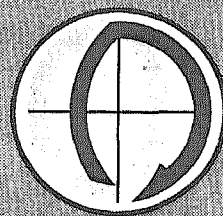


INFORMATIONS : NOTICIAS

ITF NEWS



NACHRICHTEN : NYHETER

HUGE AIRLINE JOB CUTS IN WAKE OF GULF WAR

Tens of thousands of aviation workers are losing their jobs as the airline industry is hit by the deepening economic crisis in some parts of the western world and the effects of the Gulf war.

Large scale increases in fuel and insurance costs and the massive cut in flights and passengers resulting from the onset of the war have had a devastating effect. A constant stream of airlines in the United States and Europe have announced serious financial losses and more than 25,000 jobs are to be axed.

In the USA, the recession has merely intensified the pressure on the weaker airlines caused by the aftermath of deregulation. Eastern Airlines has stopped trading and both Continental Airlines and Pan Am are now operating under Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection (see **ITF News**, January 1991).

On February fifth, Pan Am announced plans to fire 4,000 employees. 2,600 of these it blamed on the drop in traffic resulting from the Gulf crisis and 1,400 on its planned sale of London-US routes to United Airlines. This sale, like the parallel deal between TWA and American Airlines, is still dependent on the UK government permitting the purchasers to operate from Heathrow airport (see **ITF News**, January 1991). The latest round of talks between the UK and US government have broken down over additional rights demanded by the UK government for

its carriers in the US in return for allowing TWA and Pan Am to be replaced by more robust airlines.

Though TWA denies that it will soon follow Continental and Pan Am and seek Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, it has recently defaulted on \$75.5m of interest and principal payments due on certain bonds. It announced on January 21 that it was cutting overseas services by up to 50% and laying off 2,500 employees, including 1,500 cabin attendants, without pay. The airline reported a 60% drop in bookings. USAir also announced job losses of 3,585 on February 11. The lay offs include 660 pilots, 540 flight attendants, over 500 maintenance staff, 305 reservations agents and 1,300 customer service staff.

In Europe, the situation is equally bleak. Iberia was reported in early February to be considering laying off 10 per cent of its workforce, while Olympic says the Gulf crisis may force it to close down entirely. British Airways announced to its unions on February 11 a voluntary redundancy and early retirement package designed to reduce its workforce by 4,300 in the UK and 300 jobs overseas. 2,000

Continued on page 2

February 1991

Alfred Ndlovu freed (3)

DOCKERS

Dutch government bans nuclear cargoes (4)

PEOPLE (4)

SEAFARERS

Scandinavian Star report (5)

Campaign news (6)

ITF helps injured

Cape Verde seafarer (7)

Flag round up (8)

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS (9)

OBITUARIES (10)

INLAND TRANSPORT

African road transport conference (11)

ECMT hearing (12)

Paraná river unions meet (13)

Australian rail report (14)

CIVIL AVIATION

Air Niugini victory (15)

Olympic Catering complaint for ILO (16)

SOUTH AFRICAN TRADE UNION LEADER FREED (3)

ÖTV membership passes two million

German unification has brought about a weighty increase in membership of the ITF-affiliated Public Service and Transport Workers' Union (ÖTV).

Total ÖTV membership now stands at over two million, with 800,000 new members having signed up for the union in the former East Germany. They were joined by an

additional 18,000 new recruits from Western Germany in 1990.

At the ÖTV's Extraordinary Congress in Stuttgart on February 14-15, union President Monika Wulf-Mathies dismissed as a "provocation" calls for lower wage settlements to help pay for unification. She set out the union's goal of

bringing East German wages up to 65 per cent of Western levels in the first pay round, and called for the government to make available the necessary money to fulfil its promises to improve the conditions of the East German population.

Assistant General Secretary Åke Selander attended the congress on behalf of the ITF.

... Severe crisis hits aviation industry

Continued from page 1

employees will also be laid off temporarily on half pay in the hope that the situation will improve. Air Europe which operates from Gatwick airport has also announced 150 redundancies.

SAS has announced 3,500 job losses — 1,400 in Sweden, 1,100 in Denmark, 800 in Norway and 200 overseas. Sabena has announced 2,204 redundancies as part of a rescue package which will cost the Belgian government \$1.07 bn. The redundancies, amounting to around 18 per cent of the workforce, will, according to press reports, be 'largely voluntary'.

KLM announced that 500 jobs in the personnel and administrative departments would be abolished at the end of 1990 and a further 600 before the end of August 1991 as part of a cost cutting plan which has been in operation since October 1990. This is being done in part by early retirement but mainly by re-assigning the people concerned to other jobs. In addition, some 2,000 employees, mostly in catering and maintenance, have been transferred to other employers as a result of KLM's decision to sell off parts of its business. As a result of the Gulf war, some of KLM's employees are working reduced time. Fortunately, the Dutch government will compensate the workers involved so that

they suffer only a minimal loss in earnings.

Alitalia, having seen a 50% drop in passenger traffic, announced in February plans to cut 2,500 jobs. Unions organising Alitalia workers are opposed to the company's plans. A special decree law will apparently need to be adopted by the Italian parliament so that workers made redundant can receive up to 80 per cent of previous salary from the state. Air France unions were due to meet management in February to hear the airline's proposals for job reductions.

This crisis has also resulted in the beginnings of a savage fare war, initiated by British Airways on its North Atlantic routes. Requests by BA and other airlines for large fare reductions on these routes have so far mostly been turned down by the US government as part of the increasingly acrimonious dispute between the US and UK governments over landing rights at Heathrow. However, BA has cut some of its New York-London prices by a third, a move which triggered a round of similar price cutting by competing carriers, including Lufthansa, Pan Am, TWA, Delta and Continental. KLM is also planning discounts.

European airlines are clearly extremely worried about these developments which come in addition to the European Community's liberalisation programme which would,

in any event, have put increasing pressure on a number of national flag carriers. Representatives of the Association of European Airlines (AEA) met EC Transport Commissioner Karel van Miert on January 30 to request a suspension of EC measures during the Gulf crisis.

Following the meeting, van Miert announced that the EC will make it easier for airlines hard hit by the war to raise fares. State aid to compensate for higher security and insurance costs will be viewed sympathetically. Airlines will also be able to cooperate to share the costs of flying currently unprofitable routes without anti-trust action being taken against them while airport slots they vacate as a consequence will not be taken away. However, this looser regime will apply for only three months and it is clear that the European Commission does not intend to interrupt the liberalisation process.

A number of ITF European civil aviation unions, including the Federación Estatal de Transportes y Telecomunicaciones-UGT and FETCOMAR-CCOO in Spain, have asked the ITF to take urgent action to discuss the crisis at European Community level. The current state of the industry was due to top the agenda at the Joint Committee on Civil Aviation in Brussels on February 28.

