

# **TURKISH AIRLINES STRIKE VICTORY FOLLOWED BY VICTIMISATION**

International solidarity from ITF civil aviation unions was an important factor in the victory achieved by the ITF-affiliated Turkish civil aviation union Hava-Is after a five-week strike against Turkish Airlines (THY).

The strike, which was supported by almost all aviation workers, succeeded in paralysing the country and the state-owned airline, faced with the approaching tourist season, clearly decided that it had to negotiate an agreement with the union. The strike was immediately followed by the dismissal of a significant number of workers, mainly trade union activists.

The strikes at Turkish Airlines (THY) and the handling company Havas (see **ITF News**, March and April 1991) were called off on May eighth and tenth respectively following the negotiation by the union of a 154 per cent pay rise (a figure which has to be viewed against the country's 100 per cent annual inflation rate). Workers in Turkey have seen a steady erosion of their wages and the strikes were the first by aviation workers for ten years. During the military dictatorship in the 1980s all trade unions were subject to heavy repression.

Democratic rights in the workplace also took a beating under the dictatorship, but the agreement signed at the end of the dispute provides for equal worker-management representation on discipline councils and occupational health and safety councils in the two companies. With this the management has lost its previous

absolute control over these councils.

A statement by Hava-Is expressed the union's appreciation for the messages of support received from transport unions around the world during the dispute. ITF affiliates in Switzerland, Germany and the Netherlands were particularly active in putting pressure on their national airlines not to participate in efforts to break the strike.

Only a few days after the strike had ended, THY management, clearly intent on securing revenge for its defeat, announced the dismissal of 33 workers ostensibly for 'economic reasons'. Since there is no unemployment insurance system in Turkey, the threat of dismissal is often used by employers to intimidate workers and undermine union solidarity. It seems that the management of THY, worried by the effectiveness of the recent strikes, are now keen to do this. Many union activists are among those who have lost their jobs, including Zerrin Güner who represented Hava-Is at the ITF's Florence Congress in August 1990.

Trade union activists have some legal redress against the dismissals, though their chances of regaining their jobs are not particularly good. Other workers have no opportunity to turn to the courts.

## **May 1991**

ETUC backs social Europe (2)  
Bamako toxic waste convention (4)

### **Obituaries (4)**

### **Forthcoming Meetings (5)**

#### **Inland Transport**

UIC and IRU back  
combined transport (6)  
TransNamib contract (7)

#### **Civil Aviation**

ITF AMEL meeting (8)  
Airline round up (9)  
UK says no to smoke hoods (10)

#### **Dockers**

Antwerp Dangerous  
Goods conference (10)  
North Sea dockers condemn  
'social dumping' (11)

#### **Seafarers**

Campaign news (12)  
Flag round up (15)  
Scandinavian Star  
relatives to sue (16)

#### **People (16)**

# ***ETUC backs stronger social Europe***

To prevent the philosophy of the free market from dominating the European Community single market from 1993 onwards, the European trade union movement will have to transform itself into an effective and united force. This was the clearest message coming out of the 7th Statutory Congress of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) which took place in Luxembourg from 13 to 17 May. The first steps in this process were taken at the Congress which adopted a new Constitution which amongst other things formalises the position of the sectoral 'industry committees'. Emilio Gabaglio (CISL, Italy) was elected as the new General Secretary on the retirement of Mathias Hinterscheid (Luxembourg) and Norman Willis (TUC, Great Britain) as President following the retirement of Ernst Breit of Germany.

The central theme of the Congress was the need to make the so-called social dimension of Europe a reality. It was addressed on the issue both by European Commission President Jacques Delors and by Social Affairs Commissioner Vasso Papandreou both of whom stressed the fact that the moves

towards a single European market were progressing in an unbalanced way as a result of the continued blocking votes of the British government on social issues. Majority voting would enable progress to be made in fields such as working conditions, vocational training and information and consultation of workers Delors pointed out. Madame Papandreou concentrated on the importance of developing the social dialogue including at sectoral level, and she stressed that this could include the negotiation of framework agreements at European level between employers and trade unions.

The call for a stronger social Europe was endorsed by an emergency motion from the Congress which called on the Heads of State and Government of the EC to incorporate its Charter of Fundamental Social Rights into the Rome Treaty itself, to adopt qualified majority voting on social questions and to recognise the role and place of employers and unions in completing the social dimension of the Internal Market. Other motions adopted by the Congress included one calling for stronger European action to cut unemployment, one

supporting the creation of a European Economic Area, and one opposing discrimination and second-class treatment for migrant workers. A resolution on the organisation of trade union work within transnational companies called on unions to work, through their 'industry committees', to strengthen the representation of workers vis-à-vis the management of companies operating in different EC states.

The ITF was represented at the Congress by European Vice-President Eike Eulen (ÖTV, Germany), General Secretary Harold Lewis and Research & Publications Secretary David Cockroft. ITF affiliates also participated as part of the delegation of the recognised 'industry committee' for the transport sector, the European Transport Liaison Committee, together with Clive Iddon, Secretary of the Brussels Committee. During the course of the week detailed and constructive discussions took place on how to improve the effectiveness of transport unions in Europe in the light of the decision of the ITF Executive Board in March to reactivate the ITF European Committee.

## **Last but not least: Albania**

In the newest addition to the upsurge of democratic trade unionism in Eastern Europe, workers belonging to the Union of Independent Trade Unions of Albania (UITUA) have brought the country to a standstill in support of economic and political demands.

The unions began a general strike on May 16th to press for wage rises of between 50 and 100 per cent and an investigation into the killing of four opposition activists in Shkoder on April second.

Public transport, newspaper plants and major factories were halted across the country, even in strongholds of the ruling Party of Labour.

With 300,000 workers taking part in the action, President Ramiz Alia agreed to meet leaders of the unions to try to resolve the strike, a development which would have been unthinkable in Albania until very recently. The UITUA was only officially recognised on February eleventh.

\* A joint mission by the Interna-

tional Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and the Miners' International Federation (MIF) visited Albania from April 29th to May second for discussions with the Independent Federation of Trade Unions and the Albanian miners' union. The latter's application for affiliation to the MIF was accepted on May fourth.

\*\* As ITF News went to press reports were coming in that Albanian miners had gone on hunger strike in support of their demands.

# Hong Kong unions fight for democracy

Increased awareness of the aspirations of Hong Kong's thriving independent trade union movement was the main result of a ten-day visit to Britain in May by leading officials of the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (CTU).

The CTU, which was set up in August last year, groups together four trade union federations and twenty two individual unions and is the only independent trade union centre representing workers in the free and autonomous unions in Hong Kong (see *ITF News*, October 1990).

Since the CTU was founded another union has joined its ranks and this, together with a rise in union membership overall, has brought it seven thousand new members — taking its total membership to 104,000.

The rapid progress made by the new centre in such a short time is clear evidence of the growing desire of Hong Kong workers to organise and defend their rights outside the traditional political alignments (pro-Beijing and pro-Taipei) of the two previous established national centres.

