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## NATIONAL DOCK LABOUR SCHEME : THE AXE FALLS

# BRITISH DOCKERS IN MASSIVE STRIKE VOTE

The British government finally yielded to the intense pressure which has been building up from port employers and its own extreme right wingers (see ITF News January 1989) and announced, on April 5, the imminent abolition of the National Dock Labour Scheme. Taking advantage of the fact that John Connolly, Secretary of the Docks & Waterways Group of the Transport & General Workers' Union was in Luxembourg at the ITF's '1992' Conference, the Government announced to the House of Commons that a Bill to abolish the scheme would be introduced the following day. Showing his utter contempt for the British trade union movement, Employment Secretary Norman Fowler rejected all calls for discussions or negotiations with the T&GWU which represents virtually all the 9,400 registered dockworkers affected by the move. Instead he announced that the scheme, which was introduced in 1947 to decasualise dock labour, was limiting port employers' freedom to compete with other European ports and would be abolished without further discussion. The reaction of the T&GWU was, in the circumstances, extremely restrained. Union members in a number of ports walked out spontaneously in protest at the government's decision but returned to work at the union's urging. Under UK labour laws progressively tightened by the Conservative government since 1980, any official action against a government decision, even one which directly threatens jobs and incomes is considered illegal 'secondary action', laying the union open to court action which could lead to heavy damages and seizure of the union's assets. Not surprisingly, in view of the tough line taken by the Courts in recent disputes, the T&GWU was anxious to ensure that any action taken by its docker members did not put at risk the services provided to its members (totalling more than a million) in other industries.

The union's strategy took two forms therefore. On the *political* front, in co-operation with the opposition Labour Party, it did everything possible to prevent the passage by Parliament of the Dock Work Bill. The government's massive majority made it virtually certain that this effort would fail and the Bill passed the lower House on May 18. It is expected to become law in July. Given the near certainty that political opposition would not change the government's mind, the union also approached the National Association of Port Employers, with a request that the employers enter into negotiations for a national collective agreement providing employment guarantees and working conditions no less favourable than those which had been available under the Scheme. The employers agreed to meet the union but refused to conduct meaningful negotiations or to refer the matter to the national Arbitration and Conciliation body ACAS. The employers not only

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**Korean fishermen's tough stand brings victory (11)**

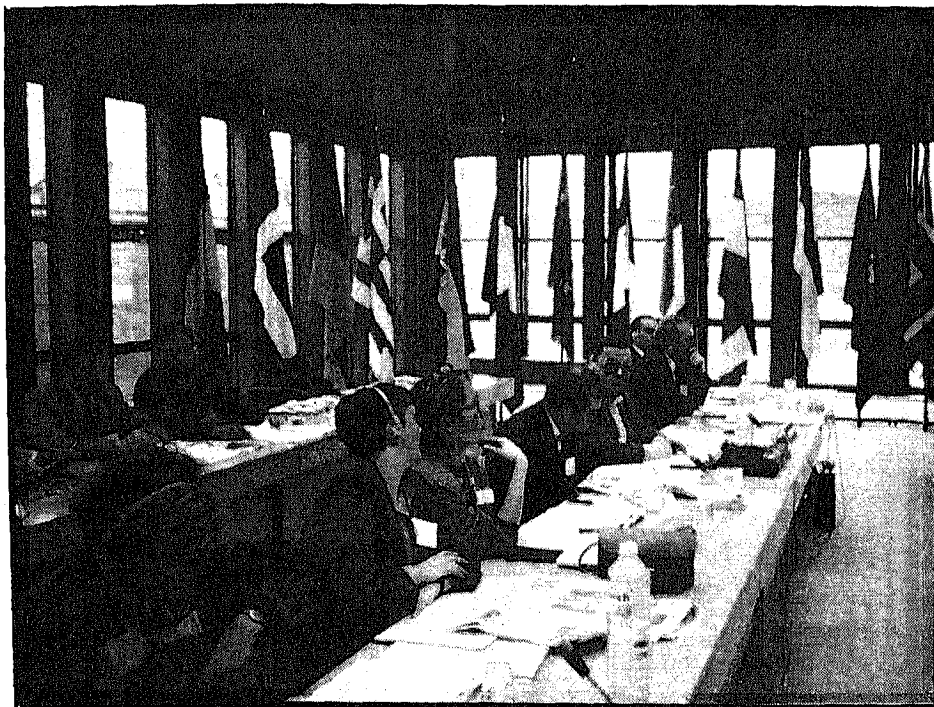
# European transport workers prepare for 1992

Urgent steps must be taken by the European Commission and Council of Ministers to create a co-ordinated and integrated Common Transport Policy. This was one of the main conclusions which came out of the three day Conference of European transport unions held under the ITF's banner in Luxembourg from 5-7 April.

More than 200 participants from 90 unions in the 12 EC countries plus Norway, Sweden, Finland, Austria, Switzerland and Turkey attended the meeting. Included in the figures were observers from non ITF affiliates in France, Spain and Portugal as well as representatives of the Christian trade union international FIOST.

The first session of the Conference, which was chaired by ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis, dealt with the 'Social Dimension' of the 1992 Internal Market deadline. It was addressed by Mathias Hinterscheid, General Secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation and by Piet Gommers from the EC's Directorate General for Employment and Social Affairs. Hinterscheid pointed out that the 'White paper' on the completion of the internal market had said nothing about the social dimension despite the priority attached to it by Commission President Delors in many speeches. The ETUC had laid greater and greater emphasis on the urgency of creating a 'social Europe', the outline of which had been established in its 1988 social programme. The internal market had to be orientated towards employment creation; the 'technological' Europe had to be created with the consent of workers; social protection of workers must be strengthened; and greater industrial democracy must be introduced. If progress was not made in the social arena, unions would ask themselves whether they should not try to block any further moves towards economic integration.

Gommers, speaking on behalf of the Commission, stressed that an 'Economic Europe' and a 'Social Europe' were not alternatives. Full employment and social progress were necessary prerequisites for the internal market to flourish. The



Commission would shortly publish a European Social Charter based on the opinion recently published by the Economic and Social Committee. The Commission was committed to the principle of a dialogue between the social partners and was always open to the trade union movement's point of view.

Clive Iddon, Secretary of the Committee of Transport Workers' Unions in the European Community introduced the debate on "Current Developments in European Transport". The ITF's background document detailed what the Commission had been doing to create a common transport policy for over 30 years. The outcome could be easily summarised: "Nothing Much". There were many important developments in European transport which had nothing to do with the internal market: the French TGV network which had revitalised rail passenger travel; just in time production which meant that transport efficiency was becoming more important than cost; and the massive growth in civil aviation demand which was imposing huge pressures on existing infrastructure. "The Council did nothing for 30 years until it was forced to by three cataclysmic events — the Nouvelles Frontières case, the

1983 Court Judgement and the Milan Council on the Single European Act.". Now things were moving but not in the direction favoured by the transport unions. "If things are to get better we must come together" he said. "This doesn't mean creating a big trade union bureaucracy but practical measures". Pointing out that a Conference such as this one needed 27 interpreters, he suggested one big step would be to give union officials language training.

Following Clive Iddon's introduction which he described as taking a "philosophical" approach, delegates got down to a detailed examination of Commission proposals industry by industry. Working time regulations in road transport occupied a good part of the debate, as did the need for greater priority to be given to the railways. Delegates heard working conditions in Rhine inland navigation described as "medieval". In air transport attention was focussed sharply on safety issues, while the decline of Europe's merchant fleet was documented sharply by seafarers' unions. In the ports industry the main problem was that the Commission had no policy and showed no great interest in adopting one.

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General Secretary: **Harold Lewis**

Publications Officer: **David Cockroft**

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# ...ITF presents Euro transport blueprint

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While the debate on 1992 transport policy was dominated by unions from the EC countries, the non-member states got their opportunity when the spotlight switched to 'transit issues'. Austria and Switzerland in particular are coming under increasing Community pressure to abandon their pro-rail policies and allow 40 tonne EC trucks free access to their transit routes. The unions — both road and rail — from those countries made it crystal clear that they opposed such bullying tactics.

A new policy document entitled "European Transport Policy — a Trade Union Strategy" was debated and adopted by the delegates. The 42 paragraph document lays down a blueprint for a better transport system in the EC countries. It calls for a co-ordinated and integrated common transport policy to be adopted as a matter of urgency and gives strong support to the ETUC's call for a social dimension to 1992. The principle of fair competition between transport modes must replace the obsession with cut price road transport which has been the only feature of policy up to the present day. Proper attention must be paid to transport planning, to safety and energy saving considerations, and to investment in socially acceptable technologies. Public transport should be given priority over private cars in urban areas and rail and bus services must be improved. More support should be given to the railways and greater emphasis should be laid on combined transport. Harmonisation of social conditions, particularly in road transport, must take



place before any further liberalisation measures, and urgent steps should be taken to preserve a Community owned and manned merchant fleet. Urgent new measures must be taken to guarantee the survival of Europe's airlines against the predatory behaviour of the US mega carriers.

On the Conference's final day, delegates participated in a lively two hour question and answer session with EC Transport Commissioner Karel Van Miert. Van Miert kicked off with an upbeat speech in which he praised the ITF's policy proposals. "We have the same concerns about the 1992 objective. Our priorities are almost identical. We must ensure that the single market is a fair market" he said, expressing doubt that the EC's founding fathers intended a common transport policy to be solely about the achievement of a free market. Like the ITF he expressed support for "a modern, co-ordinated multi-modal transport

sector...that is why we must concentrate on the social and environmental dimensions of transport policy". The *social* dimension in transport covered a number of fields he pointed out. Working conditions must be of the highest standard and the standards must be enforced. Positive measures in shipping were urgently needed and would be produced very soon (see separate story), enhanced training and more emphasis on safety were also part of his work programme. The *environmental* dimension was also of great importance, an area in which "the railways come into their own". These two dimensions would, he stressed, contribute to a single market in which which the transport industry will be able to provide safe and high quality transport services at a reasonable price to the user, at the lowest possible cost to the environment and under the best possible working conditions for the transport worker".

## Lech Walesa attends first ICFTU meeting

Following formal agreement in February to re-legalise the Solidarity trade union (see ITF News March 1989), the Polish trade union movement has been very active.

A new independent newspaper — Election Gazette — has been launched. Though it suffers from paper shortages and distribution problems, it is still the first independent newspaper to be allowed in a Communist-controlled Eastern European country.

The union is also engaged in supporting candidates in the Polish general election, to be held in June. The elections for the upper chamber will be free, but the Communist party still retains an automatic majority in the lower house. Solidarity have made the establishment of genuine democracy the central plank of the campaign, calling for full, free elections in the next general election.

Solidarity leader Lech Walesa made his first international visit since the

union's re-legalisation on May 17-19, when he went to Belgium to attend his first ever executive board meeting of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). Solidarity affiliated to the ICFTU in 1986, but Walesa had been prevented by the Polish government from attending previous board meetings.

Walesa also met with the Belgian Prime Minister, Wilfried Martens, and European Commission President Jacques Delors during his visit.

# Nairobi hosts 2nd ITF African regional conference

The ITF's second African Regional Conference, took place in Nairobi, Kenya, between April 24 and 26.

Immediately after the Conference, on April 27 and 28, a seminar on Developments in the African Transport Industry and their Implications for Transport Workers took place. Both meetings also benefited from the collaboration of the German Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES).

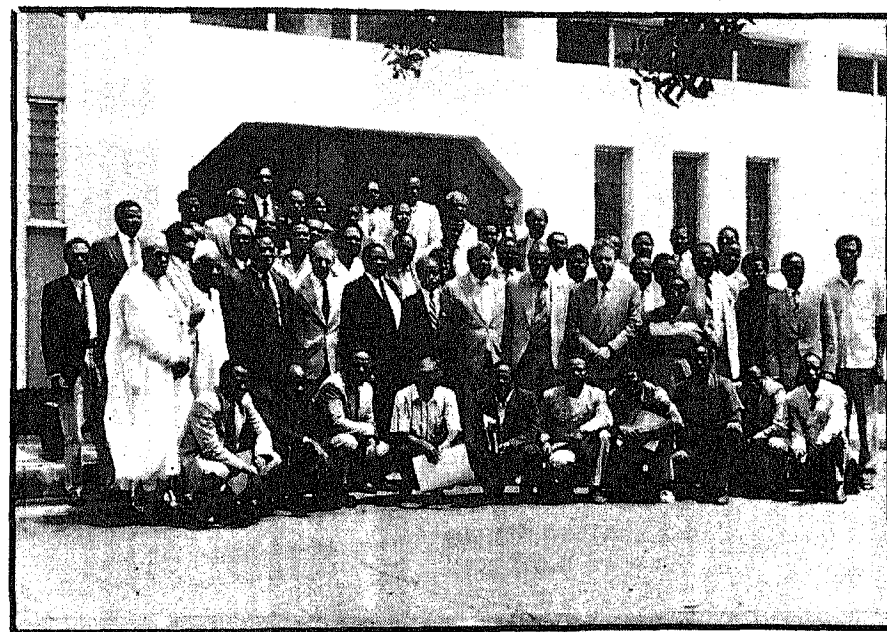
Forty-five delegates from 38 ITF African affiliates in 15 countries attended the two meetings.

The Conference was formally opened by Kenyan Minister of Transport and Communications J. J. Kamotho at a special session on April 24 chaired by Kenyan Dockworkers' Union General Secretary Juam Khamis. Kenyan Railwaymen's Union Secretary General Raphael O'kanga welcomed the participants to Kenya on behalf of the ITF's three Kenyan affiliates. The General Secretary of the Kenyan Congress of Trade Unions (COTU), J J Mugalla, H Matusch (FES), and ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis also spoke at the opening ceremony.