SA transport union leader released

Alfred Ndlovu is free!

Ndlovu, who is first Vice President of the ITF-affiliated South African Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) and whose story has been featured in *ITF News*, was released from the notorious prison on Robben Island in January under a general amnesty for political prisoners.

He had served one year of a five-year sentence on trumped-up charges of attempted murder and 'terrorism' for which no real proof was ever produced in court. He lodged an appeal against conviction but the sentence was upheld.

Ndlovu was singled out for attempting to expose the 1987 terror campaign in Natal (see *ITF News*, January 1988), his arrest in October of that year forming part of a vicious government clampdown on trade union activists and anti-apartheid campaigners.

A bus driver working for Kwa Zulu Transport and a respected trade unionist and community leader, Ndlovu had held talks with the Inkatha 'warlords' who were behind much of the violence in the Pietermaritzburg area where he lived and worked.

It is to be hoped that Ndlovu will be able to take up the threads of his life and go back to being a bus driver and local shop steward. He will be resuming his duties as TGWU Vice

President (a position he was re-elected to unanimously by last year's TGWU Congress) as well as representing COSATU as its Natal chairperson.

South African Labour Act amendment becomes law

The South African Industrial Court can no longer stop legal strikes.

This is one of the key clauses in the Labour Relations Amendment Act (1991) that became law on February 14.

The adoption of the new law marks a significant victory for South African trade unions who staged a three year campaign to overturn the repressive measures contained in the original 1988 Act (see *ITF News*, March/April and September 1988).

The 1988 Act imposed severe restrictions on the right to strike, re-defined the concept of an unfair labour practice, removed protection against unfair dismissal, encouraged racially constituted unions and was widely viewed as an attack on the rights of the democratic trade union movement.

The new Act redresses these wrongs. The pre-1988 definition of an unfair labour practice has been restored and employers will be required to give 48 hours' notice if they intend to ban a strike.

Negotiations between the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the National Council of Trade Unions (NACTU) and the employers' body, SACCOLA, have brought about a change of heart on the part of the employers, who have now put their weight behind the new Act.

International trade union support for the South African union campaign, which was strongly backed by the rank and file, was also an important factor in removing the threat to harmonious industrial relations posed by the 1988 Act.

ICFTU appeals for Gulf peace

A call for renewed efforts to secure a peaceful settlement in the Gulf based on compliance with United Nations Security Council resolutions has been made by International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) General Secretary Johnny Vanderveken in a message to UN Secretary General Pérez de Cuéllar on February 14:

"ICFTU affiliates all over the world will now be more united than ever in their determination to press for an end to the war," he said.

In his message Vanderveken deeply regretted the deaths of hundreds of Iraqi civilians in bombing

raids on Baghdad. He further condemned the deliberate missile attacks by the Iraqi military on civilian targets in Israel and Saudi Arabia.

The ICFTU has also drawn attention to the situation of migrant workers in both the Gulf and the other countries involved in the war.

According to reports received by the ICFTU, foreign workers are being forcibly drafted into the Iraqi armed forces. Meanwhile Saudi Arabia is reported to have been deporting Yemeni workers because of their government's position on the war, and has retained the passports

of other migrant workers who wish to leave the country.

The Confederation has appealed to national trade union centres to "exercise extreme vigilance" with regard to actions by governments and employers that may foster racism against immigrant workers.

It calls on trade unions to "prevent any attempt to use this crisis to spread ideas that run counter to the tolerance and mutual respect, upon which are based the principles of solidarity that regardless of each worker's race, colour or religion constitute the mainspring of the free trade union movement".

Workers victimised in Panama

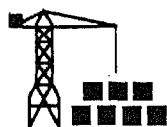
Victimisation of Panamanian trade union activists has reached a new height with the dismissal of 200 leading public sector union officials after anti-government demonstrations in December.

The government passed a retrospective law applying to the time of the demonstrations which allows for

the firing of workers who participated in "actions against democracy and the constitutional order".

This definition is open to "flexible" interpretation by the authorities. The Panamanian trade unions have appealed to the Supreme Court to have the law declared unconstitutional.

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and many national trade union confederations have written to the Panamanian government protesting against the new law and demanding reinstatement of the dismissed workers.



DOCKERS

Union boycott action inspires Dutch government to ban nuclear cargoes

Nuclear waste cargoes have been banned from the Netherlands until effective international standards are drawn up for their transport by sea.

The move, announced by the Dutch government in mid-February, comes after Rotterdam dockers boycotted a German nuclear cargo bound for Britain in line with the

ITF's policy of opposition to the carriage of nuclear waste on non-purpose built ships (see *ITF News*, January 1991).

The government ordered the cargo to be returned to Germany, although it later slipped into Britain via France before the unions were aware of what was taking place.

Now the Dutch authorities have decided not to issue any licences for the carriage of nuclear waste by any means of transport.

The ban will stay in force until the International Maritime Organization (IMO) passes specifications on how nuclear waste may be transported by sea.

New US law on seafarers' cargo handling

Foreign seafarers have been banned from carrying out cargo-handling work in United States ports, under the country's new Immigration Act.

The Act goes some way to implementing ITF policy that cargo-handling should be reserved for dockworkers except where special consent is obtained from dockers' unions.

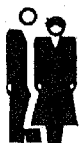
However, the legislation, passed

by Congress last year, allows exceptions for crews on board ships registered or beneficially owned in countries which allow seafarers on US ships to handle cargo in their ports.

To make sure that these provisions are applied fairly, it is essential that US longshore unions are fully informed as to the restrictions on

cargo-handling by seafarers that apply in other countries.

At the request of the ITF-affiliated International Longshoremen's Association (ILA), the ITF Secretariat has written to dockers' affiliates worldwide asking whether cargo-handling by foreign seafarers is restricted by laws, regulations, collective agreements or working practices in their countries.



PEOPLE

Akira Yamagishi has resigned as President of the Postal, Telegraph and Telephone International (PTTI) to devote more time to

his duties as President of the new Japanese trade union centre Rengo. His successor is **Curt Persson**, President of the ITF-

affiliated Swedish State Employees' Union (SF). Persson has been a PTTI Vice President for the past five years.



SEAFARERS

Scandinavian Star report highlights Foc threat to passenger safety

Flag of Convenience passenger ferries have come under sustained attack following an inter-governmental report into last year's *Scandinavian Star* disaster.

The report of the Scandinavian enquiry into the fire on the Danish-owned Bahamian Foc, which killed 158 people in April last year (see **ITF News**, April and October 1990), catalogues a scandalous list of inadequacies in equipment, ship's organisation and crew training.

