

# EUROPEANS DECIDE ON AVIATION LIBERALISATION

Following months of horse trading between civil servants from the 12 EC member states, the Council of Transport ministers meeting in Luxembourg on 22 June finally agreed on the shape of the long awaited "third package" of aviation liberalisation measures.

The measures take little or no account of the opinions expressed by the EC aviation trade unions or the European Parliament about the need for social harmonisation measures to be introduced simultaneously with market liberalisation. Indeed in most areas they go considerably further in liberalising the market than the original proposals made by the European Commission. In a press statement issued the next day, ITF Assistant General Secretary David Cockroft commented that the results of the package would inevitably be an increase in job losses and downwards pressure on wages and working conditions in the European aviation industry:

"Existing national carriers with high aviation standards will now be forced to compete with charter and regional airlines with lower standards, lower costs and which will frequently be non union. Most airlines at the moment are losing money and promises of fare cuts will therefore prove illusory," he added.

The key elements of the package are contained in three Council Regulations:

#### LICENSING OF AIR CARRIERS

Any air carrier which has its principal place of business in the EC and is owned

and controlled directly or through a majority shareholding by member states or nationals of member states shall be entitled to the granting of an operating licence. The operator must also be able to satisfy basic financial and technical fitness criteria laid down in the Regulation. A state can still insist that aircraft used by carriers which it licenses are also registered by it and covered by its airworthiness standards.

#### ACCESS TO INTRA COMMUNITY ROUTES

All EC carriers will have right to access to all intra-Community routes (seventh freedom) from 1 January 1993. Full cabotage rights (ie the ability to fly within another member state) will not be obligatory until April 1997. In the intervening period, airlines will be able to carry out cabotage services only as an extension of an existing service to or from their home state and will not be able to offer more than 50 per cent of its total seat capacity on the cabotage leg. States may impose public service obligations on routes of regional importance. Access to such routes may be limited but they must be open to public tender. Member states also have the

### June/July 1992

Indian strike (2)  
German strike (3)  
ITF European  
Committee (3)

#### Obituaries (7)

#### People (8)

#### Fisheries

Torremolinos meeting (9)

#### Seafarers

FPC (10)  
Euro deal on cabotage (11)  
Bulkers (13)  
Campaign News (14)

#### Inland Transport

Railwaymen's Committee (16)  
Swazi rail victory (19)

#### Forthcoming Meetings (19)

#### Civil Aviation

Cabin crew meeting (20)  
Airline Round-up (22)  
Nationalair (23)

#### Docks

ITF campaign against cargo  
handling by seafarers (25)  
Port workers' week (26)

Continued on page 2

# Indian workers in economic protest strike

Fifteen million Indian workers participated in a one day strike on June 16 that was called to demonstrate opposition to the government's new economic policies.

The strike was called by a sponsoring committee of eight central unions, including the HMS and the All-India Co-ordination Committee of Aviation Trade Unions (AICC ATU).

The unions oppose the Indian government's new economic policy of privatisation and deregulation.

The IMF and World bank are pressuring the Indian government to introduce a "free market" economy — against the interests of ordinary people, according to AICCATU Convenor Jagdish Lal.

The action was strongly backed by civil aviation workers. Domestic air traffic ground to a halt and international operations were severely disrupted.

The majority of workers in the ports, railways did not actually strike, but most showed their support for the action.

"Normal life was paralysed in the States of West Bengal, Kerala, Bihar and partly Orissa by mass action of workers and common people. This one day protest strike by an overwhelming majority sections of organised trade union movement of India has thrown a challenge to the Government of India to desist from its anti-people anti-worker policies in the name of liberalisation and the free market economy."

About 30,000 workers were jailed before the strike in attempts to contain the action (even though it was perfectly legal), two workers were killed and many others injured.

Despite Government attempts to claim that the action was a failure, neutral observers agreed the action

had a lot of impact. An editorial in the *Times of India* on June 18 stated that:

"...it should be plain that participation in the action far exceeded the strength of the Left- and National Front-led trade unions that had organised it. Or else it would be impossible to explain the crippling of banking and insurance, civil aviation and the bulk of public sector industries in the country, as well as the considerable effect on private industry and transport in most cities and regions."

The newspaper echoed the union's demand:

"The Government must change course and return to the search for consensus, accord and harmony."

"This mass action portends many more battles to be fought by Indian workers in defence of their security of service better wages and conditions of work and life." said Lal.

## ... Mixed reactions to EC aviation package

Continued from page 1

right to impose conditions, limit or refuse the exercise of traffic rights where serious congestion and/or environmental problems arise although such action is supposed to be non discriminatory and not to distort competition.

### FARES AND RATES

In principle member states will lose their right to disapprove air fares and cargo rates. Instead there will be 'free pricing' but subject to certain safeguards. Charter carriers will be treated in the same way as scheduled carriers. A member state may decide to withdraw a fare which is 'excessively high' to the disadvantage of users. It may also stop further fare decreases if a fares war has developed leading to a downwards spiral in fares resulting in widespread losses for all the carriers concerned. In each case any decision by a state to act (or not act) on a fare can be referred by an interested party to the Commission which will make a speedy decision. This can, in turn, be

appealed to the Council of Ministers.

There are as many different views of the practical results of the third package as there are industry commentators. There is certainly no enthusiasm in the industry at present for large widespread fare reductions. Unions will, however, undoubtedly experience still more pressure from airlines for job wage and benefit cuts as they position themselves for the large scale restructuring in airline ownership which is almost certain to result from the liberalisation of the market combined with the increasing pressure towards privatisation.

Big questions still remain unanswered, however. One is the question of slot allocation. All the EC's most attractive airports have big congestion problems. Existing carriers have most of the decent take off and landing slots and want to keep them. The Council has now made the development of a code of conduct on the allocation of slots one of its top priorities. The second big question is external policy. The most intense competi-

tion in the aviation industry today is not on intra European services but on Atlantic and Asia/Pacific routes. The USA has recently announced its willingness to negotiate reciprocal "open skies" agreements with other countries. The Commission, meanwhile, has its eyes on grabbing the competence to negotiate bilateral agreements with other countries from individual member states. It sees enormously enhanced bargaining power if the EC can confront the US in negotiations as a single unit offering Community cabotage rights to US airlines only in exchange for US cabotage rights for European ones. Member states so far seem markedly less enthusiastic about the idea.

### ITF News is late...

We're sorry we're late! This combined issue covers June and July 1992 — the next edition will be August 1992. Unavoidable pressures of work have messed up our schedule.

# German transport workers win strike

Western Germany's striking public service workers won a clear cut victory following their recent eleven day strike — the longest in the country's post war history — putting an end to any hope Chancellor's Kohl's government's might have had of imposing a pay freeze on them this year (see *ITF News*, May 1992).

Thanks to the determination of rank and file union members, who rallied in huge numbers to the joint strike call, negotiators for the six public service workers' unions have secured what had once seemed impossible — a 1992 pay settlement averaging 5.8 per cent that is considerably higher than the arbitrator's original recommendation rejected out of hand by the employers on April ninth.

In a high wage economy like western Germany the structure of pay deals in the public sector, which has many high but also many low paid workers, is of crucial importance.

The current settlement sets out to narrow pay differentials between workers in the sector by tipping the balance in favour of those in the lower and middle salary brackets, the groups that have been hardest hit by recent price movements.

It does this in two ways; by awarding lower and middle paid public sector staff a lump-sum payment to compensate them for the absence of a pay agreement during the first four months of this year which, at DM 750, is DM 150 more than for that for the higher grades and by making higher grades wait an extra month — until June first — before they receive the 5.4 per cent across-the-board salary increase that has been granted for 1992.

This represents a real advance on the 5.4 per cent that came out of arbitration and the employers' "final offer" of 4.7 per cent from April first plus DM 500.

There is no doubt that this year's pay round would have turned out quite differently but for the clear will of close on two million public sector workers to fight back against the government's all-out attack on their rates of pay.

Even the conservative press was forced grudgingly to admit that the unions had won hands down, while at the same time expressing misgivings about the size of the settlement.

More enlightened sectors of public opinion ascribe the public service workers' success to the unions' strike strategy of progressively bringing out key groups of workers across the country — a tactic which ensured that the industrial action caused growing disruption to transport and communications and kept the issues behind the strike to the fore.

The unions also turned the fact that the May Day holiday fell in the middle of the strike strongly to their advantage. They wound down their action over what is a traditional holiday weekend so that other workers would not be prevented by transport difficulties from enjoying the break and to give the employers time to reflect and agree to talks.

When they failed to respond, the unions reimposed the strike on Monday May fourth with renewed vigour, extending it to include all the country's major airports, with the exception of Frankfurt, which was hit the following day, the first time it had been completely closed in over fifty years.

By May sixth, almost half a million transport workers were out on strike as the unions put on a last minute show of strength before negotiations resumed.

After a fruitless negotiating session on May sixth, talks resumed early the following day and the final deal that allowed the strike to be called off was hammered out in the early evening.

In the subsequent membership ballots, members of all the unions involved with the exception of the biggest public sector union — the Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (ÖTV), whose members, along with the railway workers, had spearheaded the action — voted to accept the terms of the settlement.

ÖTV officials spent the following couple of weeks explaining the settlement in detail to their members be-

fore calling a meeting of the Board on May 25 which voted to accept its terms. As a result of their discussions with the rank and file, the ÖTV have agreed that they will review procedures for keeping in touch with the membership this autumn.

## ***A European transport workers' Federation?***

Close working relations between a reinforced ITF European structure and a strengthened body which represents transport union views within the European Community will eventually lead to the establishment of a European Transport Workers' Federation. This at least was agreed by virtually all the more than 70 delegates from 23 European countries who gathered in London on June third and fourth to attend the first meeting of the ITF European Committee to take place for over 15 years. There was, however, a considerable difference of opinion about how long this process should and could take.