The seven-strong delegation, led by CTU Chairman Lau Chin Shek, was received at ITF headquarters on May 16 by General Secretary Harold Lewis and Asia/Pacific Secretary Mo Hoda for wide-ranging

discussions on the political and trade union situation in the crown colony. Also included in the delegation was Lam Hong Lun, who is a CTU Vice Chairman and Chairman of the Federation of Transport Workers' Organisations.

During their time in Britain, the delegation also visited the TUC and a number of British unions, as well as the Labour Party.

In the course of these consultations, the delegation explained that the CTU is working to build up a strong trade union base capable of defending the true interests of the working people in the changing political and economic circumstances in the run-up to 1997 when Hong Kong will be taken over by China.

In particular, the delegation sought the support of the ITF and of British unions for the CTU campaign for full recognition in Hong Kong of ILO Conventions on freedom of association and the right to organise and conduct free collective bargaining and for CTU efforts to extend workers' employment rights and to improve access to trade union education.

In discussions with the unions and the Labour Party, the delegation outlined the CTU strategy for the Legislative Council elections in September 1991. The CTU is seeking a fundamental change in the

electoral process to make it fully democratic and accountable to the people of Hong Kong, rather than just to the interests of big business as at present.

As a first step, the independent unions will be campaigning this year for the unions and employers to be given an equal number of indirectly elected Legislative Council seats (rather than the present distribution of two union and six employer seats).

As a result of the visit, a close working relationship has been established between the increasingly influential independent trade union movement in Hong Kong and trade unionists in Britain. Effective channels of communication have been opened up, which will prove especially important as the unions face the challenges of the 1990s.

## ***Congrats to Faroese union***

ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis sent warm congratulations to the Ships' Engineers' Union in the Faroe Islands which celebrated its 50th anniversary in April. The union, which organises engine room personnel on Faroese merchant ships and fishing vessels, is one of the ITF's newest affiliates, having been a member of the Federation since last July.

# ***New labour law in Bangladesh***

Plans for a new framework of industrial relations in Bangladesh are causing difficulties for some Bangladeshi unions.

The root of the problem is the amendment of Industrial Relations Ordinance 69 (IRO 69), according to which there will be only one union per industry recognised as the official bargaining agent. Additionally, no union will be entitled to registration if it does not have the support of thirty per cent of the

workers in the relevant industry.

While many unions recognise that the new Ordinance (IRO 89) is welcome in that it will help create strong industry based unions, there are others, notably some category unions in the aviation sector, who have understandable misgivings.

The ITF-affiliated Bangladesh Biman Flying Services Association of Cabin Crew would prefer two category-based unions in the aviation sector. But the ITF-affiliated

Bangladesh Biman Sramik Union (BBSU), which organises both ground and flying staff, disagrees, favouring the government scheme. The BBSU has also mounted a challenge in the courts to the management's decision to split Bangladesh Biman into two industrial units.

Small unions in other sectors are also opposed to the change, fearing that they will be swallowed up in the large industrial unions and will no longer have an effective voice.

# ***Africa acts to stop waste 'terrorism'***

African nations are taking firm action to stop industrialised countries using the continent as a dumping ground for toxic waste.

The Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa was signed by twelve countries belonging to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in January.

There was criticism two years ago of the loopholes which a

number of African states felt were left in the protection of the environment from hazardous waste by the Basle Convention (see **ITF News**, October 1989).

The Bamako Convention goes further and stipulates a total ban on:

- the importing of hazardous waste, including radioactive waste;
- the importing of hazardous materials prohibited or withdrawn from use in the country of manu-

facture on human health or environmental grounds;

— the dumping and incineration of waste in the oceans.

The Convention also places the manufacturers of hazardous waste under strict and unlimited liability, and commits governments to a "preventative, precautionary approach" to pollution problems.

Twelve OAU member states signed the Convention: it now needs to be ratified by ten countries before it comes into force.

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## **OBITUARIES**

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**Axel Christian Hansen**, President of the Danish Ships' Engineers' Union from 1967 to 1987, died on 17 April, aged 69, after a long illness. Hansen came from a family of engineers and trained as an engineer himself, becoming a chief engineer with Danish State Railways (DSB) ferries. His connection with the Danish union movement began in his early thirties, first within the DSB Engineer Officers' Association of which he later became president and then as a leading branch official of the Railwaymen's Association (Jernbaneforeningen). His involvement with the Ships' Engineers' Union began in 1959, first as union representative in Sorø and soon after as a member of the union executive. Within a few years of being elected to the union's top post in 1967, Hansen was a widely-respected national figure, who combined his union duties with those of president of the joint trade union body representing Danish supervisory and senior technical staffs. He also served on a number of national bodies over the years dealing with

training, maritime affairs and the labour market.

**Jef Houthuys**, former President of the Christian Confederation of Trade Unions of Belgium and Vice President of the World Confederation of Labour (WCL), died recently. In a tribute, ICFTU General Secretary John Vanderveken said he had been profoundly saddened by the news of the death of a principled man who had always remained true to his political and trade union convictions. Although we had our differences, Vanderveken said, Jef was never a man to seek a confrontation, he always preferred a dialogue. For many years, he led the workers' group on the ILO Applications Committee, the body which scrutinises the actions of governments to see if they match up to international labour standards. He made many friends in the international trade union movement and will be greatly missed.

**Ivar Norén**, General Secretary of the International Metalworkers'

Federation (IMF) between 1969 and 1974, has died at the age of 80. Swedish by birth, Norén worked first as a metal worker before pursuing a career as a full-time official of the Swedish Metalworkers' Union, which he joined in 1940. He had an interesting and varied career with the union, working for a number of years as its chief editor and later as international affairs director — a post which, with his career in the early sixties when he spent time teaching at the ICFTU college in Kampala, Uganda and undertaking various missions for the ICFTU in Africa, laid a firm foundation for his future role in the wider international union movement. In a tribute, IMF General Secretary Marcello Malentacchi, says of Norén: "(he) had a deep sympathy for the needs and aspirations of metalworkers living in every part of the world. He was a democrat to the core and understood the striving of workers, even in the most difficult or poverty-struck circumstances, for justice and for the right to create independent unions."