The enquiry makes a series of important recommendations for future ferry operations — the fitting of smoke alarms, the banning of passengers from the car decks during the voyage and calls for crew members dealing with passengers to be able to speak the same language as them.

Fire alarms failed to work, lifeboats were poorly maintained, there were no Scandinavian language safety notices and crew members were not properly trained in emergency drills. Many crew members couldn't even communicate with passengers — these appalling inadequacies significantly increased casualties in the fire, which police now believe was the work of an arsonist.

"The vessel was not ready to sail with passengers when she started on the route," the report states.

A meeting of Nordic seafaring unions in Copenhagen on February 19, chaired by ITF Assistant General Secretary Åke Selander, discussed the points raised by the report and considered how to bring pressure to bear on Scandinavian governments to ensure that crew training standards and safety practices are radically improved.

The unions have highlighted the low levels of professional and language training on many Foc vessels, and are campaigning for Foc ferries to be banned altogether from Scandinavian waters.

The report's finding that the *Scandinavian Star*'s crew had been recruited only a week before the

ferry became operational, that most of them lacked proper certificates and could speak neither English nor any Scandinavian language, and that the pressure of long working hours had prevented them being adequately trained in emergency procedures can only add weight to the union campaign.

Swedish strike victory

Strike action by seafarers has forced the British Royal Mail Lines to sign Swedish "internationalisation" agreements for vessels it has bareboat chartered from Laser Lines of Sweden.

Crews on board the Bahamian flag *Atlantic Stream* and the Swedish flag *Rosa Blanca* went on strike as the vessels were in Hamburg and Rotterdam in December. The action against Royal Mail Lines' refusal to sign agreements for the *Atlantic Stream* and *Nordic Stream* threatened to spread to the Swedish flag *Bo Johnson* and the Norwegian international register (NIS) flag *Rosa Tucano*.

Royal Mail Lines was planning to

replace the Swedish crew on the Bahamian flag *Nordic Stream* with British officers and Filipino ratings.

The strikes by members of ITF-affiliated Swedish seafaring unions were sanctioned by the country's Labour Court. Royal Mail also came under pressure from Laser Lines because of the losses the escalating action threatened to impose on both companies.

Under the new agreements Royal Mail Lines is establishing a Swedish subsidiary to employ the crews. The "internationalisation" agreements will enable the company to benefit from Swedish tax relief.

The charter deal with Laser Lines is set to run for at least a year.

New US oil pollution law

Shipowners face huge fines if their vessels pollute the seas or shores with oil, according to new United States legislation.

The Oil Pollution Act (OPA) has much stricter provisions than the International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage or the International Fund for Compensation of Oil Pollution Damage, both of which are International Maritime Organization (IMO) instruments that the US government

has not ratified.

Under the OPA, liability for pollution caused by tankers can be limited by the "responsible party" (the owner, operator or demise charterer) to \$1,200 per gross tonne, subject to a minimum of \$10 million for vessels over 3,000 grt and \$2 million for those under 3,000 grt.

If the responsible party fails to report a discharge, fails to take part

Continued on page 8

Polly Anna escapes from Gibraltar

The *Polly Anna* was being detained last month by **Gibraltar** Port authorities for multiple defects following the failure of the British government to respond to a formal complaint from a seafarer who was briefly engaged on the ship (see **ITF News**, January 1991). While docked in Gibraltar, the vessel's Maltese registration was lifted (its provisional

St. Vincent registration expired last November), leaving the vessel unregistered, uninsured and unclassed. A member of the crew apparently ended up in police cells

charged with attempting to steal an outboard motor. He was bailed out and returned to the vessel. At 2h15 on the morning of Saturday January 26, the ship weighed anchor and escaped from Gibraltar. It had originally been bound for Greece. Gibraltar Port Captain John Prior told *Lloyd's List* newspaper that the ship was in an unseaworthy condition when it left port. The ITF contacted its Greek seafaring affiliate PNO and asked them to mount a special watch for the ship. A fax message was sent by ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis to the headquarters of the European Port State Control Authorities in the Netherlands alerting them to the incident and asking them to act. Deputy Secretary Richard Schiferli replied immediately that the Greek maritime authorities were alerted to "take appropriate action if the *Polly Anna* calls in one of their ports". The Port State Control equivalent of an All Points Bulletin was issued through the SIRENAC electronic mailbox system to all Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control member states

alerting them to the case, and the Secretariat promised to keep the ITF informed of any developments. That was on January 30. Nothing has been heard of the *Polly Anna* since. A rumoured appearance of the ship in the port of Piraeus turned out to be a false alarm. By now it is clear that the *Polly Anna* has managed to disappear.

when they take a firm stand for better conditions.

The Maltese flag of Convenience *Lito* — under arrest in **Rotterdam** by the ship's agent, an action which was joined by a wage claim of US\$23,000 for nine Sri Lankan and three Greek crew (see **ITF News**, January 1991) is scheduled for pub-



The crew strike in **Denmark** on the Honduran flag of Convenience *Tropicana* (see **ITF News**, January 1991) was forcibly ended by a Labour Court appeal ruling at the beginning of this month. The Egyptian crew, who were being cheated on their low non-ITF agreement, took strike action for an ITF Agreement. After a month's action, on appeal, the Jutland County Court ordered them to end their strike, receive the backwages owed under the disputed contract and be repatriated at the Saudi Arabian owner's expense. They were flown back to Cairo on February 11, and a new Egyptian crew were flown in to the ship. The local Egyptian Embassy provided the men with an indemnification against harassment or punitive action. The Danish Court ruling is a blow to basic trade union rights — the ITF firmly believes workers should have the right to take legitimate industrial action in pursuance of better working conditions and higher wages. In this case, the Danish courts did not agree, but the ITF stands behind the *Tropicana* crew and will continue to support crews

lic auction in Rotterdam on March 13. The sister ship of the *Lito*, the Maltese flag *Pascal*, is also under arrest by the Chancery Bank in **Valletta**, Malta. The 12 Egyptian crewmembers haven't been paid for many months and are owed US\$82,000 in back wages. Foc Inspector John Mansueto, from the ITF-affiliated General Workers' Union, has entered a writ of summons in the Commercial Court for US\$82,000. The ship is set to be sold at the beginning of March.

The Cyprus flag *Almas* — a ship beneficially owned in Cyprus and so covered by a Cyprus collective agreement — was underpaying its Filipino crew. The crew sought the assistance of US Foc Co-ordinator John Sansone, from the ITF-affiliated International Longshoremen's Association, in **New Orleans**, at the end of December. Sansone met with the Master and demanded that the crew receive their proper wages. After negotiations with the ship's agent, the company agreed to pay a total of US\$31,059.09 in backwages to the crew on January second.