The Conference discussed country reports from affiliates. Then it reviewed the activities carried out by the ITF in the five years since the first Regional Conference in Mombasa, Kenya in 1983. The second conference had been planned to take place in Lagos, Nigeria in May 1986 but had been forcibly closed down by members of the Security Forces acting on false information supplied by an anti-ITF faction in the Nigerian trade union movement.

The conference gave its wholehearted support to the ITF's recent activities and gave its highest commendation to ITF African Regional Representative Ben (Roxy) Udogwu for his dedicated commitment and fine work on behalf of African transport workers.

Affiliates discussed the need to inject new ideas and methods into the ITF's future educational and organisational activities and it was stressed that this relies very much on the input of the affiliates themselves. The necessity for the careful choice by affiliates of delegates to ITF seminars was emphasised, along with the importance of ensuring that the knowledge gained at these



meetings is disseminated as widely as possible amongst union members.

Since the ITF depends on revenue from affiliation fees for its existence the conference called on African affiliates to renew their determination to meet their obligations. The ITF General Secretary said that if affiliates had trouble paying their fees they should contact the ITF about it. Every effort would be made to reach an arrangement satisfactory to both parties.

One of the biggest problems confronting the development of free trade unions in Africa are the many legal restrictions and violations of trade union rights in many countries. The Conference discussed these problems, and made particular reference to the arbitrary imprisonment and harassment of trade unionists and the virtual abolition of the right to strike in some countries. In some African countries there are no guaranteed rights to join trade unions or enter into free collective bargaining. Employers and governments often work hand in hand to destabilise trade unions, and they commonly use the old colonial tactics of "divide and rule" to do this.

It's ironic that many of the government leaders who now act against trade unions came to power through the ranks of those very unions. Solidarity between unions, the Conference agreed, was vital in the struggle for trade union rights, along with the eradication of

corruption within the unions themselves. Delegates stressed the role of union education in closing the gap between union leaders and the rank and file.

The ITF General Secretary reported on the situation in Namibia and South Africa. Delegates saluted the courage and determination of the unions in those countries who are striving against great odds to serve the interests of transport workers. The Conference urged the ITF and its affiliates to continue to give the maximum possible support to these unions. Sadly, delegates from South Africa and Namibia were unable to attend the conference because, despite the strenuous efforts of the Kenyan National Centre (COTU), the Kenyan government did not grant them visas in time.

Resolutions were passed calling on the ITF to extend moral and financial assistance to the emergent transport workers' unions in Namibia; requesting an intensification of ITF activities in the frontline states in order to counter the effects of South Africa's destabilisation policy; urging the ITF to redouble its assistance to affiliates in French-speaking Africa and welcoming the possibility of having a Francophone African member of the ITF Executive Board; calling on the ITF to convene a meeting of the trade unions organising workers in the multinational

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# ...African unions demand voice in national transport planning

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airline Air Afrique; calling on the ITF to take action to encourage the development of a genuine African merchant shipping fleet; condemning the dumping of toxic waste; and expressing the Conference's sympathy for the twenty-

eight seafarers who lost their lives on the Nigerian vessel *m/v River Gurara* in Portugal last February.

The delegates welcomed the production by the ITF Secretariat of the first edition of the ITF African Bulletin and were urged by the General Sec-

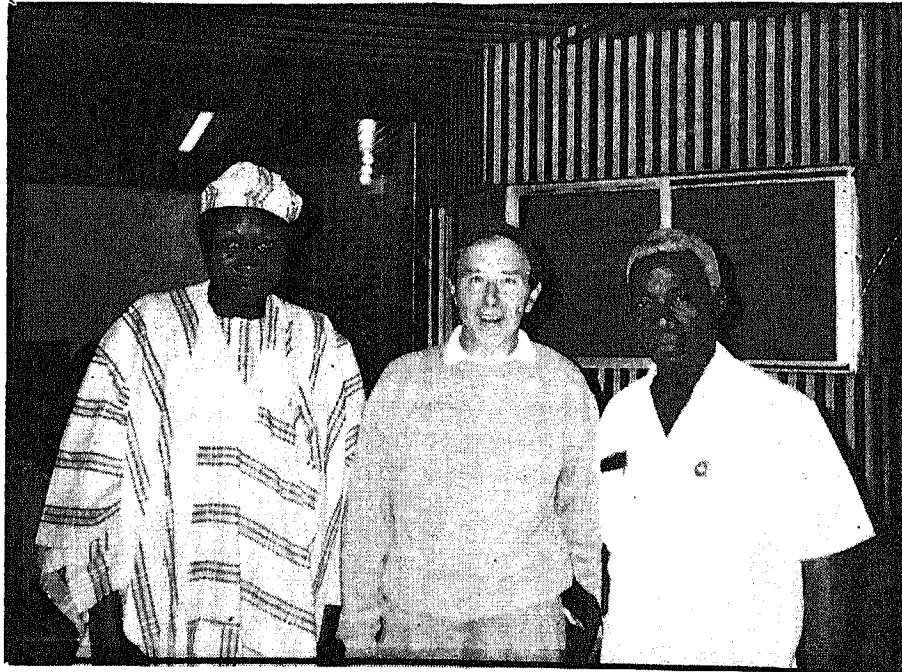
retary to provide the raw material for a second edition.

On behalf of the Nigerian affiliates, Jonas Abam of the Dockworkers' Union of Nigeria assured the delegates that the problems which had led to the cancellation of the ITF African Regional Conference in 1986 had now been resolved and therefore invited the ITF to hold the Third African Regional Conference in Lagos.

\*The conclusions of the three day seminar that followed the conference were drawn together in a declaration that was adopted unanimously.

The statement acknowledged the enormous economic and financial problems faced by many African governments, in particular those arising from external debts, but urged African governments nevertheless to give the modernisation and expansion of transport infrastructure highest priority. It was also vital to develop skills by training the workforce.

The statement stressed the benefits of regional co-operation in transport and local manufacture of transport equipment and spare parts. African governments were urged to enlist the full participation of transport workers' unions in the planning and implementation of transport policy.



ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis, with (right) Alpha Kamara, General Secretary of the Sierra Leone Motor Drivers' and General Workers' Union and (left) J K Katende, National Treasurer of the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers' Union of Uganda. Katende is wearing a Nigerian Yoruba costume given to him by a colleague in Lagos at the time of the aborted ITF meetings in 1986 (see story)

## NEW ITF PUBLICATION — AFRICAN BULLETIN



**The future of African transport**



**WORKERS RESPOND TO THE CRISIS**

The ITF has just published its first ever African Bulletin — covering all aspects of transport in Africa. The Bulletin — which is available in English and French — is aimed directly at African trade unionists. The Bulletin provides a detailed analysis of the state of African transport, and sketches the outlines of a trade union response to the serious crises afflicting all sectors of transport in Africa. The Bulletin aims to serve as a starting point for debates and discussions within the African trade union movement about the future direction of transport and transport policy and the key role that workers should play in those developments.

In addition to the detailed examination of the transport industries, the Bulletin also features a comprehensive examination of the African trade union movement by ITF African Representative Ben (Roxy) Udogwu, in which he argues strongly for an end to the ideological divisions that have hampered the movement's effectiveness in defending African workers.

African ITF affiliates have already received order forms for the Bulletin, and those attending the Regional Conference have had an opportunity to order copies. Any African affiliates who have not seen the Bulletin are encouraged to order copies. Other ITF affiliates and interested individuals are welcome to order copies as well — though the Bulletin is devoted to African issues, the questions raised and the issues at stake are of relevance to all transport workers.

# ITALIAN CONGRESS DECISION BY ITF EXECUTIVE BOARD

The 36th ITF Congress will take place in Florence, Italy, from 2 to 9 August 1990. This decision was taken by the ITF Executive Board which met in Paris from 21-22 March at the invitation of the transport unions affiliated to the FO Confederation.

The Board agreed to co-opt two new members. K Mols Sørensen of the Danish Mates' Union, well known to members of the Seafarers' Section of which he is Chairman, replaced Henrik Aasarød from Norway while Ruud Vreeman, new President of the Dutch Transport Workers' Union *Vervoersbond FNV* replaced Arend Drenth from the same union. A novel feature of the meeting was the allocation of time for a general debate on developments in the transport industry, based on a paper prepared by the ITF Secretariat. Several members of the Board laid stress on the urgent need to persuade governments to adopt a *co-ordinated transport policy*. In many sectors transport unions had been heavily defeated in recent years but there were now signs that the atmosphere was changing.

## Perestroika

The Board paid special attention to developments occurring in Eastern Europe as a result of the policies of *'perestroika'* and *'glasnost'* being pursued by the Soviet government. Some members argued for closer contacts between the ITF and Eastern European "unions" while others suggested caution since fundamental changes were also taking place in trade union structures. There was a general consensus that up to the present time, the transport "unions" in the USSR and other Eastern bloc countries had been totally ineffective, particularly in the context of the ITF's Flag of Convenience campaign. It was to be hoped that genuine democratic organisations controlled by their members would emerge in those countries. If so, the ITF would give them its full support, but it was too early to make a judgement.

## Eastern Airlines

In response to a request from its US affiliates, the Board adopted a special resolution supporting the struggle of the IAM, ALPA and the TWU against Frank Lorenzo's Eastern Airlines. A detailed report was given of the strike,

already in its 19th day, and the ludicrous efforts of Lorenzo to defeat it. These included dressing 500 Nicaraguan refugees in Miami in pilots' uniforms in an attempt to show that the picket lines were being breached. A message of support from the ITF would, it was stressed, be an important psychological boost for the striking Eastern workers. In adopting the resolution, Board members pledged to do all they could to support the strike. Scandinavian unions in particular stated their intention to exert pressure on SAS which had recently purchased 10% of the shares of Lorenzo's Texas Air Corporation.

A second emergency motion was proposed in relation to the serious situation in the Italian docks industry (see separate story). The Board agreed to lend its full support to the struggle of the Italian dockers against major changes being proposed by the Italian government.

From Africa, Anderson Mhungu (Zimbabwe) reported on new legislation being planned by the South African government designed to make funding of trade unions and political bodies from overseas illegal.

From Asia it was reported that the government of Pakistan had agreed in principle to lift the ban on trade union activities within Pakistan International Airlines, a ban which had been totally condemned by the ILO at the ITF's insistence (see separate story).

The biggest regional problem facing the Board concerned the future of its activities in Latin America. A decision had already been taken two years previously to decentralise those activities with a series of sub-regional offices replacing the current ITF office in Lima. Discussions on the practical arrangements for these new offices were not yet completed, but, the General Secretary reported, financial and organisation problems left him with no alternative but to recommend the closure of the Lima office. Following a lengthy and difficult debate, the Board authorised the General Secretary to close the office from the end of March 1989, to express appreciation for the honesty and dedication of Juan Fonseca who had taken over responsibility for the office in 1985 in difficult circumstances, and to make appropriate

arrangements to compensate long serving staff members.

## Goodbye to Pio

On a final note, the Board was informed that Pio Albanesi, ITF Civil Aviation and Travel Bureau Section Secretary had been obliged, for family reasons, to give notice of his intention to leave the ITF and return to Italy. The Board expressed deep regret at his departure and its appreciation for the considerable work which he had devoted to the Section during his two years in London. The General Secretary asked the Board to leave open the question of how to replace Pio until its October meeting. In the meantime the Secretariat would do its best to service both sections.

Applications for affiliation from unions in Portugal and Senegal were accepted by the Board. An application from the Philippine Seafarers' Union (PSU-ALU-TUCP) was considered in depth. It was pointed out that this union had initiated legal action against the ITF's existing Filipino seafarers' affiliate AMOSUP and had, on a number of occasions in the past, undermined ITF agreements on Foc vessels. It was, however, a bona fide member of a national centre affiliated to the ICFTU and as such the request should be treated seriously. The Board agreed that the General Secretary should write to the PSU expressing its concern at the union's past action and laying down the conditions under which a favourable decision on its request for affiliation might be adopted.

## FRENCH TRADE UNION CENTRE JOINS ICFTU

The Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail, the CFTD, has just been accepted into the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

The ICFTU took this important decision at a meeting of its Executive Board in Brussels on 17 May.

The CFTD thus becomes the second French trade union confederation to be represented in the ICFTU. The Confédération Générale du Travail — Force Ouvrière has been a member ever since 1949.

# ASIA/PACIFIC UNIONS DEBATE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY

The basic principles that should govern the introduction of worker participation in the region were decided by the members of the ITF's Asia/Pacific Regional Committee (APRC) at their highly successful meeting held in Wodonga, Australia from 20 to 22 February 1989.

