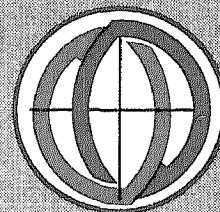


INFORMATIONS : NOTICIAS

ITF NEWS



NACHRICHTEN : NYHETER

SWEDISH LAW CHANGE WILL ALLOW ITF BOYCOTTS AGAIN

The ITF campaign against flags of convenience received a major boost on June 14 when Labour Secretary of State Bo Bylund announced that the Swedish government will shortly introduce legislation to amend the Co-Determination Act to reverse the impact of the Labour Court decision in the case of the Cyprus flag *JSS Britannia*. A bill to change the law will be introduced in the Swedish Parliament next month and the new law should be in force by January first 1991.

The court decision (see *ITF News* Nov/Dec 1989) effectively barred Swedish unions from taking solidarity action against flag of convenience ships for which a collective agreement already exists, irrespective of the level of conditions laid down in the agreement, the pressure applied to the seamen to accept it, or the genuineness of the "union" which signed it. The decision had implications far wider than the maritime sector and this helped to secure the support of the Swedish national trade union centres LO and TCO for a change in the law. Bylund's announcement was designed, he said, to prevent agreements made by "yellow" or "company" unions from being used to get around legitimate solidarity action. Asked how such a "yellow" union would be defined, he suggested that a suitable test might be that it was not an affiliate of the ITF!

Not surprisingly, the announcement was not well received by shipowners. As a representative of the Swedish Shipowners' Association told Lloyds

List, "to say that we are unhappy about it would be an understatement".

The announcement was made in the course of a seminar organised jointly by the ITF-affiliated Swedish Seamens' Union (SSU) and LO for 180 trade union activists interested in international solidarity. It was addressed by ITF Research & Publications Secretary David Cockroft, by Malte Segerdahl of the SSU, by Erlend Olausen, LO legal adviser who played a major role in the campaign to reverse the *Britannia* decision, and by Robert Thomson, an ITF lawyer from Hong Kong. The afternoon session also heard first hand testimony from a Filipino seafarer and the wife of another who had been involved in industrial action for ITF wages supported by the Swedish unions.

At the time of the court decision last November, the *JSS Britannia* case was hailed by flag shipowners as a major victory in their efforts to weaken the ITF campaign. The Swedish government's announcement means that that victory now appears a rather hollow one.

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ITF Latin American conference

Defence of trade union rights, the improvement of working conditions and the dangers of privatisation were among the subjects discussed by the sixth ITF Latin American Regional Conference of the ITF.

The conference, held in Montevideo from 25-27 April, was attended by 104 representatives of 32 unions in nine countries, as well as by ITF Assistant General Secretaries Åke Selander and Graham Brothers.

Delegates discussed economic, social and transport policy, restructuring of the ITF in Latin America and future activities. Meetings of the different transport sections were held, each section submitting conclusions to the conference.

One year on: Chinese workers beaten and tortured

Members of the Beijing Workers' Autonomous Federation (BWAFF) have been beaten and mistreated and are still being detained in undisclosed locations by the Chinese authorities.

Amnesty International is highlighting the cases of BWAFF members including railway worker Bai Dongping, a member of the Federation's central committee, who was arrested on 17 June 1989 after the military crackdown against the pro-democracy movement. The union activists were accused of participating in the "counter-revolutionary rebellion" in Beijing.

The BWAFF is one of the independent trade union organisations which was established during the growth of the pro-democracy movement and is now officially banned. Amnesty International reports that worker activists have been singled out for especially brutal treatment by the authorities for having dared to exercise their right to freedom of expression and association.

Trade unionists in Hong Kong held a May Day rally to press for the release of the imprisoned trade unionists in the

Resolutions were adopted on the right to strike, trade union rights in Panama, privatisation, the fight against drug-trafficking, working conditions in the ports and in road transport, the working hours of marine electricians, soli-

Moroccan and Czecho-Slovak union centres join ICFTU

The Czecho-Slovak trade union confederation CKOS has become the second independent national centre in Eastern Europe to affiliate to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). The CKOS, which represents over six million workers, was formed in March by members of

parity with Chilean seafarers and the improvement of ITF structures in Latin America.

A full report of the conference is available (in Spanish only) from the ITF Secretariat.

the strike committees who played a central role in toppling the Husak régime at the end of 1989 and who subsequently took over the existing union structures.

The affiliation of the CKOS brings the ICFTU's worldwide membership up to a total of 95 million. It also raises further questions as to the future of the Prague-based World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), now that all the unions in its host country have defected.

* More welcome news for the ICFTU comes with the re-affiliation of the Moroccan national centre Union marocaine du travail (UMT), which represents some 438,000 members. The UMT suspended its original affiliation to the ICFTU in 1963. But the decision of Morocco's largest national centre to re-affiliate to the ICFTU sets an encouraging precedent for trade unions in other countries in the Arab world.

Why is ITF News late?

We apologise to readers of ITF News for the late production of this newsletter and the fact that we have had to combine the months of May and June. This is due to the pressures of work in the ITF Secretariat as we prepare for the forthcoming 36th Congress in Florence in August. The same pressures, unfortunately, require us to combine the July and August issues.

People's Republic, and have organised a postcard-writing campaign in support of the prisoners.

* Appeals for the immediate and unconditional release of the BWAFF detainees should be addressed to:

Li Peng Zongli,
(Prime Minister)
Guowuyuan,
Beijingshi,
Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo,
People's Republic of China.

Cai Cheng Buzhang,
(Justice Minister)
Sifabu,
Beijingshi,
Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo,
People's Republic of China.

Many new unions join internationals

The development of democratic trade unionism in Eastern and Central Europe continues to take place at a breathtaking pace — more and more reformed or newly created unions seeking contact with and affiliation to the ITF and its sister international secretariats, rejecting the increasingly beleaguered World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU).

Even in the USSR there is evidence that Perestroika is having more than a cosmetic effect on trade unions. An observer from a Soviet trade union attended an ITF Section Conference for the first time in June (see separate story) and contacts with the ITF are being anxiously sought by other unions which claim to be in the middle of a fundamental reform process.

The paying membership of the WFTU now seems to be reduced to the USSR unions, the French CGT and a handful of "unions" from Arab countries. It is clear therefore that the loss of support from unions in the USSR would represent a final deathblow to an organisation finding it increasingly difficult to justify its continued existence despite reports that Colonel Gaddafi of Libya is ready to step in with US\$10m.

The ITF already has one affiliate from Hungary, and two more requests from Democratic League unions have been received. Requests for affiliation have also come from both Romanian and Bulgarian unions, and the Czechoslovak railwaymen's union, which is in the process of forming a general transport workers' federation with other unions, has invited the ITF to visit Prague for talks about affiliation.

Major changes are taking place in the trade union movement in Yugoslavia at present, and the ITF has been asked to participate in an International Confederation of Free Trades Unions (ICFTU) delegation in July to make an in-depth assessment of the trade union scene there. Contacts continue with Solidarity in Poland but the question of affiliation has been complicated by

internal conflicts within the national union (see below). In the GDR, June 9-10 saw the founding Congress of the new East German Public Service and Transport Workers' Union ÖTV-DDR. In common with unions in many other industrial sectors, the new union will have a very short life. In November they will merge into a Germany-wide ÖTV.

Other international secretariats have experienced similar developments as a recent informal meeting of the International Trade Secretariats held in Geneva showed very clearly. The Teachers' International IFFTU held its Executive Board meeting in Budapest during May together with a special meeting of East and Central European Teachers' Unions. The IFFTU Executive accepted two (Democratic League affiliated) unions from Hungary, three from Czechoslovakia, a Podkrepa union from Bulgaria and two unions from Romania. It has also received affiliation requests from two Yugoslavian (Croatian) unions as well as one from Latvia (still in theory part of the USSR). The Teachers' Branch of Solidarnosc in Poland believes itself to be affiliated to IFFTU although the national leadership disagrees.

In the Building and Wood Sector the Czechoslovak woodwork unions have agreed in principle to leave the WFTU-linked Trade Union International (TUI) and affiliate to IFBWW. Meetings are scheduled in the near future in Poland, Hungary and East Berlin.

Interesting developments continue also in the Miners' Sector, where a WFTU linked body the IMO was established several years ago with the support of the British miners' union President Arthur Scargill. The Mineworkers' International MIF has already accepted the Bulgarian (Podkrepa) miners' union into affiliation and has held serious discussions with the official miners' union in Hungary about affiliation. The Hungarian union was one of the few to suggest "double affiliation" — retaining its IMO mem-

bership while entering MIF. The Miners' International, in common with the other ITSs, firmly rejected this idea. As a result the Hungarian union has apparently agreed to sever its links with the IMO. In contrast with Hungary, the situation in Czechoslovakia is less encouraging. Despite the fact that the new national trade union centre KOS has been accepted as a member of the ICFTU (see separate story), the miners' union at least remains under the control of its old Stalinist leadership and is participating actively in IMO meetings. Most interesting of all are the developments in the USSR, where the miners were in the vanguard of the trade union reform process. A new meeting to establish an independent miners' union was due to take place very shortly in Donetsk and relations with the MIF are very good.

Dan Gallin, the General Secretary of the Foodworkers' International IUF, who comes originally from the Romanian speaking lands which now form part of the Soviet Moldavian Republic, has been particularly active in helping Eastern European unions to organise since the beginning of the year. The IUF has already accepted into membership two Czechoslovakian food/hotel workers' unions, the Hungarian (MSzOSz) hotel workers and four Romanian unions — all of which are members of FRATIA. Discussions on affiliation are underway with a Slovakian foodworkers' union as well as the USSR Fish Industry Union whose contacts with the ITF were initiated by Gallin.

Substantial changes have also taken place in the Chemicals industry with ICEF General Secretary Mike Boggs reporting that both Czech and Hungarian unions have been affiliated to his organisation. This has caused particular embarrassment for the WFTU-linked Chemicals TUI whose President came from the Hungarian union and which had its offices in the union's

Continued on page 4

Worldwide attacks on trade unionists

Assassination by death squads or government forces, internment without trial, the closure of offices and confiscation of materials, repressive legislation, discrimination against union members and bans on international affiliation are among the arsenal of methods used against trade unionists in many parts of the world, as revealed in a report published by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU).

The ICFTU's Annual Survey on Violations of Trade Union Rights,

published in June, records the murders of 235 trade unionists worldwide in connection with their union activities in the year ending in March 1990.

Over 90 countries are cited where trade union rights are violated. Some of the most serious cases are in Colombia, where at least 50 trade unionists were murdered during February and March 1990 alone, and the bloody aftermath of the Tienanmen Square crackdown in China (see separate article). In Peru and El Salvador union

activists have been killed in attacks by death squads and the military.

Anti-union violence and harassment is not confined to developing countries. The survey cites the arrests of 2,500 miners and their supporters in the 10-month strike by the United Mineworkers of America in the USA, with the mistreatment by the police of some of those arrested and the introduction of heavily-armed private security guards into the mining communities by the mineowners.

...real global unity of trade unions is now in sight as official structures disappear

Continued from page 4

Budapest building. The TUI has already been expelled from the building and the ICEF is discussing using the facilities to establish its own Eastern European liaison office there.

