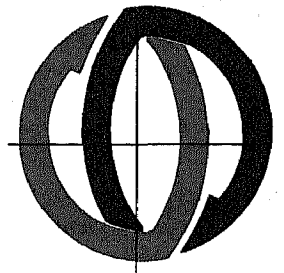


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PEOPLE (18)**MASSACRE IN TIANANMEN SQUARE :****EYE WITNESS ACCOUNT OF
THE TRAGIC EVENTS IN BEIJING**

On the evening of June 3, as troops massed facing the Northeast of Tiananmen Square, members of the Beijing Autonomous Workers' Federation, whose tent was at that corner of the square, marched with their banners to the front of the crowd, directly facing the gathering troops. It was from this corner of the square that the massacre the world will never forget began.

Students who survived the massacre said that most of the representatives of the Autonomous Workers' Federation were killed in the first assault.

On June 8, the regime announced that both the Student Autonomous Federation and the Autonomous Workers' Federation were "counter-revolutionary organisations". Their organisers and activists were to be arrested — and a special telephone hotline number was provided for informers to ring in to.

While the world knows about the pro-democracy movement and the brutal violence that the Chinese government inflicted upon the occupiers of Tiananmen square, the central role of workers and the Autonomous Workers' Federations has not received as much attention, yet Chinese workers were deeply involved in the movement — and this, coupled with signs that they were taking steps towards the formation of independent trade union structures may have been the factor which panicked the regime into ordering the massacre.

Two trade unionists from Hong Kong — Trini Leung and Lee Cheuk Yan — spent five days in Beijing at the beginning of June. They met with the workers in the Autonomous Workers' Federation tent, and they were nearby when the troops attacked the Square. Many of the people they met are now dead or in detention.

Ms. Leung is now travelling in Europe to explain to the trade union movement and the general public the role of workers and the Autonomous Workers' Federations in the recent events in China. She visited ITF headquarters late in June, where she met Asia/Pacific Regional Secretary Mo Hoda and Assistant General Secretary Åke Selander.

Following this meeting, ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis issued a special appeal to all ITF affiliates about the situation in China. ITF affiliates are being asked, specifically, to send messages of protest to the Chinese government about the imprisonment of Chinese transport workers who have been arrested in the present crackdown.

What are the Autonomous Federations?

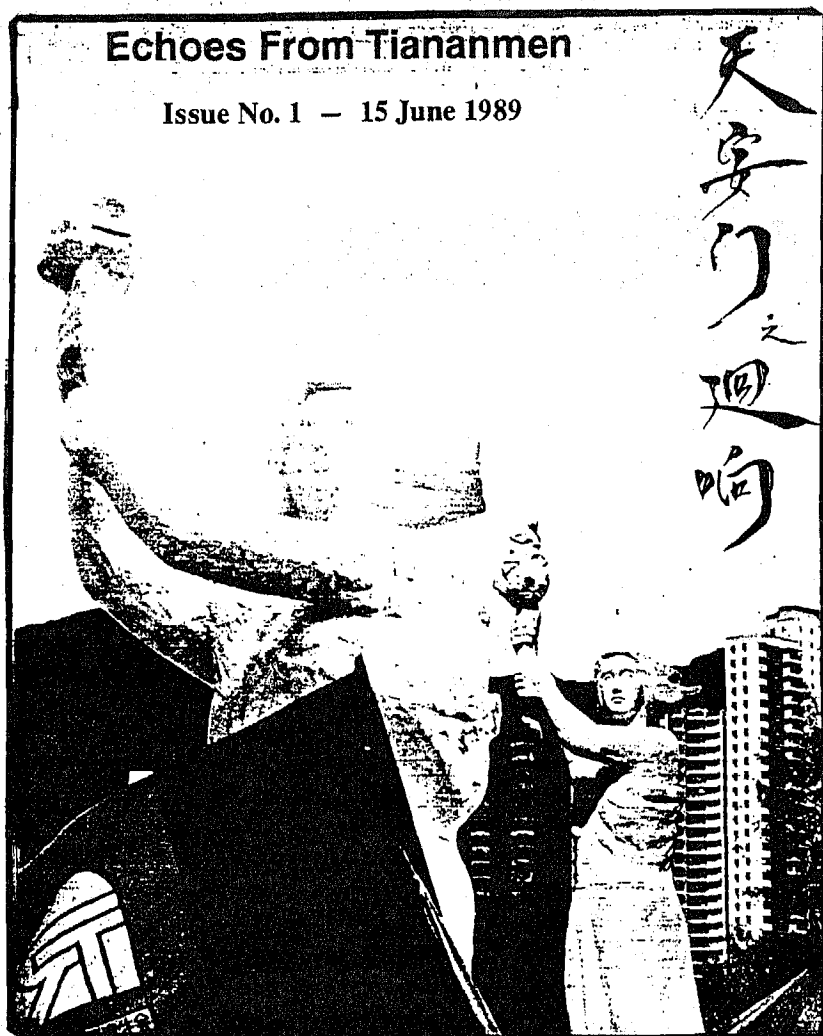
In the middle of May a group of about 100 workers erected a tent in Tiananmen Square. They flew a red flag and brandished banners calling for freedom of association and greater democracy. They had a loudspeaker and microphone from which they made speeches to crowds gathered by the tents and distributed handbills.

In discussions with the Hong Kong trade unionists, the founders of the new union said that their priorities were to build up a network amongst grass roots workers and to prepare the ground for a new, genuinely representative trade union organisation.

Continued on page 2

Turkish rail workers win massive pay rises (4)

...Chinese worker protests end in executions



Echoes of Tiananmen Square — this is the first in a series of booklets with news and analysis of the situation in China and Hong Kong as it unfolds. The booklets are being published by a Hong Kong group known as the Friends of Chinese Minzhu (minzhu is the Chinese word for democracy) and will concentrate on the role of the student and worker organisations.

Continued from page 1

They did not feel that China's government-run trade union movement — the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) — had properly represented Chinese workers or was an organisation that could be remoulded to meet their needs, but they still hoped that they would be able to work with some of the more progressive elements of the ACFTU, and, up to the time of the massacre, they were hoping to be able to establish them-

selves by peaceful, democratic and legal procedures. They were always very clear in stating that they did not challenge the rule of the Chinese Communist Party.

The role of the ACFTU

In recent years the ACFTU — which is not affiliated to any international trade union organisation — has been making contact with trade unions in the rest of the world and trying to establish its credentials as a bona-fide trade union, inde-

pendent of government control and moving towards genuine internal democracy.

One of the two Hong Kong Trade Unionists, Trini Leung, has written a book about the developments in the Chinese trade union movement. She was, until now, hopeful that the ACFTU would develop into a genuine trade union body. Now she is deeply disillusioned.

"At the beginning of the movement, elements within the ACFTU appeared to be sympathetic to the students' demands," she said, "individual factories who marched in the demonstrations had ACFTU banners. But on the day before the massacre, the ACFTU published a statement in the Beijing Daily denouncing the Autonomous Workers' Federations and calling upon the government to suppress them."

When the chips were down, the ACFTU revealed its true face as a lapdog of the ageing Communist Party leadership. Leung, and many Hong Trade unionists, are now calling upon unions worldwide to suspend all contacts with the ACFTU as a result of their stand on the independent trade unions.

Many workers' federation activists are now dead, or in hiding. Many thousands have been arrested and face possible execution. According to Leung, most of the protesters who have been executed have been workers.

The ITF has issued an appeal to affiliates to send messages of protest to the Chinese government calling for the release of detainees, the ending of the executions and the respecting of basic trade union rights by the authorities.

Echoes of Tiananmen Square
can be obtained from:

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ITF STATEMENT ON SITUATION IN CHINA

The ITF fully endorses the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) stand on the recent events in China. It deplores the massacre of unarmed students and workers by the Chinese government in Tiananmen Square, and is outraged by the government's repression of the emerging Autonomous Workers' Federations.

It supports the ICFTU's call for the Chinese government to stop the executions of those arrested for their involvement in the recent events and to release the many thousands of detainees. It endorses the ICFTU's call for the Chinese government to respect the International Labour Organisation's Conventions 87 and 98 on freedom of association and collective bargaining and support the complaint to the ILO about the serious violation of these basic trade union rights.

The ITF, representing transport workers' trade unions throughout the world, is particularly concerned about the fate of a number of Chinese transport workers who were prominent in the pro-democracy campaign, especially since the Autonomous Workers' Federations have been labelled by the state as "counter-revolutionary organisations" - an offence punishable by death under the Chinese constitution.

Transport workers have played a leading role in the Tiananmen Square occupation and the pro-democracy movement in China. Railway workers, bus drivers and tram workers were enthusiastic supporters of the movement, and many of them have now been detained or are on the wanted list.

Bai Dongping, a 26 year old railway worker and central committee member of the Beijing Autonomous Workers' Federation was arrested on June 17 in Chendue. He is charged with "engaging in counter-revolutionary revolt." Other prominent members of the Autonomous Workers' Federation who have been arrested are Liu Qiang, Lie Huanwen, and Li Jiang. Another leader, Han Dongfang, is still being sought by the authorities.