Created in 1975, the European Committee met only twice in the 1970s. The growth in importance of the EC meant that transport union activity was focused instead on a linked body, the so called "Brussels Committee" which was made up only of EC transport unions and which was specifically charged with lobbying the EC institutions.

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### **DOUBLE CHALLENGE FACES EUROPE**

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The creation of the European internal market, the potential enlargement of the EC and the democratisation of Central and Eastern Europe have all led over the past few years to demands by affiliates for the ITF to in-

**Continued on page 4**

# European transport ministers discuss the problems of growth

The 12th Symposium on Theory and Practice in Transport Economics organised by the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) was held in Lisbon from 4 to 6 May on the theme "Transport Growth in Question". Sub-topics discussed during the symposium were: Demographic Structure and Social Behaviour, Economic Evolution and Transport Specialisation, Infrastructure Capacity and Network Access, Impact of New Technologies on Efficiency and Safety, and The Environment, Global and Local Effects.

Increasing congestion and saturation of the transport network has been apparent in conurbations for some time now, but growth in longer distance transport arising from integra-

tion of markets, dispersal of production facilities and tourism is also causing the overloading of the inter-urban and inter-regional networks.

Attention was drawn to the limited ability to create additional infrastructure capacity for inland transport and for the need, therefore, to make the most efficient use of existing capacity. This would require much greater commitment to multi-modal transport systems and policies. A particular theme of the debates was the need for the price of transport to reflect its real external costs in terms of congestion, environmental impact and social costs.

The contribution which could be made by collective, public transport to averting a crisis was generally recognised and it was pointed out that

public transport must become a basic element in future town and country planning.

The ECMT has traditionally been concerned with inland transport questions, but it is increasingly being recognised that the integration of the coastal and short-sea maritime sector offers possibilities for alleviating the congestion in land transport. The need for political co-ordination of transport policy at the international level is seen as essential to the adoption of long-term solutions.

Representatives of ITF affiliates from Austria, Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Sweden and Turkey as well as ITF Assistant General Secretary Graham Brotherton, attended the Symposium.

## ...ITF European Committee debates future structures

Continued from page 4

crease its European activities. As a first step in this process, the ITF Executive Board decided to reactivate the European Committee. The same developments have blurred the clear separation of functions between the ITF and the Brussels Committee (which is overwhelmingly made up of ITF unions and of which the ITF is itself a member)

The most radical suggestion at the meeting, which was chaired by ITF European Vice-President Eike Eulen (ÖTV, Germany) was that a European Federation of transport unions should be created as quickly as possible. Such a Federation would take over many of the functions of national transport unions and would be able to respond effectively both to future Community decisions and to the increasingly multinational nature of transport employers. Other delegates argued for a more evolutionary approach to the problem, working through the two existing organisations and accepting that they have different and complementary functions and that any duplication be avoided by forging even closer working relationships.

Summing up the debate, ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis reminded the meeting that activities matter more than structures. The ITF for the first

time had a responsibility to represent unions throughout Europe and not only in the Community. In the EC at least, the need for a European Federation could not be denied as a result of the Single Market and the free movement of labour, but the process could not be rushed. In the end it would depend on the willingness not just of union leaders but of union members. The final shape of any structure could only be decided once the results of current discussions on restructuring the Brussels Committee were known. In the meantime, it was necessary to reach an interim solution.

After some further discussion, the Committee agreed to establish a new Praesidium consisting of the European members of the ITF Executive Board plus the chairmen of the ITF European Sectional Committees. This body, plus the Praesidium of the "Brussels Committee" will then formally meet on a regular basis under the title "European Transport Liaison Committee", an organisation which, on paper at least, has existed for nearly twenty years as the recognised "industry committee" of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) for the transport industry. Since the ETUC's Luxembourg Congress in 1991, the role of industry com-

mittees in the organisation has grown in importance, necessitating an urgent review of this structure too.

### GREEN ISSUES TOP THE BILL

Having debated structures, the meeting went on to examine recent industrial developments in the transport sector. One issue that affiliates were keen to address is the environment — an urgent concern both for the European Community, as the Commission develops draft policy such as that contained in its recent Green Paper on the subject, and for Eastern and Central Europe, where the years of heavy industrialisation have made pollution control vital, and the meeting recognised the need to develop a unified trade union strategy in the field to match the initiatives taken by governments and industry.

The Committee also reviewed the statement on European Transport Policy adopted at the ITF Conference on Transport and the Single European Market, held in April 1989. The document should be expanded to cover environmental issues, trade union rights and issues affecting Eastern and Central Europe. Affiliates were asked to forward their comments to the ITF which will then circulate a revised and updated policy statement to be submitted to the next meeting.

# Spanish unions stage protest strike

All three Spanish trade unions affiliated to the ITF went on strike in May in protest against the policies of the Madrid government.

Transport workers from the ITF-affiliated Federación Estatal de Transportes y Telecomunicaciones (FETTC-UGT) and from the Federación Estatal de Transportes, Comunicaciones y Mar (FETCOMAR-CC.OO.) gave their full support to a general strike called on the morning of 28th May, whilst in the Basque country the unions joined forces with another ITF affiliate, ELA-STV, the largest union in the region, in a 24-hour stoppage called the day before.

Unions said the strikes were a resounding success, with up to 90 per cent of the workers in the country joining the action.

The government disputed the figures, but had to admit that at least 30 per cent of Spaniards had stopped work between 05h00 and 12h00 on the 28th. In the Basque strike on the 27th, official figures had been as high as 70 per cent.

## UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS CUT

Unions are angry at the increasingly heavy-handed attitude of a government that seems to have forgotten that it was elected on a "socialist" platform.

The strikes were called in protest against changes to social security provisions — which will cut benefits by 40 per cent — contained in a decree recently voted in by Parliamentary delegates, and likely to be approved over the next few months. Nicknamed the "decretazo", the measure is ostensibly the government's plan for European Community convergence at the end of the year, and is intended to channel funds away from public spending into paying off the huge government debt accumulated over the past few years.

Large numbers of unemployed workers will be affected by the decree. The government has claimed that extra training and job creation

schemes will be introduced — but in the absence of any concrete plans for the implementation of such measures, unions are cynical.

They are also concerned that Spain spends a relatively low amount on unemployment protection (despite televised assertions by Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez that Spain is among the top three Euro-spenders, it is actually sixth on the list).

## STRIKE LAW IS UNCONSTITUTIONAL

The scope of the strike was widened to include a strong protest against the draft strike law currently going through parliament (see *ITF News*, April 1992) when negotiations between the government and unions on the law broke down on May 11th.

The proposed legislation sets down essential services that must be maintained in the case of strike action, and radically limits the fundamental rights of many workers — including public transport and goods distribution workers, who must maintain agreed levels (sometimes up to 40 per cent) of normal services during strikes. Actions declared by tribunals as being "political" will also become illegal.

The draft risks infringing Spain's own constitution which unconditionally enshrines the right to strike.

Following its avowal that the strikes of the 27th and 28th were illegal the

government declared that it would guarantee the "right to work" during the strike.

## STRONG POLICE PRESENCE

As a result, public transport was targeted by police who gathered at bus and train stations all over the country, confronting picket lines in an unprecedented show of force.

Reports say that as first light rose over Madrid on 28th, the city appeared to be in the throes of a military takeover, its streets thronged with police.

Trade unions noted that the increased police presence was a worrying tendency.

ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis supported the Spanish unions' action in letters to Spanish affiliates.

Lewis expressed concern over the introduction of a strike law, the terms of which had not been agreed by the social partners.

The ITF "condemns the recent government measure of cutting unemployment benefits, carried out via the so-called "decretazo", and without consultation with the workers' representative organisations", he added.

Since the action, both the UGT and CC.OO. have called upon the government to resume negotiations. They say they will call another strike in October if the situation does not improve.

## Workers' opposition to Malawian dictatorship grows

International concern for the safety of detained Malawian union leader Chakufwa Chihana is increasing, while workers opposition to the regime is intensifying.

Chihana — secretary-general of the Southern African Trade Union Coordinating Committee (SATUCC) — was arrested in the Lilongwe airport, Malawi, on April 6 (see *ITF News*, May 1992). His crime was advocating democracy in Malawi.

The government also initially arrested the entire SATUCC office staff,

but they have now been released without charge.

Malawian workers took to the streets in early May. Striking textile workers were soon joined by others.

Demonstrations turned into riots in the main cities when police fired live ammunition at workers — killing at least 40 in Lilongwe and Blantyre on May 7.

Thousands of workers gathered outside the High Court that day chanting "free Chihana" where lawyers ar-

Continued on page 6

# Hundreds killed as Thai's overthrow Suchinda

The people of Thailand have achieved a major victory for democracy and freedom at a terrible cost in human lives.

Following the February 1992 military coup (see *ITF News*, April 1991), Thailand's military rulers have attempted various devices to stay in power.

When the military appointed coup leader General Suchinda Kraprayoon as Prime Minister in April, following inconclusive and unfair "elections", the Thai people rose up.

Former Member of Parliament Chalad Vorachat began a hunger strike outside the Bangkok Parliament building on April 10 demanding General Suchinda's resignation. He was joined on May 4 by a popular opposition politician Chamlong Srimuang.

People began to gather in support of the hunger strikers. By the evening of May 7, over 100,000 had assembled.

On May 11, the pro-democracy movement suspended all mass protests for a week after their leaders accepted proposals for constitutional amendments to be agreed between opposition parties and the government.

However, the military backed down on this deal and publicly renounced it.

In the evening of May 17, 300,000 people gathered in a peaceful pro-

democracy rally. The rally marched towards the Parliament building to demand Suchinda's resignation but were stopped by a series of barbed wire barricades and most of the crowd dispersed — leaving 70,000 on the streets.

In the middle of the night (3h00 on May 18), the government announced a State of Emergency. Troops fired automatic machine guns into the crowd.