# Spanish unions challenge pay limit

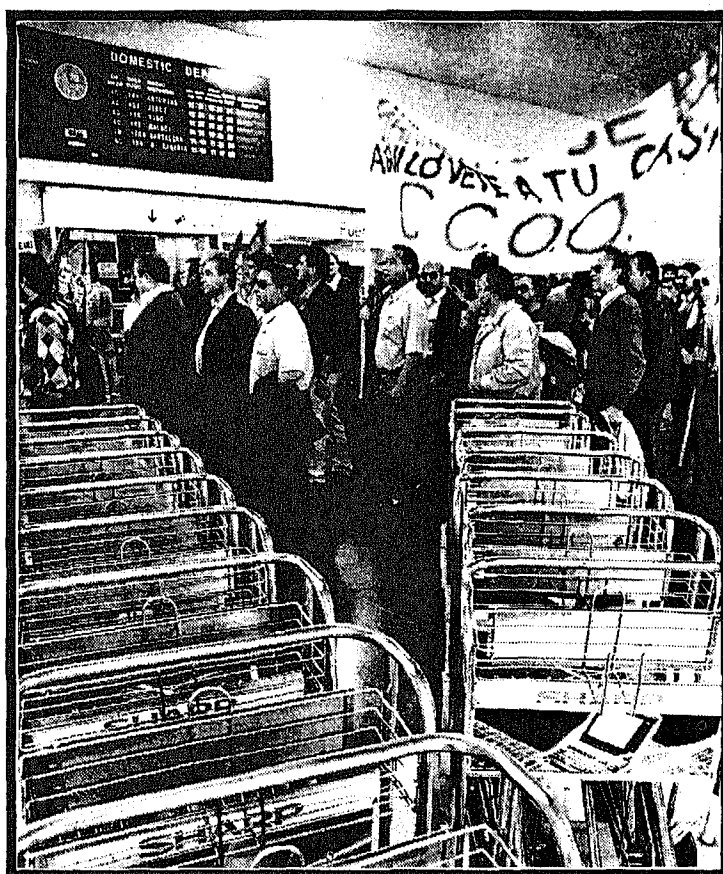
Public sector workers in Spain have mounted a wave of industrial action in opposition to a five per cent limit on pay increases.

Civil aviation and railway workers belonging to the ITF-affiliated transport sections of the confederations CC.OO. and UGT were at the forefront of the action, which was timed to coincide with the campaigns for the regional and local elections on May 26th.

The airline Iberia was forced to cancel 167 flights, some 40 per cent of the day's total, on May 14th as ground staff and cabin crew stayed away from work. Iberia's subsidiary carrier Aviaco subsequently managed to head off similar disruption by agreeing to a 7.5 per cent pay award.

Iberia, which is holding out against an above-limit increase, has become so desperate to break the continued action by baggage handlers that it is arranging for passengers' luggage to be delivered directly to their homes by non-union labour.

Workers at the national rail network Renfe have held a series of one-hour and one-day stoppages, and further action is planned. The strike by employees of the state petrol company Campsa also started to hit the country's motor-



Rally of Iberia workers at Barajas airport

ists and road haulage companies.

Pay levels in the public sector have fallen behind while increases in the private sector, which is not bound by the government's spending targets, have averaged around eight per cent.

\* The unions' action culminated

in a one-day strike by 250,000 public sector workers on May 24th. The UGT and CC.OO. held mass demonstrations in twelve cities as 177 Iberia flights were cancelled and almost no trains ran at all. Iberia workers plan to hold more one- and two-day stoppages in June and July.



## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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
25-26 September	Rhine-Main-Danube Working Group	Regensburg



# INLAND TRANSPORT

## *Green light for combined transport in Europe*

Support for the ITF's policy of giving greater priority to combined road/rail transport has been provided by the umbrella organisations representing undertakings operating in these two sectors — the International Union of Railways (UIC) and the International Road Transport Union (IRU).

Their view is outlined in a joint declaration entitled "The Conditions for the Development of Combined Transport in Europe", which the Secretaries General of the UIC and the IRU Michel Walrave and Arend-Jan Westerink presented to EC Transport Commissioner Karel van Miert on April 25th.

The declaration is evidence of a firm commitment on the part of the two organisations to cooperate as partners in encouraging increased use of a relatively new type of transport, which is complementary to traditional road and rail transport, by seeking to ensure that the necessary conditions for it to flourish are put in place.

The paper points out that combined transport brings together the best of each of the transport modes and can help solve some of the problems inherent in relying exclusively on either road or rail transport — it can overcome the difficulties of the railways in providing diverse

door-to-door services and it can help reduce road congestion and traffic bottlenecks on the major highways and transit routes of Europe.

The two organisations argue that if combined transport is to prove attractive to European transport operators it must take full account of their current and foreseeable needs and of their established preferences. Action must also be taken to improve access to its services for small transport undertakings, which are not well served at present, but which make up a sizeable proportion of its potential customers.

The technical standards of essential equipment such as swap bodies and containers, which are popular with loaders and transport operators and make it possible to reduce wasteful part-loads and empty journeys, should be upgraded, and urgent attention given to developing common European standards on weights and dimensions of both equipment and vehicles. However, the paper's suggestion that the maximum permissible weight of road vehicle combinations should be raised to 44 tonnes in all European countries will meet with strong objections from major transit nations such as Austria and Switzerland.

Other priorities must include the

improvement of transloading techniques, as well as adaptation of the rail infrastructure and the expansion and adaptation of terminal handling capacities to combined transport units. The development of timetables tailored to users' needs and action to improve journey time reliability are also strongly advocated.

The paper strongly supports the harmonisation of tariff structures and of conditions of liability at national and international levels and calls on governments to abandon regulatory discrimination which hinders the development of combined transport.

It recognises the importance of public support and encouragement of a pan-European combined transport network and urges the public authorities to participate financially in the creation of the necessary infrastructure.

The UIC and IRU conclude by urging the Economic Commission for Europe and the European Community to implement the measures needed to ensure that combined transport can improve the quality of its services and take its rightful place in the European transport market in the interests of users, transport operators and finally of society as a whole.

## **Finns launch driver assistance scheme**

Generous free assistance is being offered to international truck drivers in Finland under a new scheme just introduced by the Finnish Transport Workers' Union AKT.

The scheme extends to foreign members of European unions corresponding to the AKT who get into legal or other difficulties while in

Finland in the course of their employment.

The AKT will step in and help drivers with any work-related problem they meet, such as traffic accidents, sickness or disputes and disagreements involving Finnish customs or local companies.

Finnish customs has agreed to

help the union in distributing brochures — with a text in English, German and Swedish as well as Finnish — to drivers outlining the help available to them.

Under the legal assistance scheme, drivers will be offered free

*continued on page 7*



# Breakthrough contract for Namibian union

Namibian transport workers have made major gains under the terms of an historic union recognition agreement concluded earlier this month.

The agreement, which covers employees of the state transport company TransNamib, is the outcome of twelve months of difficult negotiations between the newly ITF-affiliated Namibia Transport and Allied Workers' Union (NATAU) and the parastatal transport company. These continued right up to the formal signing of the agreement, which was delayed by a last-minute hitch.

The union side at the talks was led by NATAU General Secretary Willie Matsi and Alfa Iyambo, NATAU chairman and a clerk in the TransNamib finance department.

The agreement is a significant one as TransNamib is the biggest employer of NATAU members. Of its 4,000 employees just over one in four is a member of the union and this figure is likely to rise substantially with the application of the new agreement.

Commenting in the highly respected national newspaper *The*

*Namibian*, Alfa Iyambo said there had been 'untold difficulties' before the union had managed to persuade the company to accept that transport workers had certain fundamental rights. Now that this hurdle had at last been overcome he hoped that both the employer and the union would cooperate in educating workers on their rights and privileges under the new agreement.