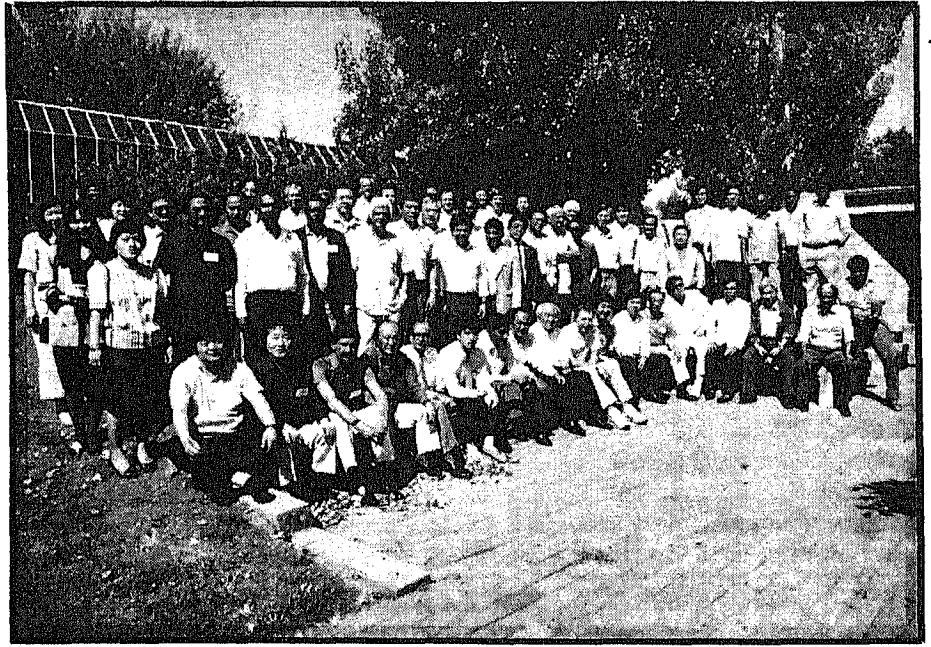
Participation in what Regional Secretary Mo Hoda says was a 'very useful' meeting was boosted by the members of the region's Inland Transport Committee, also in Wodonga for their own meeting, who had asked to be allowed to attend as observers.

Opening the meeting, APRC Chairman K. Doi said that the Committee had proved its worth over the years and had a continuing role to play in strengthening international worker solidarity in the region. Replying to Doi, ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis described the Committee as a vital 'safety valve' for transport workers in the Region, adding that the Executive Board always looked very closely at the recommendations that emerged from its deliberations.

Speaking on behalf of the hosts, Mike Fleming of the Merchant Service Guild of Australia welcomed the participants and mentioned the role of the Clyde Cameron College in training the labour educators who were now conducting the ITF's long-term programme for the region.

ILO expert Satoru Tabusa from the Bangkok office of the International Labour Organisation spoke on the meeting's key theme—worker participation.

In the customary review of recent events in the region, committee members deplored the growing trend towards privatisation in the different transport sectors and the lack of respect for basic trade union rights in countries such as Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Bala Tampoe (CMU, Sri Lanka) reported to the meeting that trade union officials had been among those assassinated during the unrest on the island, while Michael Columbus of Fiji informed the meeting that racial disharmony was gaining ground in Fiji and that for the first time the trade union movement in his country was being divided on racial lines. Columbus urged that countries such as



France, Australia and New Zealand that had pledged economic aid to Fiji should make it clear to the present rulers that such assistance would not be forthcoming until steps were taken to restore full trade union rights.

The main business of the meeting was devoted to a discussion of a document on Workers' Participation in Management that had been specially prepared by the ITF Secretariat. Central to the conclusions that were drawn up by a working group and later adopted by the meeting was the demand that the introduction of such schemes in the transport industry should be the subject of voluntary agreement between management and workers and that they should not interfere with existing collective bargaining procedures.

The participants stressed the importance of ensuring that the unions were fully involved at all stages of the process and that workers' representatives were appointed in consultation and agreement with the union or unions involved. The trade unions also had an important role in running training courses for workers' representatives which should be funded by government or industry. Where this was not practicable, training should be provided by a body acceptable to the unions.

It was felt that consultative machinery set up for a specific purpose, such as when new technologies were being introduced, had the best track record as its objective was more clearly defined.

The meeting further advocated the lifting of all legal restrictions on workers' participation and stressed that any laws that might be passed on the subject should not attempt to define the precise form industrial democracy should take but should leave this up to the parties concerned as they were best placed to decide what was the most appropriate to their particular circumstances.

The delegates were firmly of the view that workers' participation could bring benefits to all concerned provided workers' rights were adequately protected.

At the close of the meeting K Doi and Mike Fleming were re-elected as Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively of the Committee. Captain Wu, General Secretary of the Hong Kong Merchant Navy Officers' Guild (MNOG) was also elected as the Committee's second Vice Chairman.

*A special edition of the Asia/Pacific Bulletin to be published later this year will be devoted to the topic of workers' participation. An announcement will be carried in ITF News when the Bulletin is available.*

# Fijian government clampdown on trade unions

Plans for a national strike in Fiji to protest against "continued worker repression" have prompted a backlash from the government which has come out with statements accusing the unions of everything from plotting to sabotage Fiji's economic recovery to promoting civil disorder and seeking to destabilise the country.

According to press reports at the beginning of April, the Fiji Trades Union Congress said that the workers' protest movement would begin with rallies of workers, farmers and the unemployed to protest at the policies of the present administration. The strike decision was taken by the FTUC executive at a meeting at the end of March and was intended to mark the start of a period of trade union militancy.

"The fight for democracy is now on" was how FTUC general secretary Mahendra Chaudhry summed up the executive's decisive mood.

The time for patience was over, he said, adding "We have tried to reason with the government but their arrogance and sheer insensitivity to the cry of the people, leave us with no choice".

Chaudhry said the trade union movement was no longer willing to tolerate such widespread abuse of Fijian workers who were locked out from any real share in the fruits of their labour.

The government seems bent on ensuring that the workers' voice, however moderate, shall no longer be heard in Fiji. A week after the strike call was carried in the local press (it did not need to wait for this as three Special Branch officers had attended the executive meeting and no doubt reported straight back to their political masters) it withdrew official recognition from the FTUC.

Chaudhry accused the government of seeking to avoid talking about the real issues in the country. Outlawed or not, the FTUC, he reiterated, remained the true voice of the country's workers.

All this happens at a time when the government is losing its grip to a group of fundamentalist Methodists, backed by the taukeis (warrior chiefs) who are openly defying the rule of law with impunity. The government has refused to act against them and leading figures have even attended an illegal rally

called by the rebels at Suva's Centenary Church to hear their grievances!

Regional Secretary Mo Hoda was able to take away a first hand picture of events in Fiji at the time when he visited Suva and Nadi for four days at the beginning of March this year and held lengthy talks with the FTUC and the ITF's Fijian affiliates.

The unions presented a catalogue of complaints to Hoda. Thus armed, he used his subsequent meetings with the Industrial Relations Minister Vietata and Deputy Prime Minister Josefata Kamikamica to demand answers.

The union leaders told Hoda that the racial disharmony actively promoted

Minister Vietata shrugged off these complaints saying that the wage freeze had in fact been lifted (if it has the unions don't seem to know about it!) and that employment levels were improving, another message that does not seem to have percolated down to the workers who stay in jobs they don't like and for which they are poorly paid because they know they have no real choice.

The Minister also promised that the ILO's recommendations for the revision of the Trades Disputes Act would be 'taken into account'. Hoda asked him to consult the unions before acting as they were very keen to be actively

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***"The fight for democracy is now on"***  
***— FTUC leader Mahendra Chaudhry***

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by the government was now being reflected for the first time in the trade union movement which was increasingly being divided on racial lines. There was a widespread sense of insecurity as Fijians of Indian descent were being hounded out of parliament. The government's attempts to legitimise racial discrimination by incorporating it in to the Constitution was a complaint voiced both by ITF affiliates and the FTUC.

It was also becoming more and more difficult, he was told, to call legal strikes as the government minister responsible, though himself a former trade unionist, was notoriously reluctant to register a trade dispute and thus legitimate industrial action.

The government, the unions complained, had also failed to live up to its promise to reinstate the tripartite forum, the body within which prior to the first coup government, employers and unions had all been represented. In its place there was now an "Economic Summit" — a loose body which according to the FTUC includes some overtly racist organisations.

On the positive side, unions reported that the harassment of trade unions had more or less ceased (there were only isolated raids on union offices) and indiscriminate arrests of trade unionists no longer occurred.

When taxed, Industrial Relations

involved in drafting replacement legislation.

Vietata made a number of other promises on which we will be keeping a close watch in the coming months but in view of the outlawing of the FTUC at the first signs of "trouble" we don't have much confidence in his willingness to translate them into action.

Meanwhile, the ITF hopes the Fijian government will heed the advice of the retired judge Sir William Dale — a renowned constitutional expert — who is due to visit Fiji next month to assist with the drafting of the country's new constitution.

Mo Hoda said on his return to London that the best hope for Fiji now was to secure the adoption of a Constitution that was fair to both ethnic and Indo-Fijians and the holding of free and fair elections. This would create the basis for a peaceful and better future for Fiji with all sections of the community cooperating as full and equal partners in the task of nation building.

He also warned that if the government were to force a confrontation with the unions the clock would be put back and a constructive solution could evade the country for some time to come.

The outlawing of the FTUC has all the hallmarks of repressive government and does not augur well for the future.



# ITF URGENT APPEAL : COLOMBIA'S BANANA WORKERS NEED YOUR HELP

Rural workers throughout Latin America have often suffered harshly at the hands of repressive governments who exploit their close ties with the military to mount fierce campaigns of intimidation against workers in the countryside, especially when they join together in trade unions.

Recently, banana workers in Colombia and their trade union organisations have been the target of government controlled death squads in what amounts to a reign of terror.

Forty eight trade union leaders — most of them representing workers in the banana sector — have met violent deaths at the hands of the military in the first two months of this year alone, while last autumn the government controlled assassination squads brutally murdered the General Secretaries of both the banana workers' unions SIN-TAGRO and SINTRABANANO.

Meanwhile, the killings continue (the perpetrators of the violence are rarely if ever brought to trial) and workers are understandably becoming increasingly fearful for their very lives.

Most of the violence has taken place in the Uraba province, which is the centre of banana production.

The hand of the government can be seen in what is happening to the banana workers in Uraba and thus it must be the one to call off the 'death squads'.

Three US multinational companies — United Brand, Del Monte, Castle and Cook — as well as a subsidiary of the Swedish company Volvo, operate in this sector, though we must stress that they are of course in no way responsible for what is happening to the banana workers. The multis' importance to the Colombian economy however is such that strong complaints

from them about the levels of violence could well be decisive in bringing about an end to the activities of the assassination squads.

For the violence to cease it must be brought home forcibly to the government of Colombia that the international community will not tolerate death and injury being meted out on workers for the sole 'offence' of membership of a trade union.

In March, the rural workers' international IFPAAW — the International Federation of Plantation, Agricultural and Allied Workers — joined Volvo in sending a letter of protest to the President of Colombia. IFPAAW also sent letters to the three US multinationals requesting them to address similar protests to the Colombian President.

The IFPAAW has followed this initial protest up by asking all its European affiliates to :

## The addresses to which you should write are :

President of Colombia  
Virgilio Barco Vargas  
Bogota  
Colombia

Castle and Cook Inc  
Drawar 2990  
Honolulu  
Hawaii 96802  
USA

RJR Nabisco Inc (Del Monte is a subsidiary of Nabisco)  
Reynolds Boulevard  
Winston-Salem, N.C.  
27102  
USA

United Brands  
127 Avenue of the Americas  
New York NY 10020  
USA

• *Write to the President of Colombia appealing to him to take strong measures to stop the violence and repression of banana workers and their union leaders*

• *Write to the three US multinationals requesting that they urge the Colombian government to stop the violence and repression against trade union leaders*

• *Inform the general public in your country about the persecution of trade union leaders in Colombia.*

ITF affiliates are requested to follow this advice.

# South Africa : harsh "restriction" orders imprison ex detainees in their own homes

Following the victorious national hunger strike by South African detainees being held in prison without charge, they have almost all been released.

While this is undoubtedly a victory for the determination and courage of the detainees, the government have resorted to the widespread use of "restriction" orders on those they have released.

Many activists and officials of the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union were detained, and they have now all been released.

Four TGWU members who have recently been released have been served with very severe restriction orders.

They are Boyce Fani (a worker from

Port Elizabeth), Thamsaqa Mfazwe (an official from Bloemfontein), Alson Ngubo (a worker from Pietermaritzburg) and Jerry Vilakazi (also a worker from Pietermaritzburg).

These orders amount to imprisonment without the prison. The men are prohibited from attending meetings and from travelling out of their magisterial district. They are all required to report to a police station every day.

The restriction orders cover every eventuality. The 'restrictee' is forbidden from writing articles, or giving interviews or transmitting information in any way whatsoever. The orders prohibit them from entering educational establishments, from talking to "any journalist, news reporter, news

commentator or news correspondent".

The individuals are not allowed to "attend or stay present at any gathering consisting of 10 or more persons (including yourself), convened or otherwise brought about for the purpose of discussing some or other matter."

If the person attends a gathering (presumably of nine or fewer people), they are further prohibited from addressing the meeting "in connection with" the non-compliance with any law, refusal of local municipal regulations (such as a rent strike), "the staying away from work or striking in contravention of the provisions of any law, or the supporting of any stay-away or strike" or "the non purchasing of any product or article."

According to South African legal sources, it is "virtually impossible" to challenge such restriction orders.

## OBITUARIES

Austria's Minister of Social and Labour Affairs **Alfred Dallinger** died tragically on 23 February when the plane in which he was travelling to a trade union meeting crashed into Lake Constance. Dallinger, who had been President of Austria's largest union — the Private Employees' Union GPA — for the past fifteen years, was also the longest serving member of the FIET World Executive Committee. **Richard Wonka**, Central Secretary of the Private Employees' Union also died with Dallinger in this sad air accident along with a number of other trade union officials due to attend the same meeting. Dallinger's loss is made all the more tragic in that he was a particularly dynamic trade unionist who had used his position in government to press the interests of working people and to protect and expand the welfare state at a time when it was under heavy attack both within and outside Austria.

**Fernand Desmecht**, former Assistant General Secretary of the Tram and Busmen's Section of the Belgian Public Service Workers' Union CGSP, died on 6 March at the age of 69. Desmecht, a former bus worker himself, was one

of the prime movers behind the creation of the bus workers' union in 1968.

