The TGWU organised a meeting of aviation shop stewards during the week, which was addressed by section secretary Pio Albanesi.

In Italy, the three union confederations' transport sections (FILT-CGIL, FIT-CISL and UILTRASPORTI) produced and distributed pamphlets and a large wall poster and held a press conference, which generated sympathetic coverage in the newspapers and radio. A series of regional seminars and debates between industry figures and aviation unions were also organised.

In Portugal, the Sindicato dos Quadros de Aviação Comercial, the Sindicato do Pessoal de Vôo da Aviação Civil and the Sindicato dos Técnicos de Manutenção de Aeronaves joined forces to produce a series of publicity leaflets on deregulation and aviation policy which were distributed to the general public and aviation workers in airports. A Portuguese version of the ITF sticker was widely distributed, and

a press conference achieved a very high response in positive press coverage.

In Spain, the week coincided with the hugely successful trade union general strike (see ITF News November/December 1988), but the UGT also managed to distribute leaflets and bulletins about Civil Aviation week during the strike.

In the USA, where deregulation is a grim reality and the unions have long been campaigning against it, the week coincided with a rally by the machinists' union (IAM), the pilots' (ALPA), the transport workers' (TWU) and the flight attendants' (AFA) unions outside the Washington headquarters of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to protest against the FAA's decision to allow airline companies to hive off their maintenance to foreign countries. The FAA's change to regulation FAR 145 would allow airlines to seek out cost cutting unregulated maintenance anywhere in the world. ITF Press Releases and the Civil Aviation Bulletin were distributed by the unions in their press pack for the rally, which took place on Wednesday December 14.

Airline industry in grip of takeover fever

More and more privately owned airlines are changing hands as smaller companies are taken over by their larger counterparts while the trend towards privatisation shows no sign of abating.

In an interesting development, the **PWA Corporation**, the holding company for Canadian Airlines International (CAI) — Canada's second largest carrier — has made a bid for the privately-owned airline **Wardair** in a deal worth C\$ 248 million. The deal has been forced on Wardair which has been driven inexorably into the red by the fierce undercutting on fares that is the present-day hallmark of Canadian airline operations. The merger will bring PWA the benefit of Wardair's strong international route network and create a powerful competitor for the partially privatised national carrier Air Canada. Wardair will retain its separate identity within the group with Max Ward remaining as Chairman of Wardair under PWA's ownership though he will relinquish his post of Chief Executive to PWA's Rhys Eyton. The amalgamation should go ahead smoothly as Eyton already has behind him the experience of successfully integrating the four small airlines which together make up CAI. The impact on jobs in Wardair is likely to be considerable with as many as 4,500 of the former company's employees possibly losing their jobs.

In the United States, the Memphis-based air courier **Federal Express** is to take over the giant air cargo and trucking group **Tiger International**. The deal, worth \$880 million, comes as something of a surprise as Tiger had been expected to go to Reliance Group Holdings, whose chairman, corporate raider Saul Steinberg, had shown a keen interest in the group and had already made two proxy bids (see last issue of ITF News). Instead, Federal Express will now buy Reliance's 14.8% stake in Tiger. The implications for jobs at Tiger are not yet clear but Federal Express will no doubt argue that it is planning substantial additions to its fleet of cargo aircraft when the deal is examined by the Departments of Transport and Justice which must give their formal approval of the deal.

Elsewhere in the United States, Lorenzo's troubled subsidiary **Eastern Airlines** continues to shrink. The

US Department of Transportation has just approved the sale of the profitable East Coast shuttle to New York property developer Donald Trump and now the airline's Philadelphia operations are apparently to be sold off to USAir. Meanwhile, new secret talks are scheduled in a last-ditch bid to calm the deeply troubled labour relations at the airline. Previous discussions were halted when reports of the proceedings were leaked to the press.

