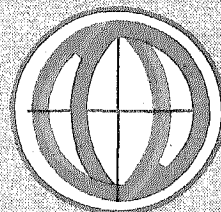


INFORMATIONS : NOTICIAS

ITF NEWS



NACHRICHTEN : NYHETER

THAI MILITARY JUNTA BANS STATE SECTOR TRADE UNIONS

The military junta which toppled the democratically elected government of Thailand in a coup on February 23, has announced a ban on trade unions in state-run enterprises.

The legislation has serious implications for all public service workers, including ITF affiliates who organise rail and civil aviation workers. With 200,000 workers, the public sector, which seems to be the first target of the military authorities, is the best organised group within the country's 450,000-strong trade union movement.

The Labour Council of Thailand and the Thai Trade Union Council are unanimous in the view that the measures "will in effect mean a total denial of basic trade union rights to workers, putting them three decades back to the dark days of the 1960s".

The ICFTU reports that the announcement contrasts sharply with the formal pledge not to restrict union activities made by the authorities at a meeting with labour leaders on February 25. The Public Services International reports that two Thai labour researchers have been arrested for publishing leaflets against the ruling National Peace Keeping Council.

ICFTU General Secretary John Vanderveken wrote to Prime Minister Anand Panyarachun on March 28 warning that the Junta's published intention towards the union movement would breach the constitution of the International Labour Organisation of which Thailand is a member state. Takashi Izumi, General Secretary of the ICFTU Asian and Pacific Regional Organisation (Apro), travelled to Bangkok on March 22 to convey to officials of the Department of Labour the strong feelings of international trade union organisations concerning measures taken and proposed by the Junta.

There are now plans for an international trade union delegation to visit the Prime Minister at the beginning of May to urge him to repeal the new legislation. The PSI and PTTI are organising a seminar in Thailand at the end of May to discuss how the legislative change will affect Thai unions and how they can best respond to the situation. ITF affiliates in Thailand have been invited to attend the seminar.

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Internationals back New Zealand unions

The international trade union movement has condemned the Government of New Zealand for its savage attack on trade unions and workers' rights.

Representations have been made to the New Zealand Prime Minister Jim Bolger on behalf of the International Trade Secretariats by Hans Engelberts, General Secretary of the Public Services International (PSI) and chair of the ITS General Conference, which denounced the proposed Employment Contracts Bill.

The protests by the International Trade Secretariats were prompted by numerous requests by their affiliated unions in New Zealand, who see the threat that a century of industrial democracy in New Zealand will be swept away by a wholesale assault on the basic elements of worker rights, including collective bargaining and the access of unions to workplaces.

The ITF Executive Board unanimously passed a motion of support for the New Zealand trade union movement at its March meeting (see **ITF News**, March 1991) and is strongly supporting the related but separate strike of New Zealand seafarers (see separate story).

The Employment Contracts Bill promotes mass de-unionisation and eliminates collective bargaining. Under its provisions, working conditions will be decided directly between workers and their employer, with the same principle applying to bargaining. Unions are to be pro-

scribed and will not be allowed access to the workplace. If adopted by Parliament, where the government party has a majority, the bill will become law, ironically, on the first of May.

Engelberts concluded his letter to

Bolger: "we support the New Zealand trade union movement in its demand that this Bill be withdrawn and that, instead, you sit down with the unions to solve the problems which you think are entailed in the present Labour Relations Act."

USSR union condemns use of force in Baltic states

The use of force against the independence movements in the Baltic states has been condemned by the USSR Fishery Industry Workers' Union (FIWU), whose request for affiliation to the ITF was accepted by the Executive Board in March (see **ITF News**, March 1991).

In a letter to ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis, FIWU President Viktor Ziryanov said:

"We have publicly condemned the use of the armed forces to deal with the internal problems of Lithuania and Latvia. We support the full observance of the rights of all peoples and nationalities to sovereign national development, to their free and democratic coexistence on the territory of each republic or country in the spirit of the UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights."

Since the FIWU underwent a thorough political overhaul and brought in free elections for union positions in early 1991, its new leadership has repeatedly expressed

support for the democratic forces in the USSR and for a decisive break with the old trade unions' subservient relationship with the government.

The FIWU is busy reorganising its own structures, so as to give greater autonomy to the regions and the different republics. Because of this and of the union's political stance the Baltic branches have decided to remain within a single USSR-wide organisation.

Like other industries in the Soviet Union, fishing faces drastic restructuring in the transition to a market economy and with the changing nature of political and trading relations between the USSR and other countries.

The FIWU is gearing up to meet these challenges, and has requested the ITF and its affiliates, particularly in Scandinavia and Western Europe, to provide assistance in organising trade union education programmes for its members and officials.

Europe prepares to join Sweden

If all goes well the year 2000 will see the opening of the long-awaited fixed link between Denmark and Sweden.

On March 23rd, the Danish and Swedish transport ministers signed a historic agreement giving the go-ahead to a combined motorway and rail link between the two nations.

The 17 km bridge/tunnel over the Øresund, the narrow arm of sea be-

tween Denmark and Sweden, will link the Danish capital of Copenhagen located on the island of Sjælland with the Swedish west coast port of Malmö.

Construction will cost an estimated Dkr 12bn (US\$1.87 billion), with additional on-land investment of Dkr 3.2 billion (US\$500.64 million) in Denmark and Skr 2 billion

(US\$312.90 million) in Sweden. The fixed link is part of a much larger transport project for the 1990s — the biggest in Europe — involving a total investment of US\$ 10 billion. Work has already commenced on a road-rail bridge and tunnel linking Sjælland with the Jutland peninsula to the west, and there are also plans for a Sjælland-German link.

Hungary to limit privatisations

The Hungarian government has rejected a privatisation free-for-all and has laid down firm guidelines on foreign and private ownership in a number of strategic industries.

Like other Central and Eastern European countries, Hungary faces the problem of dismantling the centralised structure of the old state-run economy. However, the ruling

Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF) has shunned the crash privatisation programmes being pushed through elsewhere in the region and is pursuing a more cautious approach.

In proposals published at the end of March, the government said that energy would remain almost completely state-owned and a 51 per

cent state share would be maintained in a series of other public services, including the airline Malev, and key industrial companies such as the bus manufacturer Ikarus.

The government also wants to compensate owners deprived of their property in the post-War nationalisations, which will further limit the sell-off of state assets.

Germany to invest in transport projects

The rebuilding and integration of east German transport is top of the agenda for Germany's new Transport Minister Günther Krause, who is impatient to win government approval for his plans.

He argues that efficient transport links between the former western and eastern halves of the country will act as a motor for the whole of the economy, creating jobs and attracting much-needed foreign and inner-German investment to eastern Germany.

It is an argument that is swiftly gaining support inside parliament and which has its backers among transport operators, who credit the new minister with a deeper understanding of transport problems, particularly those of Germany's sea ports, than many of his predecessors.

Krause believes that there is no time to waste if eastern Germany is to be got back on its feet after fifty six years of neglect. Rejecting official predictions that this cannot be achieved in less than fifteen years, he is demanding an immediate start to seventeen, mainly road and rail, projects costing more than DM 50 billion (US\$29.84 billion) that he would like to see completed by 1995.

Armed with a 40 per cent increase in this year's Transport Ministry budget, half of it already earmarked for investment mainly in east Germany, Krause — himself a former East German — is demanding improvements to five main east-west rail corridors and to three main east-west transit routes, more use of the inland waterways to transport freight from Magdeburg and Berlin to the

west German seaports and construction of a new regional airport for Berlin. He also supports expansion of Frankfurt and Stuttgart airports.

If the plans are to show results within five years, which Krause believes is vital if Germany is to meet the needs of unification and the single European market, ministers may have to resort to unorthodox measures to see that they are pushed through with all due despatch. One way would be to have them enacted as federal law, though he says he is willing to countenance other proposals provided they meet his tight time frame. Already, the government, recognising the need to improve roads in the east, has agreed to privately financed roads, as a way of hastening reconstruction.



SEAFARERS

New Zealand seafarers strike

New Zealand flag shipping came to a complete halt on April ninth, as seafarers joined an all-out strike against the new Employment Contracts Bill's specific impact on their industry and the shipowners' refusal to negotiate a new agreement.

The seafarers are making common cause with other New Zealand workers in fighting the vicious anti-trade union law, which will come

into force on the first of May (see separate story), but they have specific reasons for striking now.

The two key issues for the members of the ITF-affiliated New Zealand Seafarers' Union (NZSU) are the future of coastal cabotage and the seafarers' roster.