**Apostolos Kazakos**, the former head of the International Department of the Greek seamen's union PNO, died in December at the age of 90. Kazakos, whose service to the Greek labour movement spanned some sixty years, also edited the PNO's fortnightly newspaper and was active for a long period in the ITF campaign against the use of flags of convenience. An accomplished writer, he was also the author of a number of books, notably a history of the PNO, and a gifted translator from several languages.

**S K Owusu**, General Secretary of the Ghana Local Government Workers' Union, died on 16 May. Brother Owusu spent five months in London last year for medical treatment and during that time made a number of good friends among senior members of the ITF staff, who admired the cheerfulness and courage with which he faced a long and painful illness. The ITF has sent formal condolences to his union and asked that these be conveyed to his family.

## MAYEKISO

### CHARGES DROPPED

The General Secretary of the South African Metalworkers' Union (NUMSA) **Moses Mayekiso** and the **Alexandra Five** were acquitted on April 24 in Johannesburg of charges against them.

Mayekiso was detained in June 1986. In April 87, along with his brother and three others, he was charged with treason, sedition and subversion. The charges focussed on community organising activities in the Johannesburg township of Alexandra, and the trial began on October first 1987.

In mid-December 1988, the five were released on bail — Mayekiso had already spent 901 days in detention. Severe restrictions were imposed on the five when they were released. The formal treason charge was dropped this February, because the state had, essentially, no evidence.

The acquittal of the five of the remaining charges in an unqualified victory for the South African trade union movement and a vindication in the leadership of Mayekiso.

## Mass rally brings victory for Korean fishermen

Militant action by Korean fishermen has secured them recognition and bargaining rights with a company who refused to meet with them.

On March 15, 800 members of the ITF-affiliated Korean Fishermen's Union (part of the Federation of Korean Seamen's Unions) staged a mass rally at the Namhang ferry pier in Pusan to denounce the North Sea Cuttlefish Drift Gillnet Association for refusing to recognise the union. They demanded an immediate rise in wages and the conclusion of a collective agreement with the company.

The fishermen sat down on the pier and blockaded the company's ships. The union told the Association that it would prevent the ships from leaving port unless they agreed to a collective agreement.

Over the past five months the Association has refused to sign collective agreements. Instead they have tried to lower wages and set up a "sweetheart" union that would accept these cuts.

The Association even refused to meet the union in proper negotiations, using such lame excuses as "we are too busy preparing to go out fishing" to avoid negotiations.

The association attempted to impose a wage freeze, coupled with a lowering of certain allowances and a reduction of severance pay. They attempted to set up a fake union that would agree to these moves, described by the union as "a really insidious and unprecedented plot" and an "act of chicanery designed to trample upon the workers' right to exist."

"In the history of 30 years of deep-sea fishing, we must say that this is an act of terror on the part of the poisonous mushroom-like owners who are trying to suck our blood," said the union in a statement issued before the demonstration.

The dramatic, peaceful demonstration had an immediate effect. The association has now agreed to recognise the Korean Fishermen's Union as the sole collective bargaining body, to stop trying to form a sweetheart union and to enter negotiations for a new collective agreement that will be signed in April or May.



**ABOVE :** fishermen's union leaders head the mass rally on Pusan pier. Fishing boat owners were told their ships would not be allowed to leave port if they did not recognise the union.

**BELOW :** fishermen's "sit down" demo shows they mean business. The owners soon got the message and agreed to talks.



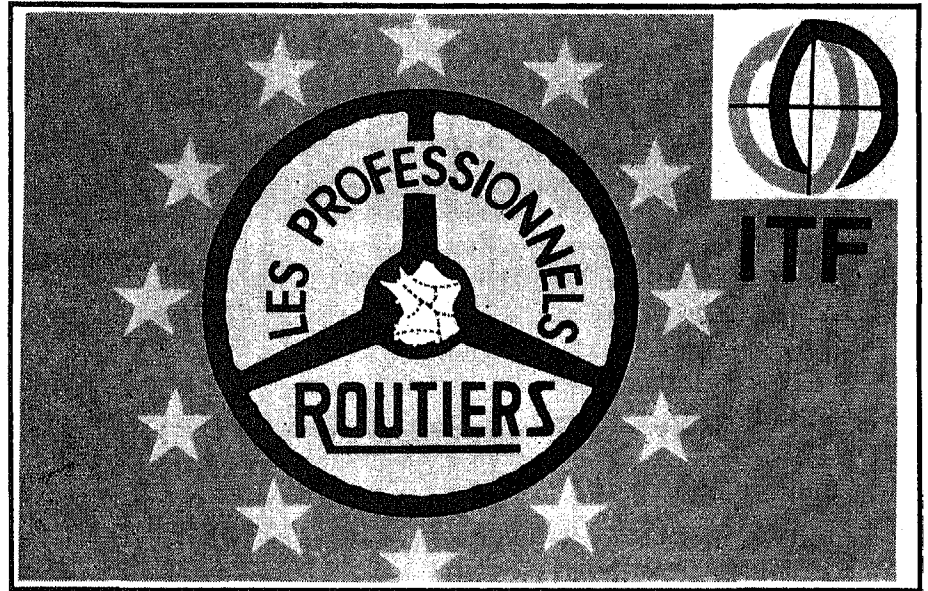
## Truck-stops with a difference

Maintaining contact with road transport drivers who, by the nature of their work, spend long periods of time away from their home bases has always been a problem for their unions.

For a number of years, ITF affiliates have accepted the need to keep in touch with their members "on the road" and to provide facilities over and above the traditional forms of trade union representation.

One of the ITF's French road transport workers' affiliates — the Union Nationale des Chauffeurs Professionnels (Force Ouvrière) — has established a chain of truck-stops (Relais) under the name *Les Professionnels Routiers*. The UNCP-FO's chain of truck-stops are located throughout France and in certain other European Community countries.

UNCP-FO General Secretary Jean Vandecasteele says that apart from providing meeting places for drivers and distribution points for union information, *Les Professionnels*



Truck drivers should look out for French truck-stops bearing this sign — you will be able to meet and talk to fellow trade union members while tucking in to a good meal.

*Routiers* also ensure a standard of welcome and cuisine which are generally much appreciated by professional drivers.

*Les Professionnels Routiers* are

identified by a distinctive sign which also carries the ITF symbol and initials and represents (by stars) the twelve member states of the European Community.

## FRENCH TRUCKERS STAGE "SNAIL" PROTEST

French truckers mounted a day of action on May 2, which included their now famous "escargots" operations — where drivers slow down to a snail's pace on major routes.

The day of action — supported by the ITF-affiliates Routiers-CFDT and Union Nationale des Chauffeurs Professionnels (Force Ouvrière) unions along with autonomous unions and the Communist-led CGT — was called to protest the total lack of progress in negotiations with employers over wages, working hours and conditions.

The unions want to see professional truckers given the status they deserve as skilled professionals. Basic wages in the industry are no higher than the government set national minimum wage and most drivers have to work 60-70 hours a week to make a half decent living. Many drivers are only paid for the hours they drive rather than the

hours they work, and the unions are demanding that pay be related to working rather than driving time.

The aim of the day of action on May 2 was to "unblock" the negotiating process. All the unions except the CGT took part (they changed their minds and decided to hold their own day of action a week later). The action was a great success, with "escargots" succeeding in bringing the action to public attention. There were also strike actions, demonstrations and public leafleting of the drivers' basic demands.

The day after the action, the employers offered the unions a ten per cent wage increase which was rejected as "insufficient" by all the unions, according to François Yverneau of the FGTE-CFDT.

The unions are now planning to mount another day of action on June 19.





# Chilean railway workers discuss rail revival

Preparing for the future in a democracy was the theme of the 4th national Congress of the Chilean Railwaymen's Federation which took place in Costa Azul, 120 km from Santiago, from 17 to 19 March.

Railway workers from throughout Chile attended the Congress and for most of them this was the first chance that they had ever had to meet and exchange ideas. When they dispersed to go home they promised that they would report fully on the Congress to their fellow workers and debate the issues that had been aired there.

The opening session of the Congress was addressed by the Federation's two top officials: President José Criado and General Secretary Germán Díaz Valdés. ITF Coordinator Elías Costilla also attended the meeting and addressed the assembled delegates.

It was agreed by all the eighty or so participants in the Congress that urgent action was needed to enable the state railways and national public transport undertakings generally to take on the central role which would rightly be theirs in a free Chile.

Delegates were reminded in a paper specially prepared for the meeting that General Pinochet had inherited a highly efficient national railway system that could bear comparison with others in more developed and industrialised nations. But the last fifteen years had been an era of lost opportunities. In the absence of a coherent national transport policy, the railways, like other transport modes, had been run down and had accumulated vast debts. It would thus be no easy task to restore



them to a condition which would enable them to contribute to the economic development of a free Chile.

The aim must be to build up an undertaking under state ownership capable of offering competitively priced passenger and goods services so as to ensure personal mobility for all Chileans and assist in the industrial and commercial activity of the country.

The railwaymen attending the Congress did not need to be told that under Pinochet they had been viewed as little more than a commodity, with no role to play in deciding how their industry should be run.

The paper set to redress this by advocating that under a democratic government workers in the rail industry should be actively involved in the

running of the undertaking.

To realise these objectives, the railwaymen attending the Congress were invited to establish a national committee of railwaymen's unions whose function would be to resist :

- \* the privatisation and contracting out of services
- \* any dismissals of railwaymen other than for valid reasons
- \* all attempts by the government and the railway management to implement popular capitalism.

The Congress also expressed its solidarity with the railwaymen who had been dismissed following the April 1988 rail strike (see ITF News, May 1988) and appealed for the liberty of the trade union leaders Manuel Bustos and Arturo Martínez, who are currently serving a sentence of internal exile.

## INDIAN RAIL UNION CHIEF TALKS TO ITF NEWS

Umraomal Purohit heads the largest democratic transport workers' union in the world. He is President of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation (AIRF), an organisation with a regular dues paying membership of more than 900,000 although, he points out, "whenever we call an action we get at least 1.2 million people responding". Purohit has led the Railwaymen's union for many years, and has often come

into serious conflict with the Government as a result, a position which has from time to time landed him in jail for prolonged periods, but defending the interests of AIRF members is not his only preoccupation. He also serves as General Secretary of one of India's many national trade union centres — the Hind Mazdhoor Sabh — the only one which is not closely allied either to a government or an opposition politi-

cal party, and is Vice-Chairman of the ITF Railwaymen's Section.

The AIRF is almost unique in a country notorious for its splintered trade union movement, in organising the overwhelming majority of workers in its industry. Despite Purohit's own involvement with HMS, the Railway Federation at national level remains

Continued on page 14

# ...Indian rail pay — the gap widens

Continued from page 13

non affiliated with any national centre — its fiercely guarded independence gives it enormous strength at times of conflict. When Purohit visited London recently on his way to attend the Executive Board of the ICFTU (of which he is a member) in Brussels, he took the opportunity to talk to ITF News about the current situation in Indian Railways and his current industrial problems.

"The first thing to emphasise" he says "is that in India railwaymen have the status of civil servants". This means that they are employed by the Government of India and their wages and conditions are fixed by government decision. This is causing serious problems at present, however, because the railways, along with other central government employees, have seen a large gap open up between their own salaries and those of employees of public sector undertakings (nationalised industries). "The central government employees are covered by pay scales set by the government's Central Pay Commission" he points out "and this body revises the scales only about once every 12 or 13 years". By contrast the state owned undertakings get a major review at 3 or 4 year intervals. The last time the Pay Commission met, in 1986, it recommended that permanent wage adjustment machinery should be established but despite sympathetic noises, the Government has done nothing to implement the recommendation. A gap of between 300 and 600 rupees per month has now opened up between the pay of comparable workers in central government and public undertakings, something which is causing understandable resentment.

"We held a meeting of the AIRF in Secunderabad on 24-26 April to discuss what to do about this problem" says Purohit "that meeting decided that the railwaymen should be asked to prepare for a General Strike in September or October of this year". At the same time the Railwaymen decided to call a joint meeting of all unions organising in central government service. "A summit meeting of all the National Executive Committees of all the unions organising in central government service will be held in Delhi on May 27" he

says, "all unions from all political tendencies will be there, including the INTUC "(the centre closest to Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's Congress (I) Party).

If the strike on the railways does take place, it will not only be about the wages issue. "There are also a number of specific problems which have got to be resolved in the railway industry" he says. "We have to hold discussions with the Ministry of Railways to resolve outstanding grievances about promotion and the level of incentive bonus payments in railway work-

shops".

Purohit is not the sort of trade union leader who likes organising strikes, however. "We must retain the threat of strike action but we can't afford to use it too often" he stresses. "Provided we get 60-70% of our initial demands by negotiation that is normally enough to avert action, but the government and railway management must know that we are prepared to take action if we must". With 900,000 dedicated trade unionists behind him, Purohit knows that his views will always be treated with respect by those in power.

## Indian Railways : the amazing statistics

At a time when the share of railways in passengers and freight is declining in most of the world, the financial performance of Indian Railways must be the object of considerable envy. While other governments pay subsidies for social and transport planning reasons to keep railway services running, Indian Railways pays a *dividend* of around 5 bn rupees (\$312m) to the government. In 1988 the railway managed not only to be profitable after payment of dividend, but also to carry more passengers and more freight than allowed for in its business plan with fewer passenger coaches, wagons and locomotives than projected.

The railways in India do, of course, benefit from certain advantages. One of these is the sheer size of the country and its population. Another is the lack of decent roads and the relatively small proportion of the population with access to private cars. Nevertheless the railways' performance is still impressive. Over 1.6 million railway employees are involved in taking care of a route network of 62,000 kilometers. 10,000 trains run each day between more than 8,000 stations carrying more than 10 million passengers and nearly 1 million tonnes of freight. There are 30,000 passenger coaches, 360,000 freight wagons, 4,500 steam, 3,500 diesel and 1,500 electric locomotives. In addition to the dividend it pays each year, the railways have a public service (social) obligation of 16 bn rupees (\$1 bn) to fulfil. 61% of capital investment is met from the Railways' own resources.