The ITF shares the international community's concern for the fate of the many thousands of Chinese who have been arrested and face possible state execution for their participation in the recent demonstrations. The members of the Autonomous Workers' Federation have been arrested primarily for the fact that they were involved in setting up an independent, self-governing trade union.

The ITF deplores the fact that the All China Federation of Trades Unions (ACFTU) - a body which has been attempting to establish its credentials internationally as a progressive, independent and genuine trade union - has fallen into line with the Chinese government in denouncing the new Autonomous Workers' Federation. In a statement published on June 2 - the day before the Tiananmen square massacre - the ACFTU denounced the Autonomous Workers' Federation and called for their suppression by the government.

As a measure of disgust at the brutal actions of the Chinese authorities the ITF has withdrawn support from a planned seminar of the International Committee on Seafarers' Welfare that was to be held in Shanghai with the participation of the Chinese government and the ACFTU.

The ITF calls upon the Chinese authorities to recognise the basic right of Chinese workers to organise their own trade unions, and calls for the immediate release of Bai Dongping and all other members of the Autonomous Workers' Federation who have been detained. It calls upon affiliates to support the ITF's position by sending messages of protest to the Chinese government and/or their local Chinese embassy.

Amnesty International seeks to outlaw death penalty

Amnesty International has launched a worldwide, year-long campaign against the death penalty with the intention of mobilising world public opinion against this most serious of all human rights violations.

Amnesty calls for all governments

to abolish the death penalty and it campaigns actively against any individual death sentence. As part of the campaign, which they are calling on all trade unions to support, Amnesty has published a comprehensive report on the 80 countries which practise the

death penalty entitled *When the State Kills...The Death Penalty v. Human Rights*. They have also produced a special article on the death penalty and the trade union movement. Both these publications are available from local offices in your country.

"SICK OUT" PROTESTS WIN THE DAY

Massive pay hikes in Turkish public sector

Turkish workers are celebrating a victory in achieving a 142 per cent wage increase in the 1989 public sector collective agreement. The achievement of the new contract, which covers 600,000 employees (including the ITF affiliated railway workers, seafarers and port workers), was won by a united trade union campaign that included many innovative forms of industrial action by workers who are barred by law from striking (see ITF News, April/May 1989).

"The achievements in the recent agreement are far above those which could have been attained by trade unions separately and are the result of a determined struggle waged by the workers and close cooperation of trade unions," said Turkish Railway Workers' Union (DEMIRYOL-IS) President Mehmet Acidereli.

This year's contract negotiations were particularly tense. Workers have seen the real value of their wages decline steadily since 1980 in the face of

severe inflation. Wages, according to the unions, have declined to one-third of their 1980 value. The unions united around demands for wages to be re-adjusted to compensate for this loss and then index-linked so that earnings would be safeguarded in the future.

The public sector employers' organisations and Turkish government refused these demands, preferring instead to rely on the repressive, anti-trade union laws that the civilian Özal government have adapted from the days of military dictatorship. The right to strike is absolutely denied in the public sector.

The unions responded by a disciplined display of unity. All public sector unions agreed to enter the negotiations as one unit promising that no separate union would sign an individual agreement. A special four member coordinating committee was set up, and unions agreed not to sign agreements without the prior approval of this committee.

In response to the denial of their

right to take strike action, the different unions adopted a series of imaginative 'collective actions' that fell within the law. The Railway Workers, for example organised mass medical appointments.

After about a month of such effective actions, the government gave in. At first they offered a 142 per cent increase over two years, but they were convinced to raise that to 142 per cent this year, followed by 37.5 per cent next year. A system of wage indexation has also been agreed:

"One of the most important achievements of this agreement is the inclusion of a provision that helps to protect the purchasing power of wages by taking inflation into consideration" said Acidereli.

This element had been a long-standing demand of Turkish workers, and its inclusion is a most welcome step forward. The wage increases effectively restore the massive losses in real wages this decade and set the tone for future real increases.

ITF JOINS INTERNATIONAL BOYCOTT OF TRUSTHOUSE FORTE HOTELS

Please do not stay or take meals at any hotel or restaurant owned by the Trusthouse Forte group.

The ITF has decided to join the international boycott of establishments owned by Trusthouse Forte — the British-based chain of hotels and restaurants — launched in June by the hotel, restaurant and catering workers' International IUF and is now asking all ITF affiliates and their members to do the same.

The IUF boycott was called because of THF's adamant refusal to recognise the British union GMB — the General, Municipal, Boilermakers' and Allied Trades Union.

The GMB's dispute with THF in Britain goes back to May 1988, when the company acquired the majority of

shares in the 17 strong Kennedy Brooks hotel chain.

THF later sold three of the original seven hotels which had agreements with the GMB but has failed to respond to GMB requests over many months that it apply the collective agreement reached with the previous owners to the remaining four hotels.

This led the GMB to call a boycott of THF in Britain — the boycott has been outstandingly successful, with the British trade union centre TUC agreeing to switch hotels for this year's Blackpool Congress.

The IUF boycott comes after an approach from its affiliate for international support.

Trade unionists generally are being asked to show solidarity and so any

moves taken by ITF affiliates will be part of a much larger action worldwide designed to demonstrate to the company that it ignores the unions of its employees at its peril.

You are asked not to patronise any establishments owned by THF until further notice. We will of course inform you immediately of any change in the situation.

THF has hotel operations in Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belgium, Bermuda, Canada, China, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Guatemala, Guyana, India, Ireland, Jamaica, Jordan, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tahiti, United Arab Emirates and United States

Solidarity triumph in Polish elections

Poland's Communist authorities suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of the Solidarity opposition movement in the country's first contested elections in 40 years held on June 4th and 18th.

Just 20 per cent of the electorate backed the Communist authorities. Solidarity captured all but one of the 100 seats in the Senate and all of the 161 seats allocated to the opposition parties in the 460-seat lower chamber, the Sejm. It was agreed during 'round-table' talks between government and opposition that the Communist Party and its allies should retain 65 per cent of the seats in the Sejm, assuring them of an overall Parliamentary majority.

The most humiliating blow to the Communist Party was the failure of most of the 35 prominent figures on the government's "national list" — including Mr Mieczyslaw Rakowski, the Prime Minister — to secure the 50 per cent of votes needed to get into Parliament. Even Lech Walesa's appeals to save the candidates on the official list were ignored by voters.

Solidarity has also poached a number of official seats from the ruling coalition. It is estimated that 30 - 40 candidates sympathetic to Solidarity were elected on official lists. In Poznan, two winners from the Peasant Party (ZSL) as well as one successful Democratic Party (SD) candidate are connected with the opposition movement. The SD and the ZSL are part of the Communist Government coalition.

The two candidates for the new position of President are General Wojciech Jaruzelski and General Czeslaw Kiszczak, the Interior Minister. Fearing that he would not gain a mandate, Jaruzelski initially refused to stand. However, he was asked by the Central Committee to reconsider his position and he has still to reach a final decision. General Jaruzelski suggested General Kiszczak as an alternative candidate.

Members of the Solidarity Parliamentary group met on 1st and 2nd July to decide which candidate to support. They are as loathe to vote for General Jaruzelski as they are to support General Kiszczak, who was Interior Minister during martial law. The group will meet again on the eve of the Parli-

amentary meeting which will finally select the president. Discussion within the independent union movement is now focusing on a proposal that a Communist candidate should be supported for the Presidency in exchange for the formation of a Solidarity led government.

Poland is experiencing a severe economic crisis. In the last five months, the inflation rate has risen to over 100 per cent and it may rise to 250 - 300 per cent by the end of the year. There have recently been rises of 30 - 80 per cent in the price of sugar, household goods, petrol, tobacco and vodka in a single week.

Price rises have triggered off a wave of strikes. The authorities have quickly agreed to strikers' demands, anxious to avoid serious labour unrest amid mounting inflation and food shortages. The strikes have been in the service industries only.

Transport workers in the industrial

city of Bydgoszcz staged a stoppage on 28th June. Within 12 hours, the management agreed to raise pay by 80 per cent from Zl 300 to Zl 550 an hour. Transport workers in Torun and Kielce stopped work the next day. 10,000 transport workers in Warsaw won a 50 per cent pay rise a few days later without even going on strike.

By June 30th there were new strikes in 12 Polish cities. Milkmen and newspaper deliverymen in Bydgoszcz and telephone operators in Gdansk, Wroclaw and Walbrzych stopped work. Bus drivers struck in Czestochowa, Gruziazd and Stalowa Wola. Long-distance buses between five cities also stopped. According to PAP, the official news agency, the Czestochowa bus drivers and Bydgoszcz milkmen and newspaper deliverymen won rapid pay rises and returned to work after a few hours. It seems unlikely that Lech Walesa will risk forming a Solidarity government under these circumstances.

South Africa : Putco four reprieved

The South African State President last month reprieved Stanford Ngubo, Johannes Buthelezi, Bethwell Sabelo and William Khuzwayo — the PUTCO four — from their death sentences.

Ngubo, Buthelezi, and Sabelo — all members of the ITF affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) — have had their sentences reduced to 18 years. Unemployed former bus driver Khuzwayo's sentence has been reduced to 20 years.