The roster is the established seafarers' employment pool. When a ship's voyage is completed, the sea-

farer takes his or her leave, then registers with the roster for a job on another ship. This system ensures a steady supply of maritime labour and provides regular employment for seafarers. The Employment Contracts Bill makes the roster illegal in its present form. A new system could be negotiated — if the employers were willing.

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European shipping safety foundation

The ITF is calling upon the European Commission to act on a European Parliament resolution calling for the establishment of a European Foundation for Safety at Sea.

In November 1988, the European Parliament passed a wide ranging Resolution on Safety at Sea dealing with marine accidents, pollution, port state control and barratry. It also called for the establishment of a European Foundation for Safety at Sea which would operate as a model European Shipping University.

The Foundation would provide training for all seafarers, Merchant Navy and Shipping Agency staff. This foundation would promote high standards in crew training and thus encourage greater safety at sea and environmental awareness. Publicly financed training would also relieve shipowners of responsibility for training costs and thus encourage a

more competitive European fleet.

Unfortunately, as is often the way in matters European, no effective action has been taken towards implementing this important resolution.

In fact, the European Parliament has twice before called for the establishment of a Foundation — on 28 October 1983 and 11 September 1986.

The ITF European Seafarers' Regional Committee, which met last January in Paris (see **ITF News**, January 1991) discussed the Safety at Sea Resolution and agreed that it was broadly in line with existing European Community Seafarers' policy on positive measures to support EC shipping.

ITF Assistant General Secretary Åke Selander wrote to EC Transport Commissioner Karel van Miert at the beginning of February pointing

out the ITF support for the resolution and urging the Commission to act on the Foundation:

"I do believe that the time has come for the Commission to put into effect the operative part of the above Resolution and I would much appreciate receiving information concerning the Commission's intentions in this regard," he said.

Copies of the letter have also been sent to the President of the European Parliament's Committee on Transport and Tourism and to Commissioner Vasso Papandreou.

No reply has been received from van Miert, but Papandreou has replied to say that she has written to van Miert reminding him that the Commission intends to give the occupational health and safety responsibilities of the Foundation to the proposed European Agency on Safety and Health.

...Strike settlement with some private shipowners

Continued from page 3

New Zealand shipowners have, however, taken advantage of the government's attack on trade unions to try and destroy the roster. The union is particularly angry about this duplicity because they have just completed a Task Force agreement, under which shipowners promised to maintain the roster in exchange for seafarers agreeing to reduced crewing levels. Now the shipowners want reduced crewing *and* an end to the roster.

The second major cause for concern is the future of New Zealand coastal shipping and the Tasman Sea trade. The New Zealand equivalent of coastal cabotage will be eliminated by the law.

Many countries operate cabotage regulations that restrict coastal and inter-island shipping to domestic flag ships (that in turn must be crewed by nationals). In New Zealand, the practice is established by a stipulation that wage agreements for union

ships must be applied to all ships trading in these waters. In effect, this means that coastal and Tasman trade ships can employ non-union, non-New Zealand crews, but they must pay union rates. Thus there was never any advantage in a shipowner hiring foreign crews. The Employment Bill removes that legal protection and opens the way for a Flag of Convenience free-for-all in New Zealand coastal trading.

These implications of the new law would not be a problem if the shipowners had been willing to negotiate new provisions. The present seafarers' collective agreement (the "award" in New Zealand terms) expires at the end of April. Negotiations on a new award broke down because of the shipowners' decision to hide behind the government's new Bill — and so strike action was inevitable.

ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis has sent a message to NZSU National President Dave Morgan

telling him that the ITF will back industrial action by New Zealand seafarers "in any way we can". He also reiterated the ITF Executive Board's unanimous support for the Asia/Pacific Regional Committee's motion declaring total support for the New Zealand trade union movement in its struggle to preserve trade union protection for New Zealand workers (see **ITF News**, March 1991).

Some private sector shipowners have agreed to a wage rise and continuation of the terms of the existing award. On April 15, NZSU members on 17 ships returned to work after accepting an offer from five shipping companies giving a two per cent pay rise and an extension of the terms of the existing award for 12 months. The state-owned New Zealand Railways, which operates the inter-island ferries, has only offered a 0.5 per cent pay rise and a three month contract extension — this has been rejected.

The *Polly Anna* is found — but was it ever really lost?

The *Polly Anna* has been found — no thanks to the efforts of the European Port State Control authorities. The ship, last heard of on January 26 when she escaped Port detention at Gibraltar, was unregistered, uninsured and unclassified — and one crewmember

was on bail for a theft charge (see *ITF News*, January and February 1991). Before detention in Gibraltar, a British seafarer had abandoned the ship in disgust

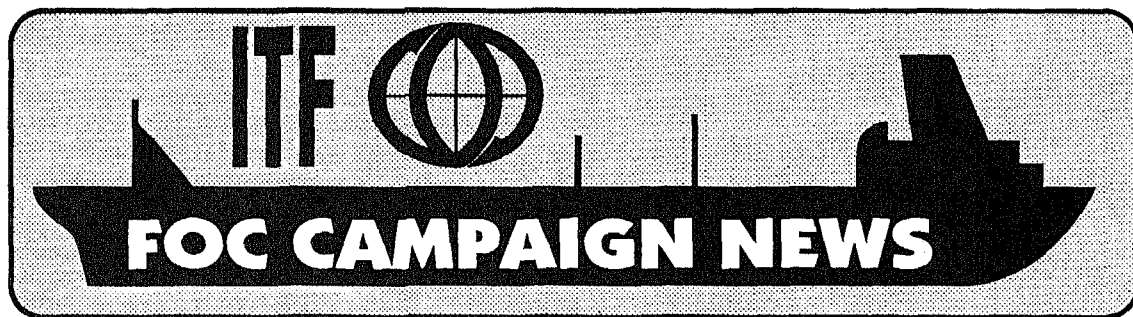
at the unsafe conditions and unhealthy operations of the ship. The seafarer and his union (the ITF-affiliated RMT) tried unsuccessfully to alert the UK Port State Control authorities to the ship — but they refused to intervene because the complaint wasn't made in writing (!)

After the ship fled Gibraltar under cover of darkness, ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis sent a fax alert to the Secretariat of the Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control (MOUPSC) in the Netherlands — the co-ordinating bureau of the 14 state European port state control system. The Deputy Secretary of the Secretariat, Richard Schiferli, replied on January 29 to say that the Secretariat had alerted the Greek authorities, had issued an electronic mail alert to all MOUPSC Port Inspectors and had asked all member states to keep the Secretariat informed of any action taken with respect to the ship. The ITF was assured that if there were any further developments, the MOUPSC authorities would tell us.

Nothing was heard of the ship for many weeks. Then the ITF received a tip that the vessel was berthed in Lavrion, near Piraeus in Greece.

ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis sent a telex to the MOUPSC on March first informing them that

tionals on the ship. The Moroccans have replied, but the British haven't. In March the British Minister of Shipping told the RMT that the government had no idea where the ship was, but had placed it on the watchlist and was co-operating with



we believed the ship might be there. No reply was received. On April 22, *Lloyd's List* newspaper reported that the ship was in Lavrion, deserted by the crew and no arrest or detention action had been taken by the Greek authorities. Acting on a tip, the ITF contacted Greek lawyer Dimitri Papas in Piraeus. He has arrested the ship in Lavrion for US\$16,000 in unpaid wages to the crew — who are ashore in Lavrion at the moment.

Papas said that the ship arrived in Lavrion on February 10 — in other words this ship that the combined efforts of 14 Port State Control authorities couldn't find has been sitting in the Greek port which it was bound for for two and a half months without being found. Papas says that the Captain and Chief Engineer have disappeared and that he arrested the ship on March 20.

He sent telex messages to the Moroccan and British embassies via the Greek Ministry of the Mercantile Marine on April 14 asking for their intervention to assist their na-

tional efforts, however, seem not to have included acknowledging the plea for help from Papas. Papas was in court on April 23, and the crew have been granted their wages.

But, in common with most people involved in this bizarre affair, he has been unable to get any response from the ship's German owner — Mr O Kristensen. It is probable that Papas will have to get the court to order the public auction of the vessel. The ship is still without registration, classification or insurance — or an anchor. It is apparently tied to the wharf by rope. Papas told the ITF that the ship was under port detention because of its total lack of certification. However, the Director of the MOUPSC Secretariat in The Hague, Netherlands, Captain Henk Huibers has told *Lloyd's List* newspaper that he hadn't known where the ship was and hadn't received any communications from the Greek authorities. He also denied

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... Crew arrest Polly Anna for unpaid wages

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receiving the ITF's telex on March first informing him that the ship might be in Lavrion.