Passenger traffic accounts for 55% of total traffic on the railways but contributes only 24% of the revenue. Government pressure is constantly on the railways to cut costs and to improve services. As 'Railway Sentinel' the newspaper of the Western Railways Employees' Union makes clear "politicians of each and every party want new railway lines, more and faster trains, all important trains to stop at the stations in their constituencies, punctuality in the running of all trains, no accidents, cushioned 2nd class sleepers, bed rolls for all 2nd class/air conditioned/1st class passengers, cold drinking water inside coaches, better and cheaper food, all unmanned crossings to be manned, higher dividend from the railways to the government, modernisation of the entire railway system and no increases in passenger fares or goods transport rates. This can be possible only if some miracle happens".

## TURKISH RAIL UNION GETS ROUND STATE RESTRICTIONS

# Mass "sick outs"— new kind of protest

Turkish railway workers, prevented from taking strike action by law, have invented a new form of industrial action to pressure the government. They have been organising mass medical appointments for thousands of workers at the same time.

According to Mehmet Acidereli, President of the ITF affiliated DEMIRYOL-IS railway workers' union "it sometimes takes up to 4-5 hours for all the workers in a workplace, especially in large establishments, to go to the hospital all together and to come back again."

1989 is a critical year for all public sector workers in Turkey, because the public sector collective agreement is up for renewal. The agreement covers 600,000 workers, of which 30,000 are employed on the railways.

Turkish workers have seen a steady decline in the real value of their earnings since 1980 and, according to Acidereli, they have now "reached unbearable limits."

The civilian Özal government, which replaced the military dictatorship, is following a strictly pro-capital

policy. Workers' purchasing power has declined to one-third of what it was in 1980 — an effective wage cut of over 66 per cent! Trade union activities were outlawed in Turkey during the dictatorship — trade unionism, under "serious restrictions", has been allowed since 1984.

"Due to the limited rights and freedoms which are determined by the ruling authorities," says Acidereli, "it became impossible for trade unions to confront the obstinate attitude of the government by themselves."

The trade unions have responded by agreeing, through the Türk-İs national centre, that there should be a united front approach to the present round of negotiations in the public sector. A special co-ordination committee has been set up (with Acidereli as a member) and the unions have agreed that no-one shall sign a collective agreement in the public sector without the prior approval of this committee.

"The trade unions felt the need to join forces in response to the intransigent attitude of the public sector employers who have a strong organisa-

tion. It has become clear that the only way to confront the oppression and inflexibility on the part of the government is to act together." says Acidereli.

Talks have been deadlocked since the start of April. DEMIRYOL-IS submitted its claims to the Turkish State Railways (TCDD) on March 7 and their negotiations began on March 23. No substantive agreement has been reached on any of the main points.

Hundreds of thousands of workers have been pursuing a campaign of whatever industrial action they are legally allowed to undertake. New methods of action — such as the mass medical appointment — have been devised.

Negotiations continue between a four member sub-committee of the Co-ordination Committee and the public sector employers. Unconfirmed press reports indicate that the government has now offered a 142 per cent pay rise, spread over two years — a figure that sounds very high, but would still not bring the real earnings of Turkish workers back to their 1980 level.

## *London faces summer of traffic chaos*

London commuters faced almost complete disruption of the usual rush hour public transport services into the capital on 15 May when bus staff staging the first of a series of then fortnightly 24 hour strikes were joined by London Underground staff in the third in an unofficial programme of rolling strikes affecting virtually the entire tube network. To make matters worse British Rail services into London were drastically reduced as drivers on two BR regions continued their unofficial ban on overtime and rest day working.

The industrial unrest that is spreading among public transport workers in London and throughout the BR network stems from a new management style where major changes that have a real impact on the working lives of transport staffs are being imposed from

above without taking account of legitimate objections from the workers. At the same time pay increases are being imposed that do not match current levels of inflation (now eight per cent and rising) and leave workers worse off at a time when government economic policies have resulted in steep increases in housing and other essential living costs.

Drivers on London Buses were offered a 7.1 per cent pay rise in April and when this was decisively rejected their union, the TGWU, organised a ballot which produced an overwhelming majority for strike action in support of higher pay. This offer has since been increased by 0.4% to 7.5 per cent but union negotiators have turned this only marginally improved offer down, arguing that the new figure is still below

inflation. As we went to press, London Buses staff were being rebalotted and are confidently expected to endorse further strike action.

Two of the three rail unions organising London Underground staff had called an indefinite stoppage from 15 May after their members backed the strike call in a workplace ballot on the controversial Action Stations scheme. However, the strike plans were abandoned when the employers obtained a High Court injunction against one of the unions — the National Union of Railwaymen — forbidding the strike. Both unions decided to postpone the action, which would have closed down the network, and to ballot their members once again changing the question

Continued on page 16

# ...BR pay offer fails to match inflation

Continued from page 15

on the ballot paper to avoid a further legal challenge.

The Action Stations plan — a pilot scheme was due to come in to effect on 22 May — is being opposed because it would force staff to take on new duties for which they have not been trained, turning them into 'multipurpose' staff who could find themselves selling tickets one day and on platform duty the next. Overtime would effectively disappear under the plans with the introduction of a five day working week with 'continental' rostering which would involve Sunday being paid as a regular working day. Flexible working patterns would replace the present fixed length shift with variable shifts ranging from a minimum of five hours 45 minutes to eight hours 45 minutes. The plan would also end the present scheme where promotion is linked to seniority.

Meanwhile, the unofficial action on the Underground, which has now led to four separate one day strikes, continues as drivers of trains without guards

(who are being progressively phased out) seek a substantial backdated rise to reflect the extra responsibilities involved in one-man operation. The NUR and ASLEF, which between them organise the drivers, are still pursuing the drivers' case with management and have called on their members to work normally as negotiations continue. The management has increased its pay offer to drivers and guards in an attempt to gain their acceptance but more pay does not address the question of the fundamental disagreement between the two sides on the vastly altered duties and conditions that will apply in the future to London Underground staff under the new scheme.

Meanwhile, staff of British Rail have received an offer of seven per cent on pay, which has again been firmly rejected by the unions because it fails to keep pace with inflation. With typical heavy handedness BR management has reacted by imposing the settlement on its unwilling staff and has tinkered with the offer by offering additional al-

lowances to certain groups of staff in the expensive South East. It was clear from the outset however that this would not be enough to ensure acceptance from the workforce.

Dissatisfaction with pay on British Rail is a major cause for concern as wages have fallen well below those in industry generally and railway workers are having to put in excessive overtime hours to earn a living wage. Industrial relations are fraught at the present time with British Rail announcing its intention to break up the existing national machinery before the end of this year, replacing it by five separate bargaining units.

The NUR is now preparing to go ahead with a ballot of its members on industrial action in support of both the pay and bargaining issues, with a result expected on 10 June. However, delegates attending the drivers' union ASLEF annual conference in May voted against a ballot linking the two. ASLEF could now follow the clerical union TSSA which has decided to refer the pay offer to the Railway Staff National Tribunal for arbitration, or it could decide to set a new date for a ballot on pay alone while continuing to campaign against the scrapping of the industry's collective bargaining structure. On the bargaining question, delegates to the TSSA conference, which was also held in May, have authorised their leaders to seek agreement with BR on new machinery in further negotiations.

## Finnish truck strike called off

A nationwide stoppage of drivers in the Finnish wholesale and retail trades and in the food industry was narrowly averted when the ITF-affiliated Road Transport Workers' Union (AKT) and the employers agreed to the mediator's proposals for a new two-year contract only a matter of hours before the strike deadline on 3 May.

Drivers' pay goes up by a total of 8.1% in the first year of the agreement and there is provision for a further rise in the second year. The employers have also agreed to the union's conditions for talks on shorter working hours.

## PEOPLE

Peter Michalzik was elected as the new General Secretary of the Miners' International Federation at the MIF's 46th Congress in Harare at the beginning of March. Michalzik, a German, was previously a senior ICFTU official. Anders Stendalen (Sweden) was elected MIF President.

George E Leitz has been elected as the new President of the Transport Workers' Union of America in succession to John Lawe, who died in January. Leitz has been the TWU's Executive Vice

President since 1985 and was previously its Secretary-Treasurer.

Dónal Nevin has retired as General Secretary of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and is succeeded by Peter Cassells. Nevin had served the Irish labour movement for the past fifty years, firstly within the old Irish Trade Union Congress, transferring to the ICTU when it was set up in 1959.

George Kourpias will be the next President of the US International As-

sociation of Machinists (IAM) after William Winpisinger. Kourpias, who is 56, has been an IAM Vice President since 1983.

Eleonora Hostasch has become the first woman to lead an Austrian trade union. She was elected President of the Private Employee's Union GPA, Austria's largest union, in succession to Alfred Dallinger.

Former ITF ship inspector Roger Deschamps has been created a chevalier of the French Legion of Honour



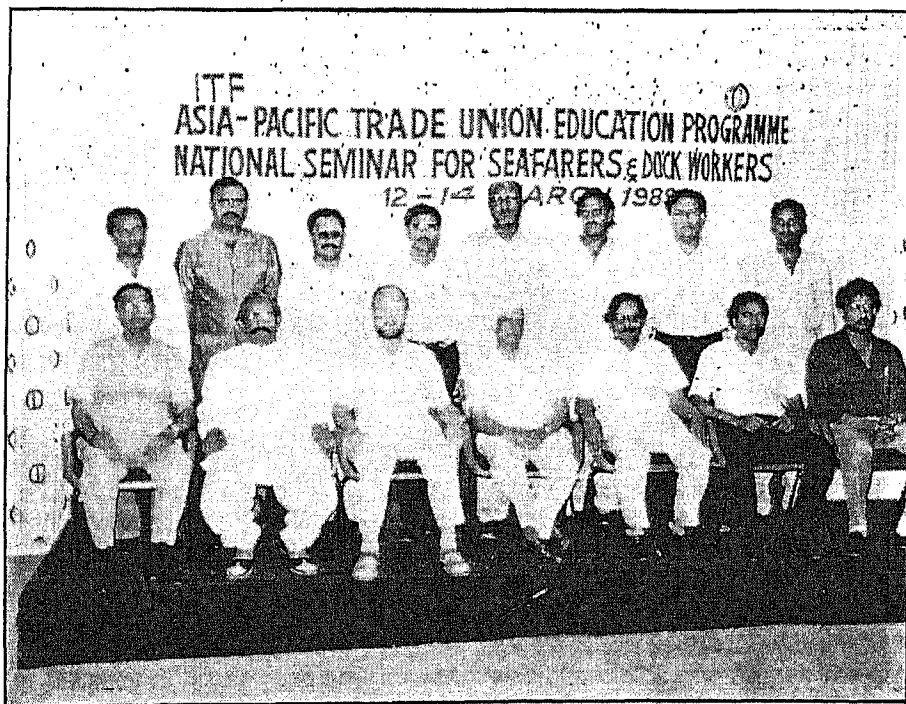
# First Pakistan Foc seminar

The forty trade unionists who came to Karachi in March for the first national seminar for seafarers and dockworkers the ITF has held in Pakistan said at the end of the three-day programme that on their return home they would do their utmost to spread the ITF Foc campaign message among their fellow unionists in Pakistan.

Lectures on the ITF and the regional educational programme given by Asia/Pacific Regional Secretary Mo Hoda were followed by a detailed exposition of the history and present aims of the Foc campaign from Brian Laughton, Secretary of the Special Seafarers' Department. The contributions of both speakers were followed with obvious interest.

The participants also took part in group discussions on issues affecting both groups of workers, eg new ports technology, the Karachi dock regulations and the employment difficulties of Pakistani seafarers.

The participants expressed the hope that the ITF would organise similar seminars in the future. They pointed out that this would serve to enhance awareness of the aims of the interna-



Brian Laughton (Secretary, ITF Special Seafarers' Department) and Mo Hoda (Asia/Pacific Regional Secretary) addressing the seminar participants

tional transport workers' movement among workers in Pakistan, particularly in the new political climate that

was emerging in the country following the election of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

## 'EUROS' — A EUROPEAN FLAG?

A Future for the Community Shipping Industry? The question mark at the end of the title is well deserved, since Europe's national flag fleet has done nothing but shrink for the past decade while governments stand idly by and watch it happen. It is just possible, however, that the question mark could be deleted if proposals currently circulating within the European Commission actually turn into binding EC regulations.

The proposals are the first draft of what has become known as the "Positive Measures" package. This is the second bite at shipping policy by the Commission, the European Community's executive body, following the

disastrous 'free market' regulations introduced at the end of 1986. The tenure of Stanley Clinton Davis, the previous Transport Commissioner, was marked by constant attempts by Commission civil servants and even fellow members of the Commission to sabotage any proposal which was not based entirely on the principle that shipping should be provided at the lowest possible price and hang the consequences. There are signs that his successor, Karel Van Miert, may get an easier ride.

Decent Community shipowners and seafarers' unions both want to see the survival of a significant Community fleet. By this they mean a fleet which is owned by Community nationals,

manned (largely if not entirely) by Community nationals, and flagged in a Community country. With this in mind, efforts have been under way in the past few months to draft a joint paper on "Positive Measures" within the Joint Committee on Shipping, an advisory body to the Commission. Although this process is not quite complete, and several important differences still divide the two groups, they have had the first opportunity to look at the Transport Commissioner's thinking on the subject in a draft document 'Measures to Improve the Operating Conditions of Community Shipping' issued in April.

