**SACKED ZIMBABWE RAIL WORKERS REINSTATED**

Nearly 6,000 Zimbabwe Railways workers summarily dismissed for going on strike were reinstated following a Memorandum of Agreement signed in Bulawayo on 29 January.

The agreement was signed by the management and the Zimbabwe Transport Unions' Federation, a loose grouping of ITF unions, following the government's decision to suspend recognition of the ITF-affiliated Zimbabwe Amalgamated Railwaymen's Union (ZARU). While pleased that the basic issue of reinstatement has been dealt with, ZARU is not happy with certain aspects of the agreement which could still leave some workers open to dismissal at a later date. Nevertheless, the government owned railways' climbdown represents an important shift in position in the face of massive pressure from ITF affiliates and the Zimbabwe trade union movement. Prior to the meeting in Bulawayo, the railways had engaged in blatant union busting tactics, including attempts to recruit unskilled workers to fill the strikers' jobs. According to the *Financial Times*, riot police had to be called to control the "hundreds of anxious job seekers" who showed up.

The hand of the Zimbabwe government, which owns the railways, could clearly be seen behind the whole exercise. On January 22, Labour Minister John Nkomo approved railway chief Alvord Mabhena's decision to fire everyone who had not returned to work, and to obtain a court order effectively shutting down the union. Both the orders were challenged by ZARU in the High Court. Combined with the attempts to recruit scabs, these measures represent

an unprecedented act of anti-union repression by a government which has, in the past, shown itself relatively sympathetic to trade union concerns.

On the same day, ZARU appealed to ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis for help. Urgent fax messages were relayed immediately to ITF affiliates throughout the world asking them to lodge suitable protests, preferably through Zimbabwe's local diplomatic representatives. Over the next few days, fax messages from ITF unions flooded into Zimbabwe State President Robert Mugabe's office.

The ZARU strike was in support of a wage demand of 13 per cent and against the railway management's decision to bargain with a breakaway locomotive drivers' union. It was promptly declared illegal by the government under a law (the Labour Relations Act) which bans almost all strike action in "essential services". Such laws are quite common in many developing countries despite clear rulings from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) that classifying transport as an "essential service" for this purpose is in violation of its basic trade union rights Conventions 87 and 98.

Other ITF affiliates in Zimbabwe and the national trade union centre ZCTU have declared their support for the union. In a statement issued on January 23, ZCTU President Gibson Sibanda warned that continued repressive action by the government against ZARU would be "likely to provoke a national response".

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**Seafarers**

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## **Cuban docker arrested for union activism**

The general secretary of Cuba's first independent trade union — the UGTC — was attacked by a mob and then arrested by the Police on January 12. Rafael Gutierrez, a Crane Operator in Havana port, has already been sacked from his job, along with all the other UGTC activists. The Cuban government has refused to recognise the union, and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) warns that the government may be planning a wide-spread crackdown on union and human rights.

## **Free Burma Campaign**

An international campaign against the Burmese dictatorship has been launched by the ICFTU in collaboration with other international union bodies and Burmese exile groups. A resolution adopted at the November ICFTU Executive Board meeting condemns the regime's brutal suppression of human and trade union rights, demands the release of Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi and calls for an international campaign to establish democratic rule and full respect for human and trade union rights in Burma.

## **Latvia and South Korea join ILO**

Two more states joined the International Labour Organisation at the end of last year, bringing total membership of the ILO to 152 states. The Republic of Latvia has formally pledged to adhere to the principles of the ILO Constitution, as has South Korea. The Koreans, however, have stated that they are not planning to ratify the basic ILO trade union rights Conventions Nos. 87, 98 and 151 on the grounds that existing South Korean law allows only one union per company, bans non-governmental third party intervention in labour disputes and prohibits unionisation of government employees.



Asia/Pacific Secretary Mo Hoda is seen here speaking at the Education Officers' Seminar held in Tokyo last November marking the launch of the second phase of the ITF's Long Term Education Programme. Hosted by the Japanese Coordination Committee and conducted by the Regional Secretary, the planning seminar gathered together education officers, Asia/Pacific Regional Committee members, Executive Board members T Kubo (Japan) and B U Kim (Korea) as well as representatives of the donor organisations. After three days of dis-

## **Romanian unions call general strike**

A strike by Romania's three trade union federations is planned this month. Workers are protesting about inflation — although wages have doubled in a year, food prices have gone up 400 per cent. People have reached the limit of existence, unions said. The main trade union confederation, Fratia, joined by the Alpha cartel and the CNSLR, is demanding a minimum wage of 24,000 lei (US\$ 81). Talks came to a deadlock when the government refused to increase the present minimum of 8,500 lei (US\$ 28).

cussions, a detailed plan was agreed for the overall conduct of the programme. Transport unions in the region were asked to build up a network of trainers who, under the guidance of National Coordinating Committees and the education officers, would be responsible for conducting a wide range of activities — awareness courses for grass roots members and potential union members; workplace safety and health and other specialist courses; and skills and leadership development programmes for union activists and potential officials. The seminar stressed the role of National Coordinating Committees, in consultation with education officers, in drawing up detailed programmes, monitoring their progress and submitting financial accounts and assigned the duties of education officers, to include: the creation of a network of trainers; liaison with the National Coordination Committees and the trainers' network; and contacts with academic and research institutions and fellow education officers. All seminar participants will be asked for their comments so that the national programmes can be adjusted to reflect the changing needs of transport workers. The ultimate objective is to create a totally self-supporting education programme in the region.

# European transport ministers' council meeting

Steadily pursuing the objective of completing the internal market in transport by the target date of first January 1993, the European Community Council of Transport Ministers, which met on 16 and 17 December 1991, took important decisions covering a number of different transport modes. These decisions were reported to a session of the Co-ordinating Committee of the Committee of Transport Workers' Unions in the European Community (the so-called Brussels Committee), held in Brussels on January 15, which also held a briefing meeting with representatives of the Commission's Directorate-General for Transport (DG VII).

ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis attended the meeting which also agreed to conduct a review of the structure and functions of the Brussels Committee.

## ROAD TRANSPORT

As part of its programme of road safety measures, the Council reached a *political agreement* (see separate box for EC jargon definitions) on speed limiters for heavy vehicles transporting either goods or passengers. Goods vehicles of more than 12 tonnes will be limited to a maximum of 90 km per hour. Buses of more than ten tonnes will be limited to 100 km per hour. The new limits will apply from first January 1994 for new vehicles and from first January 1995 or first January 1996 for vehicles registered between 1988 and 1994, depending on whether they are used for international or purely domestic transport.

On the key question of access to the goods transport market, the Council took a "favourable view" on the Commission's proposals which are designed to implement the 1988 decision that international goods transport quotas are to be eliminated by first January 1993. A formal decision of the Council will only be taken following the receipt of an opinion by the European Parliament.

The Council reached agreement, but only by a qualified majority, on a regulation guaranteeing undertakings in all member states freedom to carry

out international bus and coach services without discrimination on the grounds of nationality. Regular and shuttle services will still require government authorisation but the regulation lays down "objective criteria" which have to be used in granting it.

## A QUICK GUIDE TO EURO-JARGON

*Those readers not intimately connected with the goings on of the European Community may be mystified by some of the terms used. Here are a few explanations.*

**Qualified majority** voting in the Council of Ministers is weighted so that the big countries (UK, France, Germany, Italy, Spain) get more votes than the small ones. Some subjects have to be decided unanimously. Any state (usually the UK) can block it. If the treaty says a qualified majority is needed then at least one big and one small state must oppose a decision to stop it going through.

**Political agreement.** The Council can't formally adopt a text until it has been translated into the 9 official EC languages and checked over by lawyers. Political agreement means they have dealt with the principles but still have to tidy up the drafting.

**Directive.** A Directive is a piece of EC legislation which is binding on member states but leaves it up to them to implement it. Normally this is by passing a law in a national Parliament, but it can be a regulation or even a collective agreement providing it has the same effect as a law.

**Regulation.** A Regulation is an EC law which is directly applicable to the territory of a member state. National courts have to enforce it in the same way as a national law. If the courts or the government don't do so, they can be forced to by the European Court.

The Council also asked that the transport ministers be kept closely in touch with discussions going on in the economic and financial council regarding heavy goods vehicle taxes.

The Council heard reports by the Commission on infrastructure projects in the following areas: the European High Speed Train network; the combined transport system; the European inland waterway network; and the road network. Proposals from the Commission covering these subjects are expected by May 1992.

## INLAND NAVIGATION — CABOTAGE

One of the most sensitive (for the trade unions) and important (for the Commission) aspects of the internal market is cabotage. This means the

freedom for a transport operator from one country to carry out domestic transport in another. In Inland Navigation, the principle was agreed at the October Council meeting and in December the Council adopted by a qualified majority the text of a cabotage regulation. This provides that from first January 1993, any carrier of goods or passengers by inland waterway shall be permitted to carry out national transport in another member state providing he is properly established and is authorised to carry out international transport.

## CIVIL AVIATION

The Council held a general discussion on the "third package" of civil aviation liberalisation measures. A final decision will only be taken after receiving the opinions of the Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee. It adopted a Directive on aircraft noise which implements the decisions relating to restrictions on "Chapter II" aircraft taken last year by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). From 2002, all aircraft not meeting "Chapter III" standards will be banned from the airports of member states.

The Council also formally adopted the texts of two directives (on mutual acceptance of personnel licences and on harmonisation of technical requirements in civil aviation (JARs), which were agreed in principle in October.

## SHIPPING

A general discussion took place on the application of cabotage to the shipping industry and a regulation was adopted on shipping consortia. This effectively grants a block exemption from EC competition rules for certain agreements between shipping lines which are members of consortia.

The Presidency of the Council of Transport Ministers now passes to the Portuguese Minister Mr Joaquim Ferreira do Amaral. The ITF and the Brussels Committee will be seeking a meeting with Mr Amaral during his period of office to discuss progress on issues of key importance to transport workers.

# Fijian regime launches assault on basic trade union rights

In a thinly disguised attempt to bring the unions under rigid state control, the government of Fiji has brushed aside objections from organised labour and made sweeping changes to national labour legislation.

The new regulations, effective from November first, contain many of the features of two draconian decrees, which the government was forced to suspend last July in the face of a general strike threat and international pressure.

Further discussions on changes to Fijian trade union legislation were referred to the tripartite Labour Advisory Board (LAB), where the government's revised proposals were brought to the attention of the unions in August.

But discussions within the Board were abruptly terminated. The Fiji Trades Union Congress (FTUC) was

simply told by Labour Minister Taniela Veitata — no more consultation.

The Fiji Employers' Federation, which had originally backed the unions' demand for a comprehensive overhaul of the labour laws to bring them into line with modern industrial relations machinery and practice, swung behind the government.

The FTUC immediately indicated that it would ignore the new laws and its leaders risked imprisonment by calling for international support.

The new laws have three main aims: to weaken the trade union movement; to curb the right to strike; and to destroy the financial base of unions.

In a clear attack on FTUC National Secretary Mahendra Chaudhry, a special clause bans officials from holding office in more than one union. Chaudhry is Secretary of the National

Farmers' Union and the Fiji Public Service Association. The Registrar of Trade Unions has already been in touch with him asking which office he is giving up.

## STRIKE BALLOTS

The legislative amendments include clauses which:

- \* allow the registration of "in house" unions
- \* prevent certain categories of employees from joining unions
- \* introduce government supervised strike ballots
- \* require 50 per cent of members to vote in ballots
- \* impose fines and/or jail terms for strike action taken before ballot results are declared
- \* require moves to seek solidarity support for strikes from abroad to be put to the membership
- \* widen the definition of strikes to include go-slows and works to-rule
- \* abolish the automatic check off of union dues.

The ICFTU and the ITSs have been quick to respond to this blatant attack on the basic union rights and freedoms of Fijian workers.

A resolution was adopted by the ICFTU Executive Board meeting in November calling on the government to revoke the decrees and pledging support for FTUC opposition. The ITSs and national trade union centres have also made strong protests to the Fijian government.

On January 21, the ICFTU lodged a formal complaint with the International Labour Office against the Fijian government, accusing it of breaches of ILO Conventions on freedom of association and of breaking its promise to recognise the FTUC as a partner in the re-established tripartite machinery. In an accompanying letter, ICFTU General Secretary John Vanderveken points out that the changes have severely restricted the ability of Fiji's trade unions to represent the country's workers.

## Transport workers protest against East Timor massacre

ITF member unions have issued strong protests or are urging their members to take action against Indonesian transport following the brutal murder last November of unarmed civilians by Indonesian soldiers in Dili, capital of East Timor (see *ITF News*, December 1991).