Final settlement for severely injured seafarer who was abandoned by owners

Evangelino Ribeiro Silva, a 38-year-old Cape Verde able seaman, suffered terrible burns in an accident on the German-owned, Cyprus registered *Amazonit* (see *ITF News*, March/April 1988).

He was working in the cargo hold of the ship on 27 October 1987, while it was unloading in the Libyan port of Ras Lanuf, when a 200 litre drum fell from the hoist into the hold, splashing his body with battery acid as it spilled open.

He only survived thanks to the quick thinking of a fellow crewman with him in the hold who stripped off his clothes in a valiant attempt to remove as much of the deadly corrosive acid as he possibly could.

He suffered first and second degree burns to his face, chest, arms and legs, and spent some time in hospital in Libya with his burns being cared for.

As soon as he began to show signs of recovery the ship's local agent tried to put pressure on him to return home to Cape Verde. Silva refused.

He was discharged from the Libyan hospital at the end of November 1987 but had to attend each day to have his wounds dressed. Still, the agent tried to persuade him to go back home.

On 3 December, he was put on a plane for the Netherlands and was told that he would be met by a company representative in Amsterdam. But no-one met the plane when it arrived at Schiphol airport.

Silva was clearly in poor physical shape. Customs officers and the police took pity on him and had him admitted to hospital in Rotterdam.

A social worker from the hospital contacted ITF Foc inspector Gert-Jan Harmsen, saying that the hospital had been unable to get in touch with the German owners of the *Amazonit*.

When Harmsen contacted the owners they said they did not know Silva was in Holland.



Evangelino Ribeiro Silva displays his cheque, flanked (right) by Foc Inspector Gert-Jan Harmsen and (left) lawyer Romke Wybenga.

After examining Silva, the Dutch doctors said that it was a miracle he was still alive, especially after the flight from Libya to Holland. The medical report on him when he was admitted to the Dutch hospital described him as 'in severe and neglected condition', adding that the action of the company in requiring him to fly from Libya to Holland was 'absolutely irresponsible'.

According to the report, he would be in hospital for a number of months recovering, he would never be able to go to sea again and would always be in pain.

Silva eventually left hospital in mid-June 1988 but was told that he would need at least a further year's follow-up treatment. He was recommended to remain in Holland.

He moved to a guest house run by a fellow countrywoman, visiting the hospital each month.

Meanwhile, the ITF arranged financial assistance towards his legal costs so that he could pursue a case for damages against the *Amazonit*'s owners.

The case was handled by R J

Wybenga of the Rotterdam firm of lawyers, Beker and Company, who contacted the ship's owners and operators.

They proved extremely reluctant either to admit liability or to meet their financial obligations towards the severely injured crew man.

They contested liability, claiming that Silva had acted contrary to the master's instructions and was thus at fault. Silva's lawyers countered by arguing that the accident would not have happened if the master and officers had discharged their duty properly — ie if they had made sure that all crew members in the hold were safely out of the way before the load was hoisted.

The ITF also contacted the Department of Shipping within the Cyprus Ministry of Communications and Works to enquire whether the company had reported the accident as it was required to do within 48 hours and whether any investigation had been held.

Not surprisingly, given Cyprus' abject record in policing the ships

Continued on page 8

UK demand for maritime tax concessions

The ITF-affiliated UK officers' union NUMAST has appealed to the government for drastic measures to defend the declining **British**-registered fleet. In a special submission to Members of Parliament in advance of next month's budget, the union calls for tax incentives to boost shipping and special tax and social security concessions for seafarers. The union's appeal has been echoed by the shipowners, who have warned that unless measures are taken to protect what is left of the fleet, even more owners will flag out. The independent Centre for Maritime Policy Studies has also called for British seafarers to be given tax-free status, in line with existing exemptions in the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway and Greece.

The shabby little **Cayman Islands** Flag of Convenience register is making a big effort to "get rid of bad

ships and the rust bucket image," according to "Chief marine surveyor" Alan MacNaughton — a retired UK Department of Transport employee. "We are looking for prudent owners who know what running ships safely is all about," he is quoted as telling *Lloyd's List* newspaper. The Cayman Islands should know a thing or two about safe ships — they only established a "marine survey department" in 1988 — before that they had one and a half people running the register (from the back of someone's shop). As part of their "new image" the Foc has now expelled 13 ships from the register in the last 18 months — all for persistent non-compliance with regulations. Interestingly enough, the largest of these 13 is only 1,997 tons and most are in the 300-500 ton range. The register now has 463 vessels of 430,454 gross tons. Despite the fact that they have

chucked 13 ships off the register, MacNaughton says that Cayman Islands laws do not allow him to name the owners of the vessels.

While other European states opt for second registers, the **Dutch** government is continuing its policy of relaxing standards on the main flag to near-second register standards. A new bareboat charter law, set to go through Parliament by the end of the year, will allow owners the operational benefits of easy bareboat chartering in and out of the Dutch flag combined with other recent "relaxations" of flag rules. Under these measures, owners' taxation is reduced by 35 per cent and "core crewing" allows non-domiciled seafarers to be hired.

Since inauguration on December third, the new **Hong Kong** register

Continued on page 9

... Evangelino Silva receives nearly \$200,000

Continued from page 7

under its flag, the Department of Shipping replied in the negative. No accident had been reported and the Cypriot company had not replied to Cypriot government enquiries.

The ITF has advised the Cypriot government of the name and ad-

dress of the German owners of the vessel at the time of the accident and has requested them to follow up the matter.

A request for information from the ITF-affiliated Federation of Transport, Petroleum and Agricultural Workers of Cyprus, also revealed that there were no regulations for Cyprus flag ships on the

loading and unloading of dangerous cargoes! Nor were there any guidelines on safe working practices.

The case was finally settled in January 1991 when the owners agreed to pay Silva US\$ 195,523, to meet his repatriation costs and to pay his medical costs in full. He has now returned safely home to Cape Verde.

... Big fines for shipowners who pollute with oil

Continued from page 5

in clean up operations or follow other directions from the authorities, then they must pay the full fines. The same applies if the "responsible party" is found guilty of gross negligence, wilful misconduct or violation of federal regulations.

In a welcome recognition of the responsibilities of flag states, the law gives the Coast Guard power to deny ships entry to US waters if their flags do not match US standards on vessel licensing and the certification of seafarers.

Each state in the USA is allowed to enact its own oil pollution legislation with even more stringent pro-

visions on top of those of the OPA.

Shipowners have already initiated a campaign against the new law, arguing that it threatens to drive them out of business and make tankers trading with the USA uninsurable. They are also objecting to the costs involved in the OPA's requirement for double hulls to be introduced in tankers by 1995.