The PUTCO four were condemned to death by the South African Supreme Court in Durban on August 23, 1988 for murdering a Durban South Putco Depot bus driver during the October/November 1986 Putco bus strike.

The four appealed to the Supreme Court, but their convictions and death sentences were upheld in December 1988 (see ITF News, November/December 1988).

The ITF has conducted a campaign for the reprieve of the four men, and countless messages of protest from ITF affiliates and sympathetic unions have been sent to the South African government.

The TGWU say they are "delighted with the reprieve, although the sentences are stiff, and we are sure that the international outcry had a lot to do with this reprieve."

ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis has asked ITF News to convey his thanks to the many affiliates who responded to the ITF's appeal and sent messages calling for clemency to the South African government.

Finns lift port strike threat over *Orion*

The St Vincent and Grenadines flag ship *Orion* made the headlines in Finland this spring as efforts by the labour movement to negotiate decent pay and conditions for its mixed nationality crew led to the threat of a nationwide ports shutdown.

The ferry has been making regular crossing between the ports of Viborg and Hamina since last summer. Its crew — of several nationalities, including a number of Finns — were working without any collective agreement.

When this came to the attention of the ITF's three Finnish maritime affiliates they promptly declared a blockade of the vessel and took away the union memberships of the Finns working on the ship.

All was quiet for a time until this spring when the *Orion* showed up again on its old route, this time with a crew of eight Filipinos, two Dutchmen one Chinese, four Estonians as well as a number of Finnish nationals.

The company failed to respond to union demands that an agreement be signed on pay and conditions for the *Orion's* crew and so the Finnish unions renewed their blockade of the ship on 24 April. They also forbade their members to take jobs on the ship.

Though the *Orion* was now denied fuel and food, as well as pilotage and other harbour services, this did not

bring it to a standstill as the port of Hamina seemed keen to retain its trade.

But the port's connivance with owners who were ignoring their basic obligations towards their employees could not be allowed to go unchallenged.

The issue was of such key importance that it was raised on 3 May at a meeting of the executive of the powerful Federation of Finnish Transport Workers' Unions.

The executive took the view that the port's attitude only served to strengthen the owner's resolve not to sign an agreement for the ship and that only very severe sanctions were likely to bring it into line.

The Federation therefore warned that the blockade declared by the seafarers' unions would be extended to the entire port the next day — a serious step indeed involving action by all twelve of the Federation's member unions.

This threat was enough to bring the port to heel. So as not to face total disruption, it agreed that the *Orion* would be denied port services and that the company would be refused the use of the passenger terminal with its customs area.

But the *Orion's* owners weren't so easily put off. They managed to get round even this hurdle by clearing customs not in the customs shed but at the quayside.

The blockade of Hamina eventually began at 10 am on 10 May after the port had allowed the *Orion* in once again. Nothing moved in or out of Hamina — the country's largest port — until 15 May when the port administration began to see sense and suggested that mediated talks be held on the *Orion* case.

The Federation promptly took up the offer of talks and a satisfactory conclusion was reached on 18 May when the strike threat to all passenger and freight services through Finnish ports set for 19 May was lifted.

Under the settlement the 24 man crew of the *Orion* now have a so-called 'combination' agreement with elements of both the ITF and Finnish agreements.

The crew of the *Orion* are obviously well satisfied with their new rates of pay. When they first put in at Hamina this year, catering staff on the ship were receiving a monthly base rate of US\$350 plus \$150 overtime pay, which was less than half they would have had a right to under an ITF agreement.

The *Orion* affair featured widely in the Finnish press and on local television and should serve as an object lesson to any other owners using the country's ports who might be thinking of imitating such cavalier treatment of their crews.

PERUVIAN ATTACK ON CREW RIGHT OF STRIKE

Earlier this year, twenty six officers and ratings on the *Lima II*, which is owned by Peru's major privately owned shipping company, went on strike in the Belgian port of Antwerp in protest at the low pay, salary discrimination and poor conditions on board the ship.

However, when they were ordered by the Peruvian labour department to return to work they took up their normal duties once again and thought that would be the end of the matter. They did not expect to be victimised for exercising the right to strike which is

vouchsafed by article 55 of the Peruvian Constitution and is also contained in the Peruvian merchant marine regulations.

But this is just what happened. Captain Don Carlos Cobos Vargas was sent to Belgium on behalf of the Peruvian Navy with his passage paid by the company. On his orders, the crew were taken off the ship and repatriated.

The Peruvian unions representing merchant navy officers and ratings have protested vigorously and publicly that the country's naval authorities should

thus have exceeded their powers by intervening in a labour dispute over which they have no jurisdiction.

The Navy has the right to intervene in the capacity of a policeman on a vessel forming part of the country's merchant fleet but only when there is a serious disturbance on board and in this case there was clearly nothing of the sort. There would seem to have been even less reason for Naval intervention as the dispute, even if it had not necessarily been resolved, was at least at an end.

PHILIPPINE FLAG MOVES CLOSER TO FOC STATUS

The joint body of seafarers' and dockers' unions charged with overseeing the ITF's campaign against Flag of Convenience shipping — the Fair Practices Committee — held its annual meeting in London from 24-26 May.

The meeting was attended by 55 members, 42 advisers and 20 observers from 40 countries.

The world shipping industry continues to be plagued by the growth of sub-standard Foc shipping and the inevitable exploitation of the seafarers who work on these ships.

Shipping is a rapidly changing, multinational industry, and the FPC devotes much of its annual meetings to adapting and refining policy in response to the twists and turns of the world situation.

The meeting designated two new registers as Flags of Convenience. At the request of the US affiliates, the Marshall Islands register was declared an Foc. There was also discussion about the Burmese register, which appears to have accepted a number of German-owned ships recently. Rather than take an immediate decision, the meeting decided to refer the question of its status to the FPC Sub-committee following further research into the number and nature of ships on the register.

Many Philippine flag ships will from now on be treated as flying a flag of convenience following a thorough examination of that country's bareboat charter registration system. The FPC decided that foreign-owned and controlled shipping had been permitted to register under the Philippines flag — effectively offering them all the advantages of FOC facilities without any of the disadvantages in terms of action by ITF affiliates. The FPC decided that all bareboat chartered Philippine flag ships with dual registration should be treated as Foc vessels and that all other Philippine flag vessels will be examined on a ship by ship basis for evidence of their real place of ownership and control. Foreign-owned Philippine flag bareboat chartered ships will be treated by ITF affiliates as Focs.

Traditional maritime registers have increasingly turned to the establishment of "second registers" as a means of retaining their ships under a form of national flag.

The Danish International Register (DIS) was set up earlier this year, and the entire Danish fleet switched to the second register — voiding all existing collective agreements for Danish seafarers. The Danish unions are attempting to negotiate an agreement to cover DIS ships, the meeting was told by Seafarers' Section Chairman K Mols Sørensen. The Danes requested that, should these discussions fail to reach a satisfactory agreement, the FPC should give the Danish unions the power to declare DIS an Foc register. The meeting agreed to do this.

The German second register (GIS)

had also just come into effect. The ÖTV seafarers' union was challenging the constitutional status of the new register and is also attempting to conclude collective agreements for vessels under the GIS. As with DIS, the ÖTV has the right to declare the GIS an Foc if these negotiations fail.

The FPC adopted a policy on the definition of beneficial ownership and procedures for establishing the real control of ships. Policy statements on the employment of non-domiciled seafarers and the problems of crews from eastern bloc countries were also adopted (see also Polish story below).

Solidarnosc campaign to organise seafarers will get full ITF support

The re-legalisation of the Solidarity trade union in Poland may herald a new dawn for Polish seafarers.

In recent years, ITF affiliates have been increasingly concerned by the Polish government's supply of low-cost seafarers to Flag of convenience vessels. The official Polish seafarers' "union", the Polish government and manning agents such as "PolSERVICE" have worked together to ensure that Polish nationals on Foc ships are paid low wages and denied their basic rights. Polish seafarers have been forced to sign the notorious "loyalty letter" that states they will make no contact with the ITF, and that if they receive additional wages as a result of ITF action, they must pay the money back to the government.

The underlying problem has always been that Polish seafarers have been denied their rights to genuine trade union representation. The ITF has consistently refused to have any relations with the "official" unions because they are nothing more than government departments.

The legalisation of Solidarity as well as its remarkable election victory has changed the scene entirely.

A number of recent contacts have taken place between the ITF and Solidarity to discuss cooperation, particularly in the maritime field. General Secretary Harold Lewis met Solidarity International Secretary Bogdan Lis in Geneva in early June and pledged the ITF's full support for organisation in all the different transport sectors. In particular he made it clear that the ITF will do everything possible to support the building of a genuine union representing Polish seafarers both on national flag and Foc vessels. Further discussions took place in London the following week involving a representative of the new Solidarity Seafarers' Branch and discussions between Solidarity's Stockholm office and the Swedish Seamen's Union have been continuing with a view to organising a series of training courses on organising seafarers and dockers. The first objective is to break the hold which PolSERVICE and the official 'unions' have over the supply of Foc crews. Another will be to encourage Solidarity to defend the rights of Polish seafarers who are prepared to complain about substandard wages and conditions when contacted by ITF affiliates in foreign ports.