The ITF's four Portuguese aviation affiliates — SNPVAC, SITAVA, SITEMA and SQAC — adopted a resolution of solidarity with the oppressed Mauber people in the former Portuguese Colony. The joint resolution also urged Portuguese ground and flying staff to refuse to handle cargo and passenger flights to and from Indonesia in protest at Indonesia's long-standing campaign of repression and intimidation against the people of East Timor and its refusal to grant them the right to self-determination.

Industrial action against Indonesia has taken place in Australia where

stevedores belonging to the ITF-affiliated WWF stopped work on the Indonesian-flag *Anro Djakarta* in the port of Brisbane.

The Australian Council of Trade Unions has turned down a request for an immediate all-out campaign against Indonesia — including a ban on Indonesian flag ships and the national carrier Garuda — but has promised to reconsider its position in the light of the findings of the official Indonesian inquiry.

Trade unionists across Australia took part in a day of mourning on December seventh, the fifteenth anniversary of Indonesia's annexation of East Timor, when Indonesian flagged ships and aircraft were denied services, as a mark of solidarity.

\*Indonesia's Free Transport Workers' Union (SBBT) formed in May 1991 (see *ITF News*, September 1991) now has 7,000 members, most of them taxi drivers in Jakarta.

# ITF mission to Slovenian and Croatian transport unions

Two weeks of frenetic activity faced Ali Memon, ITF inspector in the port of Bremen, when, at the request of ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis, he interrupted his normal duty of inspecting Flag of convenience ships to assist the newly ITF-affiliated transport unions in the former Yugoslav republics of Slovenia and Croatia. Ali, who is originally from Pakistan and has been an official of the German transport union ÖTV and an ITF inspector for many years, is married to a Croatian and speaks the language fluently. This, combined with his detailed knowledge of the ITF flag of convenience campaign and maritime industrial relations, made him an obvious choice when the Maritime Employees' Union of Slovenia and the Seafarers' and Dockers' Union of Croatia both made an urgent request for technical help.

## SLOVENIA

Memon arrived in Portoroz in Slovenia on December eighth. The following day he met Maritime Union President Vladimir Zevnik, held discussions with the Personnel Director of the Slovenian shipping company Splosna Plovba, and gave a lecture on the ITF and industrial relations to a group of 50 trade unionists. The meeting was also attended by the Slovenian Deputy Ministers of Transport and Labour. Memon and Zevnik followed up the meeting by giving a number of interviews for Slovenian radio, TV and newspapers, all of which received wide coverage. He also made contacts with unions of road transport and aviation employees and encouraged them to forge closer links with Zevnik's union.

While in Portoroz he also spoke to representatives of the seafarers' unions and helped to resolve a problem for the shipping company's administrative staff. In Koper (Slovenia's only port) Memon met with repre-

sentatives of the coastal and port workers' unions.

In response to the widespread publicity about Memon's visit, a meeting was hastily arranged on December eleventh with the Slovenian Transport Minister, where he strongly criticised the government's current policy of freezing all wages and salaries, a subject which was also taken up in the Slovenian capital Ljubljana two days later in a meeting with Mrs Puhar, the Minister of Labour. In the interim period he gave detailed advice to the road transport drivers' union which was engaged in a dispute over wages and hours of work.

During the meetings with government ministers, Memon was accompanied by Brother Zevnik of the Maritime Employees' Union as well as by a representative of the newly established independent trade union confederation KS 90. This body, to which the Maritime Employees' Union is affiliated, was created late in 1990. It is a loose confederation of unions in different industries and works alongside two other union confederations, one, the ZSSS, having grown out of the former official Communist "trade unions" and the other, KNSS, which has close links with the ruling DEMOS coalition parties.

Newspaper coverage of Memon's visit gives a good idea of the message which he conveyed to government and employers alike. The issue of *Delo* for December tenth says it all: "While many of the domestic shipowners do not give a damn about the government's or the national trade unions' opinion of some of their business decisions concerning their employees, they do care about the ITF's reaction."

## CROATIA

The political environment facing Slovenia is relatively calm compared to the appalling problems facing

Croatia, which is still engaged in a war with the Yugoslav Army and groups of Serbians on its territory. Nevertheless, as previous issues of ITF News have already reported, the Seafarers' and Dockers' Union of Croatia has been continuing its efforts to negotiate collective agreements which meet ITF standards on behalf of its members. While the union's officials have plenty of enthusiasm and determination, they lack experience in negotiating collective agreements, so this was the main purpose of Memon's five day stay in Croatia.

After observing conditions in the port of Rijeka, where its headquarters are situated and where many refugees from the fighting are being assisted by the union, he travelled to Croatia's capital Zagreb where he attended a meeting of the Executive Board of the United Independent Unions of Croatia.

While in Zagreb he met representatives of the maritime ministry and discussed the ITF's attitude to the Croatian government's decision to transfer its ships temporarily to Foc registers pending the creation of a Croatian flag. Back in Rijeka on 18 December, he advised the union representatives in their negotiations with the management of the biggest shipping company Jugolinija which is transferring 50 vessels to the St. Vincent and Maltese registers. His remaining time in Rijeka was spent in lecturing to seminars of union members on the history and structure of the ITF, German industrial relations practice and the application of ITF Foc policy.

The Slovenian and Croatian unions expressed deep gratitude for the valuable help they received during Memon's visit. The ITF General Secretary has also expressed his appreciation of the time and effort devoted to this mission by Ali Memon and to the ÖTV for making him available.

# International trade secretariat conference

Success can often bring its own problems. The rapid development of free trade unions following the collapse of totalitarian rule in Central and Eastern Europe, Africa and Latin America is putting huge extra workloads on the modest staffs and budgets of the international trade secretariats (ITSs).

At the same time, they are also becoming more and more deeply drawn into the process of closer economic integration in Western Europe in the run up to 1993. Only in a few cases, unfortunately, has their income from affiliation fees expanded at the same rate.

For any organisation, an expanding workload combined with static or falling resources spells trouble. It certainly sparked off a lively debate at the annual General Conference of the International Trade Secretariats (ITSs) held in London on 7-8 January. A further meeting in Geneva this June will examine the problem in depth.

The General Conference, which brings together senior officers of the ITSs, was chaired by Hans Engelberts (General Secretary, Public Services International) and attended for the last time by International Confederation of Free Trade Unions General Secretary Johnny Vanderveken, who has announced his intention to retire at the forthcoming ICFTU Congress in March.

## WFTU COLLAPSING

The meeting heard that the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) and its associated Trade Union Internationals (TUIs) are on their last legs, having lost virtually all their members from Central and Eastern Europe and finally, also, their funding from the (former) USSR, now known as the CIS. Attempts by its remnants to sponsor a new "third world" trade union organisation to replace it have failed, and new union centres from Africa and Latin America are finally taking the plunge and joining the ICFTU.

## EUROPE 1992

A major improvement in the sometimes stormy relationship between the ITSs and the European Trade Union Confederation was marked by the attendance at the meeting of new ETUC

General Secretary Emilio Gabaglio. He stressed that the ETUC, ITSs and ICFTU are part of the same trade union movement and that closer working relationships will be needed in future on European sectoral issues, particularly once the EC passes new legislation which will set up European Works Councils in multinational companies.

## INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

ICFTU Geneva Office Director Eddie Laurijssen told the meeting about the ILO's future industrial programme. In the ITF's field, a specialist meeting on railwaymen's problems will take place in 1993 and, despite fears that it might be eliminated for budgetary reasons, a further Maritime Session of the International Labour Conference has been scheduled for 1996, with a Preparatory Conference in 1995.

## STRUCTURAL CHANGE

Important changes are taking place in trade union structures at the national level and the internationals are inevitably affected by them, the Conference heard. The entertainment secretariat ISETU is cutting its links with white-collar secretariat FIET to join a new international media grouping which includes the Journalists. The Miners' and Chemicals' Internationals (MIF and ICEF) are also holding talks about an eventual merger, and in the teaching profession, discussions with a separate professional body on creating a single secretariat are continuing slowly.

## ECONOMIC SITUATION

John Evans, General Secretary of the Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) to the Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, gave a brief overview of the world economic situation. Overall growth in the industrialised world was around one per cent in 1991, he said, and, excluding Germany, Europe had experienced zero growth. The unemployment situation was becoming critical. Just two years ago OECD unemployment was 24 million, but even if annual growth was 3 per cent, unemployment would reach

30 million by the end of this year. Urgent action to stimulate the major economies was needed if a serious world economic crisis is to be averted. TUAC had been focusing attention on the social side of Western aid to Central and Eastern Europe and on the need for development assistance to take account of countries' human and trade union rights records.

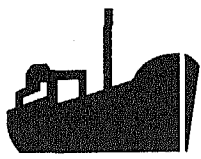
## MIDDLE EAST

For the first time the conference discussed ways of promoting free trade unions in the countries of the Middle East where countries such as Saudi Arabia, Iran and Iraq were savagely repressing trade unions but were hardly mentioned in the ILO. Links with Palestinian trade unions in the occupied territories, with the Israeli Histadrut and with ICFTU affiliates in the Maghreb countries were reported on and discussed in depth. Virtually all ITSs are gradually increasing their activities in this region.

## EASTERN EUROPE

A growing programme of education and assistance is being developed by most ITSs in Central and Eastern Europe and many new affiliates have joined in the last year. Efforts are limited by a lack of funds and a lack of trade unionists who are able to spend considerable amounts of time there. There is also an urgent need to ensure that trade union lecturers who visit CEE countries receive prior training in the countries' backgrounds and in educational techniques. Institutions which were spending millions of dollars setting up industrial relations systems and training managers ought to think seriously about trade union education too.

The meeting also discussed a US union campaign against Marc Rich, a multi-millionaire fraudster currently hiding from the US authorities in Switzerland; discussed the idea that individual ITSs should support a proposed new magazine dealing with global labour issues, and issued a protest against the Thai government's refusal to act on the disappearance of a prominent Thai trade union leader. The ITF was represented by General Secretary Harold Lewis and Assistant General Secretary David Cockroft.



# SEAFARERS

## ITF European seafarers call for expansion of activities

European seafarers — faced with flagging out and the growth of second registers and the approach of deregulated “liberalisation” measures — have called upon the ITF to significantly expand its European activities.

This call came from the ITF European Seafarers’ Regional Committee’s founding meeting in Athens on 25 and 26 November 1991.

Knud Mols Sørensen was in the Chair, and the ITF Secretariat was represented by Assistant General Secretary Åke Selander, and Senior Section Assistant Agis Tselentis.

The meeting was opened by Greek Merchant Shipping Minister Aristoteles Pavlidis, who stressed the need for tripartite solutions to problems flowing from the completion of the internal market on January first 1993.

The delegation from the host organisation, the Pan-Hellenic Seamen’s Federation (PNO), headed by General Secretary Michael Zenzefyllis, voiced serious concern at the proposed liberalisation of EC cabotage shipping which will cause massive unemployment among Greek seafarers.

The Committee re-affirmed that membership of the Committee is open to all European seafarers’ organisations affiliated to the ITF and called on the ITF Secretariat to expand its European seafarer activities and representation.

Increased cooperation between European seafarer organisations is crucial, the unions stated. Social dumping and restrictions on trade union rights in the wake of the flagging out of vessels are threats in every European country. The democratisation of East and Central Europe, and the former USSR also pose great chal-

lenges for European seafarers and their trade unions.

The Committee asked that a European seafarers’ representative be stationed in Brussels to work under the joint direction of the ITF and the so-called “Brussels Committee” at the expense of the ITF’s European seafarer affiliates.

The European seafarers’ representatives considered the “cabotage” issue to be one of the most threatening developments in the European sector. Elimination of existing coastal and inter-island shipping reservation rules could easily result in some 16,000 job losses for Greek seafarers alone. The Committee urged that sub-regional meetings be held to consider cruise ship cabotage, cargo ship cabo-

tage and inter-island cabotage, taking into account proposed EC directives.

The Committee learned that two further second registers were in the pipeline — in Finland and Spain (Canary Islands). It considered the threat posed by such registers to jobs, lower wage standards and the safety of life at sea and the protection of the marine environment, as well as the effect of the proposed introduction of second register ships in cabotage trades and called on all ITF-affiliated docker and seafarer unions to support the respective campaigns of the Finnish and Spanish affiliates concerned to defend their rights to collective bargaining and employment for their members and to maintain living, environmental and safety standards.

### ***Egyptian ferry tragedy claims 400 lives***

The Egyptian government has begun an inquiry into the tragic sinking of 1966-built ro-ro passenger ship, the *Salem Express*, which sank with the loss of over 400 lives on December 14. The vessel, carrying migrant workers and Hadj pilgrims, was bound from Jeddah to Safaga, Egypt. According to some of the 200-odd survivors, the vessel sank in 20 minutes after colliding with a coral reef. Such apparent instability will reinforce the current debate within the International Maritime Organization about the design and stability of passenger ferries.