According to Huibers, the ship is not under Port State Detention. This saga raises some very serious questions about the operation of the Port State Control system in Europe. Why was the ITF's message ignored? Why was the mobilised, Europe-wide alert, with an additional message to the Greek authorities, unable to find the ship in a Greek port? The UK Shipping Minister, Patrick McLoughlin, said in April that the government and MOUPSC had found "no trace of the ship". If the combined weight of Port State Control is unable to find a ship when they have been told where it is, how many seriously sub-standard ships are able to slip in and out of certain European countries without any action?

The only port that comes out of this murky affair with any credit is Gibraltar — and they aren't even part of the MOUPSC, but acted on their own common sense appraisal of the ship. The ITF and maritime unions have always supported the MOUPSC — and will continue to do so — but we have always said that inspections should be more rigorous, and more frequent. The ITF European Seafarers' Committee agrees strongly with the European Parliament that there is a need for another level of European ship safety control — based on the idea of "Coastal" rather than Port State Control. Given the growing concern in Europe about the safety of vessels plying its coastal waters, the time may well have come for coastal state control.

* A footnote to the *Polly Anna* affair. The ITF was brought into the case of a former second engineer on the vessel, Boleslaw Wodzinski. In January 1989 he caught his right



The *Polly Anna* — photographed in Rotterdam.

hand in the coupling of a bilge pump whilst trying to retrieve a spanner. He lost the tops of his thumb, index and middle fingers on his right hand. The Contract of Employment specifically stated that the employer had P&I insurance arranged and Accident and Disability Insurance covered in Germany with first class insurers. Despite this, and following the intervention of the Polish Chamber of Foreign Trade, Wodzinski's claim was never settled. He contacted the ITF at the end of 1990 to ask for our assistance. Attempts to approach the German owner, O Kristensen (who operates out of an office in Wales) proved fruitless. He was never available to speak to the ITF, except for one occasion when he claimed that Wodzinski's case was being dealt with by an insurance company whose name he couldn't remember! The ITF contacted the German insurance company directly and through their intervention the underwriters in London agreed to settle the claim even though the policy meant that the owners should have paid the money and then claimed it back. Boleslaw Wodzinski accepted £13,100 (US\$21,900) in full and final settlement of his claim — two years after the accident.

Polish seafarers, increasingly in demand by western shipowners as crews on flag of convenience vessels, are demonstrating a healthy spirit of militancy when it comes to demanding ITF rates. Shipowners who may think that Eastern European workers, long denied any real trade unions or basic rights to take industrial action, will quietly accept free market exploitation had better think again. On the contrary, as reports from ITF affiliates who are dealing with Polish and Russian crews confirm, these workers are keen to make up for lost opportunities and demonstrate their willingness to stand up for their rights. This militancy will benefit all maritime workers in the ITF — as it will substantially strengthen the ITF campaign against Flags of Convenience. In practice, the ITF has always been the only effective international organisation of seafarers — with the recent affiliations of Central and Eastern European unions to the ITF, and the gathering wave of pro-ITF actions by these crews, there can be no doubt that the ITF is now the *only* international vehicle for global seafarers. Shipowners take note. The ITF cam-

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Maritime casualties — a very bad month

A string of serious maritime casualties in European coastal waters has alerted public opinion to the need to introduce tighter safety regulations in coastal waters and has raised some important doubts about single-man watchkeeping experiments in busy shipping lanes.

FISHING VESSEL RAMMED BY FOC

On April 10, a British fishing vessel, the *Wilhelmina J.*, went down in the busy English Channel after being rammed by an Indian-owned, Cyprus Flag of Convenience, the *Zulfikar*. The six fishermen were all killed. The *Zulfikar* continued its

voyage to Egypt without stopping. The vessel didn't even report the incident for several hours.

The incident highlights two very serious issues for the British authorities.

If a ship with a crew of 27, operating ordinary watchkeeping procedures, could make such a serious mistake in busy coastal waters, the justification for experimenting with sole lookouts at night — which the British government vigorously supports — seems highly questionable. The ITF, maritime trade unions and many states will continue to strongly op-

pose any reduction in watchkeeping provisions as an irresponsible and dangerous measure.

Secondly, the fact that the incident occurred in coastal waters when the ship was bound for Egypt illustrates a massive weakness in the European commitment to improving shipping safety through the operation of port state control inspections — when a ship leaves port, or if it merely passes through coastal waters, maritime authorities are powerless to act. Even if a criminal act has been

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... Polish crew strike for ITF rates, and win

Continued from page 6

campaign has a secondary effect on many shipowners, forcing up non-ITF rates on many ships (conversely, if there was no ITF campaign, rates as a whole would doubtlessly drop...). The Polish crew of the Bahamian-registered, Greco-British owned *Ios* — a flag of convenience in the Marlborough (London) group — were receiving relatively "reasonable" rates of pay for a non-union ship. An AB on the 27 man *Ios* would receive a consolidated US\$600+ — lower than the basic ITF standard of \$821 basic, or the consolidated Total Crew Cost rate of \$1,000+ — but higher than the most exploitative rates the ITF encounters. Nevertheless, the crew of an Foc ship should receive ITF rates and should be covered by an ITF-approved collective agreement. However, in the case of the *Ios*, the crew weren't even receiving the rates they were supposed to for seven months. Angered by this, and aware of what they were entitled to, the crew went on strike in the Italian port of Naples on February 27. They co-ordinated their action with local Foc Inspector Enrico Cevaro (from the ITF-affiliated FIT-CISL trans-

port workers' federation) and they received the full solidarity of the local dockworkers. The Polish crewmembers (some senior officers were Greek) remained solid, and the strike ended in complete victory on March 9. An ITF Collective Agreement was signed for the ship, and the crew received \$344,886 in back wages (this included a sum of \$13,982 for two seafarers who had previously left the ship).

The Maltese Flag of Convenience *Leros Progress* was arrested by the US Marshal in Tampa, Florida on April fourth for backwages owed under an ITF Collective Agreement. The 22 Polish crew on the Greek-owned ship had not been paid for two months. The claim, for eleven crewmembers, was handled by USA Foc Co-ordinator John Sansone (from the International Longshoremen's Association) and a local attorney and included US\$55,000 in backwages and \$100,000 in penalty wages. Four days after the arrest, an out of court settlement was reached. The owners agreed to pay a total of \$84,447 — \$49,447 in backwages, and an additional \$35,000 as penalty compensation for non-compliance with the collective agreement.

The crew of the British-owned, Saint Vincent registered Foc *Sublime* weren't covered by any kind of collective agreement. Able Seamen on the ship were on US\$300 a month — and the junior officer only got \$500 a month. Not content with paying very low, non-union wage rates, the owners decided to stop paying the 18 Indian crew entirely. The ship was berthed in Singapore, and in early February the crew were owed nearly \$50,000 in backwages. Letters to the owners' agents, messages directly to the owners and an appeal to the Indian High Commission all failed to bring any satisfaction, so the crew asked the ITF-affiliated Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS) for help. In consultation with the ITF, the SOS arranged for the arrest of the vessel. The arrest procedures were begun by the SOS on March 28 — and by the first of April the owner made a full and complete settlement. All officers and crew received their full backwages and were repatriated at the owners' expense to India on April second. The owners also agreed to pay legal and survey costs.

... Make safety, not profit, the priority

Continued from page 7

committed by the ship (the *Zulfikar's* refusal to stop and failure to report may well constitute such an act), maritime authorities can only act when the ship is in port. This incident is a shining example of the need for another level of European maritime safety enforcement — coastal state control.

In an unusual development, no doubt because of the public outcry at the incident in the UK, the Cyprus authorities announced that they will be "conducting a full enquiry into the accident and if criminal negligence is proved to bring the men responsible before a Cyprus Court of Law." The Cyprus Foc register has a pretty poor history of holding enquiries. They also managed to get the name of the sunken fishing vessel wrong in their press release (calling it the *Wilhelmina Jane*, rather than the *Wilhelmina J.*).

ITALIAN FERRY DISASTER

Within 24 hours of the *Zulfikar* collision, 138 people were killed off the Italian coast when the Italian flag passenger ferry *Moby Prince* collided with the laden tanker *AGIP Abruzzo*. The ferry burst into flames as oil from the tanker enveloped it, and all but one of the 138 people on board perished. Seventy-six of the dead were passengers and 62 crewmembers — the one survivor was a crewmember. All 28 crew on the Italian flag tanker, which was anchored at the time of the collision, survived.