...Hong Kong: ITF studies the regulations

Continued from page 8

has only attracted four new ships. Assistant Director of the register S. Y. Tsui, in London in January, says another 13 are "in the pipeline". He stressed that the new register is very keen not to be labelled a flag of convenience. The ITF's existing policy is to treat Hong Kong ships on a "ship by ship" basis — any ship flying the Hong Kong flag which the ITF finds is not beneficially-owned in the territory will be treated as an Foc. The ITF Secretariat is studying the register's new regulations — any decision on a change in the flag status would have to be taken by ITF Seafarers' and Dockers' affiliates meeting in the Fair Practices Committee every June.

The **Japanese** flag fleet has declined by 83 vessels, according to a recent government report. Counting vessels over 2,000 grt, the register has lost 83 ships and 1,285,000 tons in the year to January 1991. Japanese owned Foc tonnage has now increased to a total of 1,543 ships of 36,910,000 tons.

Pakistan has announced plans to privatise the nation's shipping in-

dustry as part of plans to deregulate and liberalise the economy. Bids are being invited for the state-owned Pakistan National Shipping Corporation (PNSC). A privately owned

asking the government to establish a second register based on the resort island of Cheju that would offer tax concessions and "flexibility" in hiring non-Korean seafarers. The ITF-affiliated Federation of Korean Seafarers' Unions (FKSU) has al-

ready expressed its strong opposition to any such move. Ironically, the pressures from Korean shipowners to create a low-cost second register are a testament to the successful struggles waged by the FKSU over the last decade to raise working conditions and wages for Korean seafarers — Korea was once considered a "low-cost" labour supplying country by many operators of Foc shipping. Taking advantage of the economic growth of South Korea and the relative political liberalisation in recent years, the FKSU has fought hard to improve standards substantially for their members. Just as shipowners reacted to similar improvements by North American and European seafarers' unions by flagging out, so too are the South Korean owners. Korean-owned Foc tonnage is increasing, and now the clamour for a second register begins.

shipping company — Pan-Islamic Steamship Company — already exists.

South Korean shipowners are pressing for the government to establish a second register. They are



FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

12-14 March
19 March
19-20 March
9 April
9 April
10-11 April
15-17 May

3-4 June
4 June
5-7 June

Cabin Crew Technical Committee
Management Committee
Executive Board
Flight Deck Technical Committee
Ground Staff Technical Committee
Civil Aviation Section Committee
Road Transport Workers' Section Committee
Dockers' meeting
Seafarers' meeting
Fair Practices Committee

Buenos Aires
London
London
London
London
London
Copenhagen/
Södertälje
London
London
London

OBITUARIES

Dockers' leader Tim O'Leary dies

Tim O'Leary, Chairman of the ITF Dockers' Section from 1961 to 1974, died on 15 February, aged 81.

A London-Irishman, Tim started his working life, like his father before him, on the London docks.

He was appointed the youngest full-time official of the ITF-affiliated British Transport and General Workers' Union in 1935 and rose to become National Secretary of the Docks and Waterways Group, a post he held from 1956 until he retired in 1975.

He quickly won a reputation as a skilled advocate and conciliator, who substantially advanced the dockers' cause, often against strong employer resistance. He spearheaded a number of significant industry reforms, notably the end of the much-hated system of casual dock labour, and also campaigned successfully for shorter hours, longer holidays and the introduction of an industry sick pay scheme.

At national level, he was Joint Secretary of the National Joint Council for the Port Transport Industry and a senior member of the National Dock Labour Board, now dismantled, for over twenty five years.

Writing in the *Independent* newspaper, former TGWU General Secretary Jack Jones, who worked with Tim O'Leary for many years, spoke of him as being 'severely tested' as the registered dock labour force contracted with the advent of mechanisation.

But he withstood this test, helping to frame the new international instruments, adopted by the International Labour Organisation in 1973, on the Social Repercussions of New Methods of Cargo

Handling in Docks, which are designed to protect the rights of dock workers, to encourage cooperation between employers and unions in improving efficiency on the docks and to encourage governments to extend the appropriate safety, health, welfare and vocational training provisions to dock workers.

In recognition of his many services to the international labour movement, Tim O'Leary was awarded the ITF's highest honour, its Gold Badge, at the 1974 Stockholm Congress on his retirement after thirteen years as the Federation's popular and much-respected Dockers' Section Chairman.

He will be remembered by his many friends in the national and international labour movement as a good-humoured but determined dockers' leader.

Two leading Swedish trade union officials — **Bertil Whinberg**, President of the Construction Workers' Union, and **Ove Frederiksson**, President of the Wood Workers' Union — were brutally attacked by robbers in the Estonian capital Tallinn on the night of January 23 and left to die of their injuries.

At the time of their deaths, the two men were taking part in an international trade union mission to Estonia on behalf of the Nordic Federation of Building and Wood Workers (NBTF) and the International Federation of Building and Wood Workers (IFBWW) to forge contacts with the democratic unions and develop cooperation with the Estonian Wood and Forestry Workers' Federation. The delega-

tion was led by IFBWW General Secretary Ulf Asp.

Whinberg was the NBTF's President and a senior member of the IFBWW Management Committee and Frederiksson the NBTF Treasurer and a member of the IFBWW's Wood and Forestry Committee.

IFBWW President Konrad Carl, in a tribute to Whinberg, spoke of his deep and lasting commitment and contribution to the national and international trade union cause, adding that as trade unionists we had all lost a good friend. In Frederiksson, he remembered a warm and modest man who had risen to the top of his union and had been prominent in the IFBWW's Latin American activities.

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the International Trade Secretariats, meeting shortly after the tragedy happened, expressed their profound grief and sorrow at these tragic deaths and called for those responsible to be brought to justice.

ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis also sent a personal message to IFBWW General Secretary Ulf Asp, asking him to pass on the ITF's sympathies to the men's families.

Siim Kallas, Chairman of the Central Association of Estonian Trade Unions, also issued a statement expressing extreme shock at the violent murder of two good Swedish colleagues.

Shadrack Opala, Deputy Secretary General of the Kenyan Transport and Allied Workers' Union (TAWU), died on January 26, at the age of 55.



INLAND TRANSPORT

Workers confront the crisis in African road transport

There are few reasons for believing that the appalling conditions applying to road transport operations and working conditions in Africa will show any appreciable improvement in the near future. The road infrastructure is being pounded to pieces by grossly overloaded juggernauts, owner-drivers and sub-contractors proliferate, capacity is inadequate and overcrowding of buses is endemic, regulation of driving and working times is largely non-existent, payment of drivers by the number of trips made encourages excessive hours and provokes accidents, the involvement of politicians in the ownership and management of transport companies protects malpractice.