Luxembourg flag – last minute hitch

June saw the unveiling of the long awaited plans for the future of the French merchant fleet as well as news of a setback to the Luxembourg flag and of yet another open register — this time in Mauritius.

Substantial government support of 506 million francs (US\$83.3 m) a year for the next four or five years is envisaged in the much awaited plans for the French merchant fleet which were finally published earlier this month. The plans involve investment aid totalling 250 million francs to regular shipping, including cross Channel and Corsican traffic, and Kerguelen-registered ships. The report's author Socialist deputy Jean-Yves Le Drian would like to see the Kerguelen register extended to include tankers and possibly tramp steamers, with the tankers retaining their original French crews and a minimum of 35-40 per cent of French seafarers on trampers transferring to Kerguelen. Le Drian also proposes tax exemptions for ships and crews and exempting ship transfers from tax. A government decision on the proposals is expected in July.

The Indian government has set up a joint committee to look at the vexed question of the employment of Indian officers on foreign flag ships and says that until the committee reports it will take no action to stop its nationals taking up these jobs. The committee, headed by NUSI General Secretary Leo Barnes, includes two representatives each from domestic and foreign owners and two union members. Barnes believes that India would find it easier to retain its seafarers if it exempted seafarers on Indian flag ships from income tax or at least provided sufficient incentives to make employment on Indian flag ships more attractive. His union would continue to resist restrictions on foreign flag employment in the absence of firm guarantees on job security (for earlier details see March issue of ITF News).

Concern over the use of foreign seafar-

ers in Japan's new cruise ship sector has been heightened by the decision of the Showa Line to employ nine foreigners on its newly delivered Japanese flag ship *Oceanic Grace*. The JSU has agreed that the jobs may be filled by foreign nationals because there are no suitably trained Japanese seafarers but has obtained an undertaking from the Showa Line that Japanese

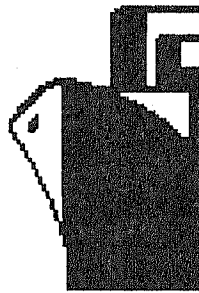
Practices Committee reaffirmed the decision taken in Rotterdam last year that Luxembourg is to be treated as a 'second register' and not an FOC as far as Belgian owned ships are concerned.

The Indian Ocean island of Mauritius is set to open its registry to foreign owners and expects to take on its first ships before the year is out. Foreshadowing the move when presenting the 89/90 budget to parliament, the Mauritian finance minister said that the 1986 Shipping Act which set up the registry would be brought into force soon. Owners will be offered the by now customary incentives of exemption from income tax, and seafarers on Mauritius flag ships will enjoy certain tax benefits. Currently there are only five or six foreign owned ships — all under bareboat charter to local agents

— registered in Mauritius. The island is now looking for someone to head up its newly created maritime safety department.

The National Shipping Corporation of the Philippines is to be privatised — against the wishes of its senior management and the seafarers who man its ships. The chief executive of the company has been so angered by the decision to sell off the Corporation that he plans to leave and set up his own company as soon as privatisation is completed. The National Shipping Corporation has been slimmed down and is now both efficient and profitable. Its three containerships operate a fortnightly Trans-Pacific service and have carved out a 40 per cent market share of containerised export cargoes to the US west coast, despite competition from such industry giants as Evergreen and Sea-Land. Its highly competitive cargo rates have proved very attractive to shippers and the fact that it offers a direct rather than trans-shipped service has won the loyalty of its customers. A previous attempt to sell the company last September failed because it attracted only one bidder and the rules set for the privatisation demanded there should be at least two contenders.

The ITF's regular flag by flag roundup



seafarers will be trained to take over these jobs. Meanwhile, the union insists that the use of foreign nationals must not be allowed to undermine the working conditions of Japanese seamen. It is also adamant that non nationals should have the same rights as Japanese seafarers and be properly certificated.

The timetable for the establishment of a Luxembourg flag — which was originally due to follow on the heels of the GIS in neighbouring Germany — has been upset by the recent general elections in the Grand Duchy. Government concern at the implications for the new flag of recent maritime incidents meant that it could not pass its final parliamentary stages in time and under the constitution the legislative process must now begin all over again. The delay has so angered Belgian shipowners, who have been the driving force behind the registry, that they are now threatening to abandon the flag — possibly for a register outside the EC — if no progress is made by the Autumn. Despite rumours to the contrary apparently circulating in the country, the lack of progress in the adoption of the register has nothing to do with the ITF's Foc campaign. The 1989 Fair

TOWNSEND THORESEN MANAGERS FACE MANSLAUGHTER CHARGES IN *HERALD* CASE

Some two years after the tragic sinking of the *Herald of Free Enterprise* off Zeebrugge with the loss of just under two hundred lives (see ITF News, March 1987) three former Townsend Thoresen directors are to be brought to trial charged with corporate manslaughter in a case that is without precedent in British legal history.

The charges stem from an unlawful killing verdict returned by the jury in the six week inquest on the *Herald* victims. The coroner passed the file on the case to the Director of Public Prosecutions who ordered a police investigation. After examining this dossier, the DPP has now decided to instigate criminal proceedings.

The public inquiry under Justice Sheen into the *Herald* tragedy severely castigated the lack of thought given by Townsend Thoresen's management to the organisation of officers' duties, accusing the company in a memorable phrase of being infected from top to bottom of its corporate structure by the 'disease of sloppiness'. The failure of the shore management to give proper and clear directions was an important contributory cause of the disaster.

This month's decision to prosecute three of its former directors (they are summoned to appear in a central London court on 1 August) means the DPP believes that the directors have a case to answer.

The British maritime unions have argued all along that it was the Townsend Thoresen management team with their flawed and imperfect operating policies that put profits before safety who were the root cause of the disastrous sequence of events that led to the ship's capsizing.

While the unions feel strongly that the Townsend Thoresen senior management should stand trial they are deeply dismayed that charges should also have been laid against the captain and two of the crew of the *Herald* — summonses were issued at the same time in respect of the master, Captain David Lewry, chief officer Leslie Sabel and the assistant bosun Marc Stanley, who failed to ensure that the ship's bow doors were closed before she set sail. Townsend Thoresen's senior master John Kirby, whose job it was to supervise the company's ferry masters but who was not actually on board the *Herald*, has also been included in the indictment.

The unions point out that the three crew members have already undergone a prolonged 'public trial' during the past two years as a result of frequent press and television coverage of the *Herald* tragedy and it is hard to see how justice could be served by the sentence of life imprisonment that now hangs over them in the event of a guilty verdict.

NUMAST's General Secretary-designate John Newman says a legal trial of its members will do nothing to enhance maritime safety and that 'to single out individuals' was a worrying precedent for all workers everywhere.

The real significance of the present case is that it recognises for the first time the legal responsibility of the shore-based management of a shipping company to draw up safety policies that its shipboard employees can carry out without jeopardising the integrity of the vessel. It has wide implications for other sectors of the transport industry — notably aviation — where employees, in observing company regulations, could bring about the very circumstances that would lead inexorably to a disaster.

The trial sends a clear warning to other companies of the need to pay far greater attention to safety. The ensuing shake up in those transport companies where safety has traditionally taken second place to profits could well be the most positive result.

The attention it will attract should prompt a new and keener awareness of the vital safety role of shipboard employees. The ITF hopes that it will persuade shipping company managements to treat their sea-going staff with greater respect and to draw on their invaluable experience, involving them more closely in operating procedures.

Swedish fleet — success story

While other traditional maritime registers either lose their ships to Focs or adopt Foc-type conditions on their second registers, Sweden's national flag fleet is increasing.

Instead of surrendering to the trend, Sweden has refused to set up a second register. Rather (as previously covered in ITF News), in response to the efforts of the ITF affiliated Swedish Seamen's Union, the Swedish government has adopted a wide ranging package of financial measures to boost the competitiveness of the genuine national flag fleet.

Between December 15, 1988 and April 30, 1989, 24 new ships have entered the Swedish register with a total gross tonnage of 218,448 tonnes. During the same time 12 ships were sold to other countries or changed register.

In total, that means that the Swedish fleet has risen by 12 ships and 76,941 GRT. This upturn directly corresponds to the adoption of the positive aid for shipping measures by the Swedish government.

One of the 12 ships that left the register reflagged to the US register (with a more expensive US crew) because it was planning to trade between US ports and was required by the Jones Act to be US flag.

One ship was a mobile offshore platform which had never employed a Swedish crew. Two of the ships were old ferries that have been scrapped and replaced by more modern ships.

Two of the ships that left the Swedish register — the *Saxen* and the *Diani* — were mismanaged rust buckets that the Swedish authorities had ordered extensive repairs on — the kind of ships, according to the SSU, that shouldn't be on the register anyway.

Sweden's example should serve as a reminder to maritime administrations that the second registers and reduced standards are not the only way to safeguard a national flag fleet.

WEEKLY STRIKES PARALYSE BRITISH RAIL

With a large degree of support from the travelling public, increasingly fed up with the appalling service provided by the crumbling UK railway network, the two biggest British rail unions recently stepped up their campaigns of industrial action in support of wage demands and against attempts by British Rail to destroy their national level negotiating machinery.