The cause of the accident is unclear. Fog was so thick at the time that some observers have speculated that it might have obstructed radar (the tanker's radar beacon was on). A theory that the watchkeepers were watching a football game on TV at the time has now been discounted. Possible radar or steering gear failure, or the likelihood that visual and radar data was misinterpreted by

the watch are now considered the most possible causes.

CYPRUS TANKER EXPLODES

Later on the same day, yet another maritime disaster occurred in Italian waters when the Cyprus flag oil tanker, the *Haven*, exploded in the bay of Genoa. After burning for a day, the ship exploded again and then sank. Three crew were killed and three are missing, presumed dead. The pollution threat from the ship caused a Mediterranean wide alert and has led to the Spanish government's unilateral imposition of new tanker safety and reporting rules for all vessels in Spanish coastal waters — a welcome acknowledgement by a European state of the need to extend safety measures to coastal waters.

The *Haven* comes from a very ill-fated class of ships. Its sister ships include the *Amoco Cadiz* (built 1974, wrecked 1978 off France in a major pollution disaster), the *Maria Alejandra* (built 1977, exploded off Mauritania in March 1980), and the *Mycene* (built 1976, exploded 1980 off Sierra Leone). The *Haven* was, in fact, on a maiden voyage after a two year refit in Singapore and the awarding of a life extension certificate (it was built in 1973). Given the record of these ships, yet again, questions must be asked about whether or not older tankers and bulk carriers should not be scrapped rather than given life extensions.

MORE FERRY ACCIDENTS...

Within four days of the *Haven* explosion, another two serious casualties occurred. The Greek flag passenger ferry *Rodos* caught fire in the Aegean Sea. The engine room fire gutted the ship — but since the incident occurred in the busy Greek internal shipping lanes the 641 passengers and crew were safely transferred to other vessels — the crew were eventually able to bring the fire under control. Hours later, the Norwegian ferry *Narvik*, with 140

passengers on board, ran aground in bad weather on the Norwegian coast. All the passengers and crew were safe.

SAFETY SUMMIT

It was a terrible week for maritime safety coming as it did just after the conclusion of the International Summit on Safety at Sea in Oslo (9-10, April). ITF Assistant General Secretary Åke Selander spoke to the summit about the ITF's safety concerns. Selander called for the industry to put safety considerations before profit — citing the high casualty rates of Flag of Convenience tonnage and referring to the obvious dangers of reduced crewing and single watchkeeping experiments. He also re-iterated the ITF's strong support for the scrapping of older tonnage — particularly bulk carriers and tankers. Finally, Selander stressed that it was time to reconsider transforming the International Maritime Organisation into a tripartite body (shipowners, governments and seafarers) rather than its existing government-only structure.

*Outside of Europe, yet another iron ore bulk carrier has sunk suddenly. A week after the European casualties, the Belgian-owned, Hong Kong flag of convenience iron ore carrier *Mineral Diamond*, sailing to Holland from Western Australia, disappeared in the Indian Ocean. A radio message, reporting that the ship had slowed down in heavy weather was received on April 17. The ship has now been reported as lost. This is the twentieth large vessel which has disappeared with a heavy cargo on board during the past 14 months.

The ITF and seafarers' trade unions do not have all the answers, but we have been calling for the shipping industry to make safety at sea the top priority. Many casualties at sea could be avoided, and it's time all sides of the industry came together to make sure they are.

Attacks on Cyprus register mount

Times are tough for the **Cyprus** flag of convenience register. The antics of the Cyprus flag *Zulfikar* (which appears to have been involved in a possibly criminal maritime hit and run sinking of a British fishing vessel) and the explosion in the Gulf of Genoa of the ageing tanker *Haven* (both covered in a separate story) have focused industry and public opinion on the appallingly poor safety record of the register. Cyprus flag ships persistently feature at the top of the list of ships detained by European Port State Control authorities for safety violations. The ITF has particular problems with Cyprus, like the Cayman Islands, over its strict secrecy provisions which mask true ownership. Serious doubts must always be raised about shipowners who are so keen to hide behind veils of corporate secrecy — what have they got to hide, and why? Cyprus' response to the mounting criticism? They're reducing registration fees and tonnage taxes as part of a new, "simpler" taxation package that will make Cyprus substantially cheaper than Liberia or Panama. A sure fire way to improve the quality of the ships flying Cyprus flags.

Shipowners and trade unions in **India** have joined together in a call for a resumption by the government of recruitment and training of seafarers. The ITF-affiliated National Union of Seafarers of India (NUSI) and the Indian National Shipowners' Association have jointly prepared a programme that is now in the hands of the government. The plan calls for direct recruitment by shipping companies incorporating a three month shore-based course and six months training on board ship. According to NUSI General Secre-

tary Leo Barnes, the average age of Indian seafarers is 50. The union has also applied for government permission to set up a training centre in Goa. A government committee, established in 1981, recommended the

suspension of all training and recruitment until the employment situation improved. That suspension happened in 1983 when the government closed all three training establishments, but the NUSI now believes that there will soon be a shortage of Indian seafarers.

The **Japanese** flag fleet has fallen by 83 vessels (1.28 million grt) in the last year to 449 vessels (20.4 million grt), according to the Ministry of Transport. The government's advice to shipowners is to increase the level of mixed crewing on Japanese flag ships in order to stay competitive with Focs. There are now 18 Japanese flag ships with mixed crewing arrangements, approved by the ITF affiliated All-Japan Seamen's Union (JSU). Meanwhile, the JSU and the ITF-affiliated Korean seafarers'

union FKSU have signed an accord to apply existing ITF manning policy to Japanese-owned Flag of convenience vessels crewed by the FKSU under ITF agreements. ITF policy states that the seafarers' union in the country of beneficial ownership has the right to insist on domestic crewing levels on ITF covered ships. The JSU's manning levels are higher than the FKSU's, and from January 1992, the FKSU will have to increase crew complements on the affected vessels.

The new **Luxembourg** register claims to have registered 44 ships. The ITF recognises the Luxembourg register as a second national register for Belgium — all Belgian owned, Luxembourg registered ships remain the sole business of the ITF-affiliated Belgian Transport Workers' Union. However, any non-Belgian owned ships on the landlocked register will be treated as Flag of convenience by the ITF. Luxembourg's Maritime Commissioner Marc Glodt told *Lloyd's List* newspaper that the "majority" of ships on the register are Belgian, and that shipowners from other European states have expressed interest in the register. Shipowners should beware that the ITF only recognises the Luxembourg register for Belgian ships, and usual policy and action will apply to the minority. The ITF's usual commercial sources only indicate 33 ships on the register so far.

The **Romanian** government is planning to set up a series of free trade zones to encourage the shipping in-



The ITF's Flag by Flag Roundup

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...Singapore bids for foreign owners

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dustry. The plans call for the establishment of three zones along the Black Sea (based in the port of Constanza), along the Danube-Black Sea Canal (which opens in September 1992) and along other canals. On top of a new law allowing direct foreign investment and special tax concessions, this should encourage the development of the maritime industry. Romania's shipping sector, which employs 360,000 people, is considered to be one of the country's most healthy economic areas, and Western European shipping economists are optimistic about the industry's future. The Romanian seafarers' trade union, based in Constanza, is a member of the ITF.

The **Singapore** register is making a bid to convince foreign shipowners to switch to their flag. A special trade mission will be dispatched later this year to Europe with the aim of encouraging shipowners to move. While Singapore is no longer on the ITF list of designated Flag of convenience registers (recognition of the fact that many Singapore flag ships are genuinely owned and controlled in Singapore) it is still treated, like Hong Kong, on a ship by ship basis — foreign owners registered under the Singapore flag must still have approved ITF agreements.

The **Spanish** flag fleet has been suffering badly from flagging out over the last year. The fleet has now de-

clined from a 1979/80 peak of 7.8 million gross registered tonnes to 3.1 million grt today. These figures are being paraded by the Anave shipowners' organisation as grounds for the development of a second register — opposed by the Spanish maritime unions. Owners are threatening to flag out more tonnage, and Anave claims the register will drop to a mere 100 ships of one million tonnes grt within the next five years.

Taiwan's shipping fleet is set to reach a record 10 million tonnes dwt in 1991, according to the government. The fleet presently stands at 9.5 million tonnes, and carries 31 per cent of Taiwan's international trade.