Despite their almost complete dependence on imported oil, African countries are experiencing increases in road transport journeys at or above the rates of increase in European countries.

These were among the many problems discussed by ITF affiliates at the Third ITF African Road Transport Workers' Conference held in Nairobi from 21 to 23 January. The Conference was hosted by the Transport and Allied Workers' Union of Kenya and was attended by 27 delegates from affiliated unions in Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Ferayi Makanda, Chairman of the African Road Transport Workers' Committee, chaired the Conference, which was opened by the Kenyan Minister of Labour, Philip Masinde.

Kenya has one of the highest population growth rates in the world



The Chairman of the ITF African Road Transport Workers' Committee, Ferayi Makanda (Zimbabwe Transport and General Workers' Union — on the right), in discussion with the Kenyan Minister of Labour, Philip Masinde, at the ITF African Road Transport Workers' Conference.

— over 3 per cent per year — and the population is set to double every 25 years. The consequences are already apparent in the chronic overcrowding of bus services and the Conference was pleased to take up the Minister of Labour's invitation to make suggestions as to how the situation could be tackled.

The Conference marked the retirement of Ben Sharman, International Representative of the ITF-affiliated International Association

of Machinists and Aerospace Workers of North America. The IAMAW has been a long-time supporter of the ITF's activities in Africa and, in wishing Ben Sharman an enjoyable retirement, ITF Assistant General Secretary Graham Brothers thanked him for his commitment over many years to the development of trade unionism in Africa. At the same time, the Conference gave a warm welcome to Alex Baye, Sharman's successor.

Chaos in former East German public transport

Urban transport services in the former East Germany are under threat after the virtual collapse of the economy and disputes about ownership and responsibility for public services.

The first town to feel the full impact of the crisis was Beeskow in Brandenburg, which announced that it would be shutting down all local public transport services except

Continued on page 12

ITF meets with European transport ministers

A decision by European ministers to focus more attention on sea transport was warmly welcomed by the ITF in January.

ITF Assistant General Secretary Graham Brothers participated in the annual European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) "audition of international organisations" in Paris on January ninth.

The annual meeting with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) linked body provides the ITF with an important opportunity to comment on the work of the ECMT and raise issues of importance to European transport workers with them.

Brothers welcomed the fact that the 1991 ECMT programme includes the holding of a Round Table on Short Sea Shipping:

"We believe that expansion of maritime transport between European countries can both help to overcome the insufficiencies in inland transport infrastructure and also provide employment opportunities for European seafarers. It is of the greatest importance that such trade between European countries be carried in ships registered under genuine European flags," he said.

Brothers expressed the ITF's disappointment at the outcome in 1990 of meetings about the alignment of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and

European Community (EC) road transport regulations (see *ITF News*, January, April and September 1990). Initially, there had appeared to be some support for movement towards a limitation on drivers' working hours, rather than an acceptance of the EC's regulations (which limit only driving hours and allow an effective working week of 80 hours for drivers). Now, the ECE appears to

for international road haulage.

On railways, Brothers said the ITF detects "a more positive attitude" from the ECMT. Measures need to be taken to harmonise the terms of competition between different transport modes (the "level playing field") so that each sector bears the true economic and environmental cost of operation:

"Recent arguments have been

"...the road transport industry will not attract qualified workers into the driving profession when conditions in other major industries average around 40 hours per week."

be ready to accept nothing more than an alignment with the inadequate EC regulations. Brothers reiterated the ITF's demand for drivers' duty times to be limited:

"Apart from the considerations of road safety and workers' health, with a permitted working week of 80 hours, the road transport industry will not attract qualified workers into the driving profession when conditions in other major industries average around 40 hours per week."

The blockades of the Italian and Spanish frontiers by truckers last year were the direct result of increasing deregulation in the road haulage industry, said Brothers. The ITF believes that there should be a system of minimum freight rates

based on the 'polluter pays' principle. We question whether this approach will produce the desired environmental result. It would not be desirable for the polluter to pay and then continue polluting. We believe a solution may be found in a combination of the 'polluter pays' and a system of 'environmental credits' for the transport modes, such as railways and inland transport, which are less damaging to the environment."

Brothers also raised an important issue in relation to transport of people with mobility handicaps. He commended the positive work of the ECMT and other bodies in this area. But while the question of improving access for the handicapped to public transport was being increasingly addressed, Brothers commented that the equally important issue of removal from a vehicle in the event of an emergency has not been adequately considered:

"Having made access to vehicles easier for people with mobility handicaps, and thereby encouraged them to use public transport, the public authorities and transport operators have an equal responsibility to ensure that people are able to leave the vehicles with all possible speed and safety when the need arises," he said.

... German public transport

Continued from page 11

school buses from February fourth. Other areas are threatening to follow suit.

The situation was brought to a head by the refusal of the state of Brandenburg to pay for the services. Because of confusion about exactly who now owns the transport networks, the Brandenburg authorities are claiming that the central office in Berlin which is responsible for

dealing with former East German state property should come up with the necessary financial support.

Monika Wulf-Mathies, President of the ITF-affiliated Public Service and Transport Workers' Union (ÖTV), has publicly called on federal government to intervene and prevent the collapse of urban transport services, before both employees and the travelling public are made to suffer any further.

ITF Paraná unions meet to coordinate response to new waterway project

The consequences for transport workers in the southern cone region of Latin America of plans for the development of the Paraná-Paraguay waterway were examined by representatives of ITF-affiliated inland navigation, dockers', seafarers', road transport and railway workers' unions from Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay at an international seminar convened in Buenos Aires on December fifth and sixth 1990. This was the first time that southern-cone unions had met since the establishment of an ITF sub-regional office in Buenos Aires. The office Director, Mario Caligari, organised the two-day meeting and led the discussions.

The Paraná river has its source in the south of Brazil and for much of its length forms the border between Argentina and Paraguay before discharging into the sea at the Argentinian capital of Buenos Aires.

The governments in the countries through which the river flows have embarked on a major cooperative venture to develop the potential of

this major natural waterway by more closely integrating road, rail and inland waterway transport. This important waterway project forms a vital element of plans for closer economic and cultural integration between the nations of the southern cone.

Though the long-term plans for the development of the Paraná waterway are still at an early stage, key government decisions are expected shortly and it was in this light that the meeting had been convened to decide on a joint transport union position.

The unions present in Buenos Aires demanded a voice in decisions taken on the future role of the waterway and urged that the appropriate machinery be developed at governmental level to facilitate effective union participation in all aspects of the project.

It was felt that the Director of the sub-regional office should have the right to attend government meetings on the project and to be involved generally in plans for inte-

grating transport in the southern cone region.