The demonstrators — in an incredible display of bravery — held their ground and continued protesting. Troops continued the slaughter into the next day (May 19)

Hundreds of people were murdered, possibly as many as a thousand died — exact figures may never be known because much of the shooting took place in back streets as troops fired indiscriminately on groups of unarmed

protesting demonstrators..

Over 2,00 people were arrested — including Chamlong Srimuang.

A wave of international protests followed. The ITF joined a host of international union organisations in demanding an end to the killings, the lifting of the state of emergency and the release of political detainees.

But it was the strength of the Thai people who remained on the streets that forced the military to back down. The King of Thailand intervened dramatically on live television, Suchinda resigned, and a new Prime Minister was appointed.

Prime Minister Anand Panyarachun is not an elected politician but does, for the moment, enjoy the critical backing of the people. His regime must move fast to satisfy the demands of the pro-democracy movement or he will face renewed mass action.

## Ravenswood strike victory

A dispute that sets a new milestone in U.S. and international trade union campaigning formally ended on 12 June with a victory for the union.

The lock-out by the Ravenswood Aluminum Corporation in West Virginia was lifted after members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) voted overwhelmingly to accept a new three-year contract which

brings material improvements and reinstates all the workers who had been "permanently replaced."

The company had kept 1,700 USWA members locked out of Ravenswood since November 1990, when RAC broke off negotiations on a new contract and hired "permanent replacement" workers.

Continued on page 7

## ... Troops fire on Malawian demonstrators

Continued from page 6

gued for the right of access to the jailed union leader.

The unrest spread over the next few days into the country's tea plantations, with workers demanding pay increases.

The government failed to produce Chihana in Lilongwe High Court, and the demonstrations continued.

A delegation from the International Confederation of Free Trades Unions (ICFTU) visited Malawi and was allowed to see Chihana on May 13 — till then no-one even knew whether he was alive or not. The delegation

also met with 93 year old Malawian President-for-life Hastings Banda, who rejected appeals for Chihana's release but promised that the trade unionist would receive a fair and proper trial.

On June 19, a High Court judge was due to give a ruling on a petition to release Chihana — but the judge failed to appear in court! According to the ICFTU, this raises serious doubts that the regime intends to keep its promise of a fair trial.

Meanwhile, Malawi held one-party "elections" on June 25-26, which were denounced by ICFTU General Secre-

tary Enzo Friso as a "sham" because democratic forces were prevented from participating. Malawians, risking punishment, boycotted the vote in large numbers — less than half of the registered electors bothered to vote.

The opposition Democratic Alliance coalition has appealed to the world for help in opening up dialogue in Malawi. People in Malawi, the Alliance states, are "still haunted by the prospect of massive repression, including extra-judicial executions." Unless Banda gives way, there is bound to be growing wave of unrest in Malawi.

# Worldwide violations of trade union rights

More than two hundred union activists and labour leaders were killed last year and a further two thousand detained as countries around the world continued to crack down on organised labour and workers' representatives.

These shocking statistics emerge from the latest Annual Survey of Violations of Trade Union Rights published by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) in June, which cites union rights abuses in a total of 85 countries.

Latin and Central America is still the most dangerous area for trade unionists, with Colombia, Peru, Guatemala and El Salvador heading the list of the region's black spots.

Colombia alone accounted for a quarter of the deaths of trade unionists over the period, with agricultural workers and teachers among the prime targets of the death squads.

In Peru, political killings and "disappearances" remained shockingly commonplace and fourteen teachers died violent deaths as the authorities put down an "illegal" strike by their union.

Active trade unionists in Guatemala face many threats, including murder and abduction, while the police, anti-riot units and the military are routinely used to deter union organisation and strikes among groups such as banana workers.

Death squads are still operating in El Salvador against trade unionists,

who are portrayed by the government and the military as fronts of the armed opposition and thus legitimate targets.

Other countries with a record of fierce trade union repression include South Africa, with forty-seven trade unionists murdered by government and army backed death squads, and the People's Republic of China, where the government has recently banned free trade unions.

In a new development, first reported by the ICFTU this year, the giant

multinationals operating in many developing countries have resorted to mass sackings when workers seek to exercise their rights under international labour conventions. Over fifty thousand workers have lost their jobs in this fashion, according to the survey.

A growing trend for company managements to enlist landlords, the police and armed forces in repressing organised workers is also recorded, as is the absence of effective curbs on well-known union busters.

## ... US Steelworkers settle dispute

Continued from page 7

Now, under the contract approved by the Ravenswood workers, the 1,700 will get their jobs back from 29 June. Each worker affected by the lock-out will receive a US\$2,000 payment, and hourly wages will increase by \$1.25 over the contract's three-year run. There is also a "progress-sharing" plan to further reimburse the workers for their losses during the lock-out.

Talks had restarted between the company and the union in April, just a week after former RAC chairman and chief executive officer R. Emmett Boyle was ousted by RAC's directors. His hasty departure was closely linked to the increasing difficulties experienced by RAC as a result of union

campaigns both in the USA and internationally.

Through a complex world network of companies, Ravenswood is ultimately controlled by fugitive millionaire commodities trader Marc Rich, who is wanted by the American authorities on a string of racketeering and tax charges.

With assistance from the international trade union movement, including the ITF, American union campaigners maintained constant international pressure on Rich and his business associates. International data collected by the International Chemical and Energy Workers Federation (ICEF) enabled the USWA to identify and target Rich's operations worldwide.

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## OBITUARIES

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**Thomas Nielsen**, President from 1967 to 1982 of the Danish trade union confederation LO, died on May sixth.

**Ernst Råberg**, former National Secretary of the Swedish Seafarers' Union, died on 30 March, aged 83. Råberg was the union's New York representative for over twenty years, moving to the USA during the war years and returning to Sweden in the early six-

ties to take up the post of national secretary. Here he soon won a name for himself as one of the leading figures in the Foc campaign in Sweden of the time and the man behind many ship boycotts.

The acting Eastern Cape branch chairperson of the Transport and General Workers' Union (South Africa) was murdered on the June 11. **Brother**

**Thlekiso** was on his way to the TGWU offices in Umtata when he was attacked by two men dressed in combat uniforms and shot twice at close range. ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis sent a special message to the TGWU expressing shock at the murder and passing on condolences to Thlekiso's family and friends on behalf of transport workers' unions throughout the world.



# PEOPLE

New officials have been elected to lead the Flight Attendants' Association of Australia — a new union formed out of a merger between the Australian Flight Attendants' Association (AFAA) and the Australian International Cabin Crew Association (AICCA). They are: Joint Federal Secretaries **Shayne Nealon** and **Lance Webb**; Joint Assistant Federal Secretaries: **Melinda Simmons** and **Mark Slater**; Federal President: **Gary McGraw**; and Federal Vice President: **Ian Renn**. Members of both unions voted overwhelmingly in favour of the merger, which came into effect on 1 June.

**Kapai K Aria** is the new General Secretary of the Papua New Guinea National Airline Employees' Association (NAEA). He has taken over from **Reg McAlister**, who has left the union to take up once again his earlier position as General Secretary of the PNG Waterside Workers' and Seamen's Union. Aria is a trade unionist of broad national and international experience. He is a former General Secretary of the Public Employees' Association (PEA) — the largest trade union in Papua New Guinea — and one-time Executive Board member of both the Public Services International (PSI) and the Postal, Telegraph and Telephone International (PTTI). A founder member of the NAEA, which was set up in the late 1970s, he served as chairman of the Grievance Board which dealt with the case of the nine sacked Air Niugini flight attendants (see *ITF News*, May 1992).

**Malcolm Bourne**, Senior Industrial Officer of the British National Union of Marine, Aviation and Shipping Transport Officers (NUMAST) has retired after a

union career spanning thirty years. During his time at NUMAST, Malcolm gave ready assistance to the ITF, mostly with Foc problems.

President of the Canadian Labour Congress **Shirley Carr** is the new Chairman of the workers' group at the International Labour Organisation (ILO), a position that she will hold for the next two years. She is the first woman and the second Canadian (the other was former CLC President Joe Morris) to lead the workers' group. Carr, who was elected CLC President in 1986 and has twice been re-elected, recently announced that she will not be seeking a further term.

**Alexander 'Doc' Cullison** has been elected to fill the unexpired term of **Gene DeFries**, President of the National Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association (NMEBA), who resigned in March. Cullison was also recently elected President of MEBA District 1/NMU.

The new General Secretary of the British Airline Pilots' Association (BALPA) is **Chris Darke**, formerly a national officer representing chemicals industry workers in Manufacturing, Science, Finance (MSF). Darke, who is 42, follows **Mark Young**, the association's General Secretary for the past seventeen years, who died last August.

**Jens Bjørn Hansen** was elected President of the Norwegian Ships' Masters' Association in May following **Eigil Tynæs**, whose four year term of office has just ended. Hansen, an experienced ship's master who worked for the Nor-

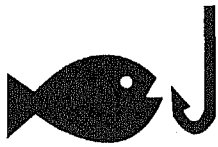
wegian Maritime Directorate during the early eighties, has previously served the union as both its sailing Vice President and briefly as President.

**David Higginbottom** has been elected as the new General Secretary of the British United Road Transport Union (URTU).

**Anders Lindström** and **Börje Persson** were re-elected President and Vice President respectively of the Swedish Seafarers' Union at the union's 13th Congress held in Gothenburg from 10 to 14 May. **Lars-Göran Holmgren** also won election to the newly-reintroduced post of National Secretary. Shortly before the SSU Congress, Lindström was again returned as President of the Nordic Transport Workers' Federation (NTF) at its Reykjavik Congress.

**Per-Erik Nelin** was elected in June as the next President of the Finnish Seafarers' Union following **Reijo Anttila**, who has now retired. Nelin has worked for the union since 1979, the last eight years as its national secretary. A musician by training, he is a former General Secretary of the Musicians' Union and worked for five years as a ship's musician. **Erkki Ukkonen** replaces Nelin as National Secretary. Both Nelin and Anttila are currently members of the Committee of the ITF Seafarers' Section, Anttila having served on the committee since the late 1970s. Anttila was also elected to the Fair Practices Committee and the newly-created Cruise Ship Committee at the 1990 Florence Congress.