### ***Doña Paz survivors sue US oil giant***

Survivors of the world’s worst peacetime maritime casualty are suing the shipping company and a US multinational for damages. The Philippines flag ferry *Doña Paz* collided with the *Victor* oil tanker on December 20, 1987, and at least 4,000 people lost their lives. Survivors and relatives of the dead, who claim that over 5,000 actually died in the disaster, are suing *Doña Paz* owners Sulpico Lines and US oil giant Caltex (which was shipping oil in the *Victor*) with “wanton disregard of passenger safety” and are demanding US\$230,000 per survivor and relative in compensation. No-one has yet received any compensation for the sinking.

### ***Brazilian tanker explosion enquiry***

The Brazilian state oil company Petrobras has launched an enquiry into the explosion on board the Greek flag *Alina P* tanker on December 30 in which one seafarer was killed and four others injured. The explosion, in Brazilian coastal waters near the São Sebastiao terminal, occurred in one of the holds. The vessel is now stranded and semi-submerged.

# ITF to set up cruiseship information database

The ITF Seafarers' Section Cruise Ship Committee met in Athens on 22 and 23 November 1991 to consider how to direct ITF campaign activities to secure collective bargaining coverage of cruise ships and to stamp out sub-standard recruitment practices in the industry.

ITF Assistant General Secretary Åke Selander chaired the meeting.

It became apparent at an early stage of the proceedings that more factual information was needed on such matters as beneficial ownership and existing collective bargaining coverage in

## US legal challenge to seafarers' tax

The US government's attempts to impose a special tax on seafarers are being challenged in court.

The ITF-affiliated Seafarers' International Union (SIU) have asked the US District Court for the District of Columbia to strike down the Coast Guard's user fee plans.

Under a 1990 law, the Coast Guard has been told to charge for its services. They have now published plans to collect US\$6 million a year in fees for issuing merchant marine licences, renewals and certificates.

All seafarers on US flag vessels require appropriate Coast Guard certificates, which must be renewed every five years. The SIU calculates that the average cost for an AB would total \$135. Senior officers would have to pay \$347.

The union has denounced the charges as a "workers' tax":

"The proposed user fee is an abuse of all merchant seamen and we feel it is incumbent on us as a union organisation representing their interests to seek a correction of this clear discrimination," said SIU President Mike Sacco.

The union also believes that the new tax is illegal and unconstitutional, which is why they have filed suit and asked the courts to overturn the fees.

view of the rapidly changing complexion of the cruise ship industry before further negotiations on industrial or corporate action could be contemplated. It was therefore decided to set up a database and to convene a small working party to follow up contacts with cruise ship operators, to review ITF minimum standards for hotel and catering crews, to refine negotiating policy and to feed into the database.

The Committee also decided to await the feedback from the working party before deciding on additional campaign features involving the ITF Foc Inspectorate worldwide.

The Committee condemned the practices of certain cruise ship recruiting agencies who charge fees for processing job applications, medical examinations and visas and require successful job applicants to pay their own joining and repatriation costs and called on all ITF seafarer affiliates to secure basic rights for all cruise ship personnel.

On the question of safety of life on

board cruise ships, the Committee adopted a resolution calling on all ITF seafarer affiliates to insist on the introduction of:

- a common language requirement, and a requirement that the crew can speak the language of the majority of the passengers, into the International Maritime Organisation's STCW Convention 1978;

- the provision of sufficient well trained, qualified and motivated crew together with responsible and accountable management ashore to ensure that operational error is reduced to a minimum;

- the return of Foc cruise ships to bona fide national shipping registers so that the control of these vessels is brought under the auspices of competent national maritime authorities; and:

- the extension of port state control to cover operational procedures and the more forceful application of labour standards under the European Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control (MOUPSC).

## Russian seafarers strike for better wages

Seafarers on three Russian-flagged ships took strike action on January 25th. The local union, whose members work for the *Novorossiisk Shipping Company*, decided to strike when the company refused to consider union demands for better wages. Seafarers on board the tankers *General Tyulenev* and *Geroi Sevastopolya*, in Ravenna and London, and the bulk carrier *Sergo Zakariadze*, in Antwerp, contacted the ITF with a request to inform union representatives in the ports.

## Australian government sets up ship safety probe

The Australian government has launched an enquiry into international ship safety. Shipping Minister Bob Collins told a parliamentary committee that the investigation, chaired by a former transport minister, will examine recent maritime casualties, the general standards of foreign vessels and existing international provisions for port state control vessel inspections. This is likely to lead to Australia assuming a more vigorous regime of port state control.

## German seafarers win wage increases

German seafarers' wages rose by an average of 6.5 per cent at the start of the year. The agreement between the unions and the VDR shipowners' association lifts the monthly tax free bonus payments for all 15,000 western German crews. Top earners will get a flat DM320 (US\$203.38) a month, the middle bracket DM240 and the remainder DM170. The 4,000 seafarers working at former east German owner DSR will receive a percentage of the agreed increase (which rises annually).



# Moroccan seafarers win strike

Moroccan seafarers have won a ten per cent wage hike and discussions on a new collective agreement after more than a month of rotating strikes.

The Moroccan Workers' Union (UMT), to which the National Merchant Marine Officers' Union (SNOMM) belongs, described the settlement, reached in mid-January, as a "very big victory" and thanked the ITF for the support they had given to the striking seafarers.

The officers were angry at the shipowners' refusal to enter collective agreement and wage negotiations and wanted a decision to phase out non-domiciled officers on Moroccan ships. They began a series of rotating 24 hour strikes on December 20.

The shipowners initially took a hardline, backed by the government. Their confrontational approach was demonstrated on the night of January

2/3, when four striking officers were seized and detained by the authorities.

This blatant violation of trade union rights escalated the dispute. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (to which the UMT is affiliated) demanded that the shipowners agree to the union's demands for talks.

The ITF, which had previously not had any dealings with the UMT Seafarers, backed the strikers. Assistant General Secretary Åke Selander sent a message of protest to the shipowners and to the government urging "unconditional negotiations" and a "just settlement".

The other seafarers' union affiliated to the UMT came out in sympathy with the officers for 24 hours on January seventh in a maritime solidarity general strike.

Realising that the officers couldn't be intimidated back to work, and seeing that their tactics had backfired by bringing the rest of the seafarers out on strike and generating strong ITF backing, the shipowners and government backed down.

They have agreed to an immediate ten per cent wage hike, and accepted the principle that all crews on Moroccan ships should be nationals. A special trilateral commission of seafarers' unions, shipowners and the government has been established, which will examine revisions of the maritime collective agreement.

Assistant General Secretary Åke Selander welcomed the victory and expressed the hope that this episode will lead to closer and more formal ties with the Moroccan maritime unions.

## Norway cracks down on Panama and Malta flags

The Norwegian government is cracking down on sub-standard bulk carriers. All Panamanian and Maltese flag bulkers calling in Norwegian ports will now be subjected to a revamped, vigorous structural safety inspection.

The immediate background to this decision lies in a spate of recent bulker casualties off the Norwegian coast. The Panamanian flag of convenience *Arisan*, laden with 400 tonnes of fuel and diesel oil and an iron ore cargo, ran aground while en route from Narvik to Ymuiden (Netherlands) on January 12. The Panamanian flag *Sonata* had to be towed into Norway in the middle of November after springing a leak in heavy seas.

Oddmund Reppe, director of Inspections at the Norwegian Maritime Directorate (NMD), told *Lloyd's List* newspaper that there appears to be a relationship between certain flags and casualties (a relationship the ITF has been insisting on for many years). Of the ten vessels detained by the NMD last year, five were Panamanian and three Maltese.

In addition to total inspections of all vessels from these flag of convenience

registers, the NMD will also target some other older vessels of certain registries.

The NMD will now depart from the standard European port state control regime of inspecting a quarter of all visiting vessels — authorities have claimed that this results in complete coverage (because of multiple visits etcetera).

Critics of Port State Control have raised doubts about the 25 per cent target — combined with the recurring reports of lax inspections in some countries and a tendency by certain inspectors to order safety repairs to vessels to be performed "by the next port of call" (and then the ship doesn't visit another European port). This Norwegian decision should force European maritime administrations to investigate the effectiveness of the Port State Control system.

\* The ship that had been arranged to carry the replacement cargo of the grounded *Arisan*, called in Narvik on January 13. The Panamanian flag *Silver Cloud* was boarded by six inspectors from the NMD who began a thorough check — examining hull

structure, tanks and the engine room. Despite passing a classification society check 30 days earlier, serious deterioration damage to the hull was uncovered which the NMD said would affect the seaworthiness of the vessel. The vessel also had an ITF Collective Agreement, which was not being honoured. When ITF Inspectors asked to see a copy of the ship's papers (a right they have under the agreement) they were refused. Consequently, the Norwegian Seamen's Union called upon the Transport Workers' Stevedore members to halt loading on January 14. Later that day, the authorities declared the vessel arrested for unseaworthiness and ordered immediate structural repairs. The repairs were concluded, and the owners have now agreed to abide by their ITF agreement. A bond of US\$150,000 has been posted to cover the unpaid wages owed to a number of (mainly) Turkish crew who have left the ship. The ITF has now written to these crewmembers informing them of their right to claim. The ship finally sailed safely from Narvik, arriving in Ymuiden on January 27.

# Pirate attacks on merchant shipping and seafarers are increasing

Highly efficient and thoroughly organised gangs of pirates are continuing to terrorise seafarers — and ship-owners are taking little action to stop them.

The problem is particularly bad in southeast Asia. The Hong Kong ITF-affiliated union The Merchant Navy Officers' Guild (MNOG) has reported several incidents to the ITF of ships being ransacked; in one case a seafarer was killed. Most of the incidents have taken place in the South China Sea. The problem "poses a great threat to seafarers plying these waters," said Hugh Ng-Quinn, General Secretary of the MNOG.

"This affair is well known to the shipping communities and governments and it would appear that there is not much they can do about it other than advising the crew to take protective measures," he added.

## CREW THREATENED WITH KNIVES

The master of the Liberian-registered bulk carrier *Seakittie* wrote to the MNOG after his ship was attacked by five pirates who boarded the vessel on the night of October 21st at the approaches to the Singapore Strait.

Threatening the crew with long knives, the attackers tied up the ship's officers whilst the crew's accommodation was searched for valuables. Having seized thousands of dollars worth of travellers' cheques, cash and personal effects, the pirates escaped.

"A thoroughly frightening experience, and as a result I have no wish to trade in these waters until the matter is resolved, as at present there is no security for seafarers in this region," said the master.

Protective measures such as keeping accommodation doors locked and turning the hose pipes on attackers are unlikely to have much effect. It has also been suggested that ships should avoid crossing dangerous areas at night — but this is neither a practical nor a foolproof solution.

The International Maritime Bureau

(IMB), which runs a reporting system to monitor the problem, has recently expressed serious concerns about the increasing frequency of attacks which have the hallmarks of organised crime.

Many attacks were well synchronised and had been carefully planned. Whilst ship's crews continue to be the primary sufferers from pirate attacks, recent targets are not only the seafarers' possessions and portable cargo; cases have included the kidnapping of a ship with a cargo of steel whose crew were tied up below decks whilst the ship was repainted and reflagged.

## OWNERS MUST REPORT INCIDENTS

The IMB said in January that owners seemed unwilling to report incidents either to the authorities or to ship-owners' organisations. IMB Director Eric Ellen stressed the error of the view that such incidents should be kept confidential, saying that lack of reporting pirate attacks was prejudicing the ability of authorities to combat them. Some owners believe that local states are unable to take effective action, but reporting the attacks is effective, Mr. Ellen underlined. He cited the examples of West Africa, where pressure by the German government after numerous attacks on their ships had led to a reduction of incidents; and the Philippines, where action by the authorities had improved safety in the area.

A January editorial in the shipping paper *Lloyd's List* took up the IMB's points, severely criticising the apparent apathy of the shipping community, and pointing to the problems inherent within Flag of Convenience administrations which ultimately exaggerate the dangers for seafarers.

## FLAG STATES

"Even 20 years ago, many of these ships would have been operated under the flags of 'traditional' maritime powers which would have had few inhibitions about voicing their displeasure at the inaction of the local

authorities...today a stiff note from the government of even the largest open register is unlikely to attract much attention," *Lloyd's List* argued.

Whether a pirate attack be small-scale or a complex operation involving many people and complicated planning, ultimately it is the crew who suffer the brunt of these attacks. Apart from the physical danger and sheer terror suffered by seafarers, in the majority of cases the object of an attack is still the crew's money and valuables, not the cargo.

Urgent action from all sectors of the international shipping community is needed to fight the plague of piracy if southeast Asian waters are to become safe for seafarers again.