The Graphical international IGF reports discussions with Hungarian, Romanian, Polish (OPZZ) and USSR unions as well as preliminary contacts from WFTU affiliates in Mozambique, Spain and Portugal. As in other sectors, the IGF has received merger proposals from its "counterpart" TUI. As in other sectors, the proposal has been politely but firmly turned down.

In textiles and clothing relatively little contact has yet taken place and it appears that many of the "unions" in the Eastern European countries remain firmly under the control of their old appointed leaderships. In journalism, however, things are moving very swiftly indeed with the IFJ having already accepted unions from Estonia (USSR at the moment), Poland, and Hungary and considering applications from Yugoslavia, the Ukraine, Lithuania, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia.

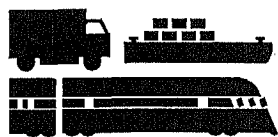
The commercial/white collar inter-

national FIET, which was the first ITS to accept an Eastern European union — the Hungarian scientific workers, has now also received an application from Podkrepa in Bulgaria and has held talks with the "official" commercial union in Hungary. Like the Miners, they have made no progress whatsoever in contacts with Czechoslovakia, however. The Public Service International has three applications from Czechoslovakia and some contacts with Romania. The Public Service TUI could also be in some trouble as its General Secretary came from the East German union which is in the process of merging with the ÖTV.

One of the biggest problems is the status of industrial unions in Poland. For this reason the ITSs held a special discussion with Lech Kaczynski, recently elected Vice-President of Solidarity. The April Congress of Solidarity, which had been expected to agree to the creation of an industrial structure and to approve the affiliation of industrial sections to ITSs had taken a surprise turn, voting down the proposition by a majority of only 20 votes. The reason for this had nothing to do with international affairs and everything to

do with the difficult process through which the union is going to define its different political and trade union roles. Internationally, although the union is affiliated to the ICFTU, its industrial sections have not been granted sufficient autonomy to enable them to affiliate to the different industrial secretariats.

In early June the ITF General Secretary sent a circular to all affiliates informing them of the position taken by the Executive Board that maximum support should be given to independent democratic trade unions in East and Central Europe and asking all affiliates which have contacts with any unions in those countries to inform the ITF. Things are still moving fast in those countries and it is important that ITF affiliates should act in unity to provide solidarity and assistance to those organisations which are genuinely representative of organised transport workers. In the meantime, the General Secretary has been making use of the authority granted to him by the Executive Board in March to invite leaders of independent transport unions in Eastern and Central Europe to attend the ITF Congress in Florence in August.



INLAND TRANSPORT

Romanian drivers create new trade union



Delegates of the "Sindicatul Soferilor din Romania" vote to adopt their constitution.

Delegates at the founding conference of the Romanian Drivers' Union (SSR) which took place in Bucharest in May did more driving than they had originally anticipated during the three day meeting. Nervousness by the various government agencies and state companies which own all public buildings in Bucharest meant that the Conference had to convene in a different hall each day, with the more than 800 delegates being conveyed to the chosen place in a fleet of buses driven by SSR members.

The Conference marked the culmination of an extraordinary four months

in the history of Romanian trade unionism. Created out of nothing in the early days of January, and facing the total opposition of the government and the official Romanian trade unions which are still under the control of the bureaucrats appointed during the Ceausescu era, the "Sindicatul Soferilor din Romania" now has more than 100,000 members in most regions of the country. Its leadership was also responsible for the creation of the fastest growing new and independent trade union centre in Eastern Europe — Fratia — which now has more than one million members and in many indus-

tries outnumbers the old official union centre which has (confusingly and inaccurately) renamed itself the "Free Trade Unions of Romania".

The ITF was represented at the Conference by Research and Publications Secretary David Cockroft. Together with Jean Zaoui of the ITF-affiliated transport workers' federation FGTE-CFDT France and Don Slaiman, the local representative of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), Cockroft took part in an intensive question and an-

Continued on page 6

... Union votes to apply for ITF affiliation

Continued from page 5

swer session in front of the Conference's International Affairs Commission on May the sixth, following which it voted unanimously in favour of ITF affiliation, a decision which was ratified by the plenary session of the Conference the next day.

The whole of the first day of the Conference was devoted to the process of electing the union's National Council. Since none of the delegates had ever had the opportunity to take part in a democratic union election before, they were clearly determined to do the job thoroughly. Every candidate for office was obliged to stand before the Conference and give a detailed account of their personal and professional history before facing a barrage of questions about the nature of their job and whether they had any connection with the management of their enterprise or with the Communist Party during the Ceausescu period. It was clear that a strong feeling of occupational identity amongst drivers has been a major factor in the union's remarkable growth. Rejecting the imposed industrial structure of the old unions, the drivers' union organises truck drivers, bus and metro drivers, taxi drivers and even chauffeurs employed by enterprises. Most of the members are employed, not by specialist transport undertakings, but by huge state-owned industrial enterprises. Many delegates argued that elected posts should be open only to professional drivers, excluding even electricians and mechanical engineers responsible for vehicle maintenance. Great hostility was shown also to any candidate who held a managerial post or who had been a Party member (generally the same thing). Some delegates from remote regions also complained about the domination of the conference by delegates from the Bucharest region. The election results, when finally declared, gave healthy but by no means overwhelming support for the provisional leadership which had organised the union since January. Miron Mitrea was confirmed as union President,

Vasile Daniele as Vice President and Dumitru (Bebe) Dumitrescu as General Secretary. Sorin Maier was elected as member of the National Council responsible for International Affairs. Mitrea is also President of the national centre FRATIA which shares a set of offices with the Drivers' Union in a building reluctantly vacated by the "official" trade union movement.

In view of recent political developments in Romania it is impossible to predict how the independent trade union movement will develop. Both the Drivers' Union and Fratia have taken great pains to emphasise that they are non party political organisations. Meetings with the government take place on a regular basis and discussions are still going on with the leadership of the old union structures about the distribution of the buildings and other assets which they have traditionally controlled.

Shortly after the Congress, the Union, which is demanding the government provide more spare parts for its members' trucks, organised a mass protest which blocked the main road to Bucharest airport and the main traffic crossing in the city with trucks. This reflects one of the biggest problems facing Romanian truck drivers — obsolete trucks which break down constantly and a chronic shortage of basic components such as batteries and tyres. According to Sorin Maier, union international secretary:

"Romanian truck drivers are amongst the most skilled in the world".

They have to be. When a truck breaks down, the driver has to fix it himself, using reconditioned batteries, and remould tyres, most of which are highly dangerous. The appalling state of the country's roads and the low quality of domestic production add to the simple daily problem of ensuring that the trucks actually get to their destination. One of the union's priorities is to encourage its members to form cooperatives and to enter into joint ventures with foreign companies giving them access to modern trucks and to adequate spare parts. Unless this happens they fear Romanian drivers will not be able to

take advantage of the massive growth in East-West trade which they hope the liberalisation of the economy will generate. A further problem which is beginning to be resolved is relations with the police who, under an old law, now being revised, had the power to confiscate a driving licence on the spot for any "offence" real or imagined. Not surprisingly this encouraged widespread corruption amongst the police, who were able to supplement their very low incomes with bribes from drivers who knew they would lose their job if their licence was taken from them.

According to Mitrea, who spoke to ITF News during the ILO Conference in June, the initial success of the drivers' union came as a big surprise to him:

"It just took off in a very short time," he said, "I was astonished by its rate of growth".

The government is still supporting the official unions, but they have been forced to negotiate with the SSR as a result of its sheer size and industrial strength. Attempts are now being made to weaken its organisation by privatising the road transport industry. The government is proposing selling off trucks to individual drivers to create small "owner-driver" enterprises which would still be dependent on their former employers for work. The government has also supported the creation of a new alternative drivers' union called START. However, this union has already been plagued by the defection of several of its leaders to the SSR. Mitrea is not concerned about the threat posed by START:

"Virtually all their members are drivers employed by the Ministry of Transport," he says. "The government has also announced that it will abolish this section of the Ministry and I expect the union to fold up when this happens."

Mitrea has been invited to attend the 36th ITF Congress in Florence in August. His union's affiliation request will be considered by the ITF Executive Board immediately prior to the Congress.

"Green" concerns reinforce trade union views on transport policy

Transport workers and the ITF have always advocated a sensibly planned transport strategy that takes account of social factors and encourages the best use of different transport modes.

The 1980s were a decade when "free market" and monetarist dogma came to dominate government policy in many countries. Even in transport, these ideas have led to a wave of deregulation and privatisation and the breaking up of many integrated transport concerns.

Apart from the fact that these strategies have proven to be a failure in their own terms, the growing awareness of the need to take urgent steps to safeguard the environment, to halt greenhouse gas emissions and to conserve the dwindling fossil fuel reserves has caused a major shift in political thinking.

In transport planning this somewhat late environmental awareness is seeing a major move away from the "free market" towards the "environmentally-friendly" approach.

For transport trade unions, we can be thankful that the pendulum has finally started to swing the other way. In the growing public debates about the future of transport systems, transport workers can now play a crucial role in developing public awareness and government support for integrated transport systems that are designed to serve the needs of the general public and the environment.

There is a fortunate convergence between the needs of saving the environment and the requirements for a socially-beneficial, rationally-planned transport infrastructure. Transport planners are now advocating very similar policies to those that trade unions have long supported for (admittedly) different reasons.

One very good example of the new thinking in environmental transport planning is the issue of "green" cost benefit analysis:

"Environmentally-friendly" cost benefit analysis, advocated by a grow-

ing number of planners, starts from the point of view that energy consumption and pollution factors should be costed into the funding of transport projects.

For example, private road transport uses far more energy and creates much more environmental damage than virtually any other form of transport. Inland waterways, railways, buses and trucks are far more efficient and much less environmentally damaging than private cars. Thus, argue the planners, fiscal measures (taxes or user charges) should be levied against the more damaging modes of transport and the revenues raised should be used to cross subsidise more "environmentally-friendly" and energy-efficient transport modes. In fact, such a strategy isn't really a subsidy as such, but the creation of an environmental "level playing field", where different modes of transport bear the true costs of the environmental damage they cause.

Such an approach also involves the factoring of true environmental impact assessment into the calculation of the funding of new transport infrastructures. Projects that develop energy-efficient transport modes should be financially supported for the overall benefit of the environment that they provide.

This new thinking is gaining ground fast. The European Community has adopted a Directive requiring member states to conduct environmental impact assessment studies for new transport projects, and is in the process of drawing up recommendations for environmentally-friendly approaches to urban transport planning.

The European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) — a body representing the Transport Ministers of 19 European countries (all European members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, plus observers from Hungary, Morocco and Poland) — has just published a very useful and informative publication (available in English and

French) entitled "Transport Policy and the Environment".

This publication stems from the ECMT Council of Ministers special session on transport and the environment held on November 23 1989. The importance of the subject was reflected in the fact that this was the first time the Ministers had ever spent an entire day on one subject, and by the fact that they have chosen to publish the scientific and political papers.

The document is packed with useful facts and figures about the environmental effects of transport and the comparative pollution generated by different transport modes. In-depth papers on urban traffic management, the need for environmental impact considerations in transport investment and the politics of environmental transport policy are all included.