## Torremolinos Protocol draft agreed

The majority of the world's fishing vessels will continue to be unprotected by international safety regulations.

The draft Protocol on Fishing Safety agreed at a meeting in Iceland in June, may get ratified, but will it have any practical impact?

The International Maritime Organisation intersessional meeting to finalise the draft text on the Protocol to the Torremolinos Convention on Fishing Vessel Safety (1977) was held in Reykjavik, Iceland from first to fifth of June. The agreed draft text will now be presented to a diplomatic conference in Torremolinos, Spain next year (provisionally scheduled for March 22- April second). This Conference will adopt the text, but it will only enter into force 12 months after being ratified by states representing 50 per cent of the world fishing fleet of 24 metres in length and over.

## World fish catch drops

The world fishing catch fell for the first time in 20 years in 1990, according to United Nation's Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO).

Total world catch exceeded 100 million tonnes in 1989, but fell to 97.2 million in 1990.

The main reason was a drop in the catch of Peruvian Anchovy, which fell from 5.4 million tonnes to 3.7. Most of the main species caught declined.

Top fish was the Alaska Pollack, down 528,000 tonnes to 5.8 million tonnes, followed by Japanese Pilchard, down 408,000 to 4.7 million tonnes.

The top fishing nation was China (12 million tonnes), just pushing the then USSR into second place (10.3 million tonnes) followed by Japan (10.3 million tonnes), Peru (6.9 million tonnes), the USA (5.8 million tonnes) and Chile (5.1 million tonnes).

The failure of the 1977 Convention to attract sufficient ratifications is the reason why IMO states have agreed to water down the draft treaty in order to make it attractive non-ratifiers.

The ITF and Fishing unions were never going to be happy with this process. Damage limitation has involved the fight to keep the draft Treaty as broad as possible.

The majority decision at the June meeting—opposed by the ITF—was that a 45 metre starting length should be adopted for four crucial sections of the Protocol—including fire fighting, life saving and radio communications.

The ITF pointed out to the meeting that 81.26 per cent of the world fishing fleet (over 100 grt) is under 45 metres in length, and hence is excluded from these critical areas of the Protocol. Since the Protocol will only apply to new vessels, the vast majority of the world's fishing vessels will not be covered by this agreement.

One concession on vessels between 24 and 45 metres is a statement in the Protocol that regional standards should be set.

The inclusion of a statement of intent in the Protocol is too much for some states (the USA and China)—who will attempt to remove this clause and replace it with a much weaker IMO Assembly Resolution. The ITF is calling upon affiliates to lobby their governments to support the retention of Article 3 (5) in the Protocol at the 1993 Torremolinos Conference.

Unions must fight for the development of regional standards. Without them, there isn't even a provision requiring life jackets on vessels under 45 metres in length!

The Japanese government is planning a meeting in Tokyo for October this year to begin formulating Asia/Pacific standards.

The meeting was not a total defeat. The ITF delegation, working through a drafting group, was able to prevent

the drill and training manual requirements being limited only to vessels over 45 metres—the new draft is, in fact, superior to the original.

The ITF delegation at the meeting included Fishermen's Section Chairman Oli Jacobsen (Faroes), Vice-Chairman Jan Skrede (Norway), Peter Sand-Mortensen (Denmark), Yugi Iijima (Japan) and Jon Whitlow (ITF Secretariat). Sixteen countries and Hong Kong were represented, along with the UN FAO, INMARSAT and the IMO Secretariat.

## Cod suspension

The European Community announced in June that it is suspending fishing northern cod in the North-West Atlantic because of the serious depletion of stocks.

EC vessels have, according to the Canadians, only caught 7,000 tonnes of northern cod out of a self-imposed quota of 27,000 this year.

There are also fears that European fishing fleets will now devastate the southern cod and ocean perch stocks.

The EC has also warned that the suspension may be rescinded in October or November if they decide stocks are replenished.

## St. Pierre deal

A 25 year old fishing rights dispute between Canada and France has finally been settled by international arbitration.

In June, an international court of arbitration ruled 3-2 that France should have fishing rights for 40 kilometres off the shores of the islands of St. Pierre et Miquelon (the last part of New France, situated in the Gulf of St. Lawrence). The French have also been given a narrow corridor 15 km wide that stretches 200 km into the Atlantic.

France had claimed 200 km wide fishing rights for the islands, and Canada had insisted on a 12 mile limit.



# SEAFARERS

## Mauritius added to Flag of Convenience list

Mauritius has been added to the ITF list of designated Flag of Convenience (Foc) registers by the Fair Practices Committee meeting in June.

The ITF FPC — the joint body of seafarers and dockers' unions who are in charge of the Foc campaign — held its annual meeting in London from June 10 to 12. The meeting was attended by over 130 members, advisers and observers from 76 seafarers and dockers unions in 44 countries.

While the FPC has delegated the authority to add registers to the ITF Foc list to the FPC Subcommittee — as with the recent addition of the Cook Islands (see *ITF News*, April 1992) — this decision on Mauritius was taken unanimously by the whole FPC in the first day of the meeting.

Mauritius clearly satisfied the criteria — not only is the register hawking itself all over the maritime world like some new low-cost detergent, but their authorities are on the record as saying that safety is no concern of theirs — owners can look after themselves! The Mauritian authorities also incorrectly told people they had obtained "ITF Approval" because they had had one meeting with officials from the ITF (who told them not to set up a register!).

On the question of shore leave being denied for seafarers, ITF Assistant General Secretary Åke Selander told the meeting that he had had no response from the Japanese authorities following the protest letter he sent (see *ITF News*, May 1992). The FPC endorsed a suggestion from the Japanese Seafarers' union that as many unions as possible should write to their government backing the ITF demands for a commitment to grant all seafarers equal rights to shore leave.

The meeting then considered the questions surrounding the "International Organization of Professional Seamen (IOPS)" and the "International Maritime Union (IMU)".

IOPS came to the attention of the ITF when the French-owned, Liberian flagged *Jean Alleaume* arrived in Helsinki, Finland with an IOPS Agreement. Although drafted to look as it had ITF approval, the agreement did not match ITF standards and had never been approved by the ITF. In fact, IOPS, which is not an ITF-affiliated union, has no right to sign agreements under ITF policy (see box). The FPC endorsed this position and also decided to suspend an official of NMEBA who had been involved in IOPS from its Sub-Committee on Collective Agreements until the US unions had resolved all outstanding problems relating to IOPS and its predecessor the IMU.

The FPC also heard that IOPS had concluded an agreement with the Norwegian shipowners ASO and the

Norwegian unions for NIS ships. Following the request of the ITF General Secretary, the Norwegian unions have withdrawn from the agreement. The FPC endorsed the General Secretary's action in this matter.

The FPC unanimously agreed a motion on opposing the Argentinean government's new maritime legislation which "considerably affects the social and working conditions of merchant seafarers."

Argentinean national collective agreements are being torn up for seafarers and dockers, leaving maritime workers "defenceless".

The FPC declared its solidarity with the Argentinean Seafarers and Dockers and asked the General Secretary to contact the Argentinean government urging them to call a halt to their anti-worker policies.

The following circular was issued by the ITF General Secretary on 15 June 1992:

"International Organization of Professional Seamen (IOPS)" and "International Maritime Union (IMU)"

The Fair Practices Committee agreed at its meeting from 10 to 12 June in London that I should make clear to everyone concerned that these two organizations are **not** recognized by the ITF in any way.

Based in the Cayman Islands, they are associated with part of the National Engineers' Beneficial Association (NMEBA) of the USA, an ITF affiliate. IOPS is linked also with a number of American maritime unions. These relationships are to be reviewed by those unions, and in particular by the NMEBA.

**Meanwhile neither IOPS nor IMU is authorized by the ITF to negotiate or sign collective agreements for FOC or Second Register vessels.**

Please advise the ITF immediately if you become aware of vessels operating under IOPS or IMU agreements.

I should also be grateful if you could bring this circular to the attention of any owners, agents or managers with whom you have dealings.

Harold Lewis  
General Secretary

# Euro-Cabotage liberalisation agreed

After years of wrangling and in the face of determined opposition from seafarers, European Transport Ministers have finally agreed on a liberalisation package for maritime cabotage.

Given that the Single European Act forces European Community member states to liberalise almost everything by the end of this year (or have the liberalisation forced upon them by the Courts), and given the fact that certain particularly free-market governments (like Britain, Denmark and the Netherlands) were fighting for a complete free for all in European shipping services, the final package is really not so bad.

The social dimension and adequate harmonisation are, indeed, ignored (as usual — but the European Member states have made this a regular feature of most recent agreements). The ITF and most European seafarers unions — particularly those in the Southern European states of Spain, France, Italy and Greece who have clearly and effectively demonstrated their opinion in strongly backed strikes in January and June — did not want a liberalisation of cabotage in the first place. But a sober examination of the agreement that has been reached reveals that European Ministers have taken some account of union objections.

There are more than 90,000 people employed in cabotage in the Southern European maritime sector (35,000 on passenger vessels). Under the agreed package, the vast majority of these jobs are safe for the moment.

## CABOTAGE AGREEMENT

In the evening of Tuesday, June 23, EC Transport Ministers (in the second day of a Council meeting exclusively devoted to maritime transport) finally reached an agreement with effect for January first, 1993.

Significantly, the Ministers failed to agree on a consensus and so the Portuguese President finally decided to hold a "forced" vote under the Qualified Majority Voting Regulations (larger states having more votes). Great Britain, Denmark and the Netherlands voted against the package (for

different reasons).