## Finnish unions in FIS deal

The unions representing Finnish deck, engine and radio officers called off a joint strike scheduled for December sixth after reaching agreement with the shipowners' association on conditions on ships to be entered in the country's Second Register (FIS) when it is eventually set up, probably in the spring. Against fierce opposition, all three unions have managed to retain negotiating rights for officers on Second Register ships and Finnish conditions for foreign officers serving on these ships. Negotiations are continuing with the owners on a ten per cent cut in manning costs on Second Register ships in return for government concessions on seafarers' taxation. As part of the settlement, which led to the calling off of the strike, the unions have also reached an agreement for Finnish ships in the foreign trade. Shipowners believe that an agreement on reduced costs, along with the recent devaluation of the Markka, will allow Finnish Second Register ships to operate at the same costs as the Danish DIS.

# Settlement for crew in Bombay

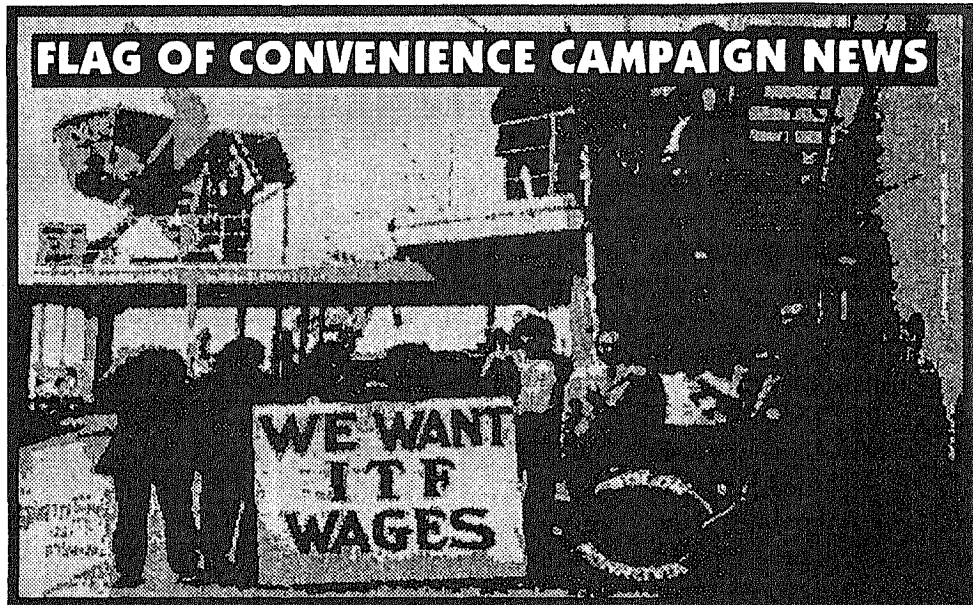
The Sri Lankan crew of the Greek-owned, Maltese flag *Trust* were covered by a Greek national collective agreement but were being cheated on it. The ship was in **Bombay** where the crew called upon the ITF-affiliated National Union of Seafarers of India (NUSI) for assistance. General Secretary Leo Barnes, in co-ordination with ITF London, successfully intervened, sending a local official on board the ship. He negotiated a full settlement in line with the agreement and repatriation costs for the seven crewmembers on January tenth.

A year ago, we reported on the plight of two Sri Lankan flagships, the *Arushi* and the *Dilini*, which had been detained by Port State Control in England for unseaworthiness (see *ITF News*, January 1991). The Finnish owners abandoned the crews, who were owed US\$140,000 in backwages. Both ships were arrested, put up for auction and sold. The *Dilini*, a true rustbucket, was reportedly sold for scrap, and the crew only received 75 per cent of their money. In fact, the *Dilini* wasn't scrapped — it was bought by its owners (a nice dodge to write off their debts) and re-registered as the *Norina* under the Honduran flag of convenience (well known for its willingness to register anything that floats). The ship called in the Swedish port of **Köping** at the beginning of this year. ITF Inspector Hans Gröning visited the ship, where he discovered that the crew had no collective agreement at all. The crew hadn't received any money since November last year, and so the Swedish Seamen's Union called upon the dock workers' union to boycott the ship for an ITF Agreement. Shortly after the unions stopped the ship on January tenth, the Swedish Maritime Safety Inspectors also put a detention order on the vessel. The ship was a disaster — steering gear-bearings were badly worn, fire-extinguishers were broken and life saving equipment was missing. The hatches, fuel and ballast tanks were all leaking. There were no classification certificates. After two weeks, an

ITF Agreement was signed, but the crew still weren't paid. In an unusual manoeuvre, the unions lifted the boycott and legally arrested the ship for backwages of \$210,000 and payment of the new contract. The vessel remains under safety detention. Maybe the owners will wait for another auction and buy it again.

In 1990, the ITF declared that Philipines registered, foreign owned, bareboat chartered vessels should be treated as flags of convenience. One such ship — the Korean owned, Japanese-managed, Philippines crewed

“is not an Foc vessel”, which it clearly is, and furthermore that “we are respecting ITF agreements”. German maritime trade unionists know well that the PSU has “signed” many agreements with German owners of GIS (Second Register) ships — taking advantage of the fact that ITF affiliates, at the request of the German unions, refuse to touch these ships pending the constitutional court ruling on the register. They are, in any event, German-owned ships that remain the domain of the domestic trade unions. After writing to Memon, Romeo Occena, self-styled “National Vice



*Hamburg Star* — called in **Bremen** at the beginning of the year. ITF Inspector Ali Memon (just back from his mission to Slovenia and Croatia, which is covered in a separate story) visited the ship and successfully convinced the owners to sign a standard ITF Agreement for the vessel on January 18. The vessel was already covered by an “agreement” with the notorious “Philippine Seafarers' Union” — the outfit which rushed to the shipowner's side in the Swedish *JSS Britannia* court case and testified against the ITF and the Swedish unions. PSU “agreements” are well below ITF rates and they consistently refuse to cooperate with other maritime unions. They publicly state that ITF rates are too high. In a letter to Memon, the PSU claimed that the *Hamburg Star*

President for Operations” of the PSU wrote to the ITF. Occena claims that the ITF Agreement constitutes “extortion and must not be tolerated” — the “union” then threatens to take up the issue with the Philippine Senate and government and “the appropriate international bodies”. The usual sort of threats the ITF receives — usual, that is from shipowners. ITF Assistant General Secretary Åke Selander replied to the PSU, stating that the German unions “acted in conformance with policy” that was “in furtherance of their campaign against phoney ship operations”. Occena publicised his slander against the ITF in the January 16 issue of the *Manila Chronicle* newspaper.

Continued on page 12

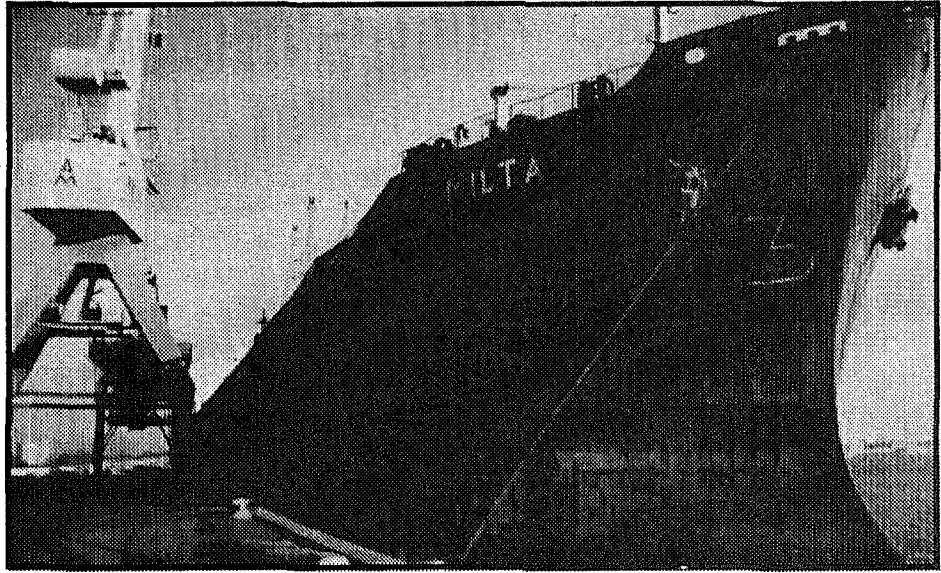
# ...ITF Inspector accused of inciting crew mutiny

Continued from page 11

ITF Inspector John Jacobsen was assisting crewmembers on board the Maltese flag of convenience bulk carrier *Milta* last November in the Danish port of **Fredericia** — pictured left on this page. The ship was under Port State Control Detention for multiple defects (see photograph). Crewmembers were literally afraid to sail on, and Jacobsen arranged repatriation for them. The ship is owned by Trader Shipping Company in Piraeus, Greece. Jacobsen met with a Captain Christos from Trader, who described himself as "Crew Manager". Christos told Jacobsen that he was willing to remit a certain amount of money to his personal bank account. Jacobsen told him to use the money to settle the crew claims, but at a later meeting Mr. Christos offered Jacobsen "a certain amount of money to forget and leave this vessel". Ship-owners should know that ITF Inspectors don't take bribes, and that any such offers will be refused and publicised. The crew were eventually repatriated at the owner's expense.

A Bosnian crewmember of the Croatian owned, Liberian flag *Cikat* contacted the ITF to say the crew weren't being paid properly. The vessel was visited by ITF Inspector Rodrigo Garciana in the port of **Pasajes** in the Basque country in early January. Because of the war in Croatia, the crew feared they wouldn't receive their wages, which were already four months overdue. When Garciana showed up, the owners paid two months' wages immediately and have promised the rest. The owners have agreed to negotiate with the ITF-affiliated Croatian Seafarers' and Dockers' Union for an ITF Agreement on board.

ITF Inspectors get accused of all sorts of things — many owners try to bribe them, and physical and mental abuse are all too common. But Domenico Scordamaglia in Genoa wins the prize for best accusation yet. He and a lawyer from the CGIL transport work-



ers' federation (Egisto Cavallari) have now been accused of incitement to vessel mutiny! The accusation is in relationship to the assistance they have rendered to the Russian crew of the passengershship *Lativia*, which has been in **La Spezia** for a year. Scordamaglia has been arranging the laborious process of repatriating crew from the ship, but has not, so far as he can recall, encouraged mutiny — which would be pretty hard so long as the ship remains in port.

The 13 Maldivian crew on the Liberian flag, Gulf East/Gokal (Pakistan) owned *Eastray*, in **Rotterdam** (see **ITF News**, August 1991) have finally been paid off and repatriated. On Thursday January 24, a representative from the Geneva office came to Rotterdam and, working with ITF Inspector Gertjan Harmsen, paid the Maldivians a total of US\$53,871.26 and repatriated them. The remaining 13 Pakistani crew still await their settlement.

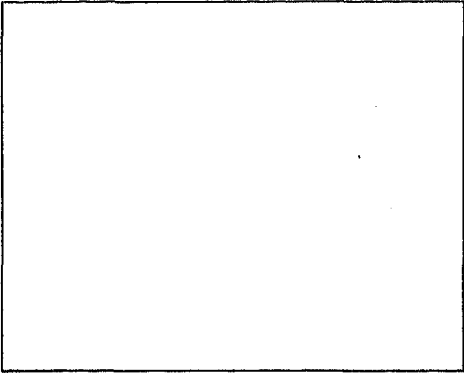
The Indian crew of the Panamanian flag *Mashco Star* contacted the ITF about underpayment of wages. The vessel is now in **Valletta**, Malta and the ITF-affiliated General Workers' Union is negotiating for the crew.

The Antigua and Barbudan flag *Einstein* had signed an ITF Agreement last October, but was underpaying some of the crew. When the ship called in **Bilbao** in January, ITF Inspector

Rodrigo Garciana obtained US\$10,000 for four underpaid crewmembers.

The Panamanian flag *Ocean Drama* and *Pacific Beauty* — both owned by bankrupt Pacific Shipping (Seoul) — are laid up in Korea. The ITF-affiliated Federation of Korean Seafarers' Unions (FKSU) is assisting the crews. After a number of weeks the Burmese crew of the *Pacific Beauty* were repatriated and paid their wages. The *Ocean Drama* is still there and crew supplies are running short. The union is investigating arresting and selling the vessel.

The Filipino crew of the Panamanian flag *Tonje Cob* tanker are owed US\$80,000 in backwages. The Canadian-owned vessel has been in Curaçao (Netherlands Antilles) since November. ITF Inspector Vinicio Creque is assisting the men, who are members of the ITF-affiliated AMOSUP union (Philippines) but are not covered by an ITF Agreement. AMOSUP have forwarded US\$4500 to Curaçao to help the men, and the ITF has contacted the Canadian owners and the Panamanian authorities. No answer (as usual) from the Panamanians, but the Canadian owners (COB Shipping of Aurora, Ontario) say they are in the process of selling the ship and that the new owners have undertaken to pay the crew's backwages and repatriation costs.