As expected, further south in Latin America, the Chilean government has adopted new privatisation legislation permitting 51 per cent of shares in the national carrier **Lan Chile** to be sold off this year (see also last issue of ITF News). The previous attempt to sell off a 32.7 per cent stake in the company — which incidentally has an excellent track record — failed last year when the companies that had qualified to bid failed to follow this up, probably because too small a stake was on offer to permit a company buying in to Lan Chile to exercise any real control, while the share price is now generally admitted to have been pitched too high. The knowledge that the government was likely to rethink its position also led companies to back off in the hope that they would get a second chance this

year on more favourable terms.

Over in Europe, the continuing search by the Scandinavian airline **SAS** for new and stronger markets, which led it to sign a cooperation agreement with Texas Air last October (see ITF News, October 1988), resulted last December in a major £25 million deal with Airlines of Britain Holdings, the go-ahead group which includes the regional airline **British Midland Airways**, **Manx Airlines** (of the Isle of Man), the Scottish company **Loganair**, and **London City Airways** (operating out of London's latest airport in Docklands). The deal, which won SAS a seat on the ABH board, should enable both companies to compete more effectively in Europe with increased business from more scheduled services out of London's Heathrow Airport. SAS has been interested for some time in a tie up with a British airline company but an earlier attempt to buy in to **British Caledonian** was frustrated when that airline was taken over by **British Airways**.

SAS is also reported to be close to an agreement with **All Nippon Airways** on a joint operation at Tokyo airport and though the projected link up with **Aerolíneas Argentinas** has encountered serious obstacles, it is still being actively pursued.

STATE STAKE IN LUFTHANSA TO BE REDUCED

The West German government has announced that they will reduce their stake in the **Lufthansa** airline from 75 per cent to a "little above" 50 per cent over the next two years.

Finance Minister **Gerhard Stoltenberg** said on December 19 that, rather than by selling any of existing shares, this privatisation would be effected by the government declining to take part in new share issues which will take place over the next 24 months.

Lufthansa has traditionally enjoyed a virtual monopoly of internal German flights, which is now being challenged.

Charter operator **Aero Lloyd** began competing services in November. Running a fleet of 119 seat DC9s and 137 seat MD83s between Munich, Frankfurt, Hamburg and Düsseldorf,

they have, so far, failed abysmally.

Aero Lloyd's main attraction is that their prices are ten to 15 per cent less than **Lufthansa's** — but the attraction does not appear to have been enough to encourage German airline passengers to switch. In mid-December, six weeks after the service began, **Walter Schneider**, a senior executive with the airline, admitted that most flights were carrying only a handful of passengers. **Schneider** claimed that the average number of passengers was ten to fifteen, but other industry analysts put the figure at an average of 7.3 per flight (a load factor of five per cent!). The airline's break even is a 50 per cent load factor.

In April, **Lufthansa** will face another competitor in the form of German

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AIR NAURU DISPUTE DEADLOCKED

The protracted dispute involving Air Nauru's pilots remains deadlocked with the government still adamantly refusing either to recognise the pilots' union or to enter into talks on an end to the pay freeze introduced as far back as 1981. (For background to the pilots' strike see ITF News May, June, July/August and September 1988.)