PEOPLE

Michael Chin, currently based at the Anglican Chinese Mission in Melbourne, Australia, has been elected as the next General Secretary of the International Christian Maritime Association (ICMA). He brings to his new post, which he takes up in November of this year, a wide experience as a priest, port chaplain at The Missions to Seamen in New York and Melbourne and a former Asian consultant to the Centre for Seafarers' Rights. His linguistic ability — he speaks six different Asian languages — and his understanding of the special problems of Asian seafarers is sure to serve him well in his new post. The present ICMA General Secretary is the **Reverend Bernard Krug**.

Robert Herdin has retired as Treasurer of the Finnish Seamen's Union and is succeeded by **Mikko Tuominen**.

Sigurd Bøje Larsen, Treasurer of the Danish Radio Officers' Association, has been elected President of the Welfare Council of the Danish Merchant Fleet.

Dr Shanti Patel, Vice President of the Indian trade union centre Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS) and President of the Bombay Port Trust Employees' Union and the All India Port and Dock Workers' Federation, has been appointed Chairman of the National Shipping Board.

Dr. Philippe H P Rochat has been elected Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). He succeeds **S S Sidhu**, whose term of office expires at the end of July.

Erik Skovmand has been elected the new Vice President of the Danish Ships' Engineers' Union. He suc-

ceeds **Preben Pedersen**, Vice President for the past three years, who had decided not to seek re-election. An official in the Ministry of Fisheries, Skovmand has been a member of the union executive since 1981.

Syd Tierney has retired after fourteen years as President of the British Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers (USDAW). An USDAW-sponsored MP, Syd was first elected President in 1977, a post to which he has been re-elected by successive union conferences. Prior to occupying the union's highest post, he served for over twenty years as an USDAW official. He is succeeded by **Audrey Wise**, who is a Labour Member of Parliament and the first woman to be elected to the union's presidency.



CIVIL AVIATION

Turkish airline industry halted as workers strike

More than 10,000 members of the ITF-affiliated Turkish Civil Aviation Union Hava Is are now on strike. They are demanding better wages and are protesting against the erosion of basic trade union rights by successive waves of repressive legislation (see *ITF News*, March 1991).

The strike, which began on April first, is against Turkish Airlines (THY) and the handling company, Havas, both of which are represented by an employers' organisation — TÜHIS.

The employers have responded to the strike by declaring a lock-out of union members, a move which is already causing severe financial hardship in a country with an annual inflation rate of 100 per cent. They are also making extensive use of strike-breaking services provided by other companies.

The strike at Havas has been undermined by Celebi Co and Istanbul Airlines, both of which are offering handling services to airlines usually served by Havas. Istanbul Airlines is also being used to break the strike at THY by performing maintenance work on THY aircraft at their maintenance centre in North Cyprus.

Two subsidiaries of THY are being used to break the strike — North Cyprus Airlines and Sun Express, which is jointly owned by Lufthansa. Most of THY's aircraft were transferred to these airlines prior to the beginning of the strike, as well as to Sultan Air. Hava-Is is warning passengers that these small airlines will not be able to operate THY's flights safely since the strike will deprive

them of adequate maintenance services.

In another development, THY employees based at the airline's Copenhagen office, who are members of the ITF-affiliated Handels- og Kontorfunktionærernes Forbund i Danmark, have been forced to take annual leave during the strike — effectively a lock-out. The management of the THY office in London has also tried to force its employees to take unpaid leave. The British Transport and General Workers' Union has succeeded in preventing this move.

The ITF is asking its affiliates to do everything they can to halt THY's operations during the strike. Already, the ITF-affiliated Vervoersbond FNV in the Netherlands has asked KLM not to carry out maintenance work on a THY Airbus, and

the ITF-affiliated ÖTV in Germany has requested Lufthansa not to allow Sun Express to undertake strike-breaking work.

The ITF-affiliated VPOD in Switzerland has asked Swissair not to provide any services to THY during the strike. The union is in a strong position to make this request; under the terms of their collective agreement, Swissair is not allowed to do anything which might undermine strike action by unions in other countries — especially ITF-affiliated unions.

Delegates at the meeting of the ITF Civil Aviation Section Committee in London on tenth and eleventh April adopted a resolution declaring their full solidarity with the striking Hava-Is members and calling on the employers to enter into meaningful negotiations with the union.

Biman handlers to get jobs back

It now seems that the twenty eight Bangladesh Biman baggage handlers at Calcutta airport, who were dismissed two years ago, will soon have their jobs back (see *ITF News*, September 1990).

The change in their fortunes is largely due to the airline's new managing director. At the suggestion of ITF Asia/Pacific Regional Secretary Mo Hoda, the men's local union representatives in Calcutta flew to Dhaka where they had detailed talks with the incoming director, who gave them a very sympathetic hearing.

In 1989, Bangladesh Biman retrenched the baggage handlers, who are members of the ITF-affiliated All India Federation of Foreign Airlines Employees' Unions (AIFFAEU) and replaced them by non-union casual workers hired for a few days at a time.

The dispute won the widespread support of unions with members working at Indian airports, aware of the implications for the jobs of their members if other foreign airlines in India adopted a position similar to that of Bangladesh Biman.

ITF Indian leadership programme

The third phase of the ITF's pioneering Indian civil aviation trade union leadership programme has been given the go-ahead following a meeting of the programme's top leaders in New Delhi on March 14th, attended by ITF Asia/Pacific Regional Secretary Mo Hoda. The meeting argued strongly in favour of continuation.

The project was in fact the ITF's first Asian educational initiative, launched in 1983, two years before the start of the long-term education programme for affiliates throughout the Asia/Pacific region.

The second phase, begun in 1986, is not quite over yet — it finishes this June — but the Project Committee, which oversees the conduct of the programme, was anxious to get an early decision to enable plans to be drawn up for future activities.

The main benefit of the training programme so far is that it has served to unite the industry's previously fragmented unions (it covers some 47 separate unions) and to encourage civil aviation workers who have taken part in training courses to play a more active role in their trade unions.

Under the umbrella of the All India Coordination Committee of Aviation Trade Unions

(AICCATU), there has also been a swift response to appeals from ITF affiliates involved in disputes elsewhere in the region for solidarity from their fellow trade unionists.

The Project Committee is appealing for funds for the programme until the educational and social welfare trust set up by Indian aviation affiliates is granted registration and is able to raise the necessary funds from workers and the public.

ITF unions are already making a substantial local contribution to the programme, by ensuring that members are given time off to attend training courses, by meeting the travel costs of participants and by generously making meeting places and conference facilities available to the programme.

The ultimate aim is to make the programme self-financing, but this will take a few years.

The programme leaders want the programme to continue much as before, with seminars, workshops and study circles and 'training of the trainers'. It is also proposed that special programmes should be devised for women workers as few women have been involved so far. Workers at small airports are another group for whom they would like to see special courses.

*The short training courses organised for transport workers under the auspices of the ITF and local representatives of affiliates in Eastern India in recent years have been extremely successful, leading to an increase in transport union membership and helping promote understanding among the rank and file of the need to support their union, especially in difficult times.

This was the conclusion of education officers and regional union officials attending a meeting on March third under the auspices of the Coordinating Committee of ITF Affiliates in Eastern India. Encouraged by the success of the programme so far, they asked ITF Asia/Pacific Regional Secretary Mo Hoda for the ITF's continued support for a programme of non-residential one-day training courses which they felt able to conduct without the need for ITF financial support.

The overall aims of the education programme in the region were underlined at a one-day training meeting of top leaders of ITF affiliates on April second which discussed a number of subjects including the contribution of the ITF to the work of the ILO, leadership skills and training needs.



FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

15-17 May	Road Transport Workers' Section Committee	Copenhagen/ Södertälje
21 May	Aircraft Maintenance Engineers' Licensing	London
29-30 May	Fishermen's Section Committee	Reykjavik (Iceland)
3-4 June	Dockers' meeting	London
4 June	Seafarers' meeting	London
5-7 June	Fair Practices Committee	London
11-12 June	ITF/PSI Urban Transport Working Group	Nantes

Air Niugini workers still not reinstated

The nine flight attendants fired by Air Niugini for protesting against excessive duty times are still not back at work, despite a Grievance Board decision in their favour (see *ITF News*, February 1991).

The Board ruled that the nine workers — who are members of the ITF-affiliated Papua New Guinea Flight Attendants' Association — should be reinstated with no loss of pay or allowances. Air Niugini management gave the ITF a written undertaking that the airline would abide by the Board's decision.