The agreement grants full liberalisation of maritime cabotage from January 1993 but only to ships flying the national flag of a member state (which clearly excludes Flags of Convenience, and is reported also to exclude vessels registered under the Danish Second Register DIS). In addition to national flag ships, those registered under the new EUROS flag (not yet agreed or in force) will also be permitted access to the liberalised market. The exclusion of Focs is a major disappointment to the shipowners and can only be viewed as a victory for seafarers.

In addition — and no doubt in reaction to the strikes by seafarers in this region — special temporary exemptions have been agreed for services in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic coasts of Spain and France. These are as follows:

1. Ocean liners — liberalisation postponed till January first, 1995.
2. Transport of strategic goods (oil, oil products and drinking water) — postponed till January first, 1997.
3. Shipping services weighing less than 650 gross registered tonnes — postponed till January first, 1998.
4. Regular passenger transport services and transport by transshipment

## *ITF to approach shipowners for "non-dom" talks*

ITF Seafarers unions have agreed to invite the International Shipping Federation (ISF) to discussions on the issue of wages and conditions of non-domiciled crews on national flagships.

Delegates at the annual ITF Seafarers' Meeting, held in London on June 9, endorsed a proposal to approach the shipowners body with a view to reaching agreement on "non-doms." The meeting selected a working group who will represent ITF Seafarers at these talks.

The meeting also formed a working group on piracy to liaise with other organisations and refine the ITF's approach to this growing threat to the world's seafarers.

vessels — postponed till January first, 1999.

5. Cabotage with islands in the Mediterranean, the Canaries, the Azores, and Madeira, Ceuta, Melilla, the islands on the Atlantic coast of France, and the French Overseas Departments — postponed till January first, 1999.

6. Greek Island cabotage (including all categories above) — postponed till January first, 2004.

A complicated compromise was also agreed on the question of the composition of crews on ships weighing more than 650 tonnes and practicing inter-island cabotage. After 1999, flag law will apply.

The overall questions of social harmonisation and the composition of crews are still unresolved and are now closely linked to the implementation of the ECEUROS register. The qualified majority who voted for the package (and the Commission) have agreed that EUROS should be established "as soon as possible".

The ITF has always maintained that these moves must not "adversely affect the employment conditions and job opportunities of seafarers." The full and final impact of these measures will need to be observed closely throughout 1993 to see how shipowners use them.

In a frank and detailed discussion about armed attacks on merchant shipping, the vast majority of unions present backed the ITF's position that seafarers should not be armed — though some countries do do this and there are a few unions who consider it a necessary evil.

The meeting also discussed preparations for the forthcoming ITF Seafarers Section Conference (October 27-29, Genoa, Italy) and imminent maritime affairs at the International Labour Organisation and International Maritime Organisation.

The meeting was attended by 107 delegates from 66 unions in 42 countries.

# Huge increase in crew deaths in 1991

Lloyd's Register's latest Casualty Statistics show that more vessels were lost in 1991 than any year since 1986. Bulk Carriers, which only account for about eight per cent of the world's tonnage, recorded an alarming 37 per cent of all the 1.5 million tonnes grt lost. Most casualties were foundering (again mostly of bulkers). 111 vessels foundered, 72 per cent more than 15 years of age. The most disturbing figure of all, however, must be the staggering increase in deaths of seafarers — 1,204 crew were lost or reported missing in 1991, compared with 389 in 1990. The Cyprus Flag of convenience continued its shabby record by topping the statistics, followed by Greece, Panama and Liberia. Once again, the Focs demonstrate their true nature.

The **Caribbean** government-owned West India Shipping Company (WISCO) has gone out of business (see **ITF News** March and April 1992), but a consortium of private companies is trying to fill the gap. Seven Caribbean companies have put up \$2.7 million to start Carifreight Line Ltd., which will commence trading on August first with three chartered ships.

**Danish** shipping is doing well, with an increase in tonnage (thanks to the Second Register) and a boom in revenues. Danish Shipowners' Association President Ib Kruse, in a press conference in early June, said investment was running at US\$1.1 billion a year. Gross earnings were up 25 per cent on last year and net revenues up by 67 per cent. On May first, there were 612 ships flying the Danish flag, 468 on the Danish International Shipping Register (DIS), totalling 5.4 million grt. It must be expected that Danish seafarers should enjoy a part of this windfall in additional revenue.

Former East **German** state carrier Deutsche Seereederei Rostock (DSR) will be re-organised before privatisation. DSR chief executive Harry Wenzel has said that a new corporate plan aims to complete restructuring by the end of 1993. He remains confident that DSR will not be broken up

and that 2,500 German seafarers and office staff jobs will be retained. DSR operates 92 cargo vessels (1.22 m dwt) — before unification they had 158 vessels.

The **Norwegian** Maritime Directorate (NMD) is appealing for greater flag state uniformity. In the face of what they see as a continuing breakdown in flag state control and the growth of port state control, the NMD sees the confusion of varying flag state and classification society rules as grow-



ing problem. This, they correctly state, is leading to the takeover of safety supervision by Coastal States. Port State Control should be a system for randomly checking on flag state supervision, it should not replace flag state regulation, say the NMD. This is very true, but what the NMD must also realise is that certain Flag of convenience registers — by their very nature — have never played any role in enforcing standards on their vessels. It is unfortunate that Port State Control is necessary, but so long as Foc registers exist who have no control over the ships they register, the problem will persist.

A potential agreement between **Swedish** owners and unions which would have replaced the Government's proposed Special Section (see **ITF News** May and April 1992) was scuttled at the last minute by the obstinacy of the owners. Following a government offer that if the Swedish Seafarers Union (SSU) and Shipowners' Association (SSA) could agree alternative

rules for a new section of the register, the proposals would be replaced, intensive negotiations took place in Gothenburg in late May. General agreement was reached on everything until, at the very last minute, the owners presented a clause for agreement that would have still given them the right to engage foreign crews on Swedish ships. Many observers consider this to have been a deliberate "wrecking" move by the owners. Now the talks are off, and the government and owners are set for a major showdown with the entire Swedish trade union movement. At the SSU's recent Congress, the head of the LO National Centre pledged its backing for industrial action by the union against the new register.

The **Turkish** government established a separate ministry of maritime affairs on July first. Turkey already has its first minister of state for shipping — Ibrahim Tez — and the establishment of a specific ministry has long been sought by the industry as a recognition of the growing importance of shipping in Turkey.

## Wage hike for Indian seafarers

Indian seafarers have won a substantial 38 per cent overall wage increase in a two year agreement.

Effective from April first, 1992 till March 31, 1994, the agreement with the National Maritime Board of India involves a 33 per cent hike in basic wages and a host of other benefit and allowance increases.

The agreement will cover nearly 13,000 Indian seafarers. Coming after the last wage deal, which saw a 49 per cent increase, this agreement is a welcome step forward for Indian seafarers:

"With this one more stride, NUSI has progressed further towards its goal of attaining parity with international standards." said National Union of Seafarers of India General Secretary Leo Barnes in a message to the ITF.

# Canadians crack down on bulkers

The Canadian government have introduced a new stringent inspection regime for Bulk Carriers.

Following similar moves by Norway (see *ITF News* January/February 1992) and restrictions by Australian ore exporters on the use of older bulkers (see *ITF News* March 1992), there appears to be a slowly growing (but very welcome) global crackdown on bulker safety.

Canadian Coast Guard officials, from June 15, have begun special inspections of bulkers older than ten years, between 40,000 and 100,00 dwt and flying the registers of Cyprus, Panama, Liberia, Iran, Malta, Bahamas and the Phillipines. This will represent about 400 vessels a year. Coast Guard officials state that they have chosen the list of registers because these flags have a consistently poor safety record.

The rigorous inspections will check steelwork inside the holds and tanks, frames, bulkheads and the overall structural soundness of the ship. Immediate repairs will be forced if necessary.

The Coast Guard were ordered to introduce the new regime by Transport Minister Jean Corbeil who stated his concern with the increasing number of bulker losses worldwide and the large number of seafarers' deaths they were causing.

In the light of this tragic reality, the Canadian government's moves must be warmly welcomed by the world's seafarers.

Not however by International Association of Dry Cargo Shipowners (Intercargo) director Bruce Farthing.

Farthing told *Lloyds List* newspaper that the Canadian decision was a "dangerous move" that could hamper efforts to agree common international standards. Claiming that unilateral action by nations was not the way to proceed he stated that "This action has major commercial consequences..."

But only for ships that shouldn't be allowed to sail anyway, surely? While stating that Intercargo in no way condones the operation of substandard

ships, Farthing claims to favour IMO action.

The ITF can only ask what proposals have been forthcoming from any shipowners' organisation on the terrible scandal of bulk carrier losses. Shipowners are always telling the ITF to give up its fight against Focs and concentrate on sub-standard shipping. But where are the shipowners now?

Meanwhile, the Norwegian government claims that their new inspection regime of Panamanian and Maltese Focs has succeeded in "eradicating" sub-standard ships from their ports. Norwegian Maritime Directorate (NMD) director Oddmund Reppe says no substandard ships have been detected since March. This fine success of the NMD's special regime, launched in January, is very good. But, the obvious question must be, where have all the substandard ships that used to call in Norway gone?

\*Another welcome development is the decision of Germanischer Lloyd (GL) classification society to step up

its own actions against older bulkers by forming a special task force. GL decided to subject bulkers over 15 years old to special surveys last year — and 12.5 per cent of their tonnage fled (they won't be calling in Norway, at least). The task force will monitor surveyors and intervene in special cases. A GL study revealed that 50 per cent of ships in this category required repairs of some sort. GL director Gerd Beckedorf told *Lloyd's List* that surveyors needed to more time checking ships (rather than documentation) and pointed out that in many losses, previous damage had already been recorded to frames or cargo holds. GL believes problems with bulkers probably start at 16 years. It is now being generally stated in the industry that cheap ships built in the early 1980s with large volumes of high tensile steel have a short effective lifespan. If that is true, then the losses in the bulker fleet may start to be repeated in the younger world tanker ships that were built in the same way.