Fundamental to the agreement is a clause guaranteeing TransNamib employees the right to belong to a trade union. Other important clauses lay down procedures for conducting future wage negotiations and for dealing with retrenchments and grievances, as well as machinery for settling disputes.

Workers will also be entitled to a week's paid leave a year for shop steward training and TransNamib has agreed to give time and facilities (such as the use of fax machines) for union activities.

The union will now concentrate on informing its members of their rights under the new agreement and assisting them in making use of them.

TransNamib has been equally

positive about the new agreement. TransNamib's Managing Director told *The Namibian*: "TransNamib does not go into an agreement if it does not intend to keep to its terms." No doubt, NATAU will see that it keeps its word.

While it is clearly delighted that it has been able to sign an important agreement with one of Namibia's leading employers, NATAU is not resting on its laurels. It is already working on recognition agreements with four other companies.

## French plan rail growth

The French government is to more than double the network of high-speed TGV trains over the next twenty years.

The plan, which is expected to cost FF210bn. (US\$36.2bn.), will involve the construction of 16 new lines, bringing the TGV network up to a total of 4,700 km.

The SNCF railways board has already placed orders for new double-decker rolling stock worth FF10bn. (US\$1.7bn.) to cater for the enormous demand on existing TGV routes such as Paris-Brussels.

## ... Finnish union will help foreign drivers

continued from page 6

legal representation during preliminary investigations and in court. Representation will be by the union's own staff, lawyers hired by the union, or an appropriate expert. Drivers will of course still have to pay their own fines and be liable for compensation or damages imposed by the courts or as the result of summary proceedings.

Drivers who fall ill will be put in touch with the Finnish health care services, and help will also be given to a driver if his truck breaks down

or he gets involved in a dispute over the cargo.

AKT union representatives will also make contact with the driver's representative or union in his home country to enable them to assist with problems encountered while drivers are working in Finland.

The AKT is also offering assistance to get a driver back home in cases where the driver's employer or his representative in Finland has made no provision for a driver to be repatriated at their expense in a medical or other emergency.

The leaflet provides the names

and office and home telephone numbers of AKT staff in Helsinki who can be contacted for advice and the languages they speak. There are also contact persons available under the scheme at the union's offices in Kouvola and Vaasa.

The AKT scheme has grown out of an awareness of the problems that its own members have met with on international journeys. It hopes that unions in other countries will return the compliment and take similar steps to help foreign drivers visiting their own countries.



### ***ITF campaigns for aircraft engineer licensing***

Representatives of licensed aircraft maintenance engineers' unions met in London on May 21st to discuss issues relating to personnel licensing. The aim of the meeting was to formulate an ITF response to developments in the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the Joint Aviation Authorities (JAA) which groups together the aviation authorities of EC and other European countries.

In June 1988 a study group was set up by the ICAO Air Navigation Commission (ANC) to propose amendments to the aircraft maintenance engineers' licensing provisions contained in Annex 1 of the Chicago Convention (see **ITF News**, May/June 1990). In September 1990, the ANC reviewed the study group's report and decided not to adopt its recommendations at this stage since it was felt that personnel licensing provisions should be developed in parallel with Standards and Recommended Practices in Annex 6 (Operation of Aircraft) relating to approved maintenance

organisations. The ITF will urge the ANC not to delay the implementation of much needed changes recommended by the Study Group.

Delegates also decided to approve ICAO's proposals to simplify the structure of the licensing system. Currently, Annex 1 provides for two levels of AME licence. The holder of a Type I licence can certify as airworthy an aircraft after major repair, whereas a Type II licence holder can only certify an aircraft after minor repair. The proposal is to merge the two levels and create a one level licence broadly based on the current Type II licence.

Delegates unanimously reaffirmed the ITF's long-standing opposition to the 'vesting of privileges' in approved maintenance organisations, which is permitted under Annex 1 of the Chicago Convention as it is currently drafted. ITF policy is that the regulatory authority should maintain total control in setting and maintaining standards and in establishing the competency of

licence applicants. Against a background of deregulation and cut-throat competition, the role of state regulatory authorities in forcing airlines to maintain safety standards is now more important than ever.

The meeting addressed the question of the knowledge and experience requirements which should be included in the JAA regulation which is known as JAR 65. A basic text drawn up by the JAA's Joint Maintenance Committee listing knowledge and experience requirements met with the meeting's approval on most points. However, it was decided that the seven years' experience which an applicant is expected to accumulate before achieving a licence should include at least three years 'hands on' practical experience.

Delegates discussed whether all those who work on aircraft should be licensed, or just those responsible for signing the release to service. This is a controversial issue since current practice varies enormously from country to country.

### **Government U-turn on Olympic privatisation**

It seems that the recent agreement between the management of the Greek state carrier Olympic Airways and the federation of unions representing workers in the airline, OSPA (see **ITF News**, April 1991) represents only a temporary truce. On the very day the agreement was reached, the President of the Board of Directors restated the management's intention to push ahead with privatisation in a television interview.

An essential part of the management privatisation strategy is to weaken the union by intimidating the workers. Management will also

try to erode the gains which the union has fought for during many years of collective bargaining. The management's anti-union policy has the full backing of the Greek government. This represents a policy turn about for the government which campaigned on the platform of continued state ownership of the airline during the April 1990 election.

The government has already transferred 66 per cent of the stock of Olympic Catering — an in-flight meals subsidiary — to the private sector. 950 of the company's 2,000

workers were illegally dismissed and protests by workers were brutally suppressed by anti-terrorist forces (see **ITF News**, February 1991).

OSPA does not believe that privatisation is the best way to solve the airline's financial problems and has formulated an alternative strategy. The union's plan, which has been presented to the airline's management, includes proposals for a major restructuring of the company's operations to increase efficiency and the suspension of loss-making routes.

continued on page 9



# Limited recovery for airlines?

A number of airlines in Europe and the United States continue to announce disappointing financial results in the aftermath of the Gulf crisis, though there are signs of limited recovery. The European Commission is looking into the Belgian government's plan to invest heavily in Sabena, while British Airways faces increased competition as Heathrow is opened up to international carriers. Two Venezuelan state-owned airlines have joined the list of Latin American carriers facing privatisation, while the transfer of Philippine Airlines to the private sector goes ahead.

## SABENA RECOVERY PLAN

The European Commission is opening an official inquiry into the Belgian government's plans to sink nearly \$1 billion into Sabena, its loss-making national flag carrier. The Commission does not plan to stop the subsidies but is keen to see the airline restructured and not just given a temporary respite. The Belgian government intends to write off the airline's debts and invest heavily in the company (see **ITF News**, March 1991).

British Airways and Sabena are now in advanced talks over a new partnership which would see BA invest in a large direct stake in the Belgian carrier. Talks with Air France are also underway but are at a less advanced stage. The new partner is expected to buy a 25 per cent stake in Sabena.

## HEATHROW OPENED UP

Cathay Pacific is to begin operating a daily non-stop service between Heathrow and Hong Kong, following a decision by the UK government to open London's biggest airport to all carriers (see **ITF News**, March 1991). Cathay's service will increase competition for British Airways, which is already facing competition from United on its trans-Atlantic routes.