In the event the company did not accept the decision, despite its confirmation by the Labour Ministry, and appealed to the high court. Clearly Air Niugini management

were prepared to implement the Board's decision only if it went in the airline's favour.

Following the Board's decision, the airline's management wrote to the ITF claiming that the flight attendants had been reinstated and saying that the ITF should take no further interest in the situation. However, the ITF has learned that the flight attendants have not yet been placed on the payroll or allocated any work.

ITF Civil Aviation Secretary David Cockroft wrote to Air Niugini's Personnel Director Paul Aisa making clear that the continuing persecution of the flight attendants and their union was completely unacceptable. He strongly urged the

airline to abandon its action in the court and to take steps to implement the Board's decision immediately. Otherwise, he warned, the management risked an intensified campaign against the company on the part of the ITF and its affiliates.

The meeting of the ITF Civil Aviation Section on tenth and eleventh April in London adopted a resolution declaring its full support for the Papua New Guinea Flight Attendants' Association and congratulating the ITF's Australian affiliates for the solidarity action which they took in defence of the PNG union. The motion also condemned the dishonest and deceitful behaviour by the management of Air Niugini.

ITF section committee meets in London

Contracting out of aviation workers' jobs was a major concern of delegates at the meeting of the ITF Civil Aviation Section Committee on April tenth and eleventh in London. The meeting, which was attended by 76 delegates from 42 unions in 25 countries, adopted a resolution expressing "its total opposition to the sub-contracting, both national and international, of airlines and airport work and to the use of temporary employment agencies and any other form of casual labour in the industry."

Contracting out makes use of workers whose wages, conditions of employment and level of trade union organisation are significantly lower than those in the aviation industry. Areas worst hit include catering and cleaning services, aircraft maintenance and aviation security. There are even some examples of airlines buying in flight deck and cabin crew services.

It was suggested that unions could negotiate binding collective agreements with aviation employers to prevent sub-contracting. Delegates

also stressed the need to organise workers currently carrying out sub-contracting work for airlines or airports into aviation workers' trade unions and to secure for them working conditions comparable to those of aviation workers.

The meeting recognised the need to narrow the gap in wages and working conditions between workers in different countries. Employers are sub-contracting more and more work, including heavy aircraft maintenance, ticketing and reservations, to companies in other countries, where wages and conditions are inferior to those in the home country.

Delegates requested the ITF Secretariat to provide affiliates with regular and accurate information regarding pay and productivity levels to help union negotiators. There were also calls for the ITF to promote closer contacts between unions organising employees of the same airline in different countries as well as the unions organising different airlines engaged in the growing number of global alliances.

LICENSING

In some countries, contracting out has led to a serious reduction in the level of skills and experience of workers engaged in key safety-related tasks, including those associated with aircraft maintenance and with aviation security. It was felt that the only way to combat this danger was to maintain the highest possible standards of personnel training.

One way to protect safety standards is to ensure that workers in safety-related jobs hold state-issued licences which guarantee that they are properly qualified. The ITF has defended the principle of state licensing within international regulatory organisations such as the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) for a number of years. The meeting renewed calls for the introduction of international licensing standards for cabin crew.

Delegates also backed resolutions supporting the strike by Turkish civil aviation workers (see separate story)

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...ITF Flight and Duty Time policy adopted

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and the struggle by employees of Thai Airways International in New Delhi who were summarily dismissed when the airline transferred their work to outside contractors (see *ITF News*, January 1991). Another resolution declared the meeting's solidarity with the nine flight attendants dismissed by Air Niugini for taking limited protest action against excessive duty hours (see separate story).

NEW POLICY ON DUTY TIME LIMITS

A policy statement was adopted at the meeting dealing with the complex issue of flight and duty time limitations for flight deck and cabin crew. The need for a clear policy has become urgent in view of developments at the Joint Aviation Authorities (JAA) and in the European Community. ICAO has also started discussions on worldwide duty time limits. The new policy is the result of a series of discussions over the past two years involving both flight deck and cabin crew unions, and replaces the policy adopted at the 1980 ITF Congress in Miami. It has also been endorsed by the relevant technical committees.

FUTURE INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENTS

Discussion also focused on the impact of the deepening recession in Europe and North America and the aftermath of the Gulf War. A large number of airlines have embarked on major cost-cutting exercises, often involving large-scale redundancies. In most cases, there has been insufficient consultation with workers' representatives, and many delegates commented that the effects of the Gulf War are being used by airlines as an excuse for implementing massive redundancies.

Delegates concluded that estimates produced in recent years pointing to a doubling in freight and passenger traffic can no longer be relied on. However, they agreed that trade unions should not encourage

pessimism concerning the industry's future. With distinct signs of an upturn now that the Gulf War is over, the outlook for the industry is far from gloomy. A positive note was struck at the meeting of the European Commission's Joint Committee for Civil Aviation where both employers' and trade union representatives urged the Commission to halt liberalisation measures until the industry recovers from the effects of the recent crisis (see *ITF News*, March 1991).

EASTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE

Attila Losonczy, representing the ITF's first civil aviation affiliate from Eastern Europe — the Aircraft Technicians' Independent Union from Hungary — reported that civil aviation unions in Eastern and Central Europe face particularly serious problems because their airlines are uncompetitive.

He told the meeting that the privatisation of certain divisions of the Hungarian national carrier Malev would go ahead in May. One of the departments affected would be the maintenance division, where a workforce of 1,500 would be reduced to 500. The Association of Transport Workers' Unions of the Czech and Slovak Federated Republic, which has members in the civil aviation industry, has now been accepted into ITF membership.

TECHNICAL COMMITTEES

The meeting of the Section Committee was preceded on April ninth by a meeting of the Ground Staff Technical Committee where Claus Lindegaard (SiD, Denmark) was elected as Chairman in succession to Vittorio Toso (CISL, Italy). The Committee expressed its thanks to Vittorio for his work in the Section. In view of the highly differentiated nature of ground staff, the Committee decided to establish working groups to discuss the specialised problems of licensed aircraft main-

tenance engineers and air traffic controllers.

Claude Beaub (USPNT, France), who was elected as the new Chairman of the Flight Deck Technical Committee, stressed the need to reactivate the Committee and to maintain the ITF's campaign for the three-crew cockpit. It was felt that it was vital to continue with the Committee's work in order to show that the ITF represents all categories of aviation workers.

Olympic announces lay-offs

Olympic Airways, the Greek state carrier, has abandoned plans to lay off ground staff after aviation unions agreed to a two-year wage freeze.

The airline had planned to lay off 1,800 employees for three months on half pay as part of a plan to cut salary costs by US\$31.4 million this year. The remaining 6,000 ground staff were to be laid off in stages for between one and three months once the summer tourist season ended.

Under the new agreement, ground staff will also work several days of unpaid overtime during the summer tourist season and accept additional restrictions on fare discounts for their families. Pilots' and cabin crew unions had already agreed to similar concessions.

Olympic has just announced the sale of a 49 per cent stake in its in-flight meals subsidiary, Olympic Catering, to a Dutch-based affiliate of the Abela group — an international industrial and airline catering contractor. Protests by workers against the sell-off in November 1990 met with severe repression by the government (see *ITF News*, November 1990).

North American industry in deep trouble

The financial problems of US carriers continue with four airlines now operating under the protection of Chapter 11 of the US Bankruptcy Code. Unions at TWA have joined a bid to buy the heavily indebted Trans World Airways (TWA). Iberia has strengthened its position in Latin America by buying into Ladeco, while Nigerian Airways is being prepared for privatisation and Qantas may lay off nearly a third of its workforce.

The Air Line Pilots' Association, the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers and the TWA flight attendants' union have agreed to join forces with the West Coast investor Kirk Kerkorian to put together an offer for TWA. If the bid is successful, Kerkorian will hold 50 per cent of the stock and the unions 23 per cent.

A condition for the sale is the cancellation of the sale of TWA's London routes to American Airlines. The US Department of Transportation has still to give its approval to the sale of the London routes.

United is expecting losses for the first quarter of 1991 not dissimilar to the US\$296 million loss sustained in the last quarter of 1990. American Airlines is also expecting to report a loss for the first quarter.

The supreme court has rejected a plea by Pan Am to delay \$33 million in payments to lessors which supply 34 aircraft to the carrier. Pan Am, which is operating under Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code, hoped to delay the effect of a bankruptcy court ruling that would allow lessors to repossess aircraft if Pan Am cannot make the payments. It is questionable whether Pan Am will be able to make payments on the aircraft it needs to continue operating on important routes. Continental, which is also operating under Chapter 11 protection, has been hit by a similar court decision.