## ***US law to extend rights to foreign flag crews gathers support***

**In what could be a historic step for the campaign against flag of convenience shipping in the USA, the Education and Labor Committee of the US House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly on June 10 to pass H.R. 1126, a bill which will apply US labour legislation to many Foc ships.**

**The legislation, which was introduced in the House by Congressman William Clay of Missouri with the full backing of the ITF's US maritime affiliates, will apply two key pieces of US labour law - the National Labor Relations Act and the Fair Labor Standards Act to US owned foreign flag cargo ships (except container vessels) and all foreign flag cruise ships operating regularly in the US market, whatever the nationality of the owner. The Bill still has to pass the House Merchant Marine Committee, the floor of the House and the Senate before the current Congressional term ends, but its supporters rate its chances of success at better than 50%. It also needs to survive the risk of a Presidential veto. Providing it overcomes all these obstacles, however, Foc shipowners could find themselves facing direct organising campaigns by US seafarers' unions on board runaway ships for the first time in nearly 40 years.**

# Dutch Inspector aids crew in Croatia

We have previously reported about the cases of the Liberian flagged *Charger* and *Empress* that were abandoned in Rotterdam (see *ITF News*, April 1992). Thanks to the intervention of ITF Inspector Gert-Jan

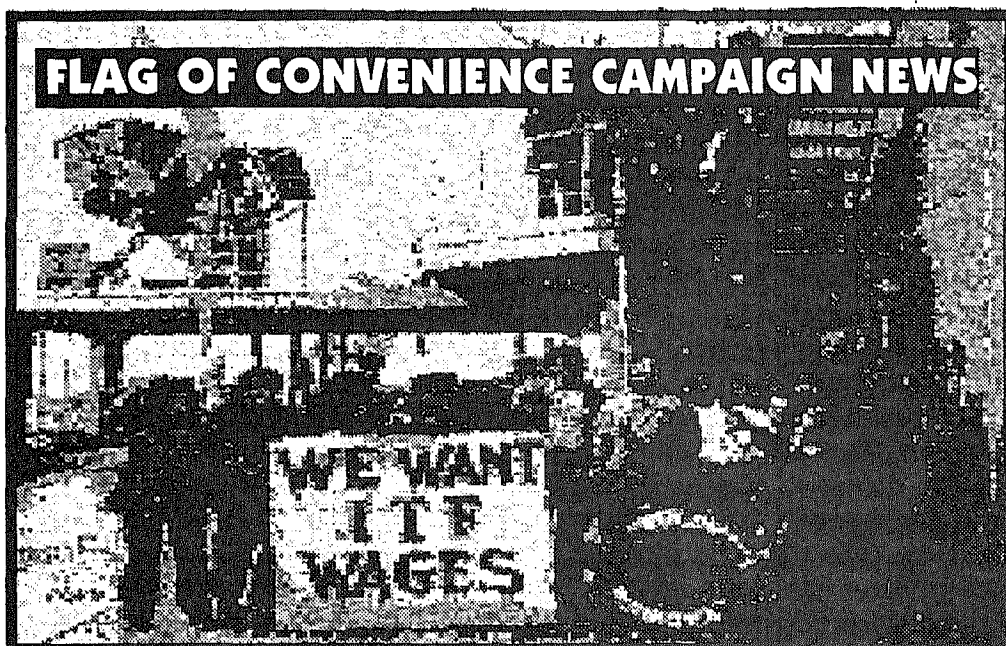
Harmsen, substantial cash settlements (over \$300,000 for the two vessels) were obtained for the crews. Another ship owned by the same company, the Liberian flag *Charger*, had also not paid its crew since the beginning of the year.

The ship was in **Rijeka**, Croatia, in the beginning of March and the crew went on strike. Predrag Brazzadurro from the ITF affiliated Seafarers and Dockers Union of Croatia came to the assistance of the men. It was agreed that Harmsen, who had successfully conducted negotiations for the other ships, would settle the men's claims for them. The original plan — in March — was to get the vessel to Rotterdam where

it could be auctioned. Working through the mortgagee bank, Harmsen did see that an advance was paid to the crew in Croatia, but little else was done by the bank. The crew remained in Croatia, and time passed.

a manager's rep to supervise the payment of the remaining (mixed European) crew. On May 7, Harmsen flew to Trieste and then drove to Rijeka. He and Brazzadurro checked the wage accounts. There were still some re-

maining problems with indemnification and leave pay for some of the remaining crew — but the managers finally agreed to pay out. Finally, on May 8, the full amounts were paid. In total over \$450,000 was obtained for the crew of this vessel — a very tidy sum indeed.



In late April, the bank told Harmsen that a temporary manager had been appointed and a representative would be sent to Rijeka. That rep. arrived on the evening of April 28 — working through the temporary manager's Amsterdam office, Harmsen oversaw the payment of the Filipino crew's outstanding wages till March 31 — they were paid off in full and repatriated. He then travelled to Rijeka with

Harmsen returned to Rotterdam on May 8.

The 27 crew of Norwegian flagged *Nordic Trader* were left penniless when their ship called in the **Sunderland**, England in May. The crew were unable to go ashore because they hadn't received any pay or allowances for five months. The seafarers approached local officials of the seafarers' union, who contacted the ITF. ITF intervention swiftly gained a full \$70,000 in payment for the crew. After a week on board the ship, the Polish and Filipino crew went ashore to enjoy a cool beer in a selection of Sunderland's legendary pubs.

The Latin American crew of the Panamanian flag *Rio Mafil*, who went on strike in **Vancouver** in April and whose ship was subsequently arrested (see *ITF News* April and May 1992) have now returned home. The crews' claims were added to the arrest, and the men were repatriated on May seventh. The case continues in the Canadian courts.

## ITF Seafarers Bulletin

The seventh edition of the ITF Seafarers Bulletin was published in June in its English version.

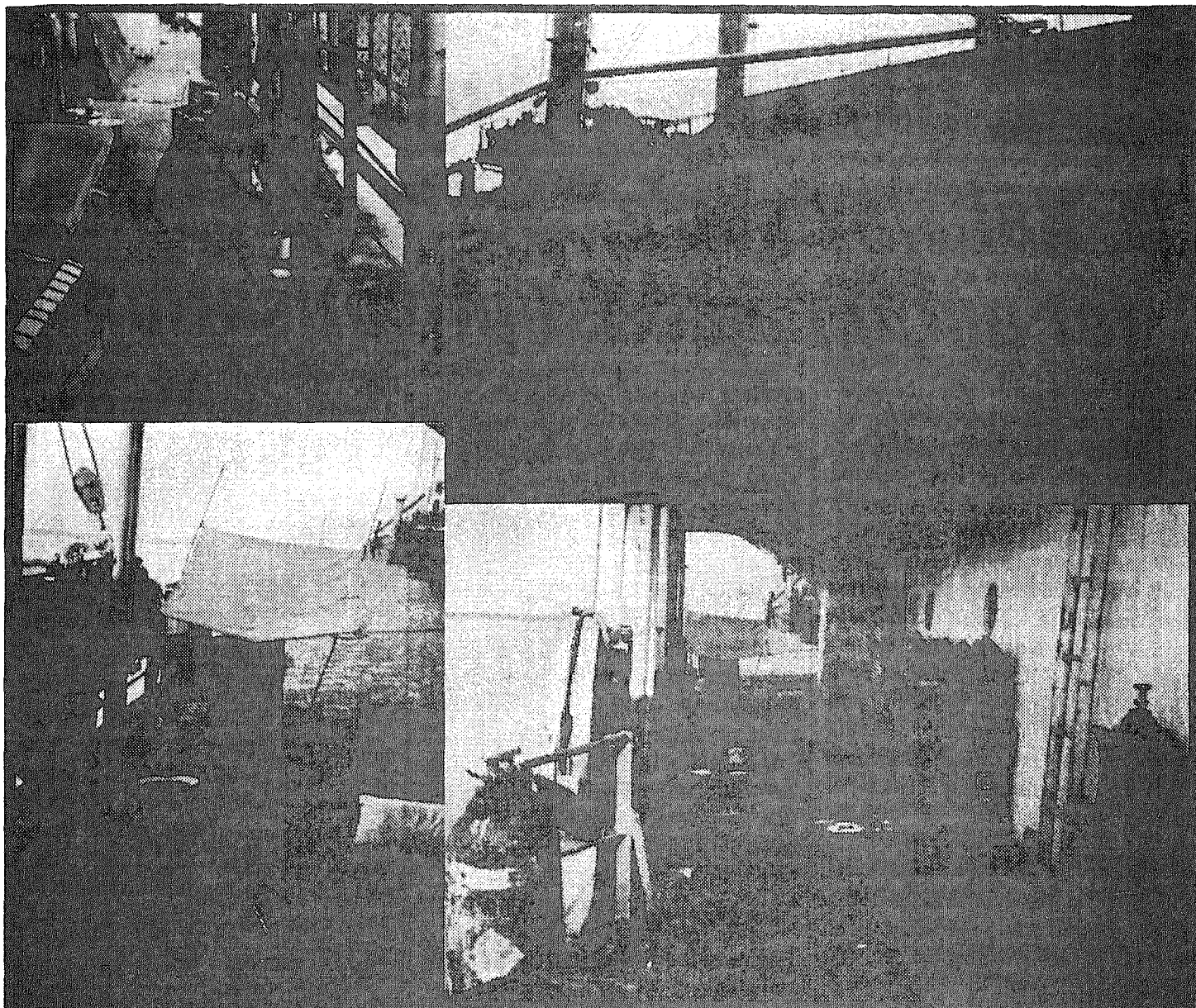
Language versions will soon be available in Tagalog (Philippino), Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, Russian, Polish, French, Swedish, German and (for the first time) Croatian.