**TO: ITF NEWS**

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**FROM:**

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

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# ITF NEWS READERSHIP SURVEY

*From the editorial team of ITF News.*

*As a regular reader of ITF News, we hope you find it interesting and useful. Over the last few years we have made a number of changes (we hope improvements) in both its content and presentation and we are still constantly on the lookout for new ideas to help us make it still better.*

*We also know that copies of ITF News still don't reach everyone who might like to see it, both within our affiliated unions and elsewhere, so we would also like help in expanding our mailing list so that we reach as many individuals and organisations as possible who are directly interested in developments affecting the transport industry and in what the ITF and its affiliates are doing. The best way for us to achieve these objectives is by getting feedback from you, the reader. If you can spare a few minutes of your time and the price of a stamp, therefore, we would greatly appreciate your filling in this readership survey and mailing it to the ITF. It has been designed so that you can just fold it, staple it, stamp it and mail it. Please continue in the space on the other side if you need it.*

## **1. Content**

Please comment on the content of the articles in ITF News. Are they too long? Too short? Are there subjects you think should be covered which are not? Are you happy with the balance between different industries and regions of the world? Are there regular features you particularly like or dislike? Do you have any suggestions for improvement?

## **2. Presentation**

Please comment on the style and presentation of ITF News. Is it too long or too short? (we are trying to standardise it to 24 pages per month). Are you happy with the page design/use of graphics and photographic material? Do you have any ideas or suggestions for improvement.?

## **3. Languages**

Does the fact that ITF News is available only in the ITF's five official languages (English, French, German, Spanish, Swedish) cause you problems in making use of the material it contains? If so does your organisation translate all or part of it into another language? (If you do, we would very much like to receive sample copies.) If ITF News were available in another language would this make a big difference to the number of readers in your country? Would you be interested in helping to produce a translated version?

## **4. Use**

What use do you make of the material in ITF News (e.g. general reading, background material for articles in union newspapers or other publications, direct reproduction of articles in other publications)? If you do use our material in your own publications, please send us copies for our files.

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Do you receive enough copies of ITF News in the right languages? If you would like extra copies please let us know how many and to what address they should be sent. Do you know of other individuals/organisations (including union branch or regional offices) which would like to be placed on our mailing list? If so, please give us details. Would you make use of ITF News articles if they were made available on a bulletin board or database via Electronic Mail? Do you have any other ideas for improving the distribution of ITF News?

## 6. What do you read?

Which sections of ITF News do you read — 0 = Never, 1 = sometimes, 3 = always:

General News	People	Obituaries	Forthcoming Meetings	Tourism Services
Fisheries	Inland Transport	Seafarers	Civil Aviation	Dockers

## 7. Contributions

Are you interested in volunteering material (stories, cartoons or photographs) to ITF News? If so, what can you offer?

## 6. Other comments

If you have any other comments, criticisms or information which you think could be useful in improving the quality and/or the distribution of ITF News, please mention them here.

*(There is room on the other side for additional comments:)*

**When you have completed this survey, fold it according to the dotted lines overleaf, fill in your name and address, add postage and send it to us.**

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS :**

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS :**



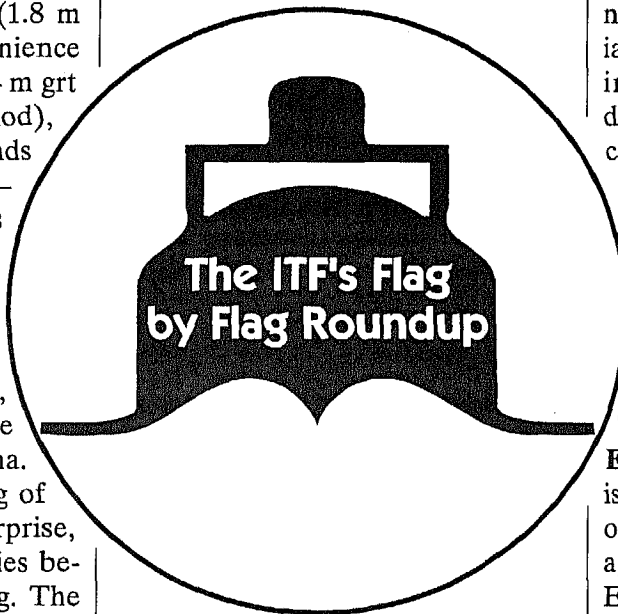


# Japanese fleet is the world's largest

The world fleet has reached its highest level ever, according to Lloyd's Register of Shipping. The 1991 figures (for July 1990) show that the world fleet stood at 436 m grt, up 12.4 m grt on the previous year. This is the third annual increase since 1988 — the fleet declined in the years 1982-88. There were 1,672 new vessels of 15.9 m grt completed in the year, while tonnage broken up was 701 (1.8 m grt). The Liberian flag of convenience maintains top position at 52.54 m grt (a decline of 2.3 m over the period), while the Panamanian fleet stands at 44.9m, a growth of 5.7 m grt — the decline of recent years has clearly been halted. The biggest fleets, in order of grt are Liberia, Panama, Japan, the USSR (the last appearance before the CIS fleets emerge), Norway, Greece, Cyprus, the USA, the Bahamas and China. The predominance of the flag of convenience registers is no surprise, but the true ownership that lies behind them is more interesting. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) have just published their annual Review of Maritime Transport for 1990 which presents the breakdown for the true ownership of the major open registry fleets. As of the first of July 1990, the largest national ownership of the Foc fleets was as follows: Greece 46.3 m grt (1,385 ships); Japan 45 m grt (1,661); USA 35.5 m grt (605); Hong Kong 26.4 m grt (603); Norway 18.3 m grt (482); UK 17.1 m grt (379); Germany 7.9 m grt (423); China 4.9 m grt (138); South Korea 4.5 m grt (111); Taiwan 3.8 m grt (162); Finland 2.5 m grt (73) — most of the rest is divided between (in order of grt) France, Switzerland, Pakistan, Singapore, Denmark, Belgium and Sweden. Removing the Focs from the list, and adding the national flag and beneficially owned, we can arrive at a rough, true world fleet chart (see box). This reveals that the world's top ten shipowning nations are Japan, Greece, the USA, Norway, Hong Kong, the ex-USSR, the UK, China, Germany

and South Korea. Hong and the UK have the highest percentage of their ships under Foc.

A decree which threatened the jobs of thousands of seafarers has been declared null and void by the National Labour Court in **Argentina** (see **ITF News**, November 1991). In a resounding victory for seafarers, a campaign



to reverse the provisions of Presidential Decree 1772/91 has succeeded. The decree, issued on September sixth, allowed Argentinian shipowners to transfer their vessels to Flag of Convenience (Foc) registers, supposedly over a trial period of two years. Seafarers' unions went to court on the basis that the decree was unconstitutional. Meanwhile, two seafarers, employees of the company *Shell C.A.P.S.A.*, took a separate case to court to protest about the loss of their jobs. Immediately the decree was announced they had been given a choice of being laid off without pay for two years (when in theory their jobs would be available again) — or accept a minimal severance settlement, well below the level paid to a working seafarer. On December 18th, the National Labour Court announced its decision, finding the decree to be null and void. "Decree 1772/91 brings into effect what is truly labour fraud...protection against arbitrary dismissals for seafarers has been ef-

fectively smashed," the judge declared. "The decree is a violation of rights and guarantees recognised in the constitution," he added. The court also ordered *Shell C.A.P.S.A.* to suspend the new conditions of employment and to reinstate the two seafarers under the terms enjoyed before the application of Decree 1772/91. The court decision is appealable, and will not go down well with the Argentinian government, which is trying to implement a massive plan to deregulate the maritime sector at the cost of workers in the industry. However, with this decision to consider, and the continued campaign by seafarers' unions to have the decree declared unconstitutional in the Supreme Court, President Carlos Menem may have to rethink.

The possibility of the creation of a **European Community** shipping register — known for inexplicable and obscure reasons as **Euro** — has once again meandered back on to the EuroAgenda. New Commission proposals on tax exemption (the latest in a very long running saga) are being referred to a working party which will report to the Council of Transport Ministers next June. Seasoned observers of the Euro idea seriously doubt that any consensus will be reached this year.

Various **Latin American** states are reported to be considering setting up a joint second register. The idea is being pushed by the Latin American Integration Association, a trade body composed of all South American states and Mexico. A meeting with shipowners to discuss the idea is planned for next March or April.

The **Maltese** flag of convenience register has grown by 300 per cent since 1987, now standing at nine million grt.

The **Panamanian** flag of convenience wants to eliminate "ruinous competition" between Foc registries by set-

Continued on page 14

# ...the illusory world of the Panamanian register

Continued from page 13

ting up an association of "open registers" that would seek to raise standards. This ridiculous concept has been backed by Teodor Franco, Panama's ambassador to the UK. Foc registers, by their very nature, are in competition with each other. Even if all the flags got together and harmonised fees and standards, someone else would enter the market and offer lower rates or laxer standards. Foc registers offer "freedom" to owners — any restriction of that freedom will always lead to certain owners seeking an alternative — and business is business, so there will always be someone who can offer a cheaper, more "relaxed" service. That's how the Foc system began — and it will always be that way unless stringent and binding international rules, imposed and enforced by bodies outside the pure profit motivation of the free flags, force owners back to genuine flags. It's ironic to see Foc registers complaining about the very ruinous competition they began. Panama often suffers from the illusion that they have some sort of control over the ships that have chosen their flag — in the late 1940s, when the ITF Campaign against Focs was young, the Panamanians agreed to negotiate a binding collective agreement with the ITF. A conference was held, the Panamanians were there, ITF unions were there, but not a single shipowner turned up. Perhaps the most significant element of this silly

## True ownership of the world's ships (1990)

(in millions of grt)

STATE	TRUE FLEET	% UNDER FOC
Japan	71.4	63
Greece	69.0	67
USA	53.0	66
Norway	41.8	44
Hong Kong	29.35-32.3	81.7-89.9*
USSR	26.4	0**
UK	23.7	72
China	19.2	25
Germany	13.8	57.24
Korea (South)	12.3	37

\* Hong Kong figures are certainly smaller than this. Hong Kong owns 26.4 m grt of ships under Foc — this figure is added to the 5.9 m grt registered under the Hong Kong flag — the ITF knows that many shipowners use Hong Kong as an Foc, but that, at least, half of the register is genuinely Hong Kong owned. This means that the true Hong Kong fleet is in the range 29.35 m grt to 32.3 m grt, which doesn't affect its ranking.

\*\* Obviously there was flagging out from the USSR after these figures were compiled, and, in any event, the register and state no longer exist.

Extracted from Lloyd's Register 1991 Statistical Tables and UNCTAD Review of Maritime Transport 1990

proposal is the fact that the Panamanians have admitted that "ruinous competition" is directly responsible for a deterioration in safety standards. It's nice to see an Foc acknowledging this fundamental reality. If they really want to reduce competition and improve safety standards, there's one simple solution — close down the register.

As the world bids goodbye to the USSR, the future of what was the sixth largest fleet in the world is still

not entirely clear. Morflot, the former USSR Merchant Shipping Ministry, has been broken up, with Russia getting 56 per cent, according to former USSR, now Russian, Shipping Minister Gennady Gerasimchuck. This leaves Russia short of chemical, reefer and bulker ships, most of which have ended up in the new Baltic registers. It would appear that Russia has about 12 m grt left out of the USSR's 26 m grt — about 46 per cent of the old fleet. There are ten shipping companies operating in Russia today.

## OBITUARIES

**Ruben Rolo**, President of the Portuguese Seafarers' Federation, died on January tenth, as the result of an accident while carrying out his union duties. Ruben was a very active member of the Committee of the ITF Seafarers' Section and the Fair Practices Committee, the body which conducts the ITF campaign against flags of convenience. He regularly attended international meetings on behalf of his union and, as Assistant General Secretary Åke Selander says in his con-

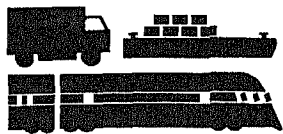
dolence message, his memory and grasp of maritime affairs was such that the ITF often called on him for help.

**Manuel Ramirez Salas**, Secretary-General of the Peruvian Drivers' Federation, died on December fifth.

**Robert D'Hondt**, General Secretary of the Christian Confederation of Trade Unions of Belgium, died on December tenth. In a tribute, ICFTU

General Secretary John Vanderveken said that D'Hondt had devoted his entire life to the service of workers, both in Belgium and internationally and was a man of conviction who had remained steadfastly faithful to his principles.