Two more US airlines have now joined Pan Am and Continental in

filing for Chapter 11 protection — **Midway Airlines**, the Chicago-based carrier and **Metro Airlines**, a small regional airline.

The US and Canada have begun talks on a new bilateral air traffic agreement which could give Canada's two main carriers — **Air Canada** and **Canadian Airlines International** — access to the US market, but expose them to stronger competition from US carriers.

The Canadian carriers are concerned that while only 40 per cent of cross-border traffic originates in the US, American carriers control 60 per cent of the business. A key reason is that the Canadian carriers are barred from US domestic routes. The US airlines' aim in the talks will be to connect more Canadian airports to their hub-and-spoke systems.

Qantas, Australia's government-owned national airline, is negotiating with American Airlines to acquire a 7.5 per cent stake in **Air New Zealand**, making it the second largest shareholder behind Brierley Investments, the New Zealand investment group.

Air New Zealand was sold in 1988 to a consortium led by Brierley after

the New Zealand government reversed an earlier decision to sell the airline to a group led by British Airways.

Qantas has only managed to offset its 1990 operating losses by the sale of nine Boeing jets. The airline plans to fire up to 5,000 of its 17,000 employees as part of a cost-cutting drive. The airline's financial problems are likely to force the Australian government to delay plans to sell up to 49 per cent of the airline.

Iberia, the Spanish flag carrier, is to extend its Latin American network, with its acquisition of a 35 per cent stake in the Chilean airline **Ladeco**. This follows Iberia's recent purchase of a 30 per cent stake in the Argentine national carrier, **Aerolíneas Argentinas** (see **ITF News**, March 1991).

The management of **Nigerian Airways** is to be transferred to the aviation ministry in preparation for privatisation. The federal government is to sell 60 per cent of its shares through the Technical Committee on Privatisation and Commercialisation. A new board of directors, which is likely to be headed by a former minister, will oversee the airline.



DOCKERS

Turkish dockers strike

Turkish dockers employed by the private port operator Limas Co. are taking strike action against the dismissal of 58 workers by the company and its refusal to sign a new collective agreement.

The ITF-affiliated port workers' union Likat-Is called the strike on April first after the management dismissed the workers when a mediator appointed to settle the dispute over the collective agreement had already submitted his report. This is contrary to Turkish law, and the union has filed a case against the company with the Labour Court.

ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis sent a message of protest to Limas Co. and its parent company Metas Holding, supporting the union's stand and calling for the re-instatement of the sacked workers and the signing of a new agreement.

ITF dockers' affiliates have been asked to send similar protests to the companies.



INLAND TRANSPORT

Striking US rail workers forced back to work

Most of America's 250,000 rail workers came out on a national strike from 0700 hours on 17 April after two marathon negotiating sessions in the run-up to the strike deadline failed to produce a settlement in the three-year-old dispute with the railroad companies (see **ITF News**, March 1991).

Congress reacted to the strike by rushing through emergency legislation ordering the strikers back to work. This was signed into law by President Bush in the early hours of 18 April.

The legislation establishes a three-man emergency panel whose job it will be to look at those sections of

January's Presidential Emergency Board report that are disputed by the management or unions or are considered to be unclear in their intention. Either side may request the panel to rule on recommendations contained in the report.

While this process is continuing rail workers may not take renewed industrial action. Nor will the railroad companies be allowed to impose any changes to existing working conditions except in the case of the three rail unions which reached tentative settlements before the strike began.

The panel must submit a report within 55 days on requested modi-

fications to the emergency board recommendations. Labour and management will then have ten days to negotiate mutually agreeable changes to the report or the panel's decisions before the recommendations become law. Even then, one final avenue of appeal will still remain as the panel may be called back at any time before the end of this year to clarify its decisions.

The unions are clearly deeply disappointed by a solution which rules out further use of the strike weapon and inevitably means that most of the earlier emergency board recommendations will be implemented.

Togolese rail cuts delayed for six months

Plans for the restructuring of Togo Railways involving the closure of two of the country's three railway lines and the loss of over 800 rail jobs will now be implemented in the first half of 1991, six months later than originally scheduled (see **ITF News**, January 1991).

This latest news comes from E K Kpoyi, General Secretary of the Togolese Railway Workers' Union SYNCHETO, who has written to ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis thanking the ITF for its prompt intervention with the Togolese national trade union centre, the CNTT.

On learning of the plans, the ITF had immediately contacted the CNTT urging it to use its good offices with the Minister and the Togolese President to reach a solution preserving as much of the rail network as possible.

Kpoyi said that the **ITF News** item had been read out to a conference of railway union members convened to inform them of the government's latest plans. The fact that the problems of Togo Railways had reached

a wider audience had been of great comfort to the workers.

With implementation of the savage job cuts now imminent, Kpoyi has again asked the ITF to use its influence to help promote a solution to the country's debt problems that reflects the interests of rail workers.

Meanwhile, however, the country is in turmoil as opposition groups call for direct elections and for the resignation of President Gnassingbé Eyadéma. On 5 April, the country's national centre, the CNTT, declared its independence from the ruling RPT Party.

Euro-truck exhaust limits

Trucks will no longer be allowed to keep on adding to environmental pollution in Europe when new EC regulations limiting the emission of exhaust gases come into force.

Currently trucks, despite their relative numbers, are far worse polluters than the private car, and are responsible for a staggering ninety per cent of harmful emissions from road vehicles in Europe.

Under an agreement in principle signed by EC Environment Ministers on March 18th trucks will have to comply with a phased plan aimed at drastically reducing the toxicity of emissions by 1996.

With effect from July 1992 all new truck models will have to be fitted with a device cutting harmful emissions by half and from October 1993 all trucks granted permits will have to meet the same requirements. Further restrictions, as yet unspecified, will be phased in in 1995.

The new regulations will be of special benefit to the Alpine transit nations of Austria and Switzerland, which bear an unfair burden of the heavy goods traffic on Europe's trunk routes.

Deregulation threat to European rail

Europe's railways could be facing a future in which a plethora of private railway companies vie for passenger and freight traffic with state-owned rail operators.

This prospect is opened up by European Commission proposals that would give new rail carriers access to national rail networks on the same basis as existing public operators. The proposals were given

their first airing by Community Transport Ministers at their March meeting.

Reaction to the plans was mixed, with countries in favour of privatisation, including Britain, suggesting that the Commission should go further and allow railway service companies to operate in third countries. UK Transport Secretary Malcolm Rifkind said the fact that the Com-

mission was the engine of this change was to be welcomed. This is hardly surprising, coming from a government that has recently been examining options for the privatisation of British Rail with renewed interest.

Other countries, notably Italy, France and Spain, urged a more cautious line.

It also emerged at the meeting that Dutch Railways (NS) might be the next candidate for privatisation.

Portuguese to upgrade key rail routes

More efficient north/south rail links between Oporto and the Portuguese capital Lisbon will be the end result of the current massive investment programme in Portuguese Railways (CP) totalling escudos 225 billion (US\$1.55 billion) over six years.

The geography of Lisbon has meant that the nearest rail bridge to the city is in fact some 35 miles upstream. Recognising this handicap to efficient rail communications, the government has given the go-ahead for the modification of the Lisbon road suspension bridge over the Tagus river to enable it to take both road and rail traffic.

At the northern Oporto end, the traditional rail connection via the hundred year old single track bridge over the Douro river will end next year with the opening of possibly the world's biggest pre-stressed concrete rail bridge, which will carry dual rail tracks.

The income-generating capacity of the Lisbon-Oporto link — it accounts for half of CP's income each year — will be further enhanced by the introduction of high-speed (160 kph) passenger services on a new trunk line which it is hoped will prove attractive to businessmen.

Rail links to Portugal's ports will be a further major beneficiary of the welcome injection of funds in CP.

One major project is the creation of a rail access route from the Lisbon-Algarve main line to the major

port of Sines which will enable imported coal to be transported by rail from the port to a new electricity generating station at Pego on a mainly electrified route. Tenders have already been invited for this project, and the state electricity company is to purchase a fleet of 65-tonne coal hopper waggons for the route.

The new level of investment — five times greater than the previous decade, and assisted by an escudos 6 billion loan (US\$41.38 million) from the European Investment Bank — will also permit the purchase of ultramodern locomotives and goods waggons and a massive electrification programme of Portugal's major trunk routes.