The publication also includes the full text of the ECMT Council of Ministers resolution passed at the end of the session which outlines the need for developing a coherent international environmentally-friendly approach to transport.

The ECMT is now working on the implementation of this policy, and a small working party will report back in late 1991.

This period of discussion provides ITF affiliates with the chance to make their voices heard in the global debate about transport policy. While the new environmental awareness is a very welcome departure from the free market follies of the 1980s, transport workers must now use this debate to broaden environmental considerations to include all social aspects — environmental friendliness also means striving for a transport system that puts passengers first and seeks the most rational organisation of cargo handling — all of which, naturally, means that transport workers and their unions must have a central place in the formulation and implementation of these new policies.

Moscow rail workers take action

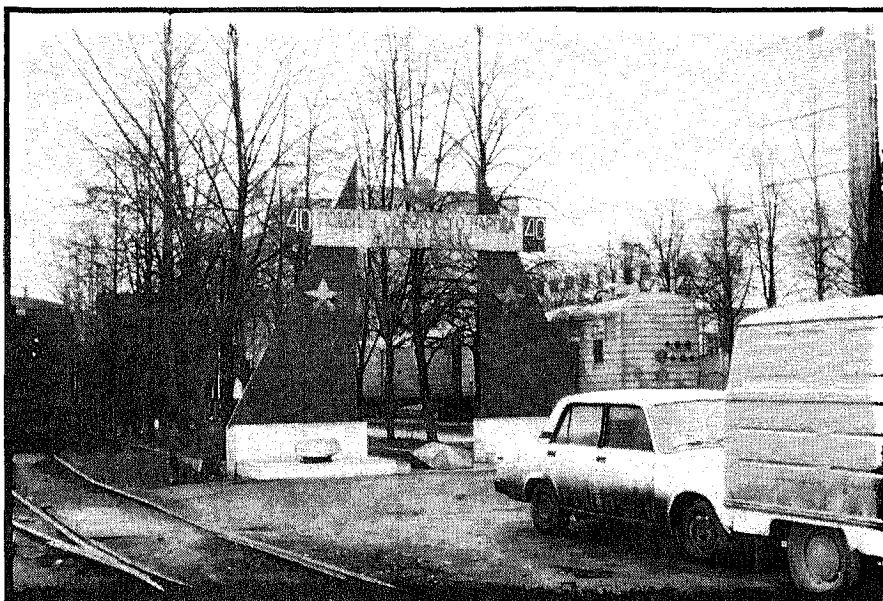
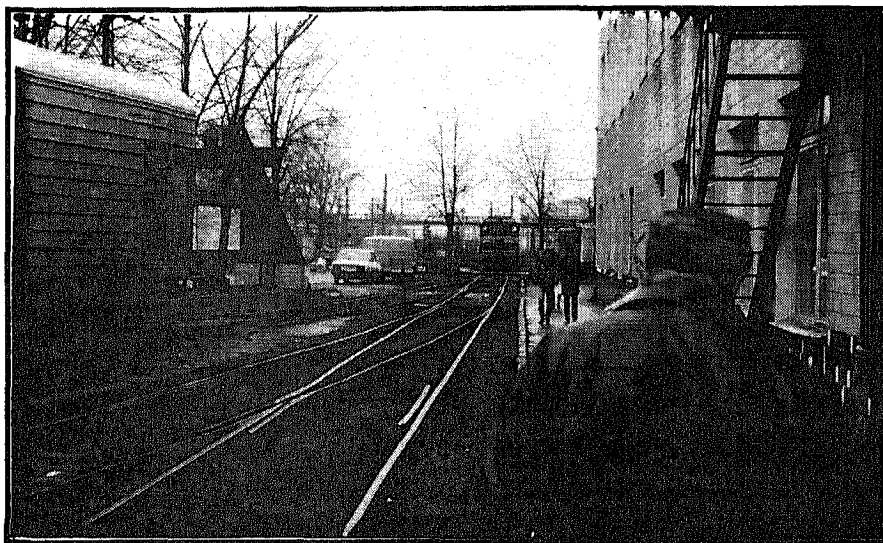
Workers at the Moscow refrigeration wagon maintenance depot have been taking industrial action for better wages and working conditions.

The majority of the 3,000 employees at the depot have joined action called by the small independent union Sotsprof, beginning with a go-slow in April. Union activists at the plant, who are trying to set up a branch of Sotsprof, hope to receive support from the 23 other depots throughout the USSR.

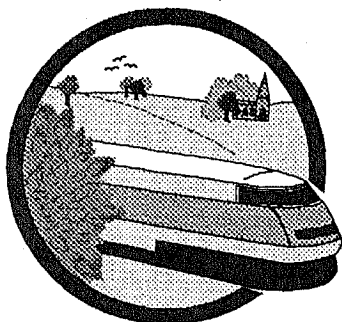
Work in the depots is badly paid, noisy and hazardous to the health, particularly because of the freon gas used in the refrigeration cars. The diesel motors used to maintain low temperatures cause vibration in the cars and are extremely noisy, so that many workers have completely lost their hearing.

Given the purpose to which the refrigeration cars are put, and precarious nature of the current food supply situation in the Soviet Union, the depot workers would appear to have a powerful bargaining card in their fight for decent pay and working conditions.

With thanks to Luc Demaret of Free Labour World, who visited the refrigeration car workers in Moscow and took the photographs of the Moscow depot reproduced here.



RAILWAYS, ENVIRONMENT
AND TRANSPORT QUALITY



A collection of Expert Papers prepared for the
International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF)



New ITF publication

Railways, Environment and Transport Quality, a collection of papers prepared for the ITF by environmental and transport specialists in a range of countries, is now available.

The papers, which are a contribution by the ITF to the public debate on the future of the transport system, cover such issues as safety and the environmental impact of railways, energy consumption and the need for an environmentally balanced transport policy.

Railways, Environment and Transport Quality is available in all ITF languages from the Secretariat, and is free to ITF affiliates, journalists and researchers.

SARHWU receives legal recognition

The South African Industrial Registrar has agreed to register the South African Railway and Harbour Workers' Union (SARHWU) under the Labour Relations Act. This clears the way for recognition of the union by South African Railways, part of the state-owned South African Transport Services (SATS).

SARHWU's strike against SATS ended in January 1990 in a victory for the union — but only after strikers were subjected to a brutal attack at the hands of management-backed strike-breakers (see *ITF News*, January 1990). Union recognition was one of the strikers' most important demands. During negotiations, SATS adopted a highly bureaucratic approach, refusing to recognise SARHWU while it was still

not officially registered — a barrier which has now been removed.

SARHWU is still negotiating with the ITF-affiliated TGWU with the aim

of creating a single union for the transport industry. In the meantime, a SARHWU observer has been invited to the ITF Congress in Florence.

Alpine working group established to tackle transit issues

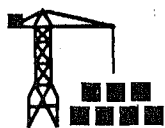
The Austrian, Italian and West German governments are to set up a working group together with the European Commission on the problems of Alpine transit traffic.

The move follows a meeting of the transport ministers of the three countries with EC Transport Commissioner Karel van Miert in Frankfurt in January to discuss complaints about Austria's ban on night-time truck traffic on

the transit routes (see *ITF News*, February 1990).

Meanwhile the Austrian government has complained to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) about West Germany's retaliatory night ban, which only applies to Austrian trucks.

The Austrian authorities argue that such a discriminatory measure violates GATT rules.



DOCKERS

ITF annual dockers' meeting

The challenges of Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) and worldwide demands by port employers for increased labour "flexibility" were among the major issues discussed by the annual meeting of the ITF Dockers' Section in London on 30 May 1990.

The meeting, which was attended by 45 delegates from 25 unions in 23 countries, was held in conjunction with the meeting of the Fair Practices Committee on the following two days (see separate story).

Participants received draft copies of the ITF's surveys of wages and working conditions, the structure of port labour and developments and trends in the ports industry for 1990, and were able to exchange further information on conditions in their home countries. It was noted that a common theme in the attacks on organised labour in the industry in most countries of the world was the demand by port employers that

dockworkers fall into line with their concept of labour "flexibility".

The meeting called on the ITF to organise a seminar for dockers' affiliates on the implications of information technology in the ports. Delegates also called for greater campaigning activities to create joint structures and a ports industry policy at European

Community level in view of the competitive challenges posed by the European Single Market.

The long-awaited first issue of the ITF Dockers' Bulletin was warmly welcomed by the meeting, and affiliates were invited to submit comments and materials for forthcoming issues to the Secretariat.

Message of protest sent to Panamanian President

The ITF Dockers' Section meeting sent a message of protest to the President of Panama, Guillermo Endara, about measures taken by the Panamanian authorities to revoke collective agreements and labour legislation covering the ports and other industries, as well as the dismissal of hundreds of dockworkers.

The message also urged President

Endara to intervene in the case of officials of the ITF-affiliated Panamanian transport union FITTAMPS who had been dismissed on political grounds in the ports of Balboa and Cristóbal. In its reply to the message, the Panamanian government claims that its measures are "not anti-union" and that it is merely attempting to take action against agents of the ousted Noriega régime.

What future for Mediterranean ports?

The necessity of joint employer-union cooperation to secure the future of the Mediterranean ports in the context of the European Single Market has been highlighted in a maritime industry conference held in Palermo, Sicily.

The conference, which was the first of its kind organised by the Sicilian local authorities and port industry bodies, brought together representatives of Italian port and shipping employers, national and local government and ITF-affiliated dockers' trade unions from 16-19 May.

Speakers from the industry and the academic world underlined the challenges facing Mediterranean European Community ports in competition with both their major Northern European rivals and with ports outside the EC. Many Mediterranean ports suffer from a long history of under-investment and outdated technology and infrastructure.

The Director of the Port of Marseilles, Michel Pechère, outlined how his port was rising to the challenge of structural change in the ownership of shipping and cargo-handling interests and the new competitive conditions of the Single Market. Marseilles has taken the initiative to develop a range of information technology systems for the paperless processing of customs and port clearance formalities, which are being offered to carriers on a subscription basis. A separate computer system for communications between shipping companies, vessels, port authorities, pilots, etc. is already in use by some 50 per cent of ships using the port. These developments are helping Marseilles to match waterfront capacity to vessel and container loads.

The case for a European Ports Policy, which would seek to harmonise the competitive conditions in EC ports and tackle the problems of regional imbalance and provide minimum basic standards of employment conditions, was presented by Chris Pate from the ITF Secretariat. He called for the establishment of an EC Joint Committee on the Ports Industry, a move which has been blocked by employer resis-

tance and excuses about "understaffing" at the European Commission, despite the fact that such joint committees have been established or agreed for all other transport sectors.

Representatives of the Italian dockers' unions supported moves to merge a number of the country's smaller ports, but pointed out that this was being obstructed by local municipalities. Giovanni Fusco and Giovanni Moscherini, General Secretaries of the Dockers' Sections of the ITF-affiliated transport unions FIT-CISL and FILT-CGIL respectively, attacked the Italian government for spending years on drawing up and revising legislative proposals on reform of the port industry. The latest version of the proposals was still

highly unsatisfactory and seemed designed to deplete the country's pool of skilled port labour without offering the social guarantees that exist in many other countries.