The meeting also suggested that a committee of transport union representatives be set up to prepare joint union positions for presentation to the government bodies charged with the project.

Regular and frequent meetings of the unions in the four countries affected by the plans for the waterway were advocated and the meeting asked the ITF and its Inland Navigation Section to make its expertise available to the sub-regional office to assist it in its coordinating role. The Section was also asked to undertake a survey of working conditions in the southern cone region with a view to bringing the collective agreements of the unions of the four countries more closely into line.

Holland and Hungary sign Rhine treaty

The latest of a series of bilateral treaties on shipping rights on the Rhine-Main-Danube canal has been signed between Hungary and the Netherlands.

The canal, planned to open next year, will link a string of countries in Central and South-Eastern Europe with Germany and the Netherlands.

The Dutch-Hungarian Treaty clears the way for unhampered shipping movement between the two countries, as well as for transit traffic. While transport within each country will remain the prerogative of national flag vessels, there is provision in the Treaty for further agreements to regulate transport by barges belonging to one country between the other and a third country.

European moves towards boat certificate harmonisation

Harmonisation of boatmasters' licences in European waterways is under consideration by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE). The Commission's aim is to allow for the mutual recognition of licences in European countries.

A Belgian government study for the ECE sets out draft details of a "unification of requirements for the issuance of boatmasters' licences".

Requirements would apply to the licensing of masters of boats carrying cargo or passengers — not

pleasure craft or seagoing ships using inland waterways.

Areas of professional knowledge specified in the draft cover navigation, manoeuvring and handling, vessel design and stability, engines, loading and unloading, procedures in special circumstances and communications. There are additional areas relating to passenger transport, radar navigation and the carriage of dangerous goods.

The ECE's working party considering the issue will discuss comments on the draft at its August meeting.

What happens to retrenched rail workers?

The failure of the Australian government and railway managements to develop proper skills policies is underscored in the findings of a survey of redeployed and redundant railway workers on four Australian railway systems.

The survey was conducted by a research centre within the Department of Transport and Economics, on the basis of a questionnaire distributed in early 1989 to over one thousand railway workers who had been offered alternative jobs or been declared redundant as a result of railway restructuring.

The report was prepared for the Railway Industry Council on the insistence of the ITF-affiliated Australian Railways Union (ARU), which also helped with the formulation of the questionnaire.

Its findings were published in a report entitled "Redeployment and Redundancy in Australian Railways", which examines the experience of workers caught up in the labour restructuring exercises of four major railway companies: the State Rail Authority of New South Wales, V/Line in Victoria, Australian National Railways Commission in South Australia and Tasmania, and Westrail in Western Australia.

Four groups of workers were surveyed: redeployed railway workers still in rail employment; redundant workers who had found alternative employment outside the rail industry; redundant workers still unemployed at the time of the survey; and redundant workers who had decided to retire. The survey covered January 1987 to June 1988.

REDEPLOYED RAIL WORKERS

Most of the 522 redeployed workers who responded to the questionnaire had been reallocated jobs regardless of their particular skills and many were now in less skilled jobs.

Almost two thirds reported that they had received no retraining and those who had been retrained had received 'on the job' training.

Nearly forty per cent of the sample were dissatisfied with their new rail jobs. Dissatisfaction was not necessarily linked to a fall in income as many workers who said they were unhappy in their new jobs were earning as much or more than they had done before.

REDUNDANT WORKERS IN NEW JOBS

As expected, redundant workers with obvious transferable skills had experienced the least difficulty in finding work. Most had found other work within three months of leaving the railways and were still in their first jobs, although typically in work that did not make use of their previous skills. Those who had had more than one job since leaving the railways generally had fewer formal qualifications.

Over half the sample were generally optimistic about their post-redundancy earnings and their long-term financial and career prospects.

UNEMPLOYED REDUNDANT WORKERS

The survey sought to establish why the third group — the unemployed redundant rail workers — had had difficulty obtaining work, the aim being to find out what more could be done to help redundant workers.

Most of the sample had been unemployed for over a year and had railway-only specific skills.

Most gave as reasons for not being able to find work the lack of available jobs in the area, and their lack of skills and relevant experience. It might have been thought that this would have encouraged them to enrol for a government retraining scheme, but nearly ninety per cent of the sample had not applied for retraining.

Although relocation and long-distance travel expenses exist to help unemployed workers to move to new areas in search of work only one worker had applied for relocation and only eleven for fares assistance.

RETIRED REDUNDANT RAIL WORKERS

The survey of the retired redundant rail workers sought information on

the financial status of this group and established an average total payment of A\$46,288 (US\$36,500), with some of the most skilled (managers, professionals) receiving payments in excess of \$50,000 (US\$40,000).

Most railway systems had voluntary redundancy and early retirement schemes in operation during the period covered by the survey and most retired workers had received a severance payment, the average figure being just over A\$28,000 (US\$22,000).

CONCLUSIONS

The study notes with concern that rail workers who had been redeployed were generally less positive about their future and more likely to be in jobs at lower skill levels than those who had found jobs elsewhere.

This suggests that the number of skilled jobs on the railways is declining, that the skills workers have are generally not transferable within the railway system, and that redeployment has not been managed very effectively.

The survey advocates a number of measures — none of them costly — that the railways should take when dealing with displaced workers. These include the provision of timely and accurate information, with employees being made aware of the corporate plans, what changes can be expected and how these will affect them and their families. It is also proposed that workers be given counselling to help them adjust to the changes and plan alternative careers both within and outside the railway system and that support networks be set up to enable workers take an active part in the restructuring process.

The railway companies were also urged to ensure that displaced workers knew about the possibilities for retraining and the financial assistance available and generally to treat workers who had given the railways many years of loyal service more sympathetically.

2,000 rail jobs to be cut in the UK

Over 2,000 railway jobs are to be cut in Britain, despite mounting concern over safety standards.

London Underground Limited announced on February first that it is to axe 1,000 workers. The London underground is the only urban transport system in Europe that receives no operating subsidy.

The decision will mean that some stations will be left unstaffed during off-peak hours, increasing safety risks and deterring women in particular from using the underground system.

The same day saw the news that BREL, the privatised company that

supplies rolling stock for British Rail (BR), is to cut a further 1,200 jobs.

BR Chairman Bob Reid has broken with the compliant approach of his predecessors and is publicly pressing the government for substantial increases in the funding of the railways.

The job cuts have evidently been decided without regard to the grave worries expressed by rail unions, politicians and members of the public about safety conditions on undermanned rail networks which rely on antiquated rolling stock. Carriages dating from the 1950s and which were due for replacement

were involved in a fatal accident at the Cannon Street terminal in London on January eighth.