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# Million dollar settlement in Australian 'hat trick'

It is not all that often that the ITF obtains back pay settlements for three ships at once, especially not when we are talking of over a million dollars.

But that is just what happened this March in Sydney thanks to a bit of neat footwork by Australian Foc inspector Les Symes of the Waterside Workers' Federation.

By chance three ships of the Hong Kong Islands Shipping Company — the *MV Admiralty Island*, *Young Chau* and *Island Container* — came into port in such quick succession that they were either alongside at the Container Terminals of Australia Ltd quay or were waiting for one of their sister ships to depart before they could themselves berth.

First to arrive in port was the Panamanian registered *MV Admiralty Island*. Les Symes accompanied by the WWF's Rod Garrick visited the ship to talk to the crew and were asked to pursue back pay claims for most of

those on board — mainly Chinese and Sri Lankans.

Though the *Admiralty Island* was under an ITF agreement (signed in Sydney on an earlier voyage) — as indeed were both the *Young Chau* and the *Island Container* — the crew had not been paid the agreed rates.

The company was operating the notorious double bookkeeping system under which seafarers sign one set of wage accounts saying they receive ITF wages but are actually paid much lower wages.

Some hours later, the WWF got a second phone call, this time from the *MV Young Chau*, also Panamanian registered and with a Chinese crew, which was berthed at the other end of the terminal wharf from the *MV Admiralty Island*.

Inspector Symes promptly moved along to this ship and a similar pattern of claims emerged. The total figure claimed for both ships came to

US\$ 600,000.

Whilst the WWF inspection team were negotiating the deposit of company funds with the union to cover the claims a third ship owned by the Hong Kong Islands Shipping Company, the *Island Container*, arrived in port needing the berth occupied by the *Young Chau*.

Arrangements were made to release the *Young Chau* to sail to Melbourne whilst the *Admiralty Island* was held at the terminal berth as a warning to the *Island Container* should the company fail to pay up what was due to its crew which was thought to have similar claims. Inquiries among the crew members proved this to be correct and a third back claim was calculated.

All three ships were eventually allowed to sail for Melbourne where the WWF's Melbourne Branch witnessed the cash payment of advances and balances that could not be paid out in

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## ... 'positive measures' for Euro shipping welcomed

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The most innovative proposal in the Commission paper is the establishment of a new 'second' register (tentatively called 'Euros') under which Community shipowners (tightly defined in one of the draft regulations) would be entitled to register ships. The 'Euros' register would be in addition to not instead of registration in one of the EC countries. It would confer certain obligations and entitle shipowners to certain benefits. The paper (still at a very early stage in the Community's snail like legislative process) is accompanied by a draft regulation which gives an idea of what 'Euros' might look like. Any seagoing vessel of at least 500 grt already registered in a member state and owned or operated by a Community shipowner would be eligible. All the officers and half the rat-

ings would have to be nationals of an EC member state. Wages and working conditions would have to be fixed by a collective agreement and should normally be at least at ILO minimum levels. Wage agreements shall be made (on behalf of non EC nationals in the crew) only with unions in their country of origin and those unions must satisfy the conditions of ILO Convention 87 on Freedom of Association.

What do the shipowners get in return for all these restrictions? The 'carrot' in the draft regulation is article 11 "Registration of a vessel in EUROS under the conditions laid down in this Regulation will be considered to be an instrument for the execution of an important project of common interest. Fiscal and financial aid to Community vessel owners will be examined accordingly". In other words, any special aid to Community vessels will depend

on their joining EUROS.

The ITF and the 'Brussels Committee' representing EC unions have not yet given detailed comments on the draft paper, although it is clear that it does not command universal support either from shipowners or from unions. The proposals have a difficult channel to navigate through before they reach the Community's statute book and will no doubt be amended significantly before then. The fact that the Community's decision makers are finally prepared to admit that a Community owned manned and flagged fleet is worth aiming for is, however, already a major step forward. Whether EUROS finally joins (or replaces) the other second registers or not, the ITF welcomes the debate on 'positive measures' as a small sign that the fight for genuine flag shipping has not been completely abandoned in Europe.

# GIS – open for business

The past two months have seen major movements on the flag scene. One new European register has opened for business — in Germany — and will in all probability be followed in a matter of weeks by a second — in Luxembourg. Meanwhile, as Cyprus joined the swelling ranks of those offering to serve as the base for the much mooted Euro flag, plans for a Community 'second' register were being revealed elsewhere (see story).

In a controversial move, the British dependent registry in the Cayman Islands has announced that from May 1989 it is introducing new regulations relaxing the nationality requirements for senior officers on its ships. Under existing regulations, which are derived from those in force in the UK, officers must hold UK or Commonwealth certificates but the Cayman Islands say that they will now accept certificates issued in the EC and Norway. The British officers' union NUMAST complains that the Islands are "jumping the gun" by agreeing to accept these certificates at a time when the British government is still considering such a change in respect of UK registered ships. The new regulations will apply immediately to all new ships

seeking to join the registry while ships already on its books will only have to make the change gradually.

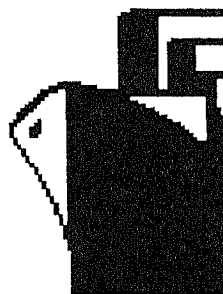
The second German register — the GIS — opened for business on 3rd May and within a week more than a hundred ships were queuing up wanting to join. Having lost the battle to stop the register coming into being, the

Gibraltar registered *Star of Alexandria* off Cape Cod in April has raised renewed doubts about the effectiveness of the colony's controls over ships flying its flag. The *Star of Alexandria* appears to have broken the rules by not having British or Commonwealth certificated officers on board. A register official has frankly admitted that it had not got round to checking the *Star of Alexandria* though doubts about the composition of the crew date from the time two years ago when the ship joined the register. NUMAST, pointing out that this is by no means an isolated case, has written to Chief Minister Jo Bossano (a former Foc inspector) demanding a 'proper in-

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## The ITF's regular flag by flag roundup

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German seamen's union ÖTV is now campaigning to ensure that all seafarers on board GIS ships, irrespective of nationality, are covered by agreements negotiated by the ÖTV. The union has also asked the ITF to ensure that no other ITF-affiliated union negotiates with shipowners on behalf of crews of GIS ships.

The sinking of the 24 year old bulker

quiry'.

Japan is to set up a joint committee of representatives of the government, owners and unions to look at the vexed issue of mixed manning on Japanese flag ships. The matter has been given added urgency with the entry of Japan into international cruise operations. The ITF-affiliated All-Japan Seamen's Union fears that the government's plans will mean a drop in the number of skilled Japanese seafarers which is not in the long term interests of the industry.

## ...ITF's million dollar coup

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Sydney because there was insufficient cash available prior to the vessels' departure.

This was a highly charged affair, played with great skill by Symes. The departure of ships was delayed and juggled with so that at least one ship was held while payment of money was handed over in two cheques.

The company's first cheque for \$536,147.95 was rejected eight days after it has been deposited in a WWF account. This led to the issue of a 'warrant cheque' — this is a form of cheque where funds are deposited immediately in an account once the

warrant has been deposited with the bank.

The backpay settlement for the three ships amounted to the magnificent sum of US\$ 1,042,035.20.

The ITF was determined that the seafarers should not be short changed by the Hong Kong Islands Shipping Company. The seafarers for their part were keen to pursue their full entitlements and so everyone gained by the action — apart from the owners of course who must now be licking their wounds.

The Sydney settlement represents quite a coup for the ITF and one we have every right to be proud of.

The Luxembourg register was due to start up just weeks behind the GIS in neighbouring Germany. Belgium has been the driving force behind the register and its largest shipowner CMB is already making preparations to transfer virtually all its 17 strong fleet to the Grand Duchy. Another 40 or so Belgian ships — the bulk of the national fleet — are expected to follow shortly. Though a landlocked nation with no maritime tradition Luxembourg would like very much to establish itself as the European flag, while the ITF is committed to treating it as an Foc for any ships which are not beneficially owned in Belgium or Luxembourg.

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# ...Luxembourg set to join the growing ranks

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The Maltese government has adopted new shipping legislation easing conditions of entry to its registry as part of plans to promote the island as an off-shore financial centre. Owners tempted to take advantage of its offer of low registration fees should be warned that the registry has an appalling casualty record and has some very dilapidated tonnage on its books. Under the new conditions oil rigs and ships under construction will have access to the registry for the first time and ships on bareboat charter will be granted temporary registration. The Maltese registry has been putting on tonnage at a tremendous rate and now stands at three and a half million gross tonnes, with most of the new business coming from Greek owned ships.

A new campaign is being launched this summer to attract more European owners to the Netherlands Antilles flag, which is being marketed as a cut price alternative to Panama with few or no restrictions on crew nationality and pay and generous tax concessions to owners. Ships on bareboat charter to Netherlands Antilles companies will also be allowed access to the flag from this summer — a shrewd move that could well tempt owners currently using Cyprus, which also permits dual registration, to switch flags. The NA flag, precisely because it is so cheap and liberal, could even draw business from the German second register which opened for business on May 3. Many owners are indeed already seeking out the Curaçao-based registry as a home

for their ships. It has grown by 25% over the past sixteen months to 89 ships of just under 500,000 tonnes — not one of the largest registries perhaps but popular because owners can hoist the highly respected Dutch flag.

The sale of the loss making state owned New Zealand Shipping Corporation (NZSC) should have been completed by the end of 1988 but moves by the shipping company during the sell off period to cut the pay and conditions of several NZSC crews created such a tense labour situation that the sale was eventually completed only this March (see ITF News October 1988, January and February 1989). Even though the unions have lost their battle to halt the sale, they have been successful in pursuing their case against the NZSC's tough labour policies through the courts. The New Zealand Labour Court, in a precedent setting judgement, said that it would 'lift the corporate veil' which the company had attempted to drape over its operations when it decided to flag out two ships (the *New Zealand Pacific* and the *New Zealand Forum II*) to Hong Kong. In the words of the Judge 'the reflagging...was a device or a sham or a facade'. The Corporation still controlled the ships, and therefore New Zealand pay and conditions should still probably apply to them. This judgement enabled an agreement to be hammered out and the original crews have been reinstated on the ships, now renamed the *Tui* and the *Weka*. With the completion of the controversial sale, ownership of the NZSC has passed to Associated Con-

tainer Transport — a joint venture between Cunard Ellerman and Blue Star Line — a company which already has a major share of regular liner trades between Australasia and Europe

The Norwegian government is now considering a further relaxation of conditions under the NIS. A white paper published in April 1989 proposed that most coastal vessels should be allowed to join, that foreign seafarers serving on NIS ships should be exempt from taxes and that NIS ships owned by non-Norwegians should not be requisitionable in times of war. Meanwhile, the register continues to expand. By May 1989 it was boasting 509 ships with a total gross tonnage of 12.6 million.

The state support given to the Swedish shipping industry last year has created a mood of optimism and by this spring many owners were talking about switching tonnage back to the national register to the relief of the unions who welcomed the extra jobs for Swedish seafarers that would come from the drift back to the flag. However the mood soured somewhat in March when, overruling union objections, Sweden lifted the ban on NIS and DIS registered ships in Swedish local traffic — a move that has reopened the debate on a possible SIS, which some owners would like to see extended to coastal shipping. First indications are the government will resist these demands. Currently Sweden has around 2m tons gross on the domestic register and a further 5m tons registered under Focs.

## British seamen's union votes to team up with NUR

The British National Union of Seamen has voted decisively in favour of merging with the National Union of Railwaymen. The new 130,000 strong union, which does not yet have a name, is expected to come into being this autumn. Both NUS General Secretary Sam McCluskie and NUR General Secretary Jimmy Knapp, welcoming the NUS decision, have spoken of the new 'powerful' union that will emerge.

In a postal ballot, NUS members voted by a majority not to continue as a separate organisation and when given the choice of joining forces with either the NUR or the Transport and General Workers' Union indicated that they wished to team up with the NUR. Talks will now be held between the leaderships of the two unions to lay the foundations for the new union.

The NUS/NUR merger is the latest in a series of tie-ups between British unions and a number of other unions in the transport sector are known to be actively considering merger proposals at the present time. There can be little doubt that the trend in Britain is towards larger workers' organisations with the back up and resources that will be necessary adequately to defend workers' interests in the nineties and beyond.



# Air fare surprise from Euro-court

Shock waves are still rebounding through the world aviation community following the European Court of Justice's unexpectedly wide ranging ruling on April 11 that states that all price-fixing arrangements between airlines are a contravention of the European Community's founding document, the Treaty of Rome.

The ruling is spectacular for a number of reasons. The court have said that it applies to all airlines flying into or out of the twelve member community (previous decisions and European policy had been limited to journeys between member states). The ruling is also the first time that the court has used Article 86 of the Treaty in an aviation matter — previously it was thought that airlines were exempt from this clause. The court decision also went much further than what it had been asked to decide upon — the ruling came from a "reference" by a German court on a point of European Law — the court didn't actually answer the original question but rather went on to make a series of wide ranging policy pronouncements. Finally, the court ruling directly contravenes the existing policy of the International Airline Travel Association (IATA) and technically leaves this airline industry body in breach of European law.

Though the ruling itself now automatically becomes a part of European law, the full impact of the decision depends on how it is exploited by individual companies and what effect it has the EC members who are set to unveil a new European Air Transport package this October.

The implications are ominous however, because the court's ruling goes far beyond what the EC itself has determined in its steps towards "liberalisation" of air travel. The ruling has given a boost to the "hard-line" advocates of US style air deregulation and promises to make the already heated debates about the future of EC aviation policy all the more acrimonious.