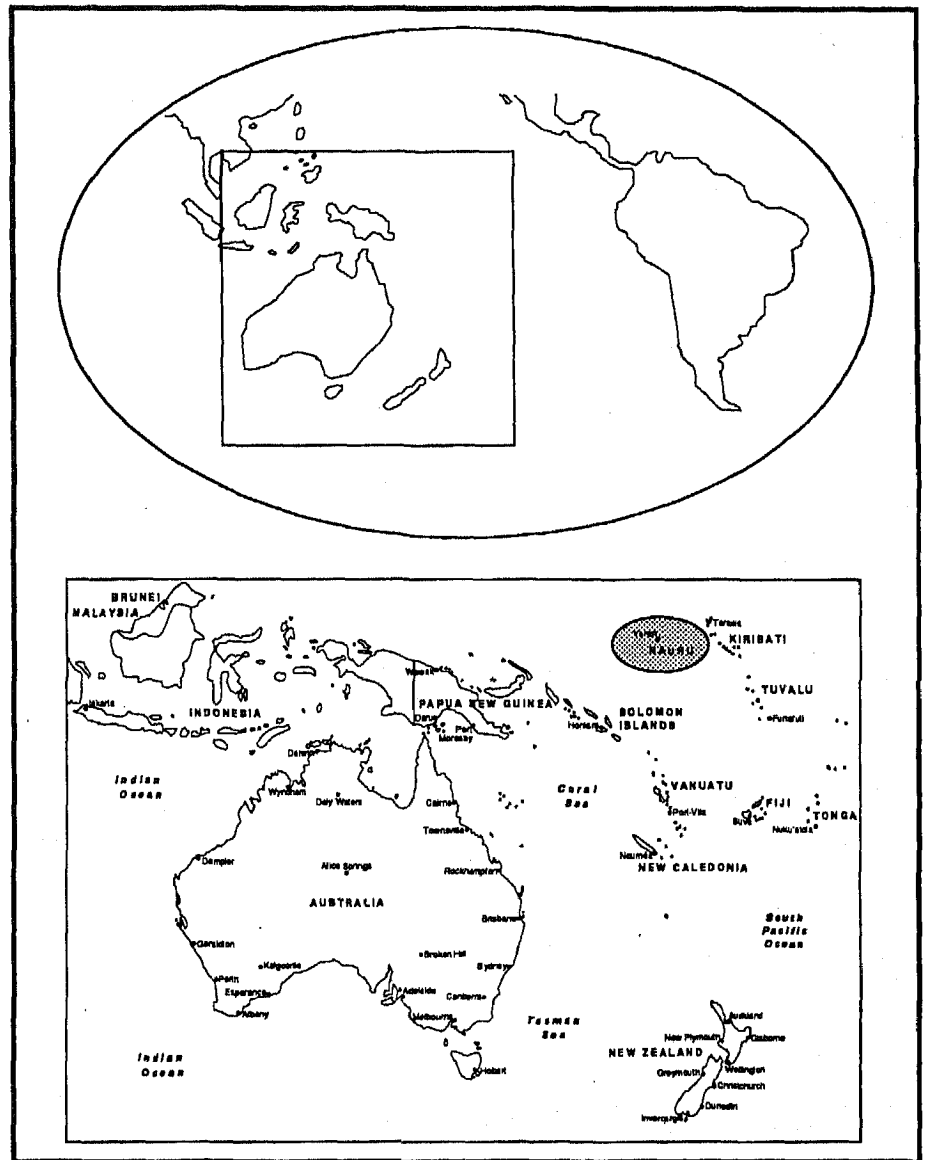
Faced with such a hard-nosed attitude, the Nauru Airline Pilots' Association (NAPA) is now considering whether to institute legal proceedings in Australia against the Republic of Nauru to obtain the back pay owed to its members and win them compensation for unfair dismissal.

Meanwhile, Air Nauru has resumed limited operations following the decisions first of New Zealand and then of Australia to reissue Air Service Certificates to the company even though it had taken no action to bring its structure and operations into line with international standards. The Australian certificate is valid only for three months but it is clear that the company will use the breathing space to recruit the pilots it needs to restart normal operations.

At the moment only a few flights are being operated with five non-union pilots hired before the dispute began and — for the moment at least — by the two Indian pilots seconded to Air Nauru last year. (These last two pilots are known to have submitted their resignations but were still flying at the end of last year.)

A vigorous pilot recruitment campaign has been launched by the Nauru government though this has not been a spectacular success. Nauru government Chief Secretary V S Mani has taken over responsibility for interviewing and hiring new pilots although he has no expertise or competence in this field.

Most likely to be interested in joining



the company are a group of former Indian air force pilots who have been finding it difficult to get jobs.

The fact that Mani is himself an Indian may well mean that he will look favourably on their applications, not least because the Indian government has shown sympathy for Nauru's attempts to re-establish regular contacts

with the outside world. Already Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi has said that pilots will be allowed to resign from Indian Airlines to join Air Nauru — a move designed to get round the opposition of ITF aviation affiliates in India who have given staunch and greatly appreciated support to their colleagues in Air Nauru throughout their dispute.