In his address to the conference, Italian shipping minister Carlo Vizzini promised coordinated government action to secure the future of maritime transport, and proposed the creation of an interministerial transport committee.

Participants from both sides of the industry expressed the view that consultative structures and cooperation at a multimodal level had a major part to play in finding constructive solutions to the problems of modernising the region's ports.

Brazilian port strike

Brazilian dockworkers have been in the forefront of the fight against the anti-union policies of the new government. A nationwide dock strike in the first week of May was a powerful protest against plans to scrap index-linking of wages, introduce wage controls and revoke labour laws.

The Brazilian action was supported by the ITF Dockers' Section at its meeting on May 30, which sent a message to the Brazilian authorities expressing dockers' unions' disgust at such measures and at the government's plans to privatise and deregulate the ports industry.

The previous month Rio de Janeiro dockworkers forced the government to back-track on plans to exclude union-organised stevedores from working on ro-ro vessels.

The port was brought to a total standstill on April 5 when members of the ITF-affiliated transport workers' union CONTTMAF took strike action against the plans.

ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis wrote to the Brazilian Ministers of Labour and Infrastructure protesting at the government's intention and highlighting the ability of ITF maritime

affiliates to take solidarity action against vessels using non-union facilities in the country's ports should the dispute last.

After the matter was referred to a civil court a memorandum of understanding was signed between the unions and the authorities, recognising the right of organised dockworkers to work ro-ro ships but agreeing on some reduction of the numbers involved.

The strikers then decided to call off the action on April 16.

Mexican UNOP congress denounces Focs

The 35th Conference of the Mexican federation of dockers' unions UNOP, took place in Tampico from 11-14 April. The Conference gave strong backing to the ITF's campaign against Flag of convenience shipping and discussed ways of combatting the increasing use of non-domiciled ships' crews in contravention of Mexican law. Delegates also called for systematic independent research into economic and labour aspects of the ports industry.

First ITF Section conference ever attended by USSR union

The ITF Fishermen's Section Conference held in London on June 13 and 14 brought together 19 delegates from 11 countries and a special guest from the USSR.

For the first time in the 94 year history of the ITF, a representative of a Soviet trade union attended a section meeting. Vitaly Pushkarev, head of the International Relations Department of the 900,000 member USSR Fish Industry Workers' Union, was given a boisterous welcome by the delegates.

ITF Fishermen's Section Chairman Olle Jacobsen said that this was an "historic happening to have the Russian fishermen here and we are all very glad about this."

Pushkarev thanked the delegates for inviting his union to the Section Conference and said that "I hope this is the first step towards encouraging closer fraternal co-operation."

The Fish Industry Workers' Union (FIWU) has undergone dramatic changes in the last six months. Until the end of last year, like other "official" USSR trade unions, FIWU was controlled by the Communist Party and the State. There was little real democracy in the organisation.

At the end of last year, rank and file fish workers took the initiative and held a series of impromptu meetings in ports throughout the USSR. They demanded that the leadership of the union call a freely elected union Congress and declare the union independent of external control. Amazingly enough, this has all happened.

"We held a special Congress in February," Pushkarev told the Section Conference, "and we have adopted a new structure and established our independence from the government and party."

Following this meeting's restructuring of the FIWU, President Vladamir Kuzmenok wrote to the ITF, explaining the changes in the union and expressing a desire to develop co-operation with the ITF.

The ITF invited FIWU to send an observer to the Fishermen's Section Conference.

While the revolutions in Eastern Europe are seeing unions return to the ITF family after a fifty year absence, the ITF has never had very strong links with Russian trade unions. A Russian Seafarers' union was briefly affiliated before the 1914-18 war, but, despite the efforts of ITF General Secretary Edo Fimmen in the early 1920s, the new Russian trade unions chose to stand alone. By 1926, the Stalinist tyranny in the USSR eliminated all vestiges of independence in the Russian trade union movement and turned the trade unions into "transmission belts" of party dictatorship.

The transformation of the Fish Workers' union is set against a most severe crisis in the USSR, with workers suffering a real decline in living standards and an uncertain future. Nationalist feelings, so long suppressed in the Soviet Empire, are also emerging as a powerful new force. Pushkarev says that the FIWU envisages itself becoming a confederation of autonomous national unions rather than a single, centralised entity.

In addition to dealing with the crisis in the Soviet economy, the FIWU, like ITF Fishermen's unions, faces the same great difficulties that plague the entire world fishing industry — dwindling stocks and environmental damage to the marine ecosystem.

All the unions present at the Section Conference gave national reports.

These were summaries of the more detailed responses affiliates (and the Russians) have already provided to the Secretariat in answer the Fishermen's Wages and Working Conditions survey. A full analysis of this survey will be provided to the affiliates later this year.

The different national reports highlighted the global nature of the problems facing the fishing industry.

On the environment, affiliates agreed a comprehensive ITF Action Programme on Marine Pollution which calls for the ITF and its affiliates to campaign against sub-standard and Flag of Convenience shipping, to work for the strengthening of national and international anti-pollution regulations, and to demand proper labelling of all cargoes. The programme calls for an end to all dumping of nuclear and industrial waste at sea, and asks the ITF to highlight the plight of the marine environment in its publications. The Section Conference set up a special sub-committee to deal with the practical implementation of this policy that includes the USSR FIWU as observers.

A detailed discussion about health and safety in the fishing industry was held. Figures provided by the Secretariat grimly illustrated the fact that casualty rates for fishermen are the highest for any occupation. Part of the problem is that there is no proper method for gathering casualty figures — though the International Maritime Organisation is now beginning a standardised reporting procedure that should improve matters.

The age of the fishing vessel fleets in many countries is also a serious prob-

Continued on page 12

...Pollution action programme adopted

Continued from page 11

lem, and, in the present economic climate, it is very hard to find the necessary money for fleet renewal and adequate maintenance. The Conference resolved to bring pressure on national administrations to improve safety conditions, training and the reporting facilities for casualties.

The Conference discussed in detail the section's work in the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) — global bodies which set international standards for fishermen's working conditions and vessel safety issues.

The meeting discussed the IMO 1978 Torremolinos Convention on fishing vessel safety. Few countries have ratified this useful Convention, and so it has not come into force. Many countries have said that they will ratify the Convention if a larger number of small and medium sized fishing vessels are exempted from the Convention — their argument being that the costs of certain safety and firefighting equipment on smaller vessels makes the ratification of the agreement prohibitively expensive.

The ITF affiliates do not like this, but a less comprehensive Convention is better than no Convention at all, and the meeting set up a small sub-committee to vet the final text of the new Protocol to the Convention.

The Conference adopted, in principle, a draft of an ITF Fisheries Policy, which lays down ITF minimum standards for the industry. Further revisions, to incorporate new items such as the action programme on pollution, are to be added to a final text which will be adopted at the Florence Congress.

Heated discussions were held on the sensitive topic of whaling. Delegates from Japan, Iceland and Norway argued that scientific evidence now shows that the world population of Minke Whales is sufficient to allow a resumption of whaling. Other delegates questioned the veracity of these figures and

said that the ITF must take account of world public opinion.

Finally, a consensus "Statement on Whaling" for submission to the forthcoming International Whaling Commission meeting in the Netherlands was unanimously adopted by the conference.

The statement calls upon the IWC to "continue to ensure that the ecological balance is maintained on the basis of sound scientific research in accordance with the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (1946). It hopes that in the process the IWC will take into account the livelihood of the fishermen concerned and the concerns of society in general."

The statement calls for "maximum consultation with all sides of the fishing industry including representatives

of fishermen", for the prevention of flagging out by fishing vessels and for "governments to introduce urgently social measures to protect redundant fishermen" and finally for "legislation designed to remove non-whaling threats such as marine pollution to existing stocks."

The Norwegian delegates proposed that the ITF should endorse a call for a North Atlantic seal cull to reduce the burgeoning numbers of seals that are posing an increasingly serious threat to fish stocks in the North Atlantic. After much discussion, it was agreed to support the motion on the understanding that the supporters of this position would provide delegates with scientific evidence of their claims at the Section Conference which will be held during the Florence Congress.

Strike threat lifted as Bermuda sets up pot fishing enquiry

An enquiry into the effects of pot fishing on the marine environment is to be held by the Bermudan government following pressure from the ITF-affiliated Bermuda Industrial Union (BIU).

When the government announced a ban on pot fishing in January, the BIU threatened an all-out national strike in

response.

The union went on to demand that the government conduct a systematic enquiry so that a scientific basis could be established for future policy on the issue.

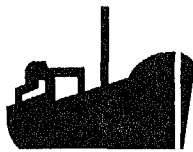
The BIU is currently preparing its submission to the enquiry.

Scottish Prawn fishermen haul in high explosives

Prawn fishermen in the Firth of Clyde, Scotland, received an unpleasant surprise this Spring when they started dredging up explosives and live detonators in their nets in an area which is a busy sea lane.

The lethal material had been dumped last summer by an explosives factory in Ardeer, Strathclyde, and had been allowed to drift out of the allocated dumping area.

The Clyde Fishermen's Association and local politicians are calling for action to be taken against British chemical company ICI, which owns the explosives plant, for negligence in dumping such hazardous waste material where it could so easily turn up in the fishermen's nets.



SEAFARERS

Soviet crews win strikes with ITF aid

Some of the Soviet seafarers on board the 19 USSR flag ships transferred to the Cyprus registry (see ITF News April 1990) have been discovering the results which can be achieved by strike action in the right place at the right time, particularly when that action is supported by the ITF. The crew of the gas carrier *Novorossiysk* went on strike in the Italian port of Fiumicino in mid-May over the implementation of their new employment contracts. Most of them had earlier refused, in Rotterdam, to sign documents authorising the shipmanagement company, Acomarit, to deduct anything it liked from their pay to cover 'social security benefits' back home in the Soviet Union.

This was viewed by the crew as a clear breach of an agreement signed between Acomarit and the ITF-affiliated Swiss transport union VHTL after consultation with the ITF Secretariat.

The *Novorossiysk* crew, who had never been in a position to take strike action while serving on USSR flag vessels in their tame "official" union, decided on arrival at Fiumicino in early May to contact local ITF Inspector Enrico Cevaro of the Italian transport workers' union FIT-CISL. Cevaro provided union support for the crew strike, made it clear that Italian unions would take action if attempts were made to bring in strike breakers, and conducted negotiations on the crew's behalf with Acomarit representatives. The immobilisation of an expensive modern gas carrier clearly concentrated the minds of the managers who quickly asked for a meeting with the ITF Secretariat in London on May 14 at which they explained that the problems had arisen through a series of 'misunderstandings' and the unwillingness of the masters of the vessels to handle substantial amounts of cash. As a result of these discussions and following the arrival in Italy of a representative of

the VHTL, an agreement was reached giving the crew members almost US\$100,000 in back-pay and compensation. Acomarit undertook to ensure that all the crew members on the other ships received their full entitlements under the VHTL agreement in cash.

Something clearly went wrong however since a fortnight later another Soviet crew refused to take the Cyprus

Congress to be held in August. The ITF has provisionally accepted this invitation. It should be an interesting meeting.