The case began when two West German travel agents — Ahmed Saeed Flugreisen and Silver Line Reisebüro GmbH — were accused of unfair competition by rival agents. They had been selling cheap Frankfurt to Tokyo tickets by purchasing the tickets in Portugal as Lisbon-Frankfurt-Tokyo tickets and saving on the lower tariffs and exchange rate. IATA regulations specifically state that airline tickets may only be purchased in the local currency of the country a passenger is travelling from.

The bizarrely named West German Association for the Campaign against Free Competition (a "fair trading" association and watchdog) sued the travel agents for breaking national air fare rules and undercutting government-sanctioned ticket prices.

The agents lost the case in the local courts so they appealed to the High Commercial appeal court in Karlsruhe. This court passed the case, two years ago, to the European Court for clarification on points of European law.

The Court took this opportunity to issue a broad ruling on aviation policy covering three key points:

1) Bilateral or multilateral price fixing pacts for domestic routes or

flights between EC and non-Community airports are void unless specifically cleared by the national authorities in the EC country concerned.

2) Price fixing accords are banned if they force competitors to follow excessively high or low prices, or force all carriers to charge the same on a single route. Applying Article 86 of the Treaty of Rome, which prohibits abuse of a dominant trading position, for the first time to aviation, the court states that such practices constitute an abuse of dominance.

3) Governments are prohibited from generally protecting national airlines by authorising anti-competitive price-fixing agreements or artificially high prices. They are only allowed to do this if it is essential for airlines to carry out a task "of general interest" — such as being asked by a government to provide an essential service on an unprofitable route.

The airline industry have reacted with thinly veiled shock to the ruling. The Association of European Airlines (AEA) has warned that interlining arrangements may disappear in the wake of the ruling. US airlines, however, would be only too glad to see their country's bilateral agreements with Europe scrapped. The US mega-carriers could easily be the real victors of the court's ruling.

As for Ahmed Saeed Flugreisen and Silver Line Reisebüro GmbH, they are certainly pleased with the ruling — but it will still be up to the Karlsruhe court to interpret the European ruling in their specific case.

## FIRST CONTRACT FOR US AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS

America's hardworked air traffic controllers will soon have their first collective contract for eight years if rank and file members endorse the agreement that has been reached by the National Air Traffic Controllers' Association NATCA — the union which has replaced the former union PATCO, a victim of the bitter 1981 strike.

The new contract is essentially a 'partnership for safety' with the controllers' union being given the right to participate in all accident investigations where controllers are involved as well as in safety related review boards. National job safety and occupational health committees will also be created.

To relieve the heavy job stress on

the controllers who oversee safety on the nation's busy air routes, the contract also includes a guarantee of vital work breaks every two hours.

NATCA will now turn its efforts to getting the law changed to enable it to negotiate for its members on pay, pensions and health benefits.

# Air Nauru pilots renew solidarity appeal

Striking Air Nauru pilots (for background details to this long-running story see ITF News May, June, July/August, September 1988 and January 1989) have taken space in the highly respected aviation weekly Flight International seeking to persuade airline pilots not to take up employment with the airline. The pilots' union NAPA says that their publicity has been successful in preventing a number of pilots from joining the strike-bound company.

Meanwhile, Air Nauru has had little success in its continuing search for a chief pilot. An American pilot who had been offered the post declined when he learned that the company was using 'scab' pilots.

Air Nauru is running its own international advertising campaign in an increasingly desperate attempt to find pilots for its fleet of 737 jets. While it originally would only recruit pilots who were endorsed for 737 operations it is now saying that it would be perfectly

happy to take on 'unendorsed' pilots and pay for their upgrading to 737s.

By the beginning of May, four Indian Airlines pilots had got jobs with Air Nauru and according to NAPA a further three were all set to join the airline. However, two Indian Airlines management pilots previously working for Air Nauru have apparently now returned to India.

The pilots could find that they have made a most unwise career move as Indian Airlines management, which has had problems holding on to its pilots, has now stepped in saying it will dismiss pilots who take leave and then seek jobs with foreign airlines. Pilots who have applied for leave so as to join Air Nauru would presumably also be included in the dismissal threat.

Even prior to the strike, Air Nauru pilots were concerned by the airline's lax safety standards. The company's reputation suffered a further blow in December when the New Zealanders suspended its certification for a second

time, once again citing its poor safety record and unacceptable training standards.

Air Nauru's striking pilots are now renewing their appeal for international solidarity from aviation workers, saying that global support is vital at this crucial time. Their union hopes that the threat of possible legal action now hanging over Air Nauru will cause the company to think again about opening negotiations.

The union's objectives remain what they always were: payment of the outstanding salary claim that goes back to 1981; reinstatement of dismissed NAPA members; and recognition of the pilots' union.

The pilots believe that the courts would probably find in favour of their claims—something which could prove acutely embarrassing to the company, which has very close links with the Nauru government, in the runup to elections later this year.

## AIRLINE INDUSTRY ROUNDUP :

# Swissair teams up with Delta in US

Privatisation and cooperation continue to be the watchwords in the aviation industry, with the signing of a new deal between the small but successful European airline Swissair and the larger US Delta Air Lines and indications of the probable early sell off of the Canadian government's remaining stake in Air Canada. A new African airline — a smaller regional rival to Air Afrique — is also in the offing.

Fierce competition in the aviation industry is leading more carriers to sign cooperation agreements. The latest deal involves the profit-making European Swissair which has decided to team up with Atlanta-based Delta Air Lines, the third largest US carrier. The two airlines have agreed to coordinate their flight schedules, improve connections on North Atlantic routes and investigate the possibility of close technical cooperation.

Rumours were also rife in April about a possible partnership between the Belgian carrier Sabena, the Dutch national airline KLM and British Airways. Sabena has been seeking partners for the past few years and a broad cooperation pact could materially assist all three airlines in the build up to 1992. The Scandinavian airline SAS and Airlines of Britain Holdings (in which SAS has an almost 25 per cent equity stake) also revealed at about the same time that they were also actively discussing collaboration with Sabena. Talks between SAS and Sabena last year on closer cooperation broke down because of Sabena's fears that it would be swallowed up by its larger rival. Hence, presumably, SAS and ABH's emphasis this time that they were seeking only a minority holding in Sabena.

Meanwhile, the Canadian government is expected to sell its remaining

55% stake in Air Canada soon, encouraged by the rising price of its shares. In what will be one of the largest ever equity issues, the company hopes to raise Can\$500 m (US\$419 m) by the sale. In Europe, 400,000 shares in Austrian Airlines are being made available to the public in an issue that will reduce the government's shareholding in the company to 61.4 per cent. Over in Latin America the Mexican government has just announced plans to sell off Mexican Airlines as part of its privatisation programme. Aeroméxico was sold last November to the Grupo Dictum consortium.

According to press reports, Zambia, Uganda and Tanzania are to set up a joint passenger airline — to be known as African Joint Air Services — to serve African and inter-continental routes.

# PIA UNION BAN TO BE LIFTED SOON

May Day — the traditional day when workers worldwide join together in marches and celebrations — was a day for special rejoicing in Pakistan this year.

The new government of Benazir Bhutto chose this first democratic 1st May for twelve years to announce that it was lifting the eight and a half year old ban on trade union activity by employees of Pakistan International Airlines.

During a visit to Pakistan at the turn of the year, ITF Asia/Pacific Regional Secretary Mo Hoda said in a press statement that was given wide coverage that the international trade union movement welcomed the installation of a democratically elected government in Pakistan and was 'looking forward to a new era of freedom of association and expression in the country'. He hoped that the change of govern-

ment would mean that the workers and people of Pakistan would be given the opportunity to take part in the task of nation building.

Hoda's statement further welcomed Benazir Bhutto's undertaking on her election that she would restore the trade union rights of workers, including employees of Pakistan International Airlines who were banned under Martial law regulation no 52 of 15 August 1981 from all union activity.

The government has now agreed in principle that PIA workers should again have the right to belong to trade unions and that ways and means will be found of protecting these rights.

But there remains the problem of deleting the infamous clause eight of the Pakistan Constitution by which the previous military government of President Zia legalised all its actions. This requires a two-thirds majority in favour, and in order to obtain the requi-

site number of votes the government must gain the support of the opposition parties, something which it as yet has been unable to do.

The ITF has provided staunch support to Pakistan's aviation workers over the past eight years and will obviously continue to press the present government to translate its statement of intent into positive action.

The government of President Zia stands accused by the Committee on Freedom of Association of the ILO of gross violation of its Conventions nos. 87 and 98 following the Committee's examination of a complaint submitted by the ITF. When the Pakistan government reacted to these criticisms of its conduct by amending the PIA Corporation Act to permanently outlaw trade unions within PIA the ITF lodged a further protest, asking the ILO to note this flagrant disregard of workers' fundamental rights.

## ITF PROTESTS AT GREEK GOV'T ACTION AGAINST OLYMPIC CABIN CREWS

Olympic Airways' domestic and international services were grounded by a 48-hour strike of its flight attendants on 22 and 23 April.

The cabin crews, members of the ITF-affiliated Greek Flight Stewards' and Stewardesses' Union (EISF), had taken action in support of their claim for higher pay for weekend and holiday working.

The cabin attendants had intended to follow up their action with a further strike scheduled to coincide with the Greek Orthodox Easter holiday but were prevented from doing this when Transport Minister Yannis Haralambous intervened on 25 April and ordered their compulsory mobilisation.

The EISF was regretfully forced to comply with the government order as otherwise it would have faced heavy penalties. It no doubt recalled the dismissal and arrest of members of the flight engineers' union some years ago when they went ahead with a strike in defiance of a government attempt to place them under military discipline.

EISF Union president Heracles Efsthathiou condemned the government's draconian action as 'unacceptable' and 'against democracy and the constitution', warning that the cabin crews of the state airline would now look for other ways to press their demands.

The ITF sent a message of strong support to its affiliate which was read to journalists at a press conference in

Athens called to denounce the government's action. After condemning the government's interference with the right to strike, the ITF statement went on to urge that meaningful negotiations be conducted so as to lead to a settlement acceptable to our affiliate.

Aviation affiliates in Europe were informed of the dispute and asked to send solidarity messages to the union.

## SAS PUTS THIRD PILOT ON LONGER 767 ROUTES

A third pilot will be on the flight deck of all B767s operated by the Scandinavian airline SAS on longer flights when the new aircraft enter into scheduled service shortly.

Under an agreement reached between the company and its flight crews, a relief pilot will be carried on all flights over six and a half hours. SAS has climbed down after first insisting

that it would only agree to a relief pilot on flights of over nine hours.

The new arrangements cover flights up to twelve hours, and effectively covers its entire B 767 operated operations.

Earlier, the flight crews had threatened to boycott the start of training for the new aircraft type if SAS did not agree to a third pilot.

**TROOPS FAIL TO BREAK INDIAN DOCKERS' UNITED STAND :****Pay victory in six-day national ports strike**

More than 300,000 Indian dockers, members of trade unions from every political tendency took united strike action for six days from April 17 in support of a 25% wage demand. The strike paralysed imports and exports and provoked a vicious response from the Indian government which sent Army and Navy personnel into the ports in a vain attempt to move cargoes.

According to Umraomal Purohit, President of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation (AIRF) and Co-ordinator of the ITF Indian Affiliates' Committee, the strike "was one hundred percent solid". Purohit, visiting ITF headquarters a few days after the strike was successfully concluded as a result of important concessions by the Government, stressed the extraordinary lengths which the Government went to to play down the strike's effectiveness and their blatant manipulation of the country's Television and Radio networks. "The government foolishly thought that it could handle a strike but the unions proved it wrong" said Purohit. As well as bringing troops in, the Government made great publicity out of its decision to suspend the dockwork legislation so that non-union "blacklegs" could be used in the ports but, Purohit stresses "not a single man was actually brought in". While the urban populations of the major port cities could see clearly that nothing was moving in the ports, the government controlled media poured out a torrent of lies, suggesting at one point that the armed forces had been forced to organise a third shift to handle the sheer volume of cargo being unloaded. TV stations continued to show pictures of the handful of soldiers and sailors who were unloading ships accompanied by assurances that the situation in the ports was 'near normal'.

It didn't take the Government long to realise that the country's economy couldn't stand a prolonged dockers'

strike and that a deal would have to be reached with the Federation of Port and Dock Workers under the leadership of S R Kulkarni. State owned Indian Airlines was ordered by the government to reserve seats on flights from the main port cities to Delhi for the night of 21 April. Leaders from Bombay, Madras, Calcutta and Visakhapatnam boarded the flights and arrived in Delhi in the early hours of the next morning. A settlement, giving wage increases in the region of 20% compared to the Government's original 16% offer, was then hammered out in a heated negotiating session in the morning of April 22.

biggest and most militant union. The AIRF General Secretary made it clear that continued use of troops as strike breakers could provoke a national strike of railwaymen and the local branch of the union supplied mass support for dockers in the port of Kandla when they were threatened with dismissal for joining the strike. Bro M A Samdani, General Secretary of the ITF's Pakistan affiliate the Organisation of Karachi Port Trust Workers also pledged his union's full support for the Indian unions.