Union fights Danube line sell-off

The Austrian government has been warned that its plans to break up and sell off the Danube Steamship Company (DDSG) could sound the death-knell for the company.

The ITF-affiliated Commerce and Transport Workers' Union (HTV) has launched a high-profile public campaign to save the DDSG from being split up into freight and passenger wings and then privatised.

The plans, published at the end of last year, would remove the company's advantages of scale and endanger such facilities as Austria's only inland navigation training school at Korneuburg and the only maintenance wharf on the Austrian Danube at Linz.

The move by the government follows years of bad management of DDSG, which has been severely criticised by the HTV. The union says that the company should be placed under the supervision of the Transport Ministry rather than the Finance Ministry, as the former is in a better position to understand the needs of modern, competitive river shipping. Inland navigation should form part of an integrated national transport policy.

Major investment in the company is needed, along with the upgrading of the fleet. The HTV argues that the state should provide this investment in such a key public asset, which provides an environmentally friendly means of transport for goods and passengers.

The union has pointed out that putting the company's viability at risk is particularly ill-advised at a time when developments in Central and Eastern Europe are raising the competitive challenges in inland transport, and the new Rhine-Main-Danube Canal is opening exciting new areas for business.

New ITF rail safety handbook now available

What precautions should be taken when maintenance gangs are working in tunnels?

How do you avoid spondylosis?

What kind of gloves should be worn when using perchloro-ethylene?

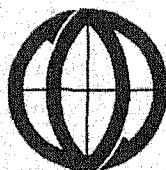
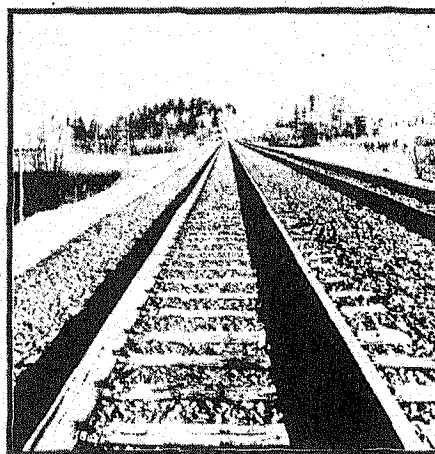
— The answers to these and many other health and safety problems facing railway workers can be found in "Making Railway Work Safer", a publication produced by the ITF Secretariat at the request of the Fourth African Railwaymen's Conference in Harare in 1990.

The publication contains guidance for trade unionists on major hazards faced by workshop and yard workers, track workers and train staff. There is also information about international safety standards and the role of health and safety representatives, as well as points for discussion which can be used at union training sessions.

"Making Railway Work Safer" is available from the ITF Secretariat in English. A French version is currently in production.

MAKING RAILWAY WORK SAFER

**SOME PROBLEMS AND GUIDELINES FOR TRADE
UNIONISTS ON HEALTH AND SAFETY QUESTIONS**



**International
Transport Workers'
Federation**

JOSEPH PUPOH IS FROM LIBERIA, NOT SIERRA LEONE

A mistake crept into the last edition of *ITF News* (see page 20). We wrongly identified Joseph Pupoh as being from Sierra Leone. He is in fact General Secretary of the Dock Workers' Association of Liberia (DWAL) and is now exiled in Sierra Leone, along with a number of other

Liberian dockers and their families, who fled the fighting in Liberia.

The exiled dockers are being helped by the Sierra Leone Motor Drivers' and General Workers' Union, who are channelling financial aid to the exiled dockers, with the assistance of a special hardship fund

that has been opened by the ITF.

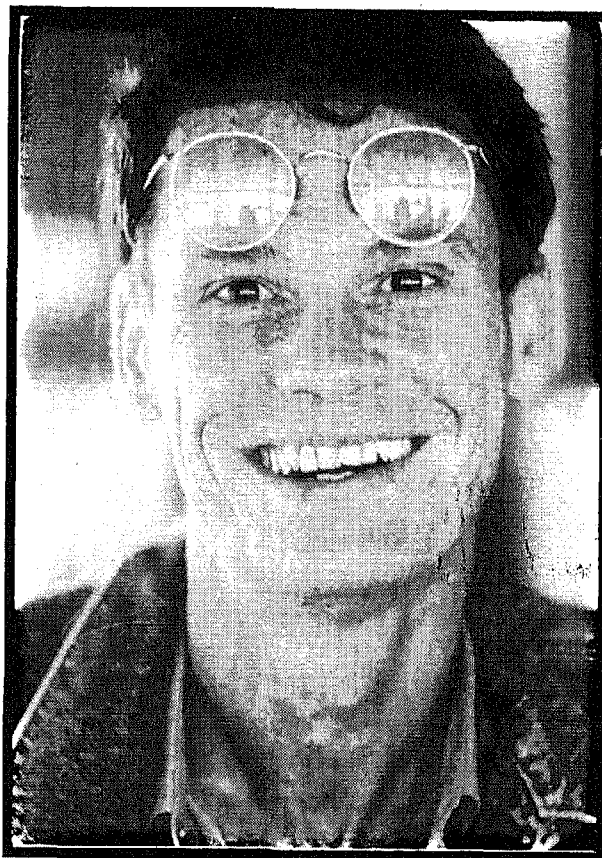
Pupoh has written to ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis thanking affiliates for this much-needed assistance and asking for their continued support. He also indicates in his letter that he will be visiting Liberia shortly to assess the situation there.

OBITUARIES

Harry R Hasselgren, Secretary-Treasurer and Executive Council member of the US International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) from 1949 until he retired in 1983, died recently, at the age of 99. Hasselgren first went to work on New York's West Side Piers in 1905. He then came up through the ranks, combining his wide experience of dock work with union office at local, district and national level. As well as being ILA Secretary-Treasurer, he was also Secretary-Treasurer of the AFL-CIO Maritime Trades Council and had the unique distinction of having served on all ILA negotiating Committees since 1915. Current ILA President John Bowers remembers Hasselgren as a 'dedicated ILA official' of many great accomplishments and a 'devoted friend'.

Leo Keltov, President from 1963 to 1979 of the Danish Taxi Drivers' Union, died on February first at the age of 79. He was also briefly towards the end of his career treasurer of the Copenhagen branch of the Drivers' Union, part of the ITF-affiliated Danish Transport and General Workers' Union SiD.

We regret to announce that **Manfred Spanner** has died at the tragically young age of only 45. An Austrian by birth, Manfred trained as a journalist and then moved to Sweden where he soon made his mark working for several union publications — notably that of the ITF-affiliated Supervisory Workers' Union SALF — before he came to work at Nautisk Tidskrift, the magazine of the ITF-affiliated Ships' Officers' Association SFBF, a job he combined with that of head of information. Manfred had a wide range of friends among the close knit maritime community and is remembered by his union colleagues



Manfred Spanner

as a lively, 'ideas man'. He also attended the very first meeting of union editors and research officers held by the ITF in June 1988.

Erik Svendsen, former President of the Danish Railway Workers' Union (Jernbaneforeningen), has died at the age of 68. Svendsen came of a railway family — his father was both a train driver and a union official — and it came as no surprise when he began work as a railway apprentice on leaving school. Elected President of the union in 1957, he held the post for twelve years, leaving to take charge of training at the Danish State Railways DSB, later being appointed operating manager and subsequently chief of passenger operations. At the time of his death Svendsen was acting as a consultant to the DSB.

L M van Waasdijk, former General Secretary of the International Federation of Industrial Unions and Factory Workers' Unions, has just died. In 1929, Waasdijk went to work for the federation — the forerunner of the present-day chemical, energy and general workers' International, the ICEF — at its Amsterdam headquarters. His career as an administrative official was interrupted by the war-time occupation of Holland, and it was to him and the then General Secretary Klaas de Jonge that fell the difficult task of reviving the International when the war ended. In 1950, at the International's 8th Congress, he succeeded de Jonge as General Secretary. During his term of office he laid the foundations for the ICEF's industrial structures by re-establishing separate sections for the world's chemical, glass, ceramics and paper industry workers.

SEVENTY YEARS OF ITF NEWS



The ITF was founded in 1896, but it wasn't until the post war reconstruction that ITF General Secretary Edo Fimmen and Assistant General Secretary Nathan Nathans launched the ITF Newsletter in 1921. Pictured here are the handdrawn mastheads from the remodelled 1924 edition — which were used until 1929.

GENERAL SECRETARY : HAROLD LEWIS

PUBLICATIONS OFFICER : DAVID COCKROFT

International Transport Workers' Federation

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Internationale Transportarbeiter-Föderation

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