A meeting was held on June 26 and 27 with representatives of the ITF and concerned affiliates from Finland, Italy, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland and the current leadership of the USSR Sea and River Workers Union to con-

*"These successful actions
have set a healthy precedent
for Soviet crews working on
foreign-flag ships"*

flag *Limbazhi* out of the port of Porvoo in Finland until they received the pay due to them. Their strike action, strongly backed by the ITF-affiliated Finnish Seamen's Union, brought an Acomarit representative scurrying to the port to negotiate with ITF/FSU inspector Laurie Heinonen a settlement which provided the crew with over US\$125,000 in back wages.

These successful actions have set a healthy precedent for Soviet crews working on foreign-flag ships. The ITF is pressing for a single acceptable collective agreement for all the vessels which have been transferred to the Cyprus flag, and is to meet Acomarit and Soviet representatives in Finland in late June to take the matter further.

The effect all this is having on the official Soviet Sea and River Workers' Union, whose President telexed the ITF during the *Novorossiysk* dispute supporting the crew, remains to be seen. The ITF has received a message from the union assuring it that a major change in direction is planned at a

consider the situation on the Sovcomflot ships.

Given that Sovcomflot and/or Acomarit appear not to have abided by the conditions of the VHTL agreement, this meeting has agreed that the VHTL should give notice of termination of the agreement to Acomarit on the grounds of default by the company. The meeting further recommended that a new collective agreement be negotiated between Acomarit, the USSR Shipping Companies, the USSR Sea and River Workers' Union, the VHTL and the ITF to cover the Russian seafarers involved.

A meeting between the ITF, the VHTL and the USSR union is planned for London at the end of July to sort out the union side of these negotiations.

In the meantime, Acomarit has agreed to abide by the existing agreement and make good any outstanding monies owed under it. Acomarit has also agreed to "settle expeditiously" outstanding seafarers' claims that the ITF is presently pursuing for seafarers on other Acomarit contracted ships.

Shipowners look east for new cheap crews

Current frantic attempts by flag of convenience shipowners and managers to grab cheap crews from the countries of Eastern Europe came under intense scrutiny at the 1990 meeting of the ITF Fair Practices Committee which met in London on 31 May and 1 June. The FPC, a joint body of seafarers' and dockers' union representatives, is responsible for the overall coordination of the ITF Foc campaign.

The meeting was one of the largest ever, bringing together 114 members, observers and advisers from ITF unions in 40 countries. In the light of the fast-moving situation in Eastern Europe it was also a historic meeting, marked by the attendance for the first time of two observers from the newly affiliated Hungarian Seafarers' Union MTSZ. Union President Sándor Bathelt and Captain Ákos Koncz were given a warm welcome by delegates.

Current ITF policy on Foc ships manned by crews who are not members of an ITF union, including those from "East bloc" countries, is that they must be covered by a standard Worldwide ITF Agreement and be enrolled directly as members of the ITF Special Seafarers' Department. The Worldwide agreement provides for a basic wage of \$821 per month for an Able Seaman, significantly higher than the so-called Total Crew Cost (TCC) agreements which apply to many vessels crewed by ITF affiliates with the consent of the union in the ownership country. This policy reflected the fact that there were no real "unions" in Eastern European countries, a situation which is now changing rapidly. Many of the new independent seafarers' unions (see separate story) are coming under intense pressure from shipowners to crew Foc vessels. The wages on offer are derisory compared with those paid to most seafarers, but represent a fortune when converted at black mar-

ket rates into the almost worthless currencies of Eastern Europe, so the incentive for the workers in those countries to accept any jobs on offer is very great.

Without assistance from the ITF there is a very real danger that Eastern European seafarers could become another major source of cheap exploited maritime manpower. Other strange developments (such as that the flagging out of USSR flag vessels for financial reasons reported in a separate story) have made a review of current policy a priority. The FPC asked the ITF Secretariat to enter into a dialogue with "appropriate" unions in Eastern Europe about the terms under which their members are being employed on Foc vessels, and report back to the forthcoming Seafarers' and Dockers' Conference which will be held during the ITF Florence Congress.

The meeting also discussed the level of existing ITF approved TCC Agreements in relation to the FPC's "benchmark" figure of \$1,000 consolidated average monthly earnings for an Able Seaman. The Committee agreed that all new agreements must conform fully to the benchmark and that any existing agreements falling below the benchmark must achieve it by January 1992.

The whole system for approving ITF agreements, including the ITF's approved manning scales will be reviewed during the ITF Congress.

A policy statement clarifying the 'Madrid Policy' on beneficial ownership of Foc ships reached after negotiations between European, Asian and North American affiliates, was endorsed by the FPC. It envisages a speeded-up procedure for consulting unions from ownership countries as well as leaving unions which are able to take boycott action against a ship free to sign agreements on a temporary basis.

The growing threat to seafarers' jobs posed by Second Registers was another major topic on the agenda. Particular problems were reported on the German International Register (GIS). Seafarers' unions from several Asian countries expressed concern that non-German nationals on GIS ships were not being covered by ITF agreements. The German union (ÖTV) explained that it is still fighting a political and legal battle against the whole concept of the GIS and did not want its position undermined. It informed the meeting that, under German law, any seafarer of any nationality on a GIS ship who joined the ÖTV had the automatic right to the conditions under the German collective agreement. ITF affiliates should therefore advise their members to join the ÖTV.

On the general question of second registers, the meeting agreed that all ITF unions involved should get together to ensure that union coverage for such vessels was maintained. Two resolutions from the ITF's US affiliates were discussed by the meeting. One proposing that future ITF "welfare fund" income should be distributed to seafarers' unions in countries which have suffered from the growth of Focs was overwhelmingly defeated.

The second, calling for the establishment of a US office to co-ordinate the growing activities of the campaign in that country, was withdrawn following assurances from the ITF General Secretary that he would give serious attention to concrete proposals about the establishment of such an office.

At the request of the two UK seafarers' affiliates NUS and NUMAST, the FPC agreed, in line with existing policy, to designate on a ship by ship basis as flying a flag of convenience any UK-owned Isle of Man registered ships not covered by an agreement with the British unions.

DOUBLE BOOK-KEEPING

A serious crime or a minor sleight of hand? Recent legal decisions in the USA agree with the ITF...

Shipowners who cheat their crews by operating a wages double book-keeping system have some new reasons to be nervous — and their international organisations are busily trying to make up excuses for their behaviour.

The ITF has encountered the problem of shipowners signing ITF Agreements and systematically stealing from their crews many times in the past.

Double book-keeping is not only a crime against a crew, but also a fraud against charterers, insurers and freight companies who are also told that the shipowner is paying ITF rates.

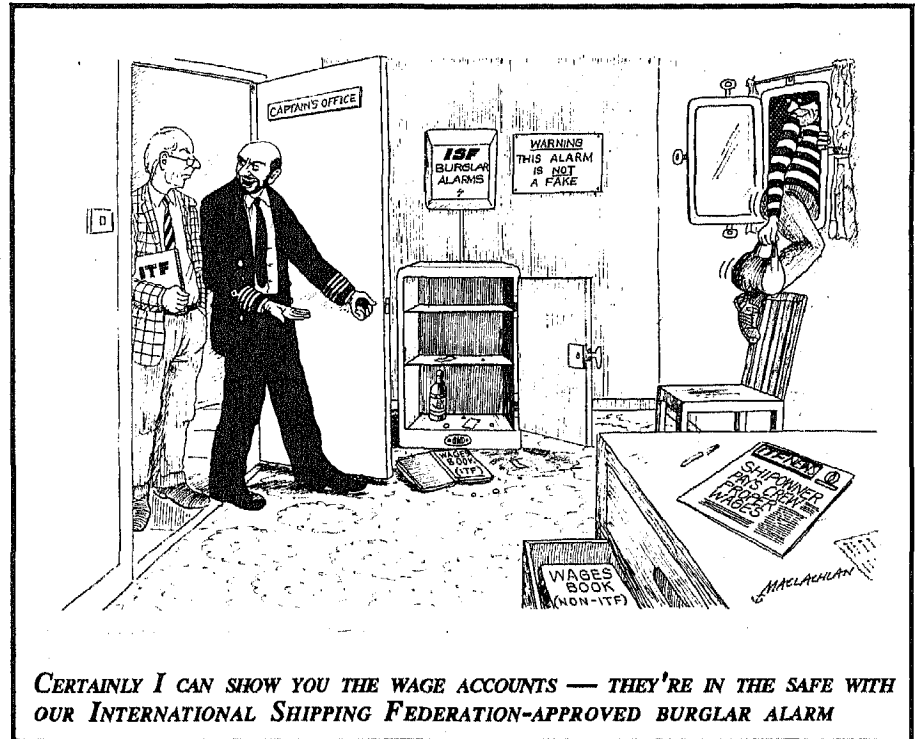
The ITF has added a new weapon to its armoury in the fight against this underhand practice with the acceptance by US courts that crews who are the victims of double book-keeping are entitled not only to their unpaid wages but also to penalty wages.

This principle was first achieved in the *Fareast Trader* case (see ITF News September 1989) where a total of US\$1,174,000 was recovered from Wa-Tung shipping after double book-keeping was proven in a Texas court.

A few months later, the precedent was reinforced in the *Pioneer Leader* case (see ITF News, January 1990) when US\$1,030,000 was recovered for another cheated crew in Jacksonville, Florida.

In January 1990, another double book-keeping case was uncovered in the USA. The Vanuatu Flag *Pine Forest* was arrested in Tacoma, Washington. In subsequent hearings, the owners (Japan's Mitsui OSK — one of the world's biggest shipowners) admitted operating double wage accounts on their ships since 1983. Later that month, another ship of the fleet, the *Fir Grove*, was arrested in Portland, Oregon.

Hearings in the *Pine Forest* case have now concluded and a ruling is expected in July. Due to the cumulative



CERTAINLY I CAN SHOW YOU THE WAGE ACCOUNTS — THEY'RE IN THE SAFE WITH OUR INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING FEDERATION-APPROVED BURGLAR ALARM

nature of the penalty wages provision, the shipowner, if they lose, may well have to pay out in excess of US\$20 million.

These large settlements are beginning to have the desired effect — shipowners are having to question whether or not it is financially viable or sensible (leaving aside the question of morality) to cheat their crews.

Since double book-keeping is essentially an illegal act, serious doubts have been expressed about whether shipowners can claim penalty wage damages back from their insurers (who have also been lied to in such cases).

The Norwegian Gard Protection and Indemnity (P&I) Club recently issued a warning to its members about double book-keeping.

One of the P&I club's suggestions to shipowners "caught in the same sticky trap as was the *Fareast Trader*" is to pay the crew their owed wages, put their future wages into a special escrow account and guarantee no har-

assment of the seafarers. Better advice, perhaps, would be to pay the proper wage rates from the start.

The P&I Club concludes that "Shipowners tempted to engage in double book-keeping would do well to heed the winds of change."

David Dearsley, from the International Shipping Federation — the global shipowners' organisation — has concocted a rather quaint analogy to justify double-bookkeeping. It is similar, he has said, to a homeowner putting up a sign saying that there is a burglar alarm on a house even though there isn't in order to deter robbers. Leaving aside the doubtful effectiveness of such a strategy, the analogy isn't quite complete, since, in these cases, it is the insurers and other parties who are also being told there is a "burglar alarm" — if the "homeowner" pays lower insurance premiums on the false understanding there is an alarm, this is clearly a fraud, as is double-bookkeeping.