**Jim Knox**, former President of the New Zealand Federation of Labour (forerunner of the NZCTU), has died, aged 72.



# INLAND TRANSPORT

## What economic integration meant to one Brazilian trucker driving in Argentina

Despite pretensions towards regional integration on the part of national politicians, life on the road for international drivers in Latin America is still beset with dangers, not least from the corrupt public officials who are more interested in shaking down captive workers than in facilitating the flow of cross-border trade.

A recent example of the treatment meted out by the Argentinian Traffic Police to a Brazilian truck driver amply serves to illustrate the fundamental changes in attitude necessary before the word integration can have any practical reality for Latin American transport workers.

On 23 September 1991, José Francisco da Silva Filho, a Brazilian truck driver, had delivered his load of bottled gas in Mendoza, Argentina, and was returning towards his base in São Paulo, Brazil, on board his truck belonging to Transultra, Transportes e Armazenamentos Especializados S/A. In Junín, Province of San Luís, Argentina, he was stopped by the Traffic Police (Policía Caminera) who, on checking the vehicle's papers, noticed an alteration in the date on the permit allowing it to operate in Argentina. "There really was an alteration which must have been made by someone in the company and which I had not noticed," said José Francisco. He thought he would be fined but soon realised that something more serious was in store for him.

The traffic policeman took the papers to the chief of the police post and came back with a pair of handcuffs, declaring José Francisco under arrest for an unailable offence. When he was taken in front of the police chief, José Francisco was given further unwelcome news. Bail would cost 20 million Australes (about US\$2,000). As he did not have this amount of money, the police chief ordered him

to be thrown in jail and held in isolation for five days.

José Francisco was then taken to a prison in Junín, still in handcuffs. In the jail they showed him another Brazilian driver who had been a prisoner for four days and had been severely beaten. "I said they should stop beating him and so they asked me if I would like to take his place," recalled José Francisco.

Four hours later, having been kicked, punched and spat in the face, he was asked by the police if he wanted to negotiate. He said he did not have much money, but was taken still in handcuffs to his truck where the police helped themselves to 2,800,000 Australes, 100,000 Brazilian Cruzeiros (approximately US\$ 130), a television, his clothes, shoes, a gas stove, a watch, two ladders and the tools belonging to the truck.

José Francisco was thrown back in jail and finally released around midnight. The police threatened to kill him if he reported what had happened.

Back in his truck he was forced to drive at high speed for 30 kilometres, with a police car behind him telling him to go faster. When he was finally left alone by the police he drove towards Buenos Aires until he ran out of fuel. Fortunately another Brazilian driver lent him some money and accompanied him to the border at Urugaiana.

Stating that he would never travel to Argentina again, José Francisco ignored the death threat made by the Argentinian police and reported what had happened to the Urugaiana road transport workers' union (a member of the ITF-affiliated CNTTT). He also made a formal complaint to the Brazilian police and to the Argentinian Consul. The ITF has written to the Argentinian Minister of the Interior, Sr. José Luís Manzana, denouncing

the treatment of our Brazilian colleague and demanding action against the Junín police involved in the assault and robbery. ITF Assistant General Secretary Graham Brothers said: "From this and other incidents reported to the Fifth ITF Latin American Road Transport Workers' Conference, it is clear that corrupt police officers in different countries consider international drivers to be easy prey. The process of economic integration in Latin America can only move forward if the activities of these delinquents in uniforms are eradicated once and for all by the responsible government authorities".

### ***ITF Latin American road transport conference***

Latin American road transport workers are grappling with the problems posed by economic integration set against a backdrop of poverty, inequality and debt.

65 delegates and guests from road transport workers' unions in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela attended the fifth ITF Latin American Road Transport Workers' Conference in Mar del Plata, Argentina, from 3 to 5 December 1991.

Ricardo Pérez, Argentina and Chairman of the ITF Road Transport Workers' Section, was elected as Chairman of the Conference. Vice-Chairmen were Orlando Coutinho, CNTTT Brazil, and José Ignacio Cadena, ASOCHOCOL, Colombia. ITF Assistant General Secretary Graham Brothers acted as Secretary to the Conference, supported by Mario Caligari, Director of the ITF's

*Continued on page 16*

# How the UIC would transform European rail

On 23 October 1991, the International Union of Railways (UIC) presented a White Paper entitled "Transformation of the International Railway System as part of new European Transport Policy" at a press conference in Paris.

Present at this launch were many leading figures from the world of European railways, including UIC Chairman Peter Langager (DSB, Denmark), UIC Secretary General Michel Walrave and Leo F Ploeger (NS, Netherlands), Chairman of the Community of European Railways (CER).

The White Paper, which is the railway undertakings' response both to recent decisions taken by the Council of Ministers of the European Community and to the political changes in central and eastern Europe, examines international rail transport in Europe as a whole from the railways' point of view and defines the main lines of railway development strategy for the coming years.

It points out that in the new emerging Europe railways will have a much more important role to play than before, that a modern, high-performance

system is therefore vital to European passenger and freight transport and that the environment for the rapid development of railways is more favourable today than at any time in the last forty years.

## *The White Paper:-*

— recognises the growing crisis in European transport caused by road and air congestion compounded by air pollution, noise and accidents and, given reasonable operating and financial conditions, offers the railways as an attractive solution in some sectors of the market;

— calls for increasing cooperation between the different railways in order to overcome their technological, administrative and managerial differences;

— calls for internationally coordinated investments and product development to enable the launching of fast and efficient passenger train services;

— states that modern and efficient transport operations cannot be achieved on old and unsatisfactory infrastructure and requests high levels of investment (with backing from the

public authorities at regional, national and European level) which should be allocated to competitive areas such as new high-speed lines and transshipment facilities for international combined transport;

— calls for a greater degree of autonomy for the railways, including the commercial freedom, for example, to set prices and tariffs;

— urges the replacement of subsidies to the railways by agreements between the State and its railway and the introduction of special contracts for transport services fulfilling social objectives;

— puts forward the advantages offered by the railways in terms of friendliness to the environment, efficiency in terms of land-take, safety and energy conservation and stresses the need for each transport mode to bear the cost of its external effects (ie environmental disruption);

— calls for the separation of accounts for infrastructure and operations but stresses the need to maintain the railway system as an integrated whole for reasons of technical and economic efficiency, productivity and quality;

— calls for the granting of rights of access to the infrastructure to new business units owned by the railways, but opposes the principal of "open access" on the grounds that it would weaken the railways' capacity to compete with other modes of transport and that maximum efficiency can only be attained through unitary organisation;

— proposes the creation of new international entities or "Business Units" (with the possibility of involvement by private shareholders) to be responsible for sectors such as marketing, product design and development and financial results: services would be produced by the national railways and governed by contracts between the international unit and the national railways.

Copies of the White Paper (in English, French and German) have been sent to European Railwaymen's affiliates and to Members of the ITF Railwaymen's Section Committee.

Further copies are available from: UIC Communications Department 16 rue Jean Rey F 75015 Paris France.

## ... Social objectives must not be ignored

Continued from page 15

sub-regional office in Buenos Aires. Recording Secretary was Wilman Marchand, SAO Uruguay, and Rúben Devetac of the UTA's Mar del Plata section was elected as Press Officer.

The process of integration between the economies of Latin American countries is typified by the intergovernmental agreements of the Andean Pact "Cartagena Agreement" (Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela) and the Merco-Sur Agreement of Asunción (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay). Both sets of agreements recognise the central position which transport will occupy in the process of economic integration and also, in the case of the Merco-Sur, in the creation of a single internal market, the target date for the completion of which has been set at January first 1995.

For the processes of integration to succeed, the facilitation of interna-

tional transport and the elimination of inequalities in transport costs are targets set by the public authorities. The main preoccupations of the trade unions, however, are that, in the rush to facilitate international transport by road, social objectives will not figure high on the agenda. They are also concerned by the transfer of resources to richer regions of the world, the imposition of privatisation and denationalisation measures, leading to the appropriation of national wealth by foreign interests, the reduction in resources allocated to social improvement programmes and restrictions on public investment intended for economic development.

In its final Declaration, the Conference called for the creation of regional and continental structures which would permit coherent discussion and unified action in response to the needs and aspirations of the Latin American continent.

# Indian rail workers demand a halt to regressive government policies

Thousands of railwaymen from all over India, each contingent marching behind its local union banner, converged on the Indian parliament on 26 November 1991. They assembled for a mass rally in front of Parliament House, where they were addressed by All-India Railwaymen's Federation President Umraomal Purohit and other top officers before a petition with a list of demands was formally handed over to the speaker.

The petition criticised the Indian government's economic and industrial policies which it argued would have serious implications for the entire working class, with falling real wages and thousands of job losses.

With regard to the railways, the petition regretted that the government of India had failed to meet the just demands of an efficient and hardworking labour force — a situation that was particularly unfair at a time when traffic was expanding and the railways were generating healthy profits.

The government was now adding to the railmen's sense of grievance by holding down labour costs and severely pruning staff numbers. Ten per cent of existing rail posts were kept permanently vacant and no new posts were being created. Higher grade posts had also been abolished, and many rail jobs were being casualised.

The petition's two key demands — on pay parity and the productivity bonus — go back a number of years and have their roots in the major Indian rail strikes of the 1960s and 1970s.

The petition criticised the government for resisting the railwaymen's demand for pay parity with other public sector employees, by overruling, two years back, a recommendation from its own Central Pay Commission supporting the railwaymen's case. Rail workers, tired of the government's delaying tactics, are now demanding an interim 20 per cent pay increase pending the establishment of review machinery.



*AIRF President (and ITF Railwaymen's Section Vice Chairman) Umraomal Purohit, ITF Section Chairman Jimmy Knapp and Asia/Pacific Regional Secretary Mo Hoda at the AIRF rally.*

The railwaymen are also seeking changes in the method of calculating their productivity bonus — introduced in 1979 — so that it is based on the actual rate of pay rather than a proportion of pay and want it extended to higher-paid workers such as drivers and guards.

The government's increasingly anti-rail and pro-privatisation bias were the backdrop against which the 64th AIRF Annual Convention, held in New Delhi from 26 to 28 November 1991, was played out.

International guests at the Convention included ITF Asia/Pacific Vice President Tadashi Kubo (Japan) and ITF Railwaymen's Section Chairman Jimmy Knapp (Great Britain). Asia/Pacific Regional Secretary Mo Hoda, who also attended, addressed the assembled delegates and conveyed a message of solidarity and fraternity from fellow rail workers organised in the ITF to one of the ITF's staunchest and oldest affiliates. In his speech, Knapp echoed Hoda's solidarity

pledge and wished the union every success with its demands to government. He stressed the ITF Railwaymen's Section policy of opposition to privatisation and its support for proper levels of subsidy and investment for the railways, which should always be operated to the highest safety standards.

Umraomal Purohit was re-elected AIRF President by the Convention. K L Gupta and J P Chaubey were also returned as Working President and General Secretary respectively.

The three day sessions ended with the formal adoption of a 20-point charter of demands which reflected the concerns outlined in the petition presented to government on the 26th.

The Convention condemned the government of India and Ministry of Railways for not entering into meaningful negotiations on the issues it contained and warned railwaymen to prepare themselves for a long drawn out struggle in defence of their conditions of service.



# PEOPLE

ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis presented Seafarers' Section Chairman **Mols Sørensen** with the ITF Gold Badge at a special lunch held in Copenhagen on December second to mark the twenty-five years he has just completed as General Secretary of the Danish Navigating Officers' Association. Mols, who will be retiring later this year, has been Chairman of the Seafarers' Section since 1973 and the award, the ITF's highest honour, goes to him in recognition of the skill and diplomacy with which he has represented the seafarers' cause over the years.

The special Congress of the Belgian Transport Workers' Union (BTB) held in October which confirmed the election of Martin Devolder to succeed Remi van Kant as union President (see *ITF News*, September 1991) also elected **Bob Baete** as National Secretary for the Ports and **Alfons Geeraerts** as National Secretary for Seafarers and Fishery. Geeraerts, who is Chairman of the ITF Inland Navigation Section, is also the BTB's Na-

tional Secretary for Inland Navigation.

**Wolfgang Baars** has left the road transport section of the German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (ÖTV) to take up a new post outside the trade union movement. His successor at the ÖTV is **Peter Baranowski**, who takes over Baars' seat on the Committee of the ITF Road Transport Workers' Section.

**Jim Herman** retired from the presidency of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) at its Seattle Convention in June after leading the union since 1977. Herman, who is only the second president of the ILWU, took over from Harry Bridges, the union's legendary president, who had headed the ILWU since its foundation in 1937. During his term of office, Herman took the union into the AFL-CIO, increasing its influence in the labour arena, and into the ITF, where he was active both as a member of the Dockers' and of the Fair Practices Commit-

tees. Herman is succeeded as President by **David Arian**, a former President of the Los Angeles-Long Beach local of the union. Leading officers elected at the same time were: Vice President (Mainland) **Brian McWilliams**, Vice President (Hawaii) **Thomas Trask** and Secretary-Treasurer **Leon Harris**.