A total of ten international airlines including Virgin Atlantic, Korean Airlines and All Nippon Airways have successfully applied for the right to begin Heathrow services. A fierce war on fares and promotions is expected between airlines vying for passengers.

BA's traffic fell 13.2 per cent in March compared with March 1990 — the airline is not expecting to recover traffic levels reached before the Gulf war before September or October. Air France has also revealed a net loss of £71.22m (US\$114m) for 1990, its first trading period since the merger with its two main domestic competitors, UTA and Air Inter.

## TWA ROUTE SALE

American Airlines has won approval from the US Department of Transportation for the purchase of TWA's three main London routes, although TWA was not permitted to sell American three less significant routes. American is to pay \$445 million for the three routes — the price originally proposed for the six

route sale. The sale means that a bid by West Coast investor Kirk Kerkorian and TWA unions has been abandoned — cancellation of the sale of the London routes was a precondition for the bid's success (see **ITF News**, April 1991).

## SLOW RECOVERY FOR US CARRIERS

United Airlines and Delta Air Lines, two of the biggest US carriers, have announced heavy losses for the first three months of 1991. These losses follow some grim figures produced by American Airlines. Overall the US industry has lost some \$4 billion during the last four months of 1990 and the first three months of the current year. However, with the Gulf crisis over and amid signs of a recovery in the economy, many airlines expect an upturn.

Pan Am, which filed for protection from its creditors under Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code earlier this year, has announced a loss of \$662.9 million during 1990. During the first quarter of 1991 the net loss reached \$249.2 million against a deficit of \$190.7 million a year earlier. Pan Am suffered heavily from effects of the Gulf situation, both the hike in fuel prices in 1990 and the fall-off in traffic in 1991. Since hostilities ceased, traffic has picked up on Atlantic and Latin American routes. However, recovery in the US domestic division has been much slower.

Continental Airlines, which has

continued on page 10

## ... Union's alternative plan for airline

continued from page 8

They have also demanded participation of elected workers' representatives in important decision making.

The unions believe that Olympic's problems are due in large part to mismanagement. The principal members of the Board of Directors appointed in July 1989 are currently being investigated by a Parliamen-

tary Inquiry Committee. Although the company makes an annual operating profit, the balance sheet shows a considerable deficit caused by the interest payments on loans accumulated over a number of years.

# UK authorities reject smoke hoods

The United Kingdom Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has ruled out the use of passenger smoke hoods on aircraft on the grounds that they risk delaying emergency evacuation of a cabin on fire.

A CAA report on improving the chances of passenger survival in aircraft fires favours the introduction of water spray systems in air-

craft cabins. Tests have shown that sprays would hold down cabin temperatures and extend the time for safe evacuation.

The CAA was asked to consider introducing smoke hoods on all UK registered aircraft after the Manchester airport accident in the summer of 1989 in which 55 people died, including 48 directly from in-

halation of smoke and toxic fumes.

The question of the use of smoke hoods was discussed at the meeting of the ITF Cabin Crew Technical Committee in Buenos Aires from 12 to 14 March 1991.

It was decided to refer the issue to the panel of civil aviation health and safety experts which the ITF is planning to establish.

## ... Venezuelan government to shed two carriers

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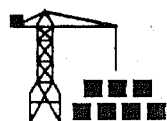
filed for protection from its creditors under Chapter 11 of the US bankruptcy code, is seeking more than \$3 billion in fresh equity and cash to restructure its debt-burdened balance sheet and help it out of bankruptcy. This financial restructuring will reduce the holding of current shareholders, including SAS. However, SAS is expected to invest additional funds in Continental.

### VENEZUELAN PRIVATISATIONS

The two Venezuelan state-owned

airlines due to be privatised this year suffered financial losses in 1990. Viasa, the government's international flag carrier, lost US\$34 million, compared with \$4.6 million profit in 1989. Aeropostal, which flies domestic and international routes, suffered a 1990 loss of \$7.3 million, compared to earnings of \$2.8 million in 1989. Nevertheless, the government is keen to push ahead with the privatisation. The consortium led by Iberia has collected \$2.6 billion to complete purchase of Aerolíneas Argentinas.

There are a number of potential buyers for the 60 per cent of Philippine Airlines (PAL) which the government is selling. They include Northwest Airlines of the US, Japan Air Lines, a consortium led by a Hong Kong company and a group headed by PAL pilots (see *ITF News*, January 1991). PAL incurred a net loss of US\$54.6 billion last year but foreign airlines are interested in the airline's trans-Pacific routes, rather than its current balance sheet. The airline is planning to double its Manila-US flights to 26 a week.



## DOCKERS

## Ports gear up to handle dangerous goods

Rules governing the transport of dangerous goods are frequently ignored by operators more interested in profit than in protecting lives. That was the message delivered by ITF Research & Publications Secretary David Cockroft when he addressed an international conference on Dangerous Goods Transport in Antwerp on 25-26 April. The Conference, organised by the publication 'European Transport Law', brought together transport industry representatives and experts in

dangerous goods problems in each mode to discuss recent developments at the international and national level.

Recalling that the ITF had organised its own conference on the subject in 1989, Cockroft pointed out that while very good international rules existed, they were often not enforced properly even in Europe. In many developing countries, inland transport of dangerous goods was effectively not regulated at all and transport workers were fre-

quently exposed to appalling risks. All workers had a right to know what substances they were working with, whether they were being transported internationally or domestically, he pointed out, stressing that the ITF had successfully argued for transport to be included within the terms of the recently adopted ILO Convention on Safety in the Use of Chemicals. In Europe, the abolition of internal frontiers in 1993

continued on page 11

# North Sea dockers' meeting condemns 'social dumping'

A meeting of North Sea ports dockers' unions in Antwerp on 23 and 24 April 1991 passed a resolution declaring full support for the ITF European Dockworkers' Charter and calling for the establishment of a Joint Committee for the Ports Industry within the European Community.

The meeting, which was chaired by Martin Devolder of the ITF-affiliated Belgische Transportarbeidersbond (Belgium), was attended by delegates from other ITF dockers' affiliates — the Transport and General Workers' Union (Great Britain), Ver-

voersbond FNV (Netherlands) and the Gewerkschaft Öffentliche Dienste, Transport und Verkehr (Germany).

ITF Dockers' Section Chairman John Connolly (TGWU) and Section Secretary David Cockroft also attended the meeting.

The resolution condemned attempts by port employers in many countries to weaken or destroy Dock Labour Schemes established by law or practice to provide social protection for dockworkers in line with ILO Conventions.

Employers are increasingly using

stronger competition between EC seaports as an excuse to introduce measures to deregulate dock labour and allow total work flexibility. The real result of these measures is to reduce wages and increase working hours.

Delegates stressed that the only way to combat social dumping after the completion of the European Single Market was to ensure upward harmonisation of working conditions. The creation of a Joint Committee is essential in order to promote social dialogue in the ports sector and collective bargaining between employers and port workers.