Disturbing facts emerge from fire enquiry

In the aftermath of the fire on board the Bahamian-flag *Scandinavian Star* off Norway in April, which killed 158 people (see ITF News April 1990), there has been a wave of international concern over safety standards on board flag of convenience ferries.

The official Scandinavian inquiry into the disaster revealed fatal confusion at the time of the fire among crew members who were neither properly trained in ship safety procedures nor able to communicate adequately with each other or with the passengers. Safety procedures were grossly inadequate, and proper inspections of the vessel's emergency equipment had not been carried out.

The requirement of the International Maritime Organization Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Convention that fire drills must be held within 24 hours when over a quarter of the crew are new to the ship had not been followed.

Only three days before the disaster, a special conference of the Nordic Transport Workers' Federation (NTF) demanded that the Scandinavian governments ban ferry operations with sub-standard conditions and non-domiciled crews.

The tragedy has had immediate international repercussions:

— The European Parliament adopted a resolution on May 17 expressing its shock at the *Scandinavian Star* disaster and other recent ferry accidents and voicing strong criticism of Pfg of convenience registry standards and the failure of the Norwegian authorities to inspect the *Scandinavian Star*. The resolution called for the creation of a European Community ship safety inspectorate, a European system of coastal monitoring and new EC legislation to harmonise safety measures.

— Legislation is currently being passed by the Danish Parliament which will restrict regular ferry traffic between Danish ports and other Scandinavian countries to ships flying the Danish flag or that of one of those countries, with no place for Focs or "second register" vessels, including the Danish international register (DIS).

— The international shipowners' organisations have been forced to re-examine the claim that flag of convenience ferries do not have lower safety standards and internal communications problems because of poor crew qualifications. International Shipping Federation Director Chris Horrocks told the Lloyd's List newspaper that the tragedy "will force the industry to look hard at some of its operating practices."

— In Norway, four major ferry operators — including the controversial Fred Olsen Lines (see ITF News April 1990) — have decided to implement International Maritime Organization (IMO) guidelines on ship safety and pollution prevention in an effort to improve emergency procedures and safety information on board their ships.

— Meanwhile the ITF-affiliated West German transport workers' union ÖTV has attacked claims by the Association of German Shipowners that ferries operating under the German Second Register (GIS) do not have lower safety standards or crew qualification requirements than German-crewed vessels.

— In the USA, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has called for increased powers to investigate accidents on board cruise ships. NTSB chief James Kolstad pointed out to Congress that had the *Scandinavian Star* disaster occurred in US waters,

the US authorities would not have been able to carry out an investigation without the owners' permission.

— A conference of ITF affiliates organising ships' engineers, meeting at Vaxholm, Sweden, on May 27-28, adopted a resolution to be forwarded as an emergency motion to the ITF Congress in August, calling for improved minimum crewing levels on ferries, better language training standards and a division of responsibility for emergency procedures, with ships' engineers being put in charge of firefighting procedures and the master and other bridge officers retaining responsibility for navigation and the evacuation of passengers and crew.

— A meeting of the IMO's sub-committee on fire protection in July is set to discuss proposals for stricter regulations on fire drills, training and equipment, which would amend the existing SOLAS provisions.

— The disaster has prompted the Swedish government to change the law on the status of collective agreements on Foc vessels following the *JSS Britannia* judgement (see separate story).

The Miami-based cruise ship line SeaEscape, which previously denied owning the *Scandinavian Star* at the time of the tragedy, has now admitted that it was indeed the registered owner, leaving it open for possible compensation claims to be lodged against the company in the USA.

Latin American seafarers' committee established

Economic measures to support the development of national fleets and trade union protection for non-domiciled seafarers were among the subjects discussed by the ITF Latin American Seafarers' Conference.

The conference, which took place in Montevideo from 23-24 April, was chaired by Marcos Castro of the Merchant Navy Officers' Union, Argentina, and the ITF Secretariat was repre-

sented by Assistant General Secretary Åke Selander.

Delegates approved a plan to set up a permanent Latin American Seafarers' Committee composed of representatives from unions in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Peru.

The Committee is to meet at least once a year and will analyse problems faced by seafarers in the region.

Widow of seafarer hit by missile receives compensation

The widow of an Indian Radio Officer who was killed when the United States Navy hit his ship with a missile has received \$575,182 compensation in an out of court settlement.

Radio Officer K. T. Joseph, a member of the ITF-affiliated Maritime Union of India (MUI), was working on the Indian flag *Jag Vivek* freighter in December 1988.

On December 12, 1988, the 14,507 tonnes vessel, loaded with 25,000 tonnes of Canadian wheat from Vancouver, was passing Kausi Island, Hawaii, on its way to India when it was hit by a 12 foot long Harpoon missile fired from an F-18 jet which had taken off from the US Aircraft Carrier *Constellation* during naval exercises.

The vessel had strayed into the US Navy's Pacific missile range, but had been warned and had left the area. The ship was called by name and told military exercises were underway and told

to steam South out of the area. The master complied and headed South for three or four hours. The Navy then told the ship that it was now clear of the danger zone, and radioed it to turn West.

Thirty minutes later, still heading West, the ship was hit by the harpoon missile plumb in the mid-section of the superstructure, right in the radio room and officer's quarters. 36 year-old Joseph was killed instantly.

The ship's master, Captain P. M. Mirchandani, was on the bridge when the missile struck. He said he heard a loud bang and saw splinters flying off the deck.

The damaged ship then limped into Lihou for drydocking and the dead Radio Officer's body was flown home.

At the request of MUI General Secretary K. E. Sukhia, the ITF was brought into the case through US Foc co-ordinator John Sansone.

Following legal action, the US Navy has agreed to pay \$575,182 to Joseph's widow, along with \$405,284 to the Indian shipowner (Great Eastern Shipping Co. Ltd.) as damages. Investigators in the US Navy have also recommended disciplinary action or administrative steps against several military officers involved in the incident.

Sukhia has written to ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis to "convey our thanks" to the ITF, the American Radio Electronic Officers' Union, and Sansone for their assistance in obtaining a very respectable settlement for Joseph's widow.

Major pay rise for Indian seafarers

In a major triumph for Indian seafarers, the ITF-affiliated National Union of Seafarers of India (NUSI) has won a 51 per cent wage rise for ratings and the introduction of guaranteed minimum payments for unemployed seafarers.

The deal, agreed by the bipartite National Maritime Board in April, involves a 27 per cent rise in basic pay and increase in allowances and bonus levels that will take Indian seafarers' pay well above International Labour Organisation standards.

Seafarers on company rosters will receive a minimum of Rs. 77 (around US\$4.40) a day even when they are not employed.

The agreement, described as "historic" by NUSI General Secretary Leo Barnes, represents a dramatic up-turn for working conditions in the Indian merchant navy following the economic recovery the fleet is enjoying after years of recession.

A US District Court has ruled that the Filipino crew of the Kuwaiti tankers that were reflagged to the US during the Iran-Iraq war are not entitled to be covered by US Minimum wage laws as other crews of US flag ships are.

The case against the 11 Kuwaiti Oil Tanker Company vessels, which was

backed by the ITF, was rejected on May 17. The Judge said that the Philippines Overseas Employment Administration contracts the crews had signed took precedence over US law. The ITF is consulting its legal advisers about the possibility of appealing against the verdict.

US court rejects minimum wage plea for Kuwaiti tanker crews

Shipowners organisations unite

Two of the world's major shipowning organisations have merged offices.

The International Shipping Federation (ISF) and the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) announced in March that they will merge their London based Secretariats. The ISF traces its roots to a secret conference organised in 1906 by the British Shipping Federation whose sole aim was to decide how shipowners could most effectively fight the new European seamen's and port workers' organisations (part of the early ITF) and resist their demands for improvements. ITF officials at the time believed that one of the major decisions of this meeting was a proposal by the German shipowners that all port workers should be forced, on engagement, to give an undertaking that they would carry out all work assigned to them, including acting as strikebreakers. There was also an agreement on the exchange and supply of strikebreakers.

The secretariat of the organisations will be headed by Chris Horrocks, Secretary-General of the ICS, who will be Director of the new Federation.

The ISF has 30 member national shipowner organisations. From its early days as an anti-union grouping, it has matured into the more respectable face of world shipowning, co-ordinating employers' representation in the International Labour Organisation and co-operating practically with the ITF, for example in the International Committee for Seafarers' Welfare.

The hidden costs of fleet decline

The continuing decline in the British merchant fleet could lead to a massive loss of earnings for the UK financial services industry according to a new report by the UK Centre for Maritime Policy Studies. The report estimates that "The City" (as it is known in financial circles) could lose £140 million (\$230.37 million) annually if the present fleet is allowed to fall by a further 50 per cent. The Marine Insurance sector would be hit the hardest, and up to 12,500 jobs could be lost in ancillary services. The UK-owned merchant fleet of ships over 500 tons gross and registered in the UK has plummeted from 1,614 vessels in 1975 to 437 ships in 1988. The number of UK seafarers employed on these ships has fallen from over 80,000 to just over 50,000. Meanwhile, British Transport Minister Cecil Parkinson has announced the establishment of a special working party to look into the decline of the fleet and report back by September. But the British government's unusual concept of industrial consultation was to set up a joint committee between themselves and the new head of the British shipowners' organisation, Sir Jeffrey Stirling — head of the notoriously anti-union P&O company, personal friend of Margaret Thatcher and major financial contributor to the Conservative Party. Stirling and Parkinson are to co-chair the working party, which will include representatives from the shipowners and the government. The absence of any input from the British seafarers' unions is typical of the UK government's approach to policy making and consultation. General Secretary John Newman from the ITF-affiliated NUMAST officers' union has demanded that his union be represented on the body. Parkinson has said he will discuss this possibility with the

shipowners and will, in any event, "take information" from the unions.

The ageing dictatorship in the "Peoples Republic" of China is set to flag out a number of Chinese-owned ships to Malta and Cyprus in a bid to overcome the damage caused to China's shipping links following the massacre of pro-

vessels are covered by ITF full Worldwide agreements. In the absence of even a semblance of independent trade unionism in China (the government continues to imprison and torture workers who sought to create real trade unions — see separate story), the presence of Chinese-owned Focs on the world's seas will not be welcomed by the ITF.



democracy demonstrators last year. Top level discussions have been held between senior Chinese officials and the Maltese and Chinese authorities. Both the Maltese and Cyprus authorities are keen to boost their flags of convenience and are quite happy to do business with the Chinese dictators. Plans were apparently made some time ago for the Chinese to attend the Posidonia shipping expo in Greece in June, but were kept secret because the Chinese wished to avoid demonstrations on the anniversary of the massacre. If the Chinese do flag out to Malta or Cyprus or any other Foc, they will become subject to existing ITF policy on Foc ships owned in countries without ITF affiliates. This means that ITF unions will seek to ensure that the

As this edition of ITF News goes to press, the Doe military dictatorship in Liberia appears to be on its last legs. The rebel armies of Charles Taylor surround the capital Monrovia, and the military regime has taken to shooting unarmed, pro-democracy demonstrators in the streets. Flag of convenience shipowners, who have made Liberia the largest shipping register in the world, might (just perhaps) feel some pangs of guilt about the thugs they have bankrolled all these years (one thing is for sure, the revenues from the Liberian register certainly haven't found their way into the pockets of the ordinary people of Liberia). In fact, most "Liberian" shipowners are not greatly concerned about the civil war. The Liberian register has assured its customers that everything will be "business as usual" if for no other reason than that the register is, in fact, administered and operated from Reston, Virginia, in the USA.