**Tom McGrath**, National Vice President (Rail) since 1982 of the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway, Transport and General Workers, retired at the brotherhood's 35th Constitutional Convention held in Vancouver last September. **Theo Stol**, previously National Vice President (general workers), now takes over McGrath's rail brief.

**Michael Sacco** (SIU) and **Jack Otero** (TCU) were elected as AFL-CIO Vice Presidents at its 19th Constitutional Convention held in Detroit in November. Otero, who is a founder member and President since 1985 of the Labour Council for Latin American Advancement, is the first Hispanic American to be elected to the Executive Council, the AFL-CIO's highest governing body. His success follows complaints that Hispanic Americans were under-represented within the organisation. In a unanimous vote, the Convention also returned President **Lane Kirkland** and Secretary-Treasurer **Thomas R Donahue** to office for their seventh terms.

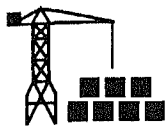
**Luis Infante Sarmiento** succeeds the late Manuel Ramirez Salas (see *Obituaries*) as Secretary-General of the Peruvian Drivers' Federation.

**Trygve Stoltenberg** has retired after working for 27 years in various administrative posts within the Norwegian Navigating Officers' Association. **Pål Verner Larsen** has been appointed as the new Organising Secretary of the Norwegian Navigating Officers' Association and took up his duties on September 16.



## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

19-20 February	Channel Tunnel	Brussels
20-21 February	Maritime Safety Committee	London
20-23 February	Asia/Pacific Civil Aviation Seminar	Manila
26-28 February	Asia/Pacific Regional Committee	Auckland, New Zealand
3-5 March	Asia/Pacific Seafarers' Regional Committee	Auckland, New Zealand
17 March	Management Committee	London
17-18 March	Executive Board	London
8-9 April	Urban Transport	Luxembourg
19-20 May	Cabin Crew Technical Committee	Washington
8-12 June	Fair Practices Committee/ Dockers	London
7-8 July	Civil Aviation Steering Committee	London
30 September-2 October	Road Transport Section Conference	Japan
17 November	Ground Staff Technical Committee	London
18-20 November	Civil Aviation Section Conference	London



# DOCKERS

## Turkish dockers mobilise against sackings

Turkish dock workers in the port of Ceyhan, near Adana, mounted impressive demonstrations in January, in support of over 400 colleagues who were unfairly dismissed.

The dispute started when workers at the *Toros Gubre Ve Kimya Edustri S.A.* terminal were suspended from their jobs. They had joined ITF-affiliated dockers' union Likat-Is after the Labour ministries' recent recognition of the union's negotiating rights at the Toros terminal.

Two union organisers were immediately sacked, and more dismissals followed when workers in the terminal organised a mass sick-out in solidarity.

### Union-bashing in Grenada

The Grenadian Seamen and Waterfront Workers' Union have requested ITF aid in their struggle for better wages, holiday pay and other bonuses. "Employers are not bargaining in good faith and attempts are being made to destabilise the union," said General Secretary Eric Pierre. Protest messages should be sent to *Mr Angus Smith, Grenada Shipping Agents Ltd, c/o WE Julien and Co. Ltd, St. Georges', Grenada, West Indies.*

### Soldiers to break up Colombian strike

Colombian dockers protesting against privatisation plans and unfair severance terms were told by the Transport Minister in January that if strikes persisted the army would be sent in to keep the ports open. Union leaders said they would strike indefinitely unless the government withdrew severance terms.



Most of these workers were later employed by a sub-contractor, where they kept up their union membership, recruiting other non-organised workers to Likat-Is. The sub-contractor reacted drastically by starting a lock-out.

"The workers...were determined to stay as Likat-Is members despite all the pressure they faced from the employer," said union President Melih Yilmaz in a letter to the ITF.

Recent moves by the Toros company have been to announce that a new sub-contractor will employ the dismissed workers (with the exception of the two organisers originally dismissed), and on condition that all the workers curtail their union membership. The offer has been energetically rejected.

A demonstration through the city of Ceyhan on January 3rd coincided with a visit to Likat-Is of Rotterdam dock workers' representative Kees Marges, from the ITF-affiliated *Vervoersbond FNV*. As well as attending talks with union members and port management in Istanbul, Haydarpaşa and Iskenderun, Marges was able to join the Ceyhan demonstration and talk to the dismissed workers, assuring them of international support for their dispute.

The demonstration was also attended by social democratic politi-

cians, and received considerable media attention.

The dispute is particularly significant for Likat-Is, as this is their first opportunity to draw the new government's attention to the violation of basic trade unions rights. Elected in the autumn, the centre-left coalition has promised to guarantee such rights.

ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis sent a message urging the Minister of Labour to contact the Toros company and requesting the reinstatement of the 400 workers.

"In doing so, you would be taking a decision that is in line with your government's policy to restore trade union rights, and a step towards healthy democratic and economic development in Turkey," he said.

Lewis also supported Likat-Is' campaigns for a system of employment insurance and the creation of industrial tribunals to protect workers against unfair dismissals.

It now appears that the Minister of Labour, Mr. Mehmet Mogultay, is keen to implement new labour legislation which could make positive changes.

But changes in the law, or government action need to come fast for the Toros dockers, who are already reported to have been harassed by police during a mid-January demonstration.

# Auckland dockers' rights attacked

The New Zealand union movement came under further attack in December when dock workers at the port of Auckland were subjected to intimidation in an attempt by employers to implement individual employment contracts.

Members of the ITF-affiliated New Zealand Waterfront Workers' Union united with other port workers' unions in rejecting the new contracts — which were at reduced rates of pay.

Pay negotiations had started in August and had seemed to be progressing, when at the end of December the Port of Auckland company shocked unions by their use of desperate tactics. When 19 Harbour Board union members rejected the company's December offer, they were immediately made redundant.

The company began making night visits to workers at their private homes, delivering redundancy notices and trying to intimidate them into signing individual contracts.

On December 20th, 120 workers were told they would be made redundant at the end of January 1992 unless they accepted the new contracts, and the Port of Auckland company declared to newspapers that it was prepared to replace the entire port staff if unions did not back down.

The ITF wrote to certain dockers' affiliates asking for messages of support to be sent to the New Zealand Waterfront Workers' Union and of protest to the company.

But then six members of the union were laid off. Seeing no other solution to the stalemate, the workers issued a strike notice and forced the re-opening of negotiations.

A new proposal, which is being considered by members, has now been developed. It at least guarantees a job for current workers and re-employment of the six who were laid off.

The dispute is symptomatic of the atmosphere of tension, shock redundancies and drastic reductions in wages and working conditions in New

Zealand, as companies use the provisions of the May 1991 Employment Contracts Act to circumvent basic trade union rights.

In the ports, much of the work traditionally done solely by registered waterfront workers has been taken over by casual and sub-contracted labour.

Employers at container terminals in Wellington as well as Auckland have attempted to cut the New Zealand Waterfront Workers' Union out of the negotiation process.

However, as President Trevor Hanson commented in a report to the ITF, in the context of rising unemployment, cuts in social benefits and increasingly repressive tactics from employers, unionised workers are better able to defend themselves.

"There is ample evidence that workers who are organised collectively stand a far better chance of surviving the present environment than workers who choose to go it alone," he said.

## US LIST OF COUNTRIES WHICH BAN CREWS FROM DOCK WORK\*

In December the US State Department added three more countries to a list of 50 which ban US seafarers from carrying out dock work (see *ITF News*, February 1991).

The listed nations all have regulations which effectively ban crews of foreign ships from carrying out cargo-handling. Under the reciprocal provisions of the US Immigration and Nationality Act, fought for by ITF docker affiliates, crews of ships registered or owned in these countries are prohibited from carrying out cargo-handling work in United States ports.

The new arrivals to the list, which was first issued in May 1991, are Japan, Germany and Algeria. Further investigations were made after US unions pressurised the government to look more closely into labour rules in Japan and Germany.

But ITF-affiliated unions the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) and the International Longshoremen and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) have criticised the State Department for its refusal to include countries where dock labour is regulated by collective agreements.

The provisions of the Immigration Act go some way towards implementing ITF policy that cargo-handling should be reserved for dock workers except where special consent is obtained from dockers' unions.

*\*Countries that have exclusive labour rules, but have no US ships calling at their ports are not included.*

Algeria	Guatemala	Philippines
Argentina	Guinea	Portugal
Australia	Honduras	Romania
Belgium	India	St. Lucia
Belize	Indonesia	Sierra Leone
Brazil	Israel	South Africa
Burma	Italy	Spain
Chile	Jamaica	Sri Lanka
China	Japan	Taiwan
Colombia	Kenya	Thailand
Congo	Madagascar	Togo
Costa Rica	Mauritania	Trinidad and
Côte d'Ivoire	Morocco	Tobago
Egypt	Mozambique	Tunisia
El Salvador	Namibia	Turkey
France	Oman	Uruguay
Germany	Pakistan	Yemen





# CIVIL AVIATION

## Nationair sacks CUPE staff and hires scabs

In what is turning into the most important dispute in Canadian aviation for many years, Canada's third largest airline, the charter carrier Nationair, has locked out cabin crew members of the ITF-affiliated Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE).

CUPE has been certified to represent cabin crew in Nationair since December 1986 after a difficult organising campaign which included the firing of union activists. A first collective agreement was signed in April 1988. That agreement expired in December 1990. After nearly a year of negotiations, and the lay off of half the un-

ion's membership in September 1991, Nationair abruptly broke off negotiations for a new agreement and locked out 450 of its regular cabin crew on November 19. The company has so far refused to talk to a mediator appointed by the Canadian government.

The company has recruited strikebreakers who lack experience as cabin crew, and who are not even being put through proper security screening procedures. One of the strikebreakers was arrested in Brussels after her first flight and is being held on an Interpol warrant for suspected heroine trafficking.

Nationair is known as an active sub-

contractor, able to provide aircraft anywhere at a moment's notice. This included providing planes for UTA during an employee strike. Other airline customers have been Garuda, Air France and Nigeria. CUPE are asking for solidarity assistance from all ITF-affiliates. Messages of support should be sent to:

**Richard Nolan, President,  
Airline Division, CUPE-SCFP  
180 Attwell Drive,  
Suite 600, Etobicoke,  
Ontario, M9W 6A9 Canada  
Fax (416) 798 3411**

## BA-KLM merger: joint union strategy agreed

British and Dutch unions say they will co-operate in a common union strategy if a merger goes ahead between British Airways and KLM. Such a merger would create the most powerful airline in Europe and would be the world's largest air cargo carrier.

Unions believe it would also affect thousands of jobs. Neither company will talk to unions about the deal, and the exact form such a merger might take is not yet known.

British ITF-affiliated unions, the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) and Manufacturing, Science, Finance (MSF), the Dutch ITF-affiliate Vervoersbond FNV and members of the ITF Secretariat met at the TGWU's head office in London on December tenth, to discuss a union response to the merger.

Another Dutch ITF affiliate VKC, representing KLM cabin crew, sent its full support to the meeting. The meeting agreed to co-ordinate a joint union strategy to defend jobs and conditions in BA and KLM in Britain and Holland. The ITF is keeping US affiliates informed, since such a merger would be likely to involve North West Air.

The participants pooled informa-

tion about terms and conditions in the two airlines. The unions are to forge stronger links through exchange visits of union officers and lay representa-

tives. They are also demanding that the airlines consult with the unions and keep employees informed about the merger discussions.

## Biman officials barricaded

The managing director of the Bangladesh national carrier Bangladesh Biman and other top airline officials spent the night of January 15 trapped in their offices after protesting airline workers took over the company's head offices in Motijheel in Dhaka. They were released at 6:00 the next morning.

The workers are demanding from the government a specific pay scale for aviation workers, separate from a general pay scale covering all public employees.

Unions have organised a series of rallies at Zia International Airport and mass sit ins at the company head offices. Talks between union leaders and officials in the Ministries of Civil Aviation and Tourism have so far failed to gain the unions their demands.

A steering committee has been formed involving eight trade unions, representing pilots, cabin crew, engi-

neers, ground services and other workers in Biman, in order to step up the campaign.

The pay dispute comes on top of the airline handing over all its Calcutta flights to Air India, resulting in the loss of 28 jobs (see *ITF News*, October 1991).

Mr Mohd Solaiman, General Secretary of the ITF-affiliated Bangladesh Biman Sramik Union, says that "Instead of an amicable settlement the management is trying to impose a unilateral and unjustified pay scale which is not acceptable to us". Feeling among employees is running so high against the company that the situation "may collapse the airline's activities".