## *Japanese strike victory*

Japanese dockers have won cuts in working hours and increases in pay and pension levels after a campaign of industrial action at nine major ports in April.

Members of the National Dockworkers' Union Council (Zenkoku Kowan) blockaded the port gates from April eighth onwards and called a 72-hour strike from April

13th. They had already imposed a ban on overtime at the end of March.

The blockades and the strike action rapidly brought the employers to their senses, and the dispute was called off on April 17th after the union's major demands had been conceded.

Under the settlement there will be an eight-hour working day with

a one-hour lunch break and a five-day week. Pay has been raised by twelve per cent, and pensions will go up from Y250,000 (US\$1,860) to Y270,000, with an additional rise to Y300,000 within two years.

Port and stevedoring charges will be fixed by new local joint committees of management and trade unions.

## ... Enforcement the key to effective safety standards

continued from page 10

would reduce one entire level of checking on dangerous goods, making strict enforcement as well as better training for transport workers absolutely vital. Unlike some European Commission experts, the ITF believed that rail and water transport should be favoured over road for certain categories of

dangerous goods and that maximum use should be made of combined transport.

He also drew attention to the trade in toxic waste particularly in Africa which had led to the adoption of both the Basle and Bamako Conventions (see separate story) and he strongly defended the ITF's

policy that irradiated nuclear fuel should be transported by sea only in purpose-built ships.

The Conference, which was held with support from the Port of Antwerp, was organised and chaired by Maitre Robert Wijffels, the editor of 'European Transport Law'.



# SEAFARERS

## *Dioscouri* — mysterious case of the shrinking ship

The mixed Filipino, South American and Indian crew of the Cyprus flag *MV Oceanid* had no supplies of fresh clean water for the latter part of their two and a half month long first voyage from New Orleans to Visakhapatnam in India where they arrived on February 13. The drinking water on the ship had been used up by the time it was off Cape Town and the captain and the owner were unwilling to take on fresh supplies. The crew were reduced to drinking dirty water from the bottom of the tank. In desperation, they scooped up rain water from the deck knowing it was

contaminated with lead, dust and coal (the ship was carrying a cargo of lead concentrate). Several crew

members got sick from drinking bad water. The lack of fresh water was bad enough, but the poor quality of food on board made matters even worse. According to crew reports, they had to exist on a diet of potatoes, rice, small pieces of meat and poor quality fruit. No fruit juice or fresh milk was available. The physical condition of the ship gave rise to a number of complaints but the captain adamantly refused to do anything about them. Nor did he respond to crew enquiries as to when they would be paid, other than to say that they would get their money in the next port of call. Of course, they never did. The only money the crew saw were small advances against pay they had already earned, and their families back home must

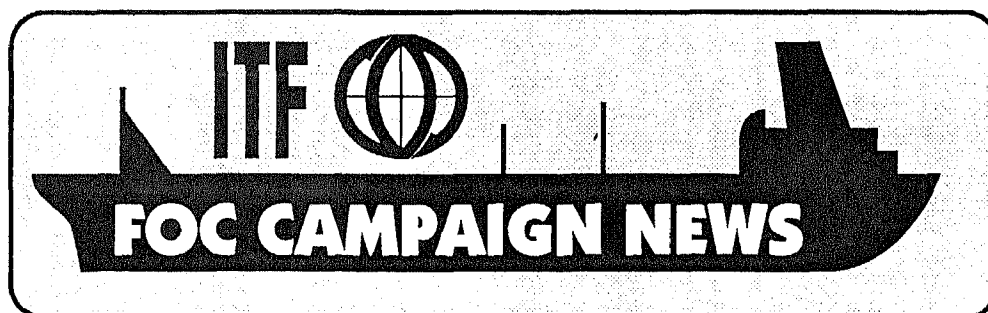
have been going short because they had not been receiving their allotments. Letters from home were being forwarded to the ship but with a delay of three or four months. Foc inspectors Bryan Allen and Harry Shaw visited the ship when it arrived in **Immingham**, England on May 22. They found that a Cyprus agreement had been signed for the ship by the ITF-affiliated Federation of Transport, Petroleum and Agricultural Workers of Cyprus which was valid to 31 January 1992. A back pay and repatriation claim was settled for the 19-man crew

port state control authorities and port health have also found deficiencies with the vessel. All in all, it looks likely that the ship will be in port for some time before it is allowed to put to sea again.

Irregularities and deficiencies on board the 25-year-old Honduras flag *Dioscouri* when it berthed in **Antwerp** on April 15 led to the ship being arrested and delayed for a week before it was allowed to sail for Syria on April 24. Owned by a one ship company, Dioscouri Maritime Co of Greece, the ship typified

the poor conditions these owners ignore in a bid to maximise profits from their only ship and testified to the serious shortcomings under the Hon-

duran flag, one of the worst Focs. There was almost no food on board and there were problems with the drinking water. The 10-man Syrian crew had been promised an AB rate of \$US400 a month all in when they joined the ship but were told when they got to sea that they would only get half this — \$200 a month. They were also refused a refund of their air fares by the master (who was a part owner of the ship) when they joined the ship in Poland on April first. None of the crew had employment contracts. Foc inspector Bob Dielis visited the ship after a complaint from one of the crewmembers. His investigations also revealed that the captain had bought his licence in Honduras and that when the ship had transferred



who received a total settlement of around US\$80,000. Meanwhile, the crew reports of deficiencies on the ship have been amply vindicated. The *Oceanid* has been detained by the Department of Transport until a 19 point list of faults is attended to. Deficiencies include undermanning (by a deck officer and an AB); condemned lifeboats (they had no flares or compasses or fit food supplies); inadequate bathroom showers (orders have been given for these to be cleaned and painted); condemned ship's medical supplies; no lights or lines on lifebuoys; no fire or boat drills held for five months (the master has been told he could face prosecution by the Department of Transport); and out of date navigation charts. The

# ... Crew forced to live off Red Cross parcels

from the Polish to the Honduran flag it had mysteriously lost weight. A surveyor from Piraeus who worked for Honduras Maritime Inspection had remeasured it and its tonnage was reduced from its original 2,500 to 1,599 gross tonnes—an advantage to the owner as it meant that the ship needed a smaller crew and there was less to pay in harbour dues. The Belgian authorities were informed and promptly arrested the ship. Dielis contacted the owner seeking a standard ITF agreement and after five days was able to negotiate a crew contract based on the ITF AB rate of \$US821, though with no overtime. The crew were paid a total of US\$18,470 (covering their backpay from the time they joined the ship) and their air fares, the captain was signed off and a new captain flown in from Greece, and the Syrian chief officer was paid off at his own request. Fresh food supplies were also sent to the ship from the ship's chandlers three days after Dielis' first visit. The ship has again been measured and the Honduran authorities have been required to issue a new tonnage certificate for 2,547 grt and a new load line certificate. Because of the higher tonnage the owner has also had to sign on a licensed Greek first officer and a first engineer. The port fees have also been recalculated.