The NUR, representing guards and station staff, staged 24-hour strikes on three consecutive Wednesdays during June and July and announced that this pattern would continue indefinitely. ASLEF drivers voted early in July for an indefinite ban on overtime and rest day working. ASLEF and NUR members have been striking on the London Underground in a separate dispute, but one which has been timed to coincide with the rail strikes to cause the maximum possible impact. London's commuters have also had to contend with a series of strikes by bus drivers and maintenance staff. Cycling, jogging or just walking have become a regular feature of many Londoners' working week as public transport has ceased and the streets have become paralysed with cars.

The rail dispute is over two issues. On pay, the unions have seen a 7% pay rise, which they reject, imposed on their members. At the same time, BR is trying to abolish the national pay bargaining machinery. The pay offer, which is well below the current rate of inflation, is unacceptable to rail workers whose basic pay levels are among the lowest in the country. The attack on national negotiations is a clear attempt to weaken the power of the rail unions. On 12th June, the NUR's 75,000 members at British Rail voted by 34,988 to 15,762 for an overtime ban and by 29,675 to 20,704 for 24-hour strikes.

In a move which has now become all too familiar in British industrial disputes, British Rail announced its intention to take the NUR to court. More surprisingly, it did so just 40 minutes after talks on resolving the dispute had begun with the conciliation service

ACAS. The employer's case was based on the fact that about 200 of the 75,000 union members appeared not to have received ballot papers in time. On 18th June, the High Court refused to grant British Rail an injunction halting the strike, a decision later upheld in the Court of Appeal.

A second attempt to halt the strike by two NUR members supported by the recently appointed government 'Commissioner for the Rights of Trade Union Members' was also rejected in the High Court.

When BR disclosed an annual profit of £304m, Jimmy Knapp demanded that rail workers should share in the profits which they had generated. He

was also quick to point out that BR was still imposing fare increases on its customers. It is clear that the massive profits (mostly generated by selling property) and the attempts to 'tame' the unions are part of a process of 'fattening up' the corporation ready for the privatisation of all or part of it, something which the Conservative government has promised City investors for some time.

London bus drivers have also been staging 24-hour lightning strikes in pursuit of a 14% pay rise. London Regional Transport initially made an offer of 8.1%. Talks at ACAS have produced an offer of 9% which the TGWU is urging its members to accept.

40-TONNERS ON BRITISH ROADS FROM 1999

The UK government has won a concession from European Community transport ministers to keep 40-tonne lorries off British roads until 1999.

The date for raising the British limit from 38 tonnes had been set for 1996 and most other member states have accepted a 1993 deadline.

UK officials, however, lobbied hard to persuade other member states and the Commission that it will take 10 years to bring trunk roads up to standard and 15 years in the case of smaller roads. They also insisted that 10,500 bridges need strengthening rather than the 4,000 estimated in a Commission survey.

The infrastructure investment of £700 m will be funded out of public funds. Ireland, by contrast, is expected to claim around I£100 m (£85m) from the EC's structural funds.

The Government is obviously becoming increasingly anxious about the new wave of strikes. Mrs Thatcher's rise to power in 1979 is usually attributed to a series of public sector strikes in 1978 termed the 'Winter of Discontent'. In recent years she has made a great deal of the success of her labour laws in stopping strikes. This summer's discontent has therefore been extremely embarrassing for her and has put great strain on her publicly announced policy of non-intervention in industrial disputes. Both the Prime Minister and various members of the government have stepped up their campaign of threats and insults against the transport unions. It has become increasingly clear that, far from wanting to "hand unions back to their members" the Iron Lady simply wants to prevent them from functioning properly. The only strikes which she or her government approve of are ones which are completely ineffective.

As well as threatening the early privatisation of the railways in response to the wave of strikes, ministers have also aired the possibility of outlawing strikes in 'essential public services' altogether. This idea, long favoured by the governments of totalitarian regimes would be a first for the country which is often viewed as the birthplace of democratic trade unionism.

MALAWI: REOPENED NACALA LINE RESTORES VITAL EXPORT ROUTE TO SEA

In early June a lone train sped down the tracks from Malawi's border over 600 kilometres across Mozambique to the Indian Ocean port of Nacala. It was the first in nearly four years.

Railway officials and aid agencies are hoping that the trains on this "Nacala corridor" will be a common sight once the last set of repairs gets underway next month. Almost 95 percent of Malawi's trade travelled through the

Mozambican ports of Nacala and Beira until 1982. But continued sabotage by right-wing rebels of the Mozambican National Resistance (Renamo or MNR) closed these two arteries to the sea completely by 1985. Since then Malawi has had extremely high transport costs, reaching more than US \$100 million last year.

The Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) embarked on a project to resuscitate

the Nacala Line in 1983 and it is slowly making progress as this train proves.

Malawi Railways estimates that when the Nacala route is in full operation — by about 1991 — it will cut this land-locked country's transport bill by two-thirds and could also carry at least three-quarters of its imports and exports. The majority of Malawi's goods now travel through Durban in South Africa — four times longer than through Nacala.

Other SADCC countries which also depend on Durban will benefit from the opening of the Nacala line. Despite the fact that the MNR has repeatedly attacked Nacala, repairs have proceeded apace.

Work has been financed by both Malawi and Mozambique together with donor funding from Canada, Britain, the EC, France, Italy and Portugal. Up until the end of 1988, these donors spent US \$191 million on the Nacala project.

The project is divided into three main parts: Immediate spot repairs on the line, long-term rehabilitation — meaning the complete rebuilding of the line — and renewal of the facilities at Nacala Port. Malawi Railways and their Mozambican counterparts, Caminhos de Ferro de Mozambique Norte, are just completing crucial spot repairs on two-thirds of the line westward from Nampula to the Malawi border.

A consortium of Italian and French companies finished rehabilitating the other third of the line from Nacala Port westward to Nampula in early 1987. Work on the second phase stopped in April 1988, only 75 kilometres west of Nampula when rebels attacked and killed several workers and soldiers. Aid officials say work will resume again in July.

The line is guarded by about 1,000 Malawian troops — possibly a fifth of Malawi's army together with an unknown number of Mozambican Frelimo soldiers. Malawi had previously been accused of harbouring Renamo rebels. The cooperation with Frelimo is a distinct turn about according to diplomats, who say the joint security is working well

French rail safety record under fire

A commission of enquiry set up to investigate SNCF's safety procedures has sharply criticised the company's style of management. The main points of the commission's report were outlined by Jacques Fournier, the SNCF President, whose predecessor was forced to resign in the wake of a series of rail disasters last year.

The ITF-affiliated FGTE-CFDT demanded a full enquiry after 57 people died and 142 were injured in 1988. The unions blame SNCF's cost-cutting policies for this incredibly poor safety record. Passenger safety has clearly been traded off against financial considerations and 20,000 jobs have been lost over the last two years.

The commission of enquiry was made up of SNCF executives and outside experts. Their criticisms centre on SNCF's management structure. They conclude that safety standards will not improve unless railway workers have a greater say in all decisions, especially those concerning safety procedures.

The report makes clear that safety regulations must take account of inevitable human error. Responsibility for accidents must rest with the organisation as a whole, rather than with individual employees. It is clearly unfair to expect employees to shoulder responsibility for accidents caused by misconceived safety regulations in which they have had no say.

The conclusions contained in the report may seem obvious. But moves to enhance worker participation would require a radical change of attitude from a company still dominated by a military-style hierarchy. SNCF workers have traditionally been expected to execute decisions in which they have had no say.

SNCF's handling of the introduction of new technology also comes under fire. Little attention has been paid to the psychological and social impact of technological innovation. Decision-making in this area must also be de-centralised if conditions for railway workers are to be improved.

This is not the first time that SNCF's management structure has come in for criticism but the impact of the report is expected to be considerable. SNCF executives will not be able to ignore its conclusions as they have ignored criticism from other quarters.

The unions have been making the points contained in the report for some time and have been consistently ignored. Now they are resentful that management has not listened to them before now. They are also sceptical of SNCF's commitment to implementing real changes.

One CFDT representative noted that this was the first time the company had admitted any criticism. He added that: "their self-criticism does not square with their everyday practice."

Story thanks to AJA/Melinda Ham

WORLDWIDE ATTACK ON DOCK JOBS WORRIES ITF MEETING

The ITF's annual Dockers' Section Meeting coincided with an unprecedented worldwide wave of attacks on dockers' job security and working conditions.

An illustration of the seriousness of the situation was the fact that Section Chairman John Connolly from the British TGWU was unable to attend most of the meeting, which took place in London on May 22 and 23, because his presence was required in the UK High Court where the port employers were attempting to stop British dockers from taking strike action.

Most of the meeting was chaired by Section Vice-Chairman Tas Bull from the Australian WWF — but he had to leave immediately after the end of the meeting to deal with the gathering storm on the Australian waterfront.