The Norwegian-flag fleet has grown by 60 per cent in the last year. Unfortunately, this "good news" will make little difference to most Norwegian seafarers — the growth has been the result of the success of the NIS second register and most NIS ships have only one or two Norwegians on board —

Continued on page 19

Foc ships sink more often than the rest

Contrary to claims by some shipowners, flag of convenience vessels are over-represented by a factor of almost 100 per cent in the world's casualty statistics. An Foc is almost twice as likely as another registered-vessel to sink!

Foc ships represent 35 per cent of the world's merchant fleet, but account for a staggering 64.48 per cent of total world casualties.

These figures for 1989, which are based on calculations of gross registered tonnage (grt), were compiled by

the ITF Seafarers' Section from Lloyd's Register statistical tables.

Of the Foc tonnage losses, a staggering 49 per cent was made up of Cypriot flag ships, with Panama and the Bahamas following with 21 and 17 per cent respectively.

... UN territory of Palau sets up a new Foc

Continued from page 18

indeed a growing number have none at all. At the start of 1990 the total NIS and Norwegian ordinary registered ships stood at 1,055 vessels of 30.5 million tonnes dwt compared with 19 million tonnes last year.

The United Nations' trust territory of Palau, which is administered as an effective United States' colony, is

reported to be establishing a new flag of convenience.

The government of Taiwan has announced that their merchant fleet has reached a record tonnage in the first quarter of 1990. The Communications Ministry announced in late May that the Taiwan-registered fleet now stands at 261 vessels of nearly 8.6 million tonnes dwt, up from 256 ships with 7.8

million tonnes in the first quarter of 1989. Though the number of ships hasn't risen much, a large number of smaller ships have been replaced with new, larger carriers and tankers. The government attributes this rise to last year's lifting of a ban on sailings to Eastern Europe and Vietnam. The ban is soon to be lifted on sailings to Albania and the USSR, and the government hopes that tonnage will pass the nine million tonne mark sometime this year.



TRAVEL BUREAU

Euro-package tour protection plan

A new directive adopted recently by the European Community Council of Ministers aims to protect consumers against breach of contract by tour operators — something which has plagued the travel industry for years. The directive will have to become part of the national law of all the member states by 31st December 1992.

Package operators offer holidays for which they are paid in advance. If arrangements go wrong — because of hotel overbooking or air transport problems — tour operators have tended to claim that they are not responsible for the operation of the different services offered. The consumer is often left without compensation.

The directive contains far-reaching rules concerning the liability of package organisers and retailers who must

now accept responsibility for the standard of services offered. The level of compensation payable may be subject to the limits laid down in international conventions.

However, the Commission believes that the financial limits applicable under these conventions are too low. Any revision of the limits will not only affect package travel since the conventions apply to all travel.

The directive also lays down rules on the information to be given to the consumer. Statements made in brochures are to be binding on the tour operator or retailer. If the package arrangements are made specifically at the request of the customer in exchange for a single payment, contracts must be in writing. Special provisions have also been made for last-minute reservations.

Under the terms of the directive, customers who cannot make use of the package they have booked will now be allowed to transfer the package to other people. The customer will also be entitled to cancel the contract if the operator seeks to alter the price substantially. The operator will be obliged to provide security covering reimbursement of the cost of the tour and repatriation of the customer in the event of bankruptcy.

Transport Commissioner Van Miert said that the Commission, supported by the Parliament, would have liked some of the provisions to have been stronger. He said that the Commission would monitor the implementation of the directive and might make additional proposals to increase protection for the package traveller.

Integration of European tourism services

Professional training, environmental considerations and quality of service were among the issues debated at a seminar on the Integration of Tourism in Europe organised by the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) in Istanbul in May.

The seminar examined the economic, social and environmental implications of the development of tourism in the European Community and non-EC regions of Europe and the relationship between professional standards and service quality in the tourism industry.

The ITF was represented by Felix

Nencláres and Juan Mendez of the Spanish Federation of Transport and Telecommunication Workers (UGT). Nencláres delivered an address on the

need to harmonise the requirements for the professional qualification of tour guides in both the EC and other European countries.

Hungarian travel agent privatised

The Hungarian state travel agency IBUSZ is planning a share flotation on the Vienna stock exchange this summer.

IBUSZ, which has been a nationalised company since 1950, employs some 3,000 full-time and 3,500 part-time workers, the latter mainly being tour guides.

The move, which is designed to raise up to US\$17 million and to enhance the company's image in Western business circles, will make IBUSZ the first Hungarian firm to have a full listing on a Western stock market.



PEOPLE

Sam Jennings has retired as General Secretary of the ITF-affiliated New Zealand Waterfront Workers' Union. Joe Harkness has been elected to serve as his successor.

Francis Mungroo has been elected President General of the ITF-affiliated Seamen and Waterfront Workers' Trade Union in Trinidad and Tobago. Ross Alexander is the union's new Secretary General and Michael Anisette is Assistant Secretary General.

Jim Herman, the President of the ITF-affiliated International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU), has been elected President of the San Francisco Port Commission.

Ernest Piggott has been appointed Executive Director of the United Seamen's Service (USS), following the retirement of Vando Dell'Amico, who had served in the USS for 33 years and as Executive Director for five years.

Michele La Calamita has been appointed Chairman of the Council of

European and Japanese National Shipowners' Associations (CENSA), replacing Hans-Jakob Kruse. Prof. La Calamita was previously President of the EC shipowners' organisation, the Comité des Associations d'Armateurs des Communautés Européennes.

OBITUARIES

A.H.M. Azizul Bari, President of the ITF-affiliated Society of Aircraft Engineers of Bangladesh (SAEB), died on June 12.

Stanley Correa, former General Secretary of the International Federation

of Plantation, Agricultural and Allied Workers (IFPAAW), died on May 31 at the age of 63. Having been a leader of plantation workers in Malaysia after the Second World War, he served as IFPAAW General Secretary from 1976-1982.



FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

31 July - 1 August

Executive Board

Florence

2 - 9 August

ITF Congress

Florence

3-7 September

Foc Inspectors' Meeting

Eastbourne,
England



CIVIL AVIATION

Aeroperu reinstates sacked crew

Six cabin attendants — unfairly dismissed by Aeroperu — have been reinstated following intervention by the ITF.

Aeroperu dismissed the six cabin crew members — Aurora Carrilo B, Wilma Ayasta, Pilar Duarte, Silvia Rannemberg, Roxana Hoyos and Susana Jordan — who are members of the ITF-affiliated Sindicato de Tripulantes de la Empresa de Transporte Aereo del Peru, for refusing to violate duty time limitations laid down in their collective agreement. The six refused to board a plane on 14th April 1990 to work after their maximum duty period had expired.

In response to a request from the union, ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis sent messages of strong protest to the President of Peru, the Labour Minister, the Transport and Communications Minister, the Aviation Minister and the Director of Aeroperu.

A heated exchange of telex messages then took place as the company's chief of human resources, Amador del Aguila, claimed that their action was

consistent with Peruvian labour law. Following a warning from the ITF that civil aviation affiliates in other countries would be requested to take solidarity action unless the cabin attendants were reinstated or brought quickly before the appropriate tribunal, the management apparently had a change

of heart. The union's General Secretary, Jorge Chavez Montoya, writing to Harold Lewis on 12th June 1990, said that the cabin attendants had been reinstated thanks to the pressure exerted by the ITF on the management, in particular Carlos Morales, the airline's President.

Ugandan unions worried by airline restructuring plans

Like many African airlines, Uganda Airlines Corporation (UAC) is in a mess. Only one plane — an F27 — is in operation. There is no doubt that major restructuring of the management and operation is needed but so far, despite promises from the Managing Director, Mr. Mboijana, and the Minister of Transport, the union representing UAC employees, the ITF-affiliated Amalgamated Transport and General Workers' Union, has not been consulted.

A team of experts were hired from a British company — PSIAIR — to compile a report and implement its

findings.

On 4th May, the ITF-affiliated Amalgamated Transport and General Workers' Union held a general meeting of all UAC workers at Entebbe Airport to discuss the PSIAIR report. The meeting passed a resolution urging the Government to set up a joint committee made up of representatives of Government, management, the union and PSIAIR.

The union is worried by plans to replace the entire workforce. They believe that only those workers who are found to be unsuitable should be replaced. They are also worried about the way in which the replacements are being found. Advertisements are being drawn up before wage levels for the various positions have been agreed. Nor are there clear procedures for conducting interviews or drawing up job descriptions.

At the request of the union, the ITF Secretariat has been in contact with PSIAIR and has received assurances that the management, not the workforce, is the main target of the restructuring process.

The next phase of the restructuring exercise involves retraining and redeployment. The union has to be involved in this work and all important decisions about the corporation's future — a request which the ITF has backed up in a strong message to UAC management.

Union dispute with British Airways in the USA

The ITF-affiliated International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) is involved in a dispute with British Airways (BA) in the United States centring on a massive increase in the carrier's use of part-time workers. BA is also planning to close or severely reduce the size of a number of BA maintenance stations at Chicago and to contract out the work there.

At the request of the IAM airline coordinator and ITF Civil Aviation Section Chairman Bill Scheri, the ITF has now enlisted the support of the British Transport and General Workers' Union. The issue has been raised at a

number of meetings between the UK union and British Airways management.

The IAM has been involved in talks with BA management for three years under the auspices of the National Mediation Board (NMB). While these negotiations were in progress, strike action would have been illegal under the US Railway Labor Act — the law that governs labor relations in the US aviation industry. However, after BA refused to comply with binding arbitration, the NMB released the IAM from negotiations, leaving the union free to take industrial action from 25th June.

Airline industry news round-up

In the United States, there have been important developments at the UAL Corporation, the parent of United Airlines, and signs that Donald Trump's empire is crumbling, while in the European Community there are differing views as to how far inter-airline cooperation should be allowed to go.

UAL's unions have sought to mount a new bid for the carrier. In conjunction with the New York investment firm Coniston Partners, the union group put forward a conditional proposal to buy the carrier for approximately US\$180 a share in cash, notes and stock worth US\$3.9 billion.

Coniston, which owns 11.8 per cent of UAL's shares has said it will fight to unseat the present board and top management if the offer is not accepted. The UAL board has said that it has found deficiencies in the bid and has instructed its advisers to explore alternatives, including asset sales and offers from other parties. However, they have agreed to talk to the unions.

Last year, the unions outbid the investor Marvin Davis by offering US\$300 a share for the company. The offer collapsed in October 1989 when the group, which included pilots' unions and management, failed to secure financing. The collapse triggered a crash on the US stock market.