Sixteen members of the mixed Sudanese and Egyptian crew of the Maltese flag *Al Taif*, which is currently docked in the Italian port of **Ravenna**, decided to go on strike on May 17th because they were being paid less than the ILO minimum rate of \$286 a month. The ship is not under agreement to the ITF. Foc inspector Bruno de Bonis agreed to meet the owner to discuss the men's pay grievances but he never turned up. However, some hours later Bruno received a phone call from a port worker to say that

the owner was now on the *Al Taif* and had brought four Greeks with him. He had sacked the master, made the 3rd mate master and informed the 3rd engineer that he was now the ship's chief engineer. He had also told those crewmembers who had not joined the crew strike that they should arm themselves with fire axes and use them on the strikers. As the situation had clearly got completely out of hand, Bruno called in the police. They removed the owner and the four Greeks from the ship and located the fire axes in the cabins of the non-strikers. The master was also reinstated. The ship was inspected by the Ravenna port authorities on May 18th and has not been allowed to discharge its cargo due to a problem with the hatches. Dockers in the port are also refusing to work the ship.

There was no food at all on the Saint Vincent registered *Sea Friends* when local RMT official Bill Anderson first visited the ship in the British port of **Liverpool**. To make matters worse, the crew had not been paid for between four and five months. With some effort, he persuaded the company to provide supplies and to make the crew cash advances but after a couple of weeks they stopped paying the ship's chandlers, who refused to make any further deliveries to the ship. The crew have been reduced to relying on Red Cross food parcels which, while welcome, are no substitute for staple food items. Fellow RMT official and Foc inspector Bryan Allen has been brought in to assist Anderson on the case and is in contact with the local agents and hopes that they will be able to persuade the owners to pay for food deliveries. If this fails the ITF will make sure that the crew has essential supplies. Meanwhile, the company is steadfastly resisting demands that it settle the crewmembers' out-

standing pay claims. It keeps on promising to send a representative to Liverpool to deal with the crew claims, but no-one has yet turned up. The *Sea Friends* has been detained in the port of Liverpool by the Department of Transport since April 24th. Inspection revealed fifteen defects and the ship was classed as unseaworthy. Its registration has also been withdrawn. As we went to press, a representative of the ship's agents arrived in Liverpool and said that he would settle the Chandler's bills. But there is still no sign of anyone with authority to conduct negotiations on the crew claims.

The crew of the Maltese flag *MV Yannis* have received a total payout of US\$131,598 in backwages following a visit to the ship while it was berthed in **Silvertown (London)** by Foc inspector Bryan Allen of the RMT to follow up a complaint from one of the crew members. Further investigations revealed that the ship's Egyptian and Filipino crew were being paid less than the PNO agreement, that they had been required to sign Cyprus contracts and that crew members who had joined the ship at Jeddah (Saudi Arabia) and at Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) had paid their own air fares and were being refused a refund. A backwages settlement was effected after lengthy discussions involving the master and the owners, although one crew member had considerably less in his pay packet than he was due and the shortfall had to be sorted out. However, the owners are still refusing to refund air fares saying this is the responsibility of their Egyptian agents. 12 of the 18 crew have now been paid off the ship and a new crew has been engaged. The crew member who had been paid less than he was owed has also received one month's sick pay (US\$422) after fracturing a small bone in his left foot in a fall on deck.

# **P&O may quit "neglected" British fleet**

Major British shipping company P & O is threatening to flag out the bulk of its UK-registered fleet if the government does not introduce tax incentives in the Finance Bill which is due to become law next month.

P & O Chairman Lord Sterling, ironically a staunch supporter of the British Conservative government, told the company's annual general meeting this month that flagging-out plans were under 'immediate consideration' and that the group's shipping divisions were actively drawing up their plans.

The group's 15 containerships are likely to be the first to switch flags, probably to Hong Kong. P & O already has bulk tonnage registered in the crown colony and is in the process of transferring the containership *Tor Bay*. Further indications of its intentions are provided by the

fact that the company is known to be seeking a listing on the Hong Kong stock exchange.

If P & O fails to get satisfaction from the government and goes ahead with its plans to move its ships elsewhere this could well mark the death knell of the British flag fleet.

British maritime unions strongly suspect that many other shipping companies are simply waiting to see which way P & O will jump before deciding to flag out themselves. Although companies such as Shell Tankers (UK) have strongly refuted union claims that they intend to re-register their ships, the industry is rife with rumours about planned flag switches.

The implications for British seagoing jobs of a major rush to foreign flags are indeed serious at a time when reduced manning levels are

already creating serious redundancy problems.

British maritime unions have recently stepped up their long-standing campaign in support of the retention of a strong merchant fleet under the British flag capable of making its proper contribution to the British economy and its defence capability. But their pleas have met with no response from a government which is doctrinally committed to the free market and appears to be prepared to sacrifice the British flag fleet in the process.

The unions fear that little can be done to stop at least P & O's container ships being lost to the British flag, although they point out that registration in Hong Kong would lose P & O important advantages such as assistance with crew repatriation costs and training.

## **Seafarers reject policing role**

Spanish seafaring unions are fighting instructions by ferry companies to their members working on the crossing between Tangiers, Morocco and Algeciras, Spain to carry out visa checks on North Africans using the route.

The seafarers' section of the trade union federation CC.OO., and the ITF-affiliated transport section of the UGT federation have condemned the order, effective from

May 15th, as being "irresponsible" and without legal foundation. There is nothing in the seafarers' employment contracts which can legitimately force them to carry out the work of immigration officers.

The unions say that if the order is not rescinded then they will call on members to boycott this work.

\* The Secretary of the Gibraltar Branch of the ITF-affiliated Trans-

port and General Workers' Union (TGWU), José Netto, has called on the Spanish authorities to grant transit visas to North Africans working in Gibraltar who wish to visit their home countries by way of Algeciras. The Algeciras-Tanger crossing is the most practical route for the 2,500 Moroccans working on the Rock. The TGWU's call has won the backing of local Spanish trade unions in the region.

## **Navy arrest seafarers hit by cyclone**

A Cyprus-flag merchant ship and its crew have been arrested by the Bangladeshi Navy in the aftermath of the murderous cyclone which hit the country.

The grain carrier *Fanis* was caught by the cyclone in the port of Chittagong and was hit by another vessel, the *Pentas Fortune*, which subsequently sank. The *Fanis* then ran aground and had to be refloated by the crew.

Ten days after the ship had been

refloated, the Bangladeshi Navy, claiming that it had hit and damaged a number of their own vessels, sent an armed squad onto the *Fanis* and arrested its officers for refusing to admit having caused the damage. The master was subsequently threatened with imprisonment if he continued to refuse to sign a declaration of liability. The ship's documents and the officers' certificates were removed by naval personnel.

The crew deny that the damage to

the naval vessels was caused by the *Fanis*.

The International Maritime Bureau (IMB) has condemned the Bangladeshi authorities' action, which it described as "arbitrary".