In addition to the Australian and British crises, delegates heard of severe problems in India, Italy, New Zealand, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Transport and Dockworkers' Union (Bombay) leader Manohar Kotwal thanked affiliates and the ITF on behalf of 300,000 Indian dockers for their support in the recent strike victory in the Indian ports. Despite that victory, he said, the unions were fearful that the opening of a new high technology, automated container port in Nhava-

Sheva threatens to eliminate a huge number of Indian dockers' jobs. The new terminal on its own would have sufficient capacity to handle all India's containerised imports.

In Italy, the dockers' unions reported on continuing strikes over government plans to reorganise the ports, allowing employers to bring unqualified casual workers onto the waterfront and imposing unacceptable changes in dockers' working conditions. As in many countries, the central fight is for job security.

In New Zealand, dockers face a similar threat to those in Britain. The government has announced the end of the 50 year-old Waterfront Industry Commission Act from October 1st this year. The Waterside Workers are in negotiations with the port employers for a new national agreement to replace the scheme. If they fail to reach an accord, then WWF General Secretary Sam Jennings said his union would have no alternative but to "close down New Zealand's ports".

In Trinidad and Tobago a massive rationalisation scheme by the government has seen thousands of dockers lose their jobs. Shift working has been imposed on the dockers and further, deep cuts in the number of workers are anticipated.

The only positive report delegates heard was from Hans Wahlström of the Swedish Transportworkers who told the meeting that, after 26 years of fighting for it, the Swedish dockers had managed to get 23,000 waterfront jobs reclassified as registered dockers' jobs at a higher rate of pay.

Jim Herman, from the US International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) said that these national developments were "the beginning of an inevitable worldwide showdown.

"Dockers must unite and work together, if they don't the first to go down will be an example for all the others to follow...dockers' unions don't just stand by and watch each other go down one by one." he said.

Herman spoke for all the delegates who went on unanimously to adopt a resolution on mutual aid between dockers' unions in the face of the present wave of attacks. The resolution affirms that ITF Dockers' affiliates will support each other in action against employers and governments who are seeking to destroy their working conditions and job security. Specifically, it commits dockers' unions not to handle cargoes loaded by strike breakers in any country where a union is

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ILO conference takes action on chemical hazards

Positive steps towards broadening the protection of all types of transport workers against the hazardous effects of chemicals were taken at the 76th session of the International Labour Conference which met in Geneva in June. The tripartite conference, which meets once a year and is the standard setting body of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), discussed a number of draft new international labour conventions including one dealing with Safety in the Use of Chemicals. After strong insistence by the ITF, backed up by the Conference's Workers' Group, the term 'use' of chemicals was defined by the Conference as including transport both within and outside the enterprise. The discus-

sion was part of a two year process leading, hopefully, to the adoption of an International Convention in 1990. The Convention, when finally adopted, will lay down safety standards for all categories of worker who come into contact with potentially hazardous chemicals in the course of their work. The draft adopted provides that all ILO member states should formulate, implement and review a coherent national policy on safety in the use of chemicals. National systems for the classification of chemicals should be established and hazardous chemicals should be clearly labelled with essential information about its identity, classification and the hazards it presents. Chemical safety data and information

sheets should be provided to employers. The suppliers of hazardous chemicals should be obliged to provide labels and data sheets on their products and employers who make use of chemicals should ensure that full information on them is made available to workers and their representatives.

In order to protect workers against chemical exposure, the convention provides that employers should choose chemicals which minimise the health risk, choose safe technologies, adopt safe working systems and practices or engineering control measures and, only in cases where the other methods are clearly inadequate, should provide and maintain personal protective equipment

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British dockers vote again for dock strike

On 7 July for the second time in two months, registered dockers in the UK voted overwhelmingly to strike in defence of their working conditions and job security. Despite predictions that support for the strike was collapsing, the vote in favour of industrial action was 74% — exactly the same as the first one in late May (ITF News April/May 1989).

The second ballot was necessary because of the ludicrous series of labour laws introduced by the British Conservative Government since 1979, laws which have already been condemned by experts from the International Labour Organisation as incompatible with the ILO's basic conventions on trade union rights. In this case even though the union had won a

massive majority in a secret ballot and had defeated a series of legal challenges, it had gone past the time limit which the law imposes after a strike ballot has taken place. The delay was, however, entirely outside the union's control, resulting as it did from an extraordinary series of complex (and expensive) court hearings held at the insistence of the employers who were trying to use the full weight of Britain's repressive labour laws to prevent dockers from striking at all.

Court action number 1 came immediately after the publication of the first ballot result at the end of May. T&GWU Dockers' Section Secretary John Connolly was unable to attend the Dockers' meetings or the Fair Practices Committee because employers

insisted on cross examining all three senior union officers connected with the dispute in person rather than taking sworn statements as is usual in such cases. The employers asked the High Court to have the strike ruled unlawful because it was a political dispute. On 27 May the Judge ruled in favour of the union. There was, he said, an "undeniable trade dispute" between the TGWU and NAPE the port employers' body.

The employers immediately appealed this decision, provoking court action number 2. During the course of the appeal, NAPE came up with a totally new and quite extraordinary set of arguments. This time they argued that the Dock Labour Scheme itself (which they had been fighting bitterly to abolish) actually imposed on all dockers an obligation to work whenever the employer required them to. This meant, they said, that registered dockers had no right to strike! Pending a full hearing of this argument, the appeal court agreed that the 'balance of interest' meant that the strike should not start.

Court action number 3 came when the TGWU appealed this absurd partisan ruling to the UK's Supreme Court — the House of Lords. On June 20, the House of Lords overturned the Appeal Court's decision.

However, the TGWU's legal problems didn't end there. Although they had won the right to strike in the highest Court in the land, they had run out of time. The relevant law states that a strike must be called within 28 days of a ballot and it makes no allowance for court hearings.

The Dock Work Act which abolished the scheme became law on July 3. From that date, employers were free to sack dockers. Those that voted for strike action on July 7 did so against the threats of employers that they would be fired and lose their entitlement to redundancy payments of up to £35,000.

Following the result of the second ballot, the union called on all registered dockers to strike with effect from midnight on July 10. ITF Dockers' Secretary David Cockroft notified all dockers' and seafarers' affiliates of the situation, reminded them of the resolution adopted by the Dockers' meeting in May, and asked them to take whatever action they could against ships loaded or unloaded by strikebreakers or cargoes diverted from strike hit ports.

...campaign against South African coal

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taking industrial action.

The meeting discussed the international campaign for an embargo of South African coal exports. Section Secretary David Cockroft reported on a meeting of an ICFTU working group which had been held in April to discuss ways of co-ordinating such a campaign. The meeting strongly supported the call for a coal embargo, but delegates stressed that unilateral action by dockers on its own would not work. There is no substitute for effective inter-governmental action, and dockers, along with other trade unions, need to make a concerted effort to lobby governments and to persuade the big users of steam coal such as electricity gen-

erators and cement manufacturers to use alternative sources of supply.

Delegates agreed that an information and awareness campaign about the South African coal trade should be conducted by the section. Affiliates, working through national centres where possible, agreed to seek government measures against the trade and the granting of legal immunities to dockers' unions who take action against South African coal imports.

The meeting also adopted two policy statements on Self-Unloading Vessels and Safety and Health in Dockwork — a statement on Casual and Part-Time work was referred back to the Secretariat for redrafting.

... need for training in chemical hazards

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and clothing at no cost to the worker.

It also provides that employers should inform and train workers about the possible hazards which chemicals may present and how to avoid them and that they should make arrangements to monitor the exposure of their workers.

Of crucial importance is the recognition in the Convention text of the right of a worker to remove himself from danger resulting from the use of chemicals 'when he has reasonable justification to believe there is an imminent and serious risk to his safety

and health'. Workers and trade unions should have the right to information on the identity and hazardous properties of all chemicals used at work.

Although the text received a wide degree of support at the Conference, it will require considerable effort at next year's Conference to ensure that it is finally adopted. If it is, and if governments ratify and apply it, situations such as that encountered in 1987 by the Koko dockers in Nigeria who unloaded tonnes of toxic waste without any idea of its identity or hazardous nature may be easier to prevent.

EASTERN'S FUTURE HANGS IN BALANCE

The sale of Eastern's Northeast shuttle which had been delayed for many months by legal arguments connected with Eastern's bankruptcy proceedings was eventually approved at the end of May when a federal bankruptcy judge agreed to a \$365 million bid from property tycoon Donald Trump who first made an offer for the Shuttle in the Autumn of 1988.

While Eastern's striking unions (see *ITF News*, March 1989, for story) would have preferred to see Eastern sold intact as part of their strategy for wresting control of the airline from Texas boss Frank Lorenzo, they have welcomed the Trump deal as the 'second best thing that could have happened' as the Shuttle will now remain a union airline.

Negotiations between the Shuttle's new management and organised labour are proceeding with every prospect of agreement on a return to work even before the conclusion of a formal contract.

The Shuttle deal could well mark

the first step in the sale of the entire company as there is no shortage of potential buyers.

Since the collapse in April of a union favoured offer from Peter Ueberroth, Eastern has been officially maintaining that the company is not for sale. Aircraft and other assets worth about US\$1.8 billion are to be sold to raise the necessary finance to run a slimmed down low cost operation (of about two thirds of Eastern's former size) that will appeal strongly to the leisure traveller.