In London, the ITF immediately issued a press statement supporting the dockers' struggle and informed all

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***Indian dockers' strike was  
"one hundred percent solid"***

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The Government's decision to return to the negotiating table was undoubtedly also influenced by the threat of solidarity action from other unions. Shortly after the strike began, the ITF Indian Affiliates Indian Co-ordinating Committee issued a strong statement of support for the dockers' unions and warning the government of the consequences of a prolonged dispute. At the same time they notified the ITF in London of the need for international support. Swift declarations of support came from the ITF's two maritime affiliates, the National Union of Seafarers of India and the Maritime Union of India, both of which organise crews on Indian flag vessels. The two unions made it immediately clear that ships' crews would refuse to do any cargo handling work which was normally the job of dockers. Other assistance was provided by the huge AIRF, India's

seafarers' and dockers' unions that they should take all possible action against cargoes loaded or unloaded at Indian ports by military personnel or blackleg labour. In a series of contacts with Indian diplomats the ITF emphasised the serious view which its affiliates took of the use of troops as strike breakers and the likely repercussions which this might have on the handling of Indian cargoes in other countries.

At the conclusion of the dispute, Bro S R Kulkarni cabled the ITF as follows "WE ARE HAPPY TO INFORM YOU THAT SIX DAYS NATIONWIDE STRIKE BY DOCKERS CALLED OFF FROM 23RD AFTER THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA REACHED SETTLEMENT WITH THE FEDERATIONS STOP DETAILS OF SETTLEMENT WILL

Continued on page 25



# ITF Caribbean dockers' education programme gets underway

A two year trade union ITF education programme for leaders of dockers' unions in the Caribbean region began with a week long seminar held in Port of Spain, Trinidad from 24-28 April.

The seminar brought together twenty four representatives from unions in Antigua, Bahamas, Bermuda, Barbados, Curaçao, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent.

It was jointly conducted by David Cockroft, ITF Dockers' Section Secretary and Roy Bannis (WAWU, Dominica) who is full-time programme co-ordinator. It was hosted by Francis Mungroo (SWWTU, Trinidad) who is also Secretary-Treasurer of the Caribbean Maritime and Aviation Council CMAC.

The seminar's opening session was addressed by Trinidad and



The seminar in session

Tobago Transport Minister Dr. Carson Charles, David Cockroft, Francis Mungroo, and by Baldwin Spencer, Antigua, Vice-President

of CMAC. Greetings were also brought by Udo Frick from the Norwegian Transport Workers' Federation, on behalf of the Norwegian trade union movement which is financing the programme. Also participating in the seminar on behalf of the ITF Dockers' Section was Claude Cumberlandidge of the Australian Waterside Workers' Federation.

During the course of the week the participants spent most of their time in working groups charged with developing detailed plans for the two year seminar which will consist of national dockers' seminars and part-time "study circles". Others hammered out draft policies on employment security, working conditions, health and safety and international solidarity.

## Support for Foc campaign

A final session discussed ways in which solidarity between different dockers' unions in the region could be made more effective as well as ways of giving greater support to the ITF's flag of convenience campaign, particularly in relation to the growing cruise ship industry.

## ...employers warned not to use 'blackleg' labour in struck ports

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BE SENT SEPARATELY STOP ON BEHALF OF 3 LAKH (300,000) PORT AND DOCK WORKERS AND ON MY OWN BEHALF WE EXPRESS GRATITUDE TO YOU AND ALL AFFILIATES FOR PROMPT SOLIDARITY HELP EXTENDED BY YOU TO OUR STRIKE STOP ARMED FORCES DEPLOYED TO BREAK STRIKE HAVE BEEN WITHDRAWN".

In a letter following up the cable, the Port and Dock Workers' Federation stressed that the strike "was total and peaceful in all the Ports. Workers have shown exemplary sense of solidarity in this strike in spite of the Government of India using repressive measures to crush the workers by deploying armed

forces in all the Ports. The Shipping Agents and Stevedoring companies were threatened that if they do not recruit black-legs their licences would be cancelled. Knowing fully well that ultimately they have to work in cooperation with the dockers, nobody succumbed to this threat". The union's letter also re-emphasised its appreciation for the prompt action of the ITF and its affiliates. "The Directive issued by you to all the affiliated unions to impose boycott on ships and shipping lines which were loaded by the armed forces and the black-legs during the strike compelled the shipping companies not to cooperate with the port authorities for employing strike breakers" it concluded.

# All change in Australian ports

The report of the Inter-State Commission (see *ITF News* October 1988), which was charged with carrying out an investigation into the Australian waterfront industry, was presented to the country's Parliament on April 6. The report emphasised the important role to be played by government in the management of change in the ports industry and expressed a preference for providing incentives for change rather than direct regulation. The report, which was immediately accepted in principle by the Government, proposes changes in current employment arrangements as well as government assistance towards the costs of 'rejuvenating' the industry. Rejuvenation is to

be achieved by means of a special early retirement and voluntary redundancy scheme coupled with the simultaneous induction and training of new employees.

The Commission proposes that unions, employers and Government should sign an agreement to implement the strategy over a three year period and that government financial assistance should be made conditional on the implementation of each stage. In particular it proposes that the current industry-wide employment arrangements, which include levies and labour pools, should be progressively replaced by individual company employment. Basic wages and conditions

would continue to be negotiated nationally but each employer should meet his own obligations in relation to idle time, sick leave and redundancy costs and be responsible for the recruitment, employment and management of employees. This system will be introduced initially in the large ports. Special arrangements will be made for the smaller ports which may still be permitted to operate labour pools. The Commission's report also deals with workplace practices, job restructuring and training and it takes a positive attitude towards the joint venture arrangements in which the WWF has entered into partnership with individual stevedoring companies.

## Jobs threat at Santos sparks Brazilian dock strikes

Serious industrial disruption has been affecting cargo into and out of Brazil's ports. The 11,000 workers at the port of Santos began an indefinite strike from April 11 in support of a wage demand of 187% — a figure which may seem extraordinary by world standards but which is extremely moderate in inflation hit Brazil. Dockers in other ports held national strikes in support of the Santos dockers on 11 and 12 April and again later in the month. The government is reportedly coming under increasing pressure to reduce manning in the port which employs around 6,000 dockers, 3,600 administrative employees and 1,300 drivers. On April 27, all Brazil's 27 ports voted to declare an indefinite national dock strike after a 39% wage offer by the Labour Ministry had been rejected by the workers.

A return to work took place on May 1 following a Labour Court ruling giving most dockers increases of around 50% but Santos remained paralysed for several more days while outstanding claims for checkers, hatch operators, and security guards were resolved. These workers were awarded wage increases of 126% by the São Paulo Labour Court on May 3.

On *Container stuffing and stripping* the Commission recommends that WWF members should not be given the right to organise employees in CFS located away from the waterfront (no change from the present situation) and that productivity incentive schemes should be introduced adapted to the circumstances of each workplace. Bulk terminals will operate using the operator's own employees and the WWF will be expected to withdraw entirely from this area.

A three member authority to implement the plan will be set up immediately and abolished at the end of the three year implementation period. Press reports suggest that full implementation of the report's recommendations would result in the loss of 3,000 jobs, partially offset by recruitment of 1000 new dockers under the age of 30.

## Union boycott safeguards jobs at Finnish private port

Reports recently reached *ITF News* of a dispute in Finland in January and February this year over the reservation of dock work to registered dockworkers. The Finnish Transport Workers' Union AKT had been negotiating with manufacturing company Outokumpu Oy about the handling of goods in the company's private port in the Kokkola area. Products from all the company's factories were being processed through this port, where cargo handling work is carried out by the company's own

employees and not by registered dockers, a trend which the union believed would cause serious job losses in the Municipal Port of Kokkola. Despite an agreement in principle signed in June 1988, the company refused to restrict cargo handled at its Kokkola port to goods destined for or coming from the factory itself. Following various negotiations involving the company, the national union centre SAK and the Metalworkers' Union, the union was forced to call a boycott of all Ou-

tokompu Oy products passing through the port of Kokkola which went ahead from 23 January. The boycott, which was supported by the Municipal Workers' Union and the Metalworkers' Union was extended to all Finnish ports with effect from 30 January. This escalation of the dispute finally forced the company to the negotiating table and on 2 February an agreement guaranteeing that only products for and from the Kokkola factory would pass through its harbour.

## CRISIS IN THE DOCKS :

# Worldwide threat to jobs and conditions from employers and governments

*The months of April and May have seen an extraordinary wave of attacks by port employers and governments on the jobs and working conditions of dockworkers in every part of the world, accompanied in many cases by strong reaction on the part of dockers' trade unions causing significant disruption to maritime trade. While a number of the disputes were resolved, several important ones were continuing or looked likely to start in late May or early June.*

Strikes have also been experienced in several other countries in the past two months. Japanese ports faced severe disruption early in April as a result of action called by two unions — the National Council of Dockworkers' Unions (Zenkoku Kowan) and the Council of Dockers and Transport Workers (Zenkoku Niyaku Roshi Kyogikai). The disputes were part of the Japanese union movement's annual "Spring Struggle" on wages and conditions. A series of strikes paralysed 97 Japanese ports until an agreement giving wage increases averaging ¥10,500

(\$79) per month to stevedores was signed on April 17.

Greek dockers' unions declared a 48 hour dock strike of their 2,700 members on 20-21 April followed by a ban on overtime expected to last until May 2. Further 48 hour strikes are expected to follow. The unions are demanding the early passage of two draft laws one of which would include dock jobs in the 'heavy and unhealthy' classification.

A major reform of the Italian ports initiated by the Government early in 1989 has provoked a long running

campaign of industrial action by ITF affiliated dockers' unions. The Government seems determined to go ahead with the passage of a law abolishing the exclusive rights of Dockworkers' Companies (cooperatives of dockers) to carry out cargo handling in the ports. At its meeting in London on 21-22 March, the ITF Executive Board adopted a resolution condemning the Government's unilateral decision. Dockers in the port of Genoa began a series of strikes in January. The strike in Genoa lasted more than 90 days and was supported by shorter strikes in other Italian ports. A technical agreement was signed by leaders of all three Italian transport unions and the Transport Minister on 17 March. However the strike continued well into April on a limited basis as a result of a difference of opinion over the interpretation of the agreement between the unions and the Minister.

## ...firm solidarity pledge for British dockers

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want to scrap the dock labour scheme (which provides for a dockworker register and employment security) but also to end "all forms of national bargaining in the industry". Their vision of the future is of autonomous local ports each setting their own wages and conditions of employment and 'competing' with each other on the basis of who pays the least or has the most 'flexible' workforce.

Following this refusal, the TGWU acting on the advice of a Dockers' Delegate Conference organised a ballot of its members in the Scheme Ports (also required under UK law) with a view to organising a strike against the employers' decision. On 8 May, the country's largest port employer Associated British Ports (ABP) issued court proceedings designed to stop a na-

tional strike arguing that it is 'political' rather than 'industrial' in nature.

The results of the T&GWU ballot were announced on May 19. 74.3% voted in favour of a strike.

Unless there is a major change of attitude on the part of the employers, a national strike of registered dockworkers now seems inevitable. Under the 982 Employment Act, it must commence within 28 days of the ballot result being declared. The results are likely to be highly damaging to the UK economy. The Scheme Ports together account for around 70% of UK seaborne trade by volume but slightly less than 50% by value. Felixstowe, the largest of the ports outside the scheme (but still 100% organised by the T&GWU) has made it clear that it will not accept diverted cargoes, although some may be transferred onto Ro Ro

vessels mainly via Dover. In confidential planning documents prepared by the Port Employers prior to the Government announcement, suggestions were also made that dockworkers would be brought into the UK from other countries in order to break any strike. On 12 April, shortly after the government's announcement, ITF Dockers' Section Secretary David Cockroft sent a message to all seafarers' and dockers' affiliates warning them of the possibility of a national docks strike in the near future and asking them for the maximum possible solidarity with the British union. The ITF Dockers' Section, which met in London on 22-23 May pledged its full support to the T&GWU and stressed that ITF affiliated dockers' unions in other countries would do everything possible to ensure that the dispute is brought to a successful conclusion.

# New Seafarers' Bulletin

The fourth edition of the ITF Seafarers' Bulletin is now available in English. Editions in Chinese, French, German, Greek, Spanish, Swedish and Korean are now being prepared and will be available soon.

The Seafarers' Bulletin is unique amongst ITF Publications in that it is aimed directly at rank and file seafarers the world over. The Bulletin seeks to be the voice of the thousands of seafarers serving on flag of convenience ships, for whom the ITF represents the most important defender of their rights.

The Bulletin is distributed through ITF affiliated Seafarers' and Dockers' unions, by Foc Inspectors who visit ships in ports, at Seafarers' missions, hotels, centres and clubs and by post to individual seafarers.

If you or your union already has an order for Bulletins, then they will be on their way to you at the moment. If you would like a copy, or (even better) if you are in a position to distribute copies to seafarers, please contact the ITF and we will arrange to send you a regular order in whatever languages you require.

Unions and centres who have existing orders should also feel free to order additional copies if the need arises. We are more than happy to let you have more copies if more seafarers will receive it. The aim of the Bulletin is to reach most seafarers in the world — and we rely on the assistance of our volunteer distributors to help us.

This latest Seafarers' Bulletin is the largest yet. In 48 pages we present a summary of international developments in the shipping industry, a detailed explanation of what the ITF is and how the Flag of Convenience campaign works, a discussion of the economic recovery in the shipping industry and a large number of "human interest" stories



about seafarers and cases the ITF has been involved in.

Many of these 'seafarers' stories' illustrate basic points about seafarers rights, and the bulletin is generously annotated with specific, practical advice to seafarers about injuries on board ship and what to do about them, what an ITF agreement is, what the potential dangers of engine room fuel oils are and even hints for combating pirate attacks. We hope that this combination of a good read and basic advice

will assist seafarers in defending their interests and encourage them to use the services of the ITF in helping them do that.

In the three years since the ITF Seafarers' Bulletin first appeared, we believe that we have proved that it is possible to create a worldwide seafarers' union newspaper which is of interest and use to seafarers from all nations and on all ships. We hope that it will continue to develop and grow as an effective and powerful voice of seafarers.