Donald Trump, the New York real estate developer, has put his Trump Shuttle on the market. Some possible purchasers have expressed interest but so far there have been no offers or negotiations.

Trump bought the airline last June from Frank Lorenzo's Eastern Airlines for US\$365 million, financing the purchase and refurbishment with an estimated US\$400 million of debt. The Shuttle — which was previously highly profitable — is reported to have run up losses of US\$85 million under Trump's ownership due to its heavy debt burden. These heavy net losses forced Trump to sell the airline.

German Wings — the Munich based independent airline — is bankrupt. After a participation deal with a large

European airline fell through, German Wings' management was forced to halt all flying operations. British Airways, Lufthansa, Scandinavian Airlines System and Swissair are all reported to have been interested in the company. German Wings was the only sizeable domestic competitor to West Germany's national carrier Lufthansa.

The European Commission is concerned about the lack of competition in the domestic markets of member states. A particular concern is that major airlines will strengthen their position by purchasing their competitors — as in the case of Air France and Air Inter and KLM and Transavia.

The Commission is keen to stamp out any practices which it views as anti-competitive. The aim of the EC's 1992 project is to create a fully competitive Community market — Member States will no longer be able to restrict entry to their home markets. The Commission is worried, however, that competition may be thwarted by private agreements between airlines.

Several European carriers are forging alliances to strengthen themselves

Union safety campaign

The ITF-affiliated Association of Flight Attendants (AFA) in the United States began a travelling passenger safety campaign late last year focussing on Flight Attendants as Safety Professionals.

The aim of the campaign is to educate the public on air safety matters and to promote the role of the flight attendant as the primary safety professional in the aircraft cabin. The campaign was launched at Washington D.C.'s National Airport in April 1989 and has since travelled to Pittsburgh, Chicago, Seattle, San Francisco, Honolulu, Greensboro, N.C, Philadelphia and Miami.

Part of the campaign is an exhibition booth which has been transported to the various airports. It displays facts and photos on air safety, and facts about the union. The booth has been

against increased competition as the EC moves towards deregulation of the industry. A recent example is the proposed link-up between Air France, Lufthansa and Iberia.

Leon Brittan, the Commissioner in charge of competition policy, is particularly concerned about these "non-aggression" pacts between airlines. There are plans to block the link-up between British Airways, KLM and Sabena on the grounds that it is incompatible with the Treaty of Rome competition rules.

Under the proposed deal, BA and KLM would each acquire 20 per cent of a joint company, Sabena World Airlines. The remaining 60 per cent would be owned by Sabena. The joint airline would feed passengers to Brussels to be picked up by long-haul carriers.

The carriers' counter argument is that they have to re-group in order to take on the big US carriers. Transport Commissioner Karel Van Miert is also opposed to Brittan's stance on the issue.

staffed by AFA flight attendants who have demonstrated to passing passengers in greater detail than is possible during a pre-departure demonstration how to use safety equipment.

A safety information brochure containing a safety quiz was also distributed to passengers. During a survey commissioned by the AFA, passengers' average score on the ten-point quiz was just 55 per cent — safety awareness could clearly be better.

"The need to educate the flying public on basic air safety issues, and also on our role as safety professionals, is a priority for the AFA," stated AFA National President Susan Bianchi-Sand. "Most airline accidents are survivable. If passengers listen to their flight attendants and know a few simple facts about safety, they will greatly increase their chances of survival."

Phase two of EC liberalisation adopted

The "second phase" package of civil aviation liberalisation measures was adopted by a meeting of the Council of European Transport Ministers on 19th June. The meeting approved regulations on pricing and capacity sharing, representing another step towards the total liberalisation of the European Community air transport market.

The pricing zones system established under the "first phase" in 1987 has been made more flexible. Three new zones have been designated for scheduled air services — a standard rate zone ranging from 95 to 105 per cent of the normal price; a reduced price zone which ranges from 94 to 80 per cent; and a deep reduction zone which ranges from 79 to 30 per cent. The eventual aim is to implement a system of 'double disapproval' (see *ITF News*, January 1990) by the beginning of 1993.

The Council also discussed the need to block predatory pricing and other anti-competitive practices which may arise from a more liberalised environment. The Commission will be allowed to implement temporary measures (for a period of six months) to stop unfair pricing.

There are also plans to bring the prices of scheduled and non-scheduled flights on the same route into line provided they both provide the same level of service.

Restrictions on capacity sharing will be gradually reduced and will disappear entirely by 1993. This will mean that air carriers will lose their right to a guaranteed share of traffic on routes to or from their country. Special provisions will be laid down for capacity sharing in markets served mainly by charter carriers.

There is also a welcome commitment to developing inter-regional air services to avoid the problem of congestion at major airports. Capacity rules will continue to be more liberal for services linking secondary airports.

In the sensitive area of negotiations with Third Countries, the Council gave the Commission the go-ahead to begin negotiations with Norway and Sweden concerning traffic rights, pricing and

capacity sharing.

In the field of air freight, no firm decisions were taken but discussions centred on proposals to remove ob-

AMEL group meeting

The final meeting of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) aircraft maintenance engineers' licensing (AMEL) study group took place in Montreal from 7th to 18th May 1990 — with a very successful outcome.

The purpose of the group was to draft amendments to the aircraft maintenance engineers' licensing provisions contained in Annex One of the Chicago Convention. The requirement to hold a state licence covers only those who sign out maintenance work — personnel who actually perform the repair work need not be licensed. The ITF was represented at the meeting by Bjarne Larsen (Dansk Metalarbejderforbund — Denmark) and Stu Johns, the ITF's permanent representative at ICAO.

The central issue facing the group was the vesting of privileges in an "approved maintenance organisation". This principle embodied in the current version of Annex One, allows governments to appoint "approved organisations (ie. airlines) to take over the responsibilities which under the Annex should only be performed by licensed persons. In theory, an "approved" airline need not use any licensed personnel at all provided it was satisfied that the level of work achieved was equivalent. The ITF's ground engineer affiliates have long fought against the whole idea of vesting of privileges, believing that passengers have the right to know that the individual responsible for the maintenance of their aircraft, like the pilot responsible for flying it, is properly qualified.

The "vesting of privileges" clause has been removed from the draft amendment produced by the group. The new draft states that any unlicensed person authorised by an "approved organisation" to sign out maintenance work must meet the same

stacles to market access, to establish a procedure for fixing charges and for ensuring that all available freight charges are published.

requirements as a licence holder. This represents a clear victory for the ITF's position on the issue. The study group's recommendations will now go to the Organization's Air Navigation Commission (ANC) for approval.

APEA campaigns against racism

The Air Pacific Employees' Association (APEA), one of the ITF's Fijian affiliates, has launched a campaign against the company's openly racist recruitment and promotion policy.

Following the military coup in 1987, Fiji's military government has tried to whip up racial tension between ethnic Fijians and Fijians of Indian origin. They have even encouraged the establishment of racist trade unions — so far only two have been formed: in the public service industry and the sugar industry.

Another racist union — Air Pacific Viti Employees' Association — has been set up. Under pressure from the government and management, ethnic Fijians are leaving the APEA in large numbers to join the racist union, which may soon be strong enough to gain recognition from management.

The Government has demanded that employers give priority treatment to ethnic Fijians in staff recruitment, training and promotion. Air Pacific managers — keen to please the Government which is the largest shareholder in the company — quickly implemented a racist recruitment policy. The APEA has tried to have the policy withdrawn — so far without success and the union is now taking the airline's management to court. The ITF has protested to the company about the policy, which it sees as a blatant violation of human rights.

ITF PUBLICATIONS

The fifth edition of the ITF's most popular publication — the *Seafarers' Bulletin* — is now available in English from the Secretariat. Ten other editions, in French, German, Swedish, Spanish, Greek, Polish, Phillipino, Korean, Chinese and Japanese will be available shortly.

The *Seafarers' Bulletin* combines human interest stories about seafarers' struggles for decent conditions and the assistance the ITF and its affiliated unions have given them along with more analytical articles.

The Bulletin is distributed through a growing network of ITF affiliates, seafarers centres and missions and individual seafarer-distributors. If you are interested in helping to distribute the *Seafarers' Bulletin* get in touch with the ITF Research and Publications Department and tell us how many copies and which languages you require.



ITF CIVIL AVIATION BRIEFING

Issue No. 1
1990

Airlines go global

The world's airlines are already forming international groupings for the 1990s. Their aim is to strengthen their position in an increasingly crowded global market. Without the right alliances, airlines will not be able to compete. Mega-carriers from the United States, Western Europe and the fast growing Asia/Pacific regions are the major global competitors, while smaller carriers from developing countries are being forced to sell off their air-linies.

Globalisation is an attractive investment strategy for three reasons. Firstly, it is a good way of spreading risks for airlines who want to concentrate on aviation rather than becoming true conglomerates. Secondly, a big airline can profit from economies of scope — economies dependent on route network size. Finally, mega-airlines can exploit short-travel strength — by controlling distribution through powerful computer reservation systems and by exercising price leadership.

United States mega-carriers

The United States mega-carriers have been the driving force behind globalisation. Domestic deregulation in the US was intended to reduce concentration in the airline industry. Instead it strengthened the giant carriers. But domestic strength no longer guarantees success — there is not enough room for expansion in the home market. The big carriers are seeking to extend their strength overseas by forging international alliances and buying equity stakes in foreign companies.

European Community airlines with relatively small domestic markets also need to compete globally. In a recent report, the International Labour Office predicted that, by the middle of the next decade, "European aviation will be dominated by five to seven mega-airlines capable of competing in the world markets."

US/European Community relations

European carriers are worried by expansionary moves by US mega-carriers into the European Community. Their anxiety is easy to understand given the Americans' sheer size. American Airlines has now acquired Eastern's central and South American routes (involving 20 destinations, plus Eastern's Miami-Madrid and Florida-Canada routes). This year, American is planning to launch five new routes with a view to increasing its European services by 22 per cent — Chicago to London, Glasgow, Munich and Düsseldorf and Miami to London. American is already the world's largest carrier — and its fleet is set to grow to 842 by the end of 1994. By comparison, Lufthansa plans to increase its fleet of 183 aircraft to 227 by 1996 and to about 350 by the end of the century.

US carriers currently have an edge over their European competitors in the battle for the North Atlantic market and their position is improving steadily. In 1988, when the total North Atlantic market grew 10.5 per cent, traffic on US flag airlines grew 17 per cent, over three times the growth rate realised by the European carriers. Given the current fragmentation of the market (see chart on Page 2) and the financial weakness of Pan Am and TWA and possible structural changes in the EC after 1992, the situation could alter dramatically over the next few years.

The European Commission is now proposing that member states should stop negotiating bilaterally.

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Civil Aviation Briefing, Page 1

A new publication for ITF civil aviation affiliates...

The *Civil Aviation Briefing* — now available in English — features in-depth articles on the globalisation of the airline industry, the failings of deregulation in the United States and the social aspects of liberalisation in the European Community, as well as stories on:

- * Computerised reservation systems;
- * Random drug testing;
- * Airliner cabin environments;
- * Ageing jets;
- * Aircraft noise regulation;
- * Dangerous goods ;
- * Airspace congestion.

Copies are available from the ITF Research and Publications Department.

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