It is certainly surprising that with the huge relief effort needed in the Chittagong area the Bangladeshi Navy can find nothing better to do than harass seafarers who happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.



# Spain opts for Canary Islands flag

The **British** government has been roundly attacked for turning its back on the national merchant fleet by the General Secretary of the ITF-affiliated officers' union NUMAST, John Newman. At the union's conference in early May, Newman accused the government of "culpable negligence" as the fleet declined to 300 vessels totalling 3.9 million tonnes, its lowest level this century. Finance Minister Norman Lamont has refused to allow any tax concessions for British shipping and is maintaining a hard ideological line against any form of support for the industry. The government's brightest idea to date for making the register more attractive to cut-price shipowners is to drop nationality requirements for officers. This was described by Newman as a "cop out and capitulation to pressures from British owners for maximum flexibility in manning".

The **Pakistan** National Shipping Corporation (PNSC) is to be privatised and bids have been invited for the state-owned company. A new ordinance has been promulgated to enable the privatisation to proceed. The government has indicated that it also intends to privatise oil tanker services.

In the face of firm opposition from seafarers' trade unions, the **Spanish** government has deferred to the insistent demands of Spanish owners for a second register. Based in the Canary Islands it will come into operation on the first of January next year to coincide with the introduction in the archipelago of a new economic and fiscal regime. The ITF-affiliated transport federation of the UGT, and the non-affiliated SLMM seafarers' union have urged the Socialist government of Prime Minister Felipe González to drop

the plans but appear to have lost the day. The state of the Spanish flag fleet—now only 3.1 million grt and falling—offers perhaps one explanation for the seeming reluctance of the government to heed the voice of Spain's seafarers.

**Swedish** shipowners are proposing the urgent establishment of a new low cost international section within the existing Swedish register as a means of ensuring that the majority of the 100 newbuildings currently on order are registered with Sweden and not with an alternative low-cost

would provide different level of social security coverage for seafarers depending on whether they had Swedish work permits, although there would be safeguards to give Swedish levels of industrial injury protection to all seafarers regardless of their work permit status. Sweden is one of the few western European countries not to have its own second register. In 1988, owners mounted a campaign for a SIS, on the lines of the NIS in neighbouring Norway, but their demands were roundly rejected by the Socialist government in favour of continued subsidies for the shipping industry. While government support means that manning costs are substantially lower than they would otherwise be (in some cases by as much as 40 per cent) they are nonetheless far higher than for many NIS ships. This cost disadvantage has exercised the minds of Swedish owners in favour of the relaxation of registry requirements. There is no doubt that the new ships would provide a valuable and welcome boost of new tonnage—there are currently 220 ships of over two million deadweight tonnes on the national register. What is perhaps the nub of the problem is how far existing requirements should be eased in order to accommodate the owners of these new ships.

In a move that will encourage the development of trade between the US and the countries of eastern Europe, the **United States** has just lifted restrictions on commercial cargo and passenger ships from Albania, Bulgaria, the Czech and Slovak Federated Republic, Hungary, Poland and Romania calling at twelve previously restricted US ports, which include some of America's biggest bulk and container ports.



register. They want the government to take swift action as never before has so much tonnage—the new orders total 6 million tonnes—been on order at any one time. The package of proposals revealed to the government and maritime unions in Gothenburg on 8 May 1991 proposes income tax exemptions for seafarers, reductions in social security contributions, new net wage agreements and 'flexibility' in the hiring of foreign seafarers. The new section would be solely for Swedish owned ships which would be classed as international workplaces and

## Sweden — Britannia law passed

The Bill overturning the infamous 1989 *JSS Britannia* ruling (see **ITF News**, March 1991) has been passed by the Swedish parliament. The new law, effective from July first, represents a major triumph for the ITF-affiliated Swedish Seamen's Union (SSU) and the national centre LO in their support of the ITF Foc Campaign.

The recent intervention of the Norwegian ambassador to Stockholm in the public debate on the Bill may almost have helped its passage through parliament.

In his statement addressed to the Swedish parliamentarians, the Ambassador expressed the "concern"

of the Norwegian authorities that the new law would leave Norwegian maritime interests and other companies operating in Sweden open to boycott actions by the Swedish trade unions.

He described shipping as a "liberalised international industry" based on the "generally recognised principle of the sovereignty of the flag state".

The Ambassador also complained about Norwegian construction companies operating in Sweden being put under pressure by Swedish unions to pay Swedish rates to their workers there, so as not to undercut local workers.

## Star relatives to sue Lloyd's

Hundreds of Norwegians whose relatives died in the fire on the Bahamian-flag ferry *Scandinavian Star* last year (see **ITF News**, April 1990), along with survivors of the tragedy, are attempting to sue Lloyd's Register ship inspectors for damages in the USA.

The vessel was passed as seaworthy by Lloyd's inspectors in Florida immediately before setting off on her fateful last voyage.

The support group co-ordinating the legal action is awaiting a decision from the American courts on whether the case can be heard there.



## PEOPLE

**Piet Kloosterman** retires early at the end of June after working for thirty two years for the Dutch Transport Workers' Union FNV. In a long career, Kloosterman has been active in the docks, inland navigation and road transport sections of the union at both the regional and national level. The wealth of experience he has amassed over the years has meant that he has often been asked to sit on bodies dealing with transport and labour-related issues. He has made an important contribution to the work of the ITF, particularly within the Inland Navigation Section, where he has served on the Section Committee and the Rhine-Main-Danube Working Group.

**Rudi Kobilke** retires shortly as a member of the Board of the German Railways (DB). Prior to his appointment to the DB, Kobilke

had been Vice President of the German Railwaymen's Union (GdED).

**Roger Lyons** has been elected General Secretary-designate of the British union Manufacturing Science Finance (MSF). He will take over as General Secretary from **Ken Gill** when he retires in August 1992.

**Franco Marini**, General Secretary for the past six years of the Italian CISL trade union confederation, has left CISL after working for the trade union movement for more than thirty years to play a more active role in politics. A few days after his departure, Marini was appointed Minister of Labour in the new Italian government formed by President Andreotti. **Sergio D'Antoni** was elected as the new General Secretary at a meeting of CISL's General Council on April 30th and

**Raffaele Morese** as his Deputy.

**Rudolf Pöder** has retired from the Presidency of the Austrian Municipal Workers' Union (GdG). His successor, elected at the union's 12th Congress in April, is **Günter Weninger**.

**Georg Poulsen** is retiring as President of the Danish Metal Workers' Union ("Metal") this summer. The union executive has proposed **Max Bæhring**, currently Metal's Vice President, as his successor, and the formal election will take place at the union's Congress this summer.

**Yang Li-Seng** was elected President of the Chinese Federation of Railway Workers' Unions at the union's 7th conference in Taipei in March. He succeeds the union's long-serving President **Kuo Yueh-I**.

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PUBLICATIONS OFFICER : DAVID COCKROFT

International Transport Workers' Federation

Federación Internacional de los Trabajadores del Transporte

Internationale Transportarbeiter-Föderation

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