The union is asking for ITF affiliates to send messages of support for their fight to: Mohd Solaiman, General Secretary, Bangladesh Biman Sramik Union, Biman Bahan, 100, Motijheel c/a Dhaka, Bangladesh.

# European liberalisation lacks safeguards

The most far reaching proposals affecting European civil aviation so far, are contained in the European Commission's third and final package of liberalisation measures.

In a statement presented to the European Parliament on December 21, the ITF European civil aviation unions said that the Commission's proposals push aviation into a programme of wholesale liberalisation without providing parallel safeguards for infrastructure, safety and working conditions. The timetable for imple-

menting the package should be linked to progress in these areas.

Employers are also concerned about the destabilising effects the Third Package could have on a weakened airline industry. The Bureau of the Joint Committee on Civil Aviation (JCCA) adopted a joint response by employers and trade unions, in Brussels on January 30, which attacked the Commission's "one leg" approach and its unrealistic timetable for implementation.

The next plenary session of the JCCA on February 19 should for-

mally adopt this paper, together with opinions on airports and the environment; the harmonisation of VAT rules and the abolition of duty free regulations; and radiological protection for flight crew. Discussions on flight and duty times and cabin crew licensing are still continuing.

The session will be preceded on February 18 by a meeting of European civil aviation trade unions which will review progress in the JCCA and discuss future co-ordination of collective bargaining in Europe.

## The flight and duty time rules debate continues

Of all the subjects which have been referred to the European Community Joint Committee on Civil Aviation (JCCA) since its establishment in September 1990, the most contentious has been the limitation of flight and duty times for aircraft crew. Although the joint employer-union working group was established in 1990 to discuss this issue, no agreement was reached on the limits which should apply. Since a parallel discussion had already been going on for more than a year in a flight time limitation (FTL) study group set up by the wider European body, the Joint Aviation Authorities (JAA), the Joint Committee agreed to suspend any decision until the results of the JAA work were known.

In the process of these discussions on Flight and Duty Time, the ITF has developed an excellent working relationship with the other organisations (IFALPA, Europilot and European Cockpit Association) which represent those pilots who do not belong to an ITF-affiliated transport union. As a result, all the trade union bodies representing flight deck and cabin crew have been able to take a united and consistent stand on what they consider to be acceptable minimum legal flight time, duty time and rest period limits in Europe.

The subject has also become the number one problem for the JAA Operations Committee as it strives to put together its common operational

rules (JAR-OPS) for first January 1993. By the time it reached its final meeting in Copenhagen on 29-30 January, the FTL group had got through 18 different drafts and two chairmen. Under severe political pressure from the operators, each draft has steadily become more flexible for the operators and less acceptable to the flight crew unions on both safety and social grounds. Trying to draft by consensus, the group on which only civil aviation authority representatives have a vote has ended up by taking the most flexible elements of each existing law and dropping the more restrictive bits. The resulting draft is a total mess which faces the unanimous opposition of all European aviation trade unions.

This was confirmed at a meeting held in London on December 19 attended by representatives of the ITF, IFALPA, Europilot and the ECA. That meeting drafted a letter to the JAA chairman setting out the minimum changes to draft 17 of the JAA rules which would be needed to avoid the outright opposition of the employee organisations. Draft 18, when it was published, applied only to cockpit crew and was even more pro-employer than its predecessor. This left the union side no alternative but to denounce the entire process and to plan an active campaign to prevent its adoption by the JAA governing bodies. This position was clearly communicated to the Copenhagen meeting

which was also told that the ITF would under no circumstances cooperate with moves to water down the draft still further before applying it to cabin crew.

The focus of attention will now inevitably switch back to the European Community and the Joint Committee. Here a major conflict is in prospect. On purely "technical" issues, the EC has said it will adopt — more or less without change — the new Joint Aviation Requirements being adopted by the JAA. The FTL scheme is intended to form part (Chapter 11) of the new operations rules JAR-OPS (most of the other chapters are finished or nearing completion). While the JAA is purely a safety organisation, however, the EC has an obligation to take social factors into account. During the course of discussions both in the Joint Committee and in the JAA, the unions have already demonstrated considerable willingness to compromise from their basic policy positions in the interests of a jointly agreed position. The employers, however, have shown no such flexibility. Unless a realistic set of flight and duty time rules is adopted, which bear some relation to the overall EC rules, the Commission's claim that it is just as interested in harmonisation as in liberalisation will be exposed as empty words. This issue will be debated in depth at the meeting of EC aviation trade unions to be held in Brussels on February 18.

# Airline maintenance : jobs exported as carriers seek out cheap labour

As part of the process of globalisation of the aviation industry, airlines are increasingly looking for low wage facilities to carry out heavy maintenance.

A joint venture between Lockheed and Malev has set up a heavy maintenance facility near Budapest. In 1991 the ITF-affiliated Hungarian Aircraft Technicians' Union was given assistance by ITF affiliates in its attempts to raise wages prior to the Lockheed joint venture.

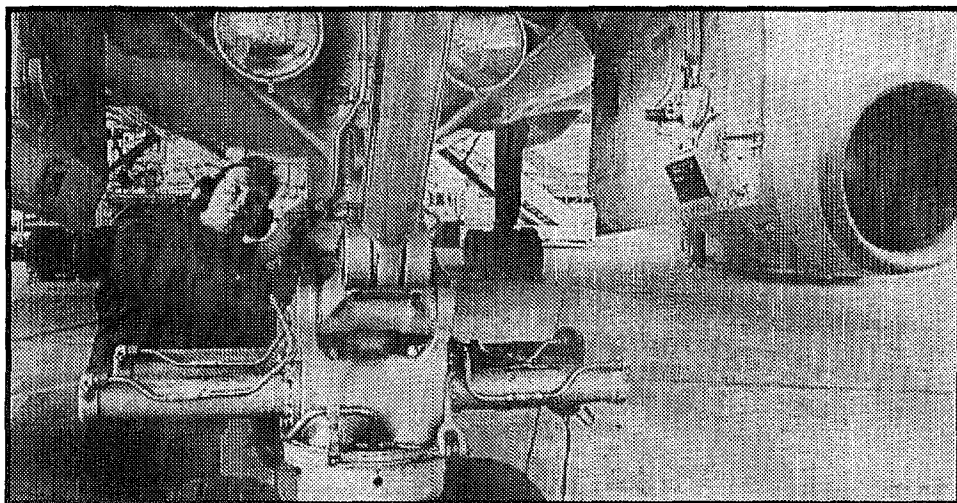
The advantages of Hungary as a maintenance base were laid out in a 1990 prospectus by Line Up Aviation Ltd, a company involved in the international recruitment of aircraft engineers, which explained, "The overriding factor in Hungary's favour at present is its low labour rates for available skills".

A Hong Kong-Mexican venture plans to invest US\$200m in building a 4,000 worker, 30 hectare repair centre for US and other aircraft just over the US border in Tijuana in Mexico. Industrial plant wages in Tijuana are as low as US\$0.80 per hour.

Aircraft production is also moving to cheap labour areas. This December McDonnell Douglas announced a controversial deal in which a Taiwanese firm will acquire up to 40 per cent of its commercial aircraft business. According to *Avmark Aviation Economist*, "the main logic behind the strategy is the savings in development and production costs offered by low labour cost countries".

McDonnell Douglas says that low cost Taiwanese labour could save 30 per cent of production costs. The benefits in stimulating any Taiwanese aircraft building industry, however, will be extremely limited. The high technology, high value parts of the production such as the wing design and avionics will be kept in the United States.

These projects are opposed in the US by the ITF-affiliated International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM). McDonnell



Douglas has just completed a restructuring which lost 10,000 US jobs and another 2,200 jobs are likely to go.

The IAM is equally worried by the repair facility in Tijuana. The union is trying to gain US congressional support to reverse the revision of FAR 145 (See *ITF News*, March 1990),

which came into force in 1990. Prior to the change, all maintenance, repair and overhaul of US commercial aviation airlines was required to be performed in the US. IAM president Bill Scheri says: "We must continue to press our legislators to ban the export of airline jobs."

## ***ITF secretariat to prepare report on airline globalisation***

The globalisation of the civil aviation industry will be the theme of the next ITF Civil Aviation Section Conference to be held 18-20 November, in London.

The ITF will prepare a major report for the conference which will focus on the trade union responses and strategies to the rise of mega-carriers, worldwide privatisation and deregulation and other aspects of globalisation ranging from aircraft maintenance to airline ticketing.

The conference theme and dates were set at the first meeting of the Steering Committee, held on 15-16 January in London, and chaired by George Ryde of the TGWU (UK), Section Vice-chairman. The meeting also launched the first ever ITF worldwide survey of working conditions in civil aviation. Survey questionnaires asking for comprehensive information on terms and conditions for both flight crew and ground services are being sent to all

ITF civil aviation affiliates.

The meeting made plans for regional meetings on aviation in Africa and Latin America in 1992/3, and for educational activities in Eastern Europe. An Asia/Pacific regional meeting on health and safety in civil aviation is already scheduled in Manila on February 20-22.

The next Cabin Crew Technical Committee meeting, to be held in Washington DC on May 19-20, will focus on cabin crew licensing in preparation for the ICAO Assembly in Montréal in September.

A Ground Staff Technical Committee meeting to be held immediately prior to the section conference will focus on the contracting out of airline and airport services. A further Steering Committee meeting will be held in July to prepare the November conference.

# 10,000 jobs lost in Pan Am collapse

Pan Am grounded its flights on 4 December 1991 after 64 years of operation, putting 10,000 employees out of work. Other carriers are buying up the airline's routes. UAL has purchased most of the Latin American/Caribbean routes, paying US\$135m for routes it had offered to pay \$215m for in August.

Two other debt-ridden airlines, TWA and Continental Airlines, are in merger talks.

American Airlines is to cut 1,250 ground staff jobs at airports around the US from February.

Pan Am's closure added to the chaos in Venezuela's air traffic. Pilots in the national carrier Viasa have been on strike since November 24. Viasa has recently been privatised and bought by Iberia. In December air traffic controllers and ground workers showed support to the pilots with slow downs and walk outs. Pilots are demanding parity with Iberia's European pilots.

## AF-CZECH LINK

Air France is to buy a 40 per cent stake in the Czech-Slovak state-owned airline **Ceskeslovenske Aerolinea (CSA)**, making it the first western airline to become a major shareholder in an existing Eastern European airline. Air France also hopes to clinch a deal soon for a partnership with Sabena, paving the way to making Brussels a new European hub airport. BA is still talking with KLM on a possible merger (see page 21).

The Ukraine has established a new airline, Avialinie, partly using IL-62 aircraft bought from the Polish airline LOT.

## AFRICAN PRIVATISATION

Privatisation has begun among airlines in Africa. **Kenya Airways** will be privatised in 1993, the first airline privatisation in sub Saharan Africa. The airline carries US\$350m debts, but access to Nairobi airport, second only to Johannesburg in terms of regional traffic. **Sudan Airways** is also up for sale. A partial privatisation has been announced for **Air Afrique**. The ten member states owning the airline are to reduce their shares from 79 per cent to 50.5 per cent.



## COST CUTTING

**SAS** has announced the largest European airline restructuring plan to date with a target 20 per cent productivity increase. After the airline initially cancelled all agreements with the ITF-affiliated Swedish Commercial Employees' Union (HTF) an agreement has finally been reached. Pay for cabin crew and ground staff was frozen during 1991 with an aver-

age three per cent rise for 1992. The airline agreed to abandon its demands for changes in collective agreements. The airline has recently imposed extra hours on pilots.

JAL airlines is cutting costs by 15 per cent. It is cutting overtime, but not jobs.

## CABIN CREW PROTESTS

More than 100 Cathay Pacific cabin crew staged a sit in over pay on 22 December. Seven flights to Europe, Australia and Taiwan were disrupted. Flights from eight Swedish airports were disrupted in December by a strike of cabin crew with two Swedish regionals — **Avia** and **Air Hudik**. The cabin crew — members of the ITF-affiliated HTF — were protesting at the employers' demand for an extension of their flight and duty hours and the withdrawal, a year ago, of allowances for working irregular hours. British Airways short haul flights were disrupted in December after the ITF-affiliated BASSA (TGWU) cabin crew union held mass meetings to discuss proposed changes to working patterns and pay.

## EUROPE PROFITS

A survey by London stockbrokers Philips and Drew forecasts that European airlines should record substantial profits in 1991 and 1992. Philips and Drew predict net profits for **British Airways** of US\$169m in 1991/92 and US\$173m in the following year, for **KLM** net profits of US\$89m in 1991/2 and US\$114m in 1992/3, net profits for **Lufthansa** of US\$32m in 1991 and US\$89m in 1992 and for **SAS**, after losses of US\$32m in 1991, net profits of US\$236m in 1992.

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