The 54 page, full colour magazine for seafarers serving on Flag of Convenience ships has grown considerably in the last six years. — Total worldwide circulation is now approximately 200,000 (in ports, clubs and union halls worldwide.)

Packed with pages of letters from seafarers themselves, and full of stories about the ITF Flag of Convenience Campaign, the Bulletin has established itself as a major voice for the world's seafarers.

If you are interested in receiving a copy, or in helping to distribute copies, please contact the ITF Secretariat.

Continued on page 15



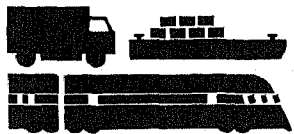
**Life on board the *Endurance Sea* — an appropriately named Liberian-flag rustbucket whose abandoned crew have sent us these photos. Top Left: Cooking on a makeshift wood stove (made out of an old Kerosene can!). Bottom Left: A rainwater barrel used for drinking and washing. Bottom Right: Empty gas bottles and rusting steel sheet (rain barrel in back) — this is a sleeping area.**

**Continued from page 15**

The 13 remaining Pakistani crew of the Pakistani owned, Liberian flag *Endurance Sea* have been abandoned in **Chittagong**, Bangladesh. They contacted the ITF on June 25 to say that none of them had received any wages since November 1991. The company — Terra Marine Agencies of Karachi — have promised money, but none has ever arrived. The crew are suffering badly — supplies of food, fuel and drinking water have run out. The crew have been reduced to begging for food, cooking on wood fires on the decks (!) and collecting rain water in a rusty old oil drum. The ship is stranded outside

a repair berth — repairs cannot be started because the company has paid no money to the yard. The crew say the ship is infected with rats and insects. Ships safety certificates have expired and the situation is so bad that some crew have simply abandoned the ship, penniless, and departed for home by land. The crew asked the ITF to try and get the Liberian authorities or the owner to intervene and they have also provided photographs of life on board the ship. In a message to the Reston, Virginia (USA) headquarters of the Liberian authorities, the ITF asked for the Foc register to send an inspector and even consider providing help to the crew.

Senior Associate Attorney (Investigation Division) Michael Davies-Sekle replied on June 30 saying that the register will continue to try and get the owners to help the crew, and also states "Pending the crew's next contact with you, we will get back to you on this matter if we receive a reply from the operators. Is it possible for the ITF to provide temporary assistance to the crew?" That will certainly happen — but its worth recording the fact that the Liberian register, whilst unable to assist a crew, is happy to ask us to. We might not be the only people who can help the crew of the *Endurance Sea*, but we are certainly the only people who will.



# INLAND TRANSPORT

## *ITF Railwaymen's Section prepares for action against privatisation*

Concern over privatisation, the separation of operations from infrastructure and the access of private operators to the infrastructure marked the meeting of the ITF Railwaymen's Section Committee held in London on 19 and 20 May 1992. The meeting, which was attended by 42 delegates from unions in 22 countries, was chaired by Jim Knapp of the British National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT) and Umraomal Purohit of the All India Railwaymen's Federation, Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively of the Section.

### **FINANCING THE RAILWAYS**

During the debate on this item delegates pointed to the deteriorating situation of public transport and the lack of political will to charge transport modes for their full costs. The sources and aims of investment were also questioned and it was acknowledged that, where investment was financed through private funds, there was a danger that an increasing number of activities would be transferred to the private sector. The Committee agreed that its continuing policy should be to persuade the public authorities of the necessity of equalising the treatment of costs between the different modes of inland transport.

### **ORGANIC SEPARATION**

Committee members related their experiences of varying degrees of separation of railway infrastructure from operations, which in EC countries was being pushed by the adoption of Directive 91/440 in June 1991 which had made separate accounting compulsory and organic separation optional for national railway undertakings. The

meeting felt that in general the separation of accounts for operations and infrastructure could be positive provided it was accompanied by measures to restructure railway finances and make adequate provision for investment. The Secretariat was requested to draw up a draft policy statement outlining the Committee's opposition to the organic separation of management responsibility for infrastructure and operations, stressing the close inter-relationship between the quality of the infrastructure and services and the need to ensure the integrity of the railway system by retaining control of them under a single management.

### **ACCESS FOR PRIVATE OPERATORS**

The meeting heard from the Argentinian delegates how the granting of concessions to take over railway operations had meant drastic reductions in the number of railway workers and how in Brazil the bankrupt government was desperately hiving off services to the private sector. Committee members expressed concern over the differing safety standards of private operators, which in Japan had led to two serious accidents on the railways. The Committee reaffirmed its opposition to the access of private operators to the infrastructure and stressed that its main priority was to sustain the integrity and coherence of the railway system.

### **COMBINED TRANSPORT**

The meeting considered the important contribution combined transport could make to long-distance freight transport and the UNEconomic Commission for Europe's European Agreement on Important Interna-

tional Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC). It was felt that the solution to road congestion lay in a reduction in the use of the private car as well as in combined transport but the need to improve railway logistics and the importance of ports as interchange centres were also touched on.

### **DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

The international nature of the Committee was stressed and delegates considered a document on the railways in developing countries which focused on those countries where prospects for improvement existed or where there were plans for improvement which were well enough supported to have a good chance of going ahead.

### **PROGRAMME OF ACTION**

The Committee heard of the plight of the Japanese railway workers dismissed when the former JNR was privatised in 1987: following court action by KOKURO, JR companies had been ordered to reinstate all the dismissed employees but had not complied and the case was now being dealt with by the Central Labour Relations Commission. The Committee underlined its policy of complete opposition to privatisation of the railways and it was agreed that the ITF and non-European Community unions should participate in European action being organised for the autumn of 1992 which would include a one-hour work stoppage for all those unions who were able to take such action. A short statement of the aims and intentions of the Railwaymen's Section will be drawn up which can be used by affiliates in negotiations with governments and employers.



# Dismissed Japanese railway workers fight on

The problems of the thousands of sacked rail workers belonging to the ITF-affiliated Japan National Railway Workers' Union (Kokuro) seem no nearer a solution five years after the break up of Japanese National Railways (JNR).

Kokuro members were particularly harshly treated when JNR was broken up into separate companies in April 1987 because of the strong stand that the union had taken against the government's plans for the future of the railways in Japan.

The new companies that make up Japan Railway (JR), the successor to JNR, proved extremely reluctant to take on Kokuro members, many of whom lost their jobs as a result. Other Kokuro members were offered work well away from their home base, or were transferred to unsuitable jobs.

Kokuro appealed against this unfair treatment to the local Labour Relations Committees, alleging that the railway workers involved were being unjustly penalised because of their membership of Kokuro. In 152 cases, the local Committees found for Kokuro, ruling that JR should withdraw the dismissals and cease to discriminate against Kokuro members.

But the employers only reacted by imposing fresh sanctions and appealing to the Central Labour Relations Committee against the decisions at the local level.

Confidence in the impartiality of the Central Labour Relations Committee was severely shaken when it failed to condemn the Japanese government for dismissing rail workers rejected for jobs in JR when JNR was finally wound up in April 1990. Its non-intervention was widely criticised, especially by Kokuro which also reminded the government and the employers of their obligation to honour the decisions of the local labour relations committees.

Some movement in this seemingly intractable dispute was recorded in September 1991 when the Central Labour Relations Committee promised that it would make it a priority and again in December 1991 when it agreed to mediate between the union and rail companies.

However, the parties were unable to agree within the set time limit (31 March 1992), and the Central Committee has now said that it will shortly submit a "final" proposal for a solution to the parties.

Kokuro fears that this may well be based on the government's preferred solution. This would involve JR taking on the employees sacked when JNR was wound up who would then opt for immediate "voluntary" retirement. The government also wants workers unable to get jobs on the islands of Hokkaido and Kyushu to agree to accept jobs with JR or related

companies on the island of Honshu, where there are vacancies.

Kokuro has produced an English language video entitled **Japan Railway's Mass Firings** which gives a graphic account of the workers' struggle against the unfair sacking of ex-JNR workers. Copies can be obtained from the National Railway Workers' Union (Kokuro), c/o Kokuro-Kaikan, 1-11-4 Marunouchi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100, Japan, on PAL, NTSC or SECAM systems (please specify when ordering).

## Romanian drivers settle dispute

The ITF-affiliated Romanian Drivers' Trade Union (Sindicatul Soferilor Din Romania) has cancelled plans for an indefinite strike following a settlement of its dispute with local employers on drivers' pay.

Two escalating warning strikes — a two hour strike on March 20 followed by a 48-hour strike three days later — called by the union failed to persuade the employers to insert clauses in new branch level collective agreements on wage rates. Subsequent discussions involving a drivers' union delegation and Prime Minister Theodor Stolojan on March 31 were similarly inconclusive.

Faced with the employers' intransigence the union's National Council met and gave notice of a national strike. Negotiations involving the employers, union and government were quickly arranged and reached a satisfactory conclusion, enabling the National Council, at an extraordinary meeting on 18th April, to withdraw its strike threat.

As the strongest and one of the best-organised of Romania's independent unions, the Drivers' Trade Union has considerable industrial muscle. Its strike plans, which included road blocks on major road arteries and at customs posts, would have widespread and costly disruption to road and particularly transit traffic and clearly helped prompt a settlement.

## Pakistani rail line privatised

The railway line linking the two largest cities in the Pakistan province of Punjab is being privatised as the government prepares for full privatisation of state owned Pakistan Railways.

Beginning from the first of July, passengers on Pakistan Railways' busy Lahore-Faisalabad line will find themselves handing over fares and baggage charges to a private contractor appointed with the approval of the government.

Under the new semi-private system of operation, Pakistan Railways will

run ten trains a day in each direction, providing all the necessary related services, while the contracting company will pay the railways Rs 93 million (US\$3.7 million) for the right to collect fares from rail passengers in the first year.

The Lahore-Faisalabad line has been chosen because of the heavy losses it has been suffering in recent years. A second loss-making route, from Lahore northeast to Narowal, will be the next to bring in a private fare collecting company.