However, the industry is less optimistic than Lorenzo about the prospects for success (it is doubted for example that Lorenzo will be able to hire enough new pilots) and most industry analysts are quietly writing off the airline.

Perhaps most important to Lorenzo's success or failure, say industry sources, is the airline's dreadful labour relations record. According to this view, the prospects of rebuilding an airline whose passengers are forced to run the

gauntlet of striking pickets are bleak. Lorenzo could choose to lock out the unions from Eastern and seek to foster some sort of team spirit in its employees but many think that his image has been so dented by the Eastern strike that his leadership ability may be permanently impaired.

The most hopeful prospect for Eastern must be for it to go to a buyer who could command the loyalty and respect of its employees. It has been clear all along that the unions are prepared to offer substantial concessions to a new owner and to cooperate in making Eastern an efficient and profitable company.

In the absence of a settlement, union members at Eastern are still on strike or observing strikers' picket lines, while a very successful consumer boycott is being conducted against both Eastern and its largely non-union sister carrier Continental. The US national centre the AFL-CIO has set up a "Fairness at Eastern/Continental" campaign which

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AIRLINE INDUSTRY ROUNDUP

Sabena finds new European partners

June saw several new developments in the growing trend towards international links between airlines, both of them involving the Dutch national carrier KLM which is clearly growing worried about its position in a more liberalised aviation world.

In Europe the biggest news was the announcement of a pioneering alliance between **British Airways** and **KLM Royal Dutch Airlines** each of which will take a twenty per cent stake in a specially created subsidiary of the Belgian airline Sabena — **Sabena World Airlines**.

The three airlines, while remaining independent and autonomous, will enter into an operating and marketing

pact, which is expected to involve joint long haul operations and cooperation on aircraft renewal, training and maintenance. Sabena World Airlines will take over all Sabena's passenger, cargo and mail carrying activities and will lease aircraft from the parent group as well as presumably from its two partners.

The deal is being submitted to all three governments and will also need the formal approval of the European Commission. This is by no means assured as airline mergers are being increasingly scrutinised to ensure that they do not fall foul of European competition laws.

In the United States, the fierce battle

for control of NWA Inc — the parent company of Northwest Airlines — which has driven up its stock prices by over 30 per cent since bids were invited in April now seems to be over.

NWA has agreed to a US\$3.65 billion bid from a group of US investors led by Los Angeles businessman Alfred Checchi after rejecting rival offers which it claimed seriously undervalued the airline.

The Checchi group includes the Dutch airline KLM as well as the finance arm of the Australian company Elders IXL. The exact size of their joint stake is unknown although US law prevents foreign companies from

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New Euro-liberalisation package expected

Following the European Court's sweeping ruling on air tariffs (see ITF News April/May 1989), European states are now preparing measures for a further "liberalisation" of the civil aviation industry.

The 'Ahmed Sayeed' ruling substantially strengthened the hands of those who advocate greater deregulation of European civil aviation (notably the Commission, the UK and the Netherlands).

The European Community is now preparing for phase two of the liberalisation process (phase one was agreed in November 1987). Liberalisation, rather than deregulation, continues to be the buzzword used by everyone, mostly because US Deregulation has proved to be such a failure that even the

word has become tainted. Whether Europe will manage to create an aviation industry that is "liberal" in terms of fare flexibility and greater passenger choice while avoiding the notably illiberal aspects of US deregulation (market dominance by monopolies, deterioration of safety and reduction of passenger choice), remains the central issue.

For the workers in the industry this is a tense and difficult time. Aviation unions do not seek to stand in the way of reform of air tariffs that will allow more ordinary people access to affordable flights — indeed the expansion of aviation is as much in the interest of the workers as the companies. But a competitive free-for-all would damage the industry, and lead to the elimination of

carriers, less choice and higher fares.

At the beginning of June, EC Transport Ministers met in Luxembourg and agreed the first steps in phase two — which is set to be unveiled later this year.

The initial agreement broadens phase one by removing certain restrictions on flights from regional airports. Phase one limited regional airport air fare liberalisation to flights of less than 400 km and on planes with a capacity of 70 passengers or less. Both those restrictions are now to be dropped.

In a welcome move, the ministers also approved a system of legally binding rules on the use of computer reservation systems (CRS) such as Galileo and Amadeus. The new rules require

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...Northwest Airlines sale approved by unions

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exercising a significant degree of control over US companies or holding more than 25 per cent of voting shares. KLM will apparently get over this latter hurdle by holding non-voting preferred stock.

Northwest, based in St Paul, Minnesota, is a thriving company which had

record earnings in 1988. It is the US's fourth biggest domestic airline and its largest carrier to the Pacific, the fastest growing area of the international air traffic market. It also has large landholdings in Tokyo which could readily be sold and used to offset the costs of acquiring the airline. Other bidders, including Pan Am are undoubtedly

disappointed by the successful Checchi bid but NWA's unions have welcomed it as being the best on offer. According to IAM airline co-ordinator Bill Scheri the unions hope that it will help put an end to the company's unfortunate industrial relations record (its pilots are currently working without contracts). NWA's chief executive Steven Rothmeier is no friend of the unions and ranks second only to Continental's Frank Lorenzo in unpopularity.

Meanwhile, US airlines American and Delta have been forced to abandon plans to merge their computer reservations systems after the Justice Department said it would block the merger in the courts on anti-trust grounds. Delta was to have paid American \$650 million for the right of access to American's giant Sabre system.

Elsewhere, a number of US and Western European airlines have shown an interest in buying in to Mexican Airlines. The aim of the privatisation move is to raise fresh capital to enable the financially restructured company to compete with American carriers. The Mexican government has said that it will not dispose of its 51 per cent stake in Mexicana but will hold it in trust for the next three years.

...Bermudan rebuff to Lorenzo

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has already collected millions of dollars from trade unionists all over the country.

International support for the Eastern strikers continues to grow also. Otwell Simmons of the Bermuda Industrial Union (BIU) has organized picketing of Eastern and Continental ticket desks in Bermuda and has made it clear to the airline management and the government that Lorenzo's union-busting companies are not welcome on the island. Unions within SAS, which currently holds a 10 per cent stake in Texas Air Corporation, are also actively working on ways to bring pressure to bear on Lorenzo to come to a

negotiated settlement. Meanwhile, unions within the ITF's Civil Aviation section are continuing to look at other ways of providing direct solidarity to the Eastern unions.

Efforts are still under way to bring pressure on airline boss Frank Lorenzo through the US Senate and House of Representatives. Trade unionists throughout the United States have intensified their boycott campaigns and with the strike now four months old workers are being asked to 'take the pledge', ie not to fly either company until the union struggle ends — a message which is having a serious effect on Continental's revenues.

...competition policy angle will dominate discussions

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that all air carriers be given equal access to CRS and that displays of fares and schedules not be displayed in a discriminatory fashion.

Some indication of the shape of the full phase two package was given in a speech made by EC Competition Commissioner Leon Brittan to an International Air Transport Association symposium in Morocco at the beginning of June.

Brittan and Transport Commissioner Karel van Miert are jointly responsible for drawing up the phase two proposals, which will then be presented to the 12 EC member states.

Brittan said that the aim of the the aviation policy was to get "rid of a large pile of rules on capacity quotas, market access, ownership, designation, fares and capacity."

He would like to see "the greatest possible freedom for airlines to pro-

vide the services they consider commercially appropriate."

Brittan said that restrictions on foreign ownership of airline shares should be lifted — but he was unclear as to whether this would apply only within Europe or would also allow the expansion hungry US mega-carriers to get their teeth into European airlines.

Liberalisation, Brittan also said, should not ignore a tight enforcement of the EC's antitrust regulations — "Governments should interfere only to curb anti-competitive behaviour" he said.

* On the broader European front, the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) — which gathers together the 12 EC states and Austria, Cyprus, Iceland, Malta, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and Yugoslavia — announced on June 23 a new set of principles for the liberalisation of aviation in the ECAC states.

The principles stress greater multi-lateral and mutual fifth freedom exchanges between members and a package of greater inter-regional airport discount fares.

Three "fields of flexibility" for discount fares were agreed that would stretch from 35 per cent to 99 per cent of the standard economy fares. Fares meeting the conditions for these discounts would not require the prior approval of member states.

In general, ECAC follows the EC in its aviation policies (they have little choice), and these measures would appear to be a preparation for their own moves later this year.

OBITUARIES

Unto Keijonen, for many years president of the Finnish Railwaymen's Union, has died. Keijonen was a leading figure in the Finnish trade union movement and was also well known to railway trade unionists throughout Scandinavia in his capacity first as a member and later as President of the Nordic Railwaymen's Union. He also played an active role within the ITF as a former member of its Railwaymen's Section Committee.

Former IAM President **Floyd E (Red) Smith** died on 27 February, aged 76. Smith served as the union's top official from 1969 to 1977 after being a Cleveland, Ohio based vice president with responsibility for eleven states for eight years. Newly retired IAM President William Winpisinger said that Smith's planning and foresight had made his own task as president far easier.