...competition fails to rattle airline

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Wings — a new airline owned by the Burda brothers (well known German entrepreneurs). German Wings will attempt to compete on quality of services, rather than price.

In the short term both new airlines can sustain gigantic losses, because of substantial tax concessions that exist for new enterprises under German law. Lufthansa is in a very strong position to maintain its domination of the internal market, however. A majority of

internal flights in Germany are feeders to international flights, and cost the passengers practically nothing. Lufthansa does not accept interlining from other internal airlines, and it retains a tight grip on the best time slots at most airports.

Phase two of ITF Indian training programme

Delighted with the success so far of our Indian civil aviation training programme, first introduced four years ago, the ITF has now launched phase two of this ambitious project.

The launch took place at a seminar held in the island resort of Manori near Bombay from 19 to 26 November 1988.

The one week seminar put twenty education officers from aviation unions and the airport authority union through their paces. Under the guidance of Project Director Mihir Bandopadhyaya the officers were taught the techniques of organising and running trade unions, learned how to conduct effective bargaining sessions and were instructed in study circle methods of training rank and file union members. Bandopadhyaya was assisted in his task

by aviation union general secretary Jagdish Lal, retired general secretary F X Fernandes and Ganapathy, a regional aviation union official.

The scope of the seminar was widened to include information on industrial relations and the trade union situation in India generally, a topic that was most ably introduced by Umraomal Purohit, President of the Indian railwaymen's affiliate AIRF, who is also Chairman of the Coordination Committee of ITF affiliates in India.

To give participants both an insight into the activities of the ITF on behalf of aviation workers and a deeper understanding of international trade unionism study materials were presented by ITF Asian Regional Secretary Mo Hoda who also organised a showing of the

ITF Video 'Can you help us?' which was greeted with considerable interest.

The first phase of the programme has succeeded in breaking down the traditional rivalries between aviation unions in India, which have previously limited their effectiveness. An impressive total of 33 unions in the sector are now grouped in a coordination committee, with the authority to speak with one voice on behalf of India's many thousands of aviation workers.

One other notable achievement of the programme is that it has brought employees of the sixteen different foreign airlines operating in Indian under one umbrella federation — the All India Federation of Foreign Airlines Employees' Unions — which joined the ITF at the beginning of this year.

OBITUARIES

Samuel M Katisya, national chairman of the Kenyan Transport and Allied Workers' Union until his retirement in 1986, died in December.

John E Lawe, International President of the Transport Workers' Union of North America has died in office. Lawe was only the union's fourth president when he was elected to the union's top post in 1985. He started life as a humble bus cleaner before moving on to drive buses. He later entered on a career as a

union official and in time became president of the union's powerful New York branch where he headed a hard fought strike of the city's bus and subway workers. He was active within the ITF Road Transport Workers' Section, representing US road transport workers on its Urban Transport Committee for a period.

Bernt Carlsson, UN Commissioner for Namibia and former Secretary General of the Socialist International,

died tragically in the Lockerbie air disaster in December whilst flying to New York to take part in the UN signing ceremony. Appointed to his post in July 1987, Carlsson had been closely involved in efforts to achieve independence for the territory. It was a sad irony that he should meet his death in such a way at the very moment when his efforts had been brought to fruition. In a tribute, ICFTU General Secretary said Carlsson would be remembered "as an indefatigable fighter for social justice, equality and human dignity".

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

20-22 Feb
23-25 Feb
23-25 Feb
21-22 March
5-7 April

13-15 April
22 -23 May
23 May
24 May
24-26 May
19-21 Sept.

Asia/Pacific Regional Cttee
Asia/Pacific Inland Transport Cttee
Asia/Pacific Seafarers' Cttee
Executive Board
Conference on Completion of the European Market "1992"
European Inspectors' Seminar
Dockers' Meeting
Seafarers' Meeting
Joint Seafarers' & Dockers' Meeting
Fair Practices Committee
Railwaymen's Section Conference

Wodonga, Australia
Wodonga, Australia
Auckland, New Zealand
Paris

Luxembourg
Genoa, Italy
London
London
London
London
Santander, Spain