Jimmy Knapp, General Secretary of the ITF-affiliated National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT) and Chairman of the ITF Railwaymen's Section, commented:

"This announcement explodes the myth that British Rail and London Underground are awash with investment. Despite all the publicity about the age of BR's rolling stock fleet after the Cannon Street accident, they still cannot find the money to replace 40-year-old coaches."



CIVIL AVIATION

Solidarity action key to Air Niugini victory

International solidarity provided by the ITF and its Australian affiliates was a decisive factor in securing the reinstatement of nine flight attendants fired by Air Niugini in December for protesting against excessive duty time (see *ITF News*, January 1991).

Following the boycott of the Papua New Guinea airline's only long haul aircraft at Sydney in January by members of the Transport Workers' Union, a special "Reference Board" to look into the case was convened by the PNG government.

At the ITF's request, Maurice Alexander, Senior Industrial Officer of the Australian Flight Attendants' Association, flew to Port Moresby to help the union prepare its case.

The Board hearing ended on February ninth and the decision — reinstatement of all nine workers with no loss of pay or allowances — was handed down on February 26. According to Alexander, the Board hearing was very one-sided:

"Our submissions were often unchallenged or remained intact at the conclusion of proceedings. They also

failed to justify their actions within their own submissions," he said.

The case, which brought a small and relatively young union up against a hard-line foreign management team hired by the state-owned airline, also has wider implications. According to Alexander:

"As a result of this experience I believe the PNG union will be able to go on from strength to strength. The case is very important in New Guinea for the union movement itself. It has become almost a test case between union rights and management rights."

WILD WEST COUNTRY

Industrial relations in Papua New Guinea are quite different from those in industrialised countries like Australia, as Alexander makes clear:

"I really enjoyed being involved with workers in an underdeveloped country who were under personal threats. Hilinai and Ben (the union officers) were certainly under enormous pressure and physical threats by management. It's real 'wild west country' but we were able to make it through by avoiding all

the 'ambushes'. I feel that we have been able to achieve some real good for these people on behalf of the ITF," he concludes.

This experience should demonstrate to airlines the risks of using heavy handed union busting tactics against ITF affiliated unions — even small ones.

Nikko hotels

Intense efforts on the part of the ITF's Japanese affiliates have so far failed to bring about a resolution to the long standing dispute between the Hotel Employees' and Restaurant Employees' Union (HERE) and the management of the Japan Air Lines (JAL) subsidiary, Nikko hotels, in Chicago and New York.

On 5 December, Shigeru Wada from the ITF's Tokyo office together with Brother Utagawa of the ITF civil aviation affiliate, the Japanese Confederation of Aviation Labour (KOKU-DOMEI), met with the Chairman of Nikko hotels. During the meeting, they stressed that, unless an acceptable settlement could

Continued on page 16

IUF files Olympic Catering abuses complaint

The International Union of Food and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF) has filed an International Labour Organisation complaint about basic trade union rights violations at Olympic Catering, a subsidiary of Olympic Airways, owned by the Greek government.

The violations happened when Olympic Catering decided to dismiss 950 workers (see **ITF News**, January 1991).

False charges were filed against the ten members of the Executive Committee of the Olympic Catering Workers' Union and they were dismissed, along with Federation President Stelios Koletsis. The un-

...Nikko dispute

Continued from page 15

be reached, international solidarity action against the company would be stepped up.

Wada and Utagawa were joined by Brother Kubo, ITF Vice President, and a representative of the Japanese Coordinating Committee of the International Union of Food and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF-JCC) for discussions with the President of JAL, KOKU-DOMEI and another of the ITF's affiliates, the Japan Air Lines Cabin Attendants' Union (KYAKUJO), have made further representations to JAL management.

It has also been decided that the ITF Tokyo office and the IUF-JCC should have regular meetings with the Japanese trade union centre Rengo to coordinate solidarity action. Representatives from KOKU-DOMEI also visited Chicago and New York from 23 to 27 January for further discussions with HERE. Their aim was to gather more up-to-date information which will be useful in further meetings with Nikko Hotels and JAL management.

ion's workplace office was sealed and closed.

Management refused to negotiate with the union as required under Greek law. The dismissal of the 950 staff was also illegal — under Greek law public sector staff declared surplus must be offered alternative employment.

When dismissed workers reported for work, they were ejected by police and barbed wire was put up around the work place.

Olympic Catering's management denied for some time that they were intending to sell the company but it was obvious that the company was being deliberately mismanaged as part of a secret privatisation plan.

Despite this, the union felt that the company could be made viable and submitted restructuring proposals, even offering to take responsibility for running the company.

When 66 percent of the company's stock was put up for sale, the employees put in an offer which was higher than any other bid received.

The management did not even respond to the union's proposal.

The increasing moves by airlines to sub-contract out catering and other services to separate companies, often with inferior conditions and trade union rights, will be discussed in depth at the ITF Civil Aviation Section Committee meeting in London on 10-11 April.

European Commission still clings to faith in 'market forces'

Despite the current crisis in the European aviation industry, the European Commission has lost none of its appetite for deregulation. In a speech given to the Aviation Club in London on 8 February 1991, Competition Commissioner Leon Brittan outlined this policy.

His basic philosophy is that market forces should determine what happens in the industry but that the Commission must ensure that these forces can work. Steps have to be taken to prevent established operators from engaging in practices which undermine competitive forces.

The Commission is keen to increase market access and does not want established operators to put up barriers to prevent new competitors from entering the market.

New entrants are also to be given priority for the allocation of new or vacant take off and landing slots at airports. Slot refusals which prevent a new entrant from taking up a competing service will be investigated, especially on a route which is only served by one or two airlines.

Commenting on airline mergers, Brittan acknowledged there is no point in creating space for competition if there are too few competitors left in the market place to make it effective. The Commission has drawn some lessons from the very negative experience in the United States, where deregulation, coupled with weak competition (anti-trust) rules, resulted in massive market concentration in the airline industry.

However, Brittan stressed that "It is not for the Commission to determine the structure of the air transport industry in the Community. The structure will be determined by market forces".

GENERAL SECRETARY : HAROLD LEWIS

PUBLICATIONS OFFICER : DAVID COCKROFT

International Transport Workers' Federation

Federación Internacional de los Trabajadores del Transporte

Internationale Transportarbeiter-Föderation

Fédération Internationale des Ouvriers du Transport

Internationella Transportarbetarefederationen

133-135 Great Suffolk Street, London SE1 1PD

Telephone: +44-71-403 2733

Telex: (051) 8811397 ITF LDN G

Fax: +44-71-357 7871

Cables: Intransfe, London SE1

E-mail: Geonet - GEO2:ITF