Hubert Vomberg, formerly Vice President of the German Railwaymen's Union GdED, died on 18 January at the age of 67. Vomberg, who had worked at the union's head office in Frankfurt since the early fifties, was first elected on to the union executive in 1959. He served as GdED Vice President from 1967 to his retirement in 1984. Active within the ITF's Railwaymen's Section, he was a former member of its Committee.

Kazuo Yamauchi, General Secretary of the Japan Federation of Transport Workers' Unions Kotsu-Roren since 1987, died in May, aged 53. Yamauchi's union career goes back thirty years to the early sixties when he was elected vice president of a local taxi drivers' union. He became a full time official of Kotsu Roren in 1974.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

31 August-1 September	Fair Practices Sub Committee	London
4-7 September	Ship Inspectors	Eastbourne
19-21 September	Railwaymen's Section Conference	Santander
17 -18 October	Executive Board	London
23 -24 October	Meeting of Cabin Crew Unions	London
30 November-1 December	Dangerous Goods	Geneva

Canada and US call for drift net ban

Squid fishing fleets in Japan, Taiwan and South Korea are under attack from North America for their use of Driftnets. Fishermen and lawmakers in Canada and the USA are demanding that if the nets are not banned, economic sanctions against the three Asian states' maritime industries should be invoked.

There are about 700 vessels plying the North Pacific equipped with the lightweight monofilament nets. They are released at night to "drift", forming an underwater wall that stretches 30 to 55 kilometres in width and nine metres in depth. Driftnets allow large squid catches by relatively small numbers of fishermen. More than 48,000 kilometres of net are cast by the fleets.

The nets are designed for squid, but opponents of the system claim that they also catch seabirds, porpoises, salmon, steelhead trout and other fish

without discrimination.

Salmon and steelhead trout spawn in Canadian and US fresh water and can only be caught by North American fishermen at certain times of the year under international maritime law.

The Taiwanese, Japanese and Koreans deny that any salmon is being caught accidentally and they vigorously refute the claims of some North Americans that undersized salmon are finding their way onto the Asian market. (Legally, if fishermen accidentally catch salmon they are required to throw them back into the sea.)

Circumstantial evidence indicates that the North American salmon catch is dropping beyond expectation. Last year, in Alaska, experts predicted a catch of 40 million pink salmon — the actual catch was only 12 million. Expert predictions of fish stocks are notoriously unreliable, however.

Environmentalists are also con-

cerned about the widespread ecological damage that Driftnets can cause to marine life. A spokesperson for the US based International Marine Mammal Project has denounced Driftnets as "the biological strip-mining of the sea." They warn that incalculable damage may be inflicted to numerous fish species and mammals by the nets.

Seacops — a North American organisation representing commercial fishing business and sports fishermen — has blamed the drop in the Salmon catch on Driftnets. They are actively lobbying for the US and Canadian governments to take steps to monitor the Driftnet fleets and to phase out the system.

In 1987, the US Congress passed the Drift Net Act, which calls for the administration to establish monitoring agreements with the Japanese, Taiwanese and South Koreans. If agreements are not reached by the Summer of this year, the act requires the administration to certify those nations as being in violation of international catch agreements. Such notification would require the US President to ban imports of marine products from the violating states.

In May of this year, the US and Japanese governments reached a "tentative" agreement to monitor the Japanese Driftnet fishing fleet to see what, in addition to Squid, was being caught in the nets. However, within days of it being announced, the US government was forced by Congressional pressure to announce that they would renegotiate the deal.

The agreement was savaged by members of the US Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee who said that the several dozen observers planned for the entire 470 vessel Japanese fleet were totally inadequate and would fail to provide any useful information. Several Senators said that the 1987 Act's sanctions should now be invoked with the aim of eliminating the Driftnets entirely.

With time running out, US Commerce Secretary Robert A. Mosbacher has now announced that he will seek a renegotiation of the agreement.

ITF asks Whale Commission to protect fishermen

International measures to restrict and, possibly, eliminate whaling, should take account of the workers whose livelihoods are affected and must consider the broader environmental threat to fishing stocks from marine pollution.

That was the message delivered by ITF Assistant General Secretary Åke Selander at the 41st annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) in San Diego, USA from 12 to 16 June.

The ITF has observer status on the body in order to be able to represent the interests of fishery workers to the IWC.

In a special statement to the IWC, Selander emphasised the need to "take into account the livelihood of the fishermen concerned" while accepting the importance of maintaining the ecological balance.

The ITF presented five points to the IWC that should underpin its future deliberations. There should be:

1. "Maximum consultation with all sides of the fishing industry including the representatives of fishermen.
2. Prevention of the flagging out of fishing/whaling vessels to evade national regulations.
3. The need for governments to introduce urgently social measures to protect redundant fishermen in the shorter as well as longer term.
4. Support for legislation designed to remove non-whaling threats such as marine pollution to existing stocks.
5. To update the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (1946) without losing sight of its original purpose, ie the protection of whales from overfishing and thus ensure their survival and rational utilization."

The ITF policy on whaling will be an item of discussion at next year's ITF Fishermen's Section Conference.

PEOPLE

Heribert Maier, General Secretary of the International Federation of Commercial, Clerical, Professional and Technical Employees (FIET), has been appointed Deputy Director-General of the International Labour Office. Heribert took up his new job, in which he has special responsibility for relations with governments, employers and workers, at the beginning of June. An Austrian, he was Head of the ICFTU's Geneva office and Secretary of the Workers' Group of the ILO Governing Body before becoming Assistant General Secretary of the ICFTU in Brussels. He moved in 1973 to FIET in Geneva as its General Secretary. For many years he has also served the Austrian trade union movement as a deputy workers' member of the ILO Governing Body.

Philip Jennings, aged 36, has been appointed by the FIET World Executive Committee as its Acting General Secretary until FIET's next Congress in August 1991. Jennings has been at FIET since 1980, in charge of its Bank and Insurance Sections. He previously worked as a full time official of the British Banking Insurance and Finance Union BIFU.

The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) has chosen a Canadian, **William O'Neil**, as its new Secretary General from a field of four candidates. O'Neil will take over from **C P Srivastava**, who has headed the organisation for the past sixteen years, at the beginning of 1990. O'Neil is keen to develop the public profile of the IMO which, because of its back room role, is not as well known among governments and the general public as he

would like it to be. He sees the 1990s as being increasingly dominated by environmental issues and is keen to adopt IMO policies geared to the interests of seafarers, particularly in the area of training — for which he can naturally count on the wholehearted support of the ITF.

Hans Schmölz, President of the Austrian Railwaymen's Union, is retiring early at the beginning of next month on doctor's advice. **Franz Hums**, the union's Vice President since 1986, who has worked closely with Schmölz for many years now, is taking over as the new president. Fortunately for the ITF Hans has agreed to continue as Chairman of the ITF Railwaymen's Section until next year's Congress.

New top officials are now leading the Carmen's Division (previously the independent Brotherhood of Railway Carmen — BRC) of the US Transportation-Communications International Union (TCU). Division President **Ed Wheeler**, who was elected BRC president in 1983 shortly before its merger with the TCU, retired in February and was succeeded by **William Fairchild**, previously the Division's Assistant General President. The division's new Assistant General President is **Lowell Cantrell**.

Bill Connor has been elected Deputy General Secretary of the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers (USDAW) in succession to **John Flood** who has retired. John Flood has been USDAW's Deputy GS for the past eleven years. In his new role, Connor will be responsible for union recruitment and industrial relations.

Neil Milligan has announced that he is stepping down early as General Secretary of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF). He will be leaving his job at the end of this year so that his successor can be elected under the union's own rules for electing officials rather than under government imposed restrictions. By the time he retires Neil will have been involved in the rail industry for just under fifty years, and for half of that time as an ASLEF official. Neil was made acting General Secretary in July 1986 and confirmed as General Secretary the following year. **Derrick Fullick**, previously ASLEF's Deputy General Secretary, is ASLEF's General Secretary elect.

Victor Schiwoff, of the Swiss Public Service Workers' Union (VPOD) retires at the end of this month as Assistant General Secretary after eighteen years with the VPOD. Victor is well known to the members of the ITF Road Transport Workers' Section, both as an active member of its Committee and in more recent years as Chairman of the Urban Transport Committee. His successor is **Stefan Giger**. Meanwhile, **Peter Keimer** has been elected as VPOD President to replace **Christianne Brunner** who is now General Secretary of the metalworkers' union SMUV.

Oddvar Skaar has been appointed acting Vice President of the Norwegian Locomotivemen's Union until the union's Congress in the autumn. He succeeds **Reidar Reksten** who has left the union in order to take up a full time post with the Norwegian State Railways.

ITF OFFSHORE SAFETY MANUAL PUBLISHED

On 6 July, one year after the Piper Alpha disaster, the ITF published its new Offshore Safety and Training Programme. The Programme, which was prepared by the Seafarers' Section Standing Committee on Maritime Mobile Offshore Units, provides detailed recommendations on: construction and stability; safety operations manuals; surveys; equipment for gas detection; ballast systems; emergency generators; fire fighting; life-saving appliances; standby vessels; muster lists, musters and drills; maintenance of life saving equipment; general emergency procedures; transport (helicopter operations); medical examination and health certificates; qualifications (basic safety training). It is available (in English only) on request from the ITF Secretariat.