# ITF European Railwaymen's Committee created

The inaugural meeting of the European Committee of the ITF Railwaymen's Section was held in London on 21 May 1992 and attended by 27 delegates from 22 European railwaymen's unions in 17 countries. During the first part of the meeting the rules for the Committee were agreed and Jim Knapp (British National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers) and Charly Pasche (Swiss Railwaymen's Union) were elected Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively.

The majority of the meeting, however, was devoted to discussions with Mr Cornet, Head of the Strategy Department of the International Union of Railways (UIC) which centred on the White Paper "Transformation of the International Railway System as Part of New European Transport Policy" published by the UIC in October 1991 (see *ITF News*, January/February 1992).

Cornet informed the meeting that the UIC had noticed a revolution in the railways, mainly as a result of EC Directive 91/440 of June 1991 which had made separate accounting for railway operations and infrastructure compulsory and organic separation optional. The UIC supported separate accounting but was of the opinion that the integrity of the railway system should be maintained and that organic separation would mean a loss of capacity at a time when there was a need for increased capacity.

With regard to financing the railways he said that States were increasingly withdrawing from their financial responsibilities which meant that rail transport needed to be efficient and would not survive if it were not profitable. Cornet emphasised that the railways could not be kept as they were at the end of the nineteenth century — times had changed and there was no point in fighting a battle that could not be won — and the railways could no longer be used as an artificial source of employment as they had been in the 1970s.

Cornet underlined the railways' long experience of international operations

and said that the UIC knew that technical compatibility between national railway systems was essential. He was of the opinion that a harmonised international system would be in place in five years.

Cornet emphasised the international nature of the UIC, which had members in non-EC European countries such as the Baltic republics and the Ukraine, and agreed with the meeting the importance of integrat-

ing the railways of eastern Europe with the western network and that it would be a disaster if social problems in eastern Europe lead to a return of authoritarianism.

It was agreed that the ITF and UIC should discuss joint action to promote the environmentally-friendly aspects of the railways and the ITF was invited to send a small delegation to Paris to meet with the UIC later in the year.

## US rail contract talks — no progress in four years

Rail unions representing 25,000 workers at Amtrak, Conrail and eighty major US freight carriers have been locked into contract negotiations with the employers that have lasted for over four years without any real progress being made.

The bargaining issues at the centre of the dispute are wage rates and proposed work rule changes that are unacceptable to the workforce.

Rail workers have already staged strike action once, in April 1991, in a bid to reach a settlement but were forced back to work by Congress the following day (see *ITF News*, April 1991) and subsequent talks, which broke down in November 1991, failed to persuade the carriers to change their bargaining positions.

The countdown to this year's rail strike began back in the spring when the National Mediation Board declared an impasse in separate negotiations involving three unions and instituted a 30 day "cooling off" period expiring on April fourth after which the unions would be free to strike.

But the original strike deadline was pushed back twice in the intervening months.

At the end of March, just days before the first strike deadline, President Bush intervened, announcing the appointment of three presidential emergency boards to review the sepa-

rate contract disputes and make their recommendations by May third.

As the strike clock ticked away without any further signs of a breakthrough, the National Mediation Board fixed a new date of May 28 for the presidential boards to report, followed by a 25 day "cooling off" period, which left the parties free to strike from June 24.

Talks between the unions and the carriers continued right up to the midnight deadline and at 00.01 on June 24, the ITF-affiliated International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) brought out its members at CSX Transportation — the largest US freight carrier — at twenty locations across the country.

Rail operators responded to the machinists' strike by halting freight operations nationwide, effectively locking out thousands of rail workers.

Forestalling an extension of the strike to Amtrak and other major freight lines Congress rushed through emergency back to work legislation.

Late on Thursday 25 June the House of Representatives passed a bill setting a 38 day deadline for a settlement of the contract dispute, failing which it will be submitted to binding arbitration.

The striking IAM workers resumed work on 26 June, while the two sides prepared for negotiations.

# Swazi rail workers win 13th month

Railway workers in Swaziland have won their long standing demand for a thirteenth month's salary, which now replaces the old end of year bonus.

The claim goes back to 1989 when the ITF-affiliated Swaziland Transport Workers' Union first asked for all its rail members to be paid an annual bonus in the form of an additional month's salary. It raised the matter a number of times over the years but was unable to convince the railway management of the fairness

of its claim.

Matters finally came to head earlier this year when the union filed a dispute with the Commissioner of Labour and conciliation was invoked. This too failed and the union issued a strike notice for 23 March.

A meeting between the union and rail management, which the Deputy Commissioner of Labour was asked to attend, was swiftly arranged by the new Minister of Transport and Communications, Albert N. Shabangu,

who was a trade union leader before being appointed to government office.

The threat of industrial action on the railways clearly worried the rail management, who came to the meeting armed with detailed proposals for an annual productivity bonus.

Having won their case, the union was able to call off the planned strike the following day.

Subject to agreement by the Railways Board, all Swazi railway work-

## Philippine PNR closure plan abandoned

The plan to close down Philippine National Railways (PNR) for two years so that it can be modernised has been dropped (see *ITF News*, April 1992).

This decision, one of the last acts of the outgoing Philippines government, has delighted the ITF-affiliated PNR railway workers' union, Bagong Kapisanan Ng Mga Manggagawa SA PNR, which has been campaigning strongly against the proposed shut-down.

In a letter to ITF Assistant General Secretary Graham Brothers, the union thanked the many ITF affiliates which had sent protest letters to outgoing Philippines President Aquino, adding that their splendid support had helped tipped the balance in the union's favour.

Union President Edgar P Bilayon said that the union's campaign had received widespread coverage in the press and television and this had won the backing of influential figures for

improved rail transport in the Philippines

He hoped that the new administration of incoming President Fidel Ramos would recognise the importance of a strong rail sector to the economic development of the country.

It was essential for the railways to have a infrastructure, new rolling stock and other essential elements of a modern railway system



## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

3 July	Tourist Guides' Working Group	London
9-10 July	Civil Aviation Steering Committee	London
2-4 September	Latin American Dockers' Conference	Vitoria, Brazil
7-11 September	Inspector's Seminar	Eastbourne
22-23 September	Offshore Steering Committee	Rotterdam
24-25 September	Sub-Committee on the Collective Agreement	Rotterdam
29 September	Asia/Pacific Road Transport Workers	Tokyo
30 September-2 October	Road Transport Section Conference	Yokohama, Japan
5-7 October	Asia/Pacific Dockers' Conference	Yokohama
20-21 October	Executive Board	Copenhagen
26 October	Maritime Safety Committee	Genoa
27-29 October	Seafarers' Section Conference	Genoa
10 November	Ground Staff Technical Committee	London
11-13 November	Civil Aviation Section Conference	London



## CIVIL AVIATION

# ***Global co-operation is "an absolute necessity" for cabin crew***

"Every year we meet it becomes more apparent that we are working in a global industry, and that international co-operation is an absolute necessity for union survival".

These opening remarks by David Cockroft, ITF Assistant General Secretary, set the tone for the 1992 ITF world cabin crew meeting (Cabin Crew Technical Committee meeting) held in Washington on 19-20 May, which was attended by 38 cabin crew delegates from 19 countries.

The importance now given by unions to developing an international response to the growing challenge to unions posed by transnational airline mergers, by cross-border employment and by other aspects of a rapidly globalising aviation industry, was emphasised by delegates throughout the two days of the meeting.

The meeting heard how British and Dutch ITF unions had come together with the ITF to co-ordinate a common union response to the proposed BA-KLM merger, and how French ITF unions had linked with Belgian ITF unions over the Air France-Sabena merger, and with Czech unions over the Air France-CSA merger.

The meeting also heard about the international co-ordination between the AFA and French unions on the issue of cross border employment after United Airlines set up a cabin crew base in Paris. As Fred Casey, Vice President of the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA), the conference hosts, put it:

"With companies like UAL setting up crew bases in London and Paris, globalisation is no longer an abstract issue".

The issue of cross-border employment received the most extensive discussion of the two-day meeting and included the presentation of an ITF survey showing the levels of cross-

border employment within major airlines.

Delegates agreed that it was vital for the ITF to set down guidelines for affiliates, particularly for handling the complex issues of cross-border employment and union representation.

The key international regulatory issues — flight and duty time regulations and cabin crew licensing — also retain their importance on the cabin crew agenda. Almost every delegate reported intense pressure from the airlines on FDT limits. Carriers are now scheduling flights to the legal limits, rather than substantially above them, and some are even breaking their national regulations.

The Secretariat reported that current JAA proposals are considered unsafe both by pilots and cabin crew. The JAA regulations will apply to Europe, but there is now a clear link up between the JAA in Europe and the Federal Aviation Administration in the US which aims to harmonise European and US operational rules.

The Secretariat reported that in ICAO, the world body setting minimum aviation standards, the Air Navigation Commission now accepted, largely as a result of ITF pressure, that all cabin crew should be covered by flight and duty time regulations on the basis of safety.

The ITF has also lobbied hard at ICAO for cabin crew licensing. This lobbying is to be stepped up for the ICAO World Assembly in Montreal this September. All affiliates pledged to renew their efforts in lobbying their government's to support the ITF proposals at the Assembly.

Industrial issues discussed at the meeting included reports on disputes (including the Nationair lock out), computerised scheduling, in-flight rest facilities, safety and aircraft design, and health and safety issues such as

cosmic radiation.

Specific resolutions were passed by the meeting which:

- condemned the Nationair lock out and urged full international support to the Nationair boycott

- condemned the New Zealand government's recent anti-union legislation, and its decision to exclude aircraft crews and ships' crews from the scope of the new Health and Safety in Employment Act

- recommended to all ITF affiliates minimum conditions which should be met by computerised scheduling systems, particularly including the participation of union representatives in the design, introduction and day-to-day implementation of the scheduling system

- lay down draft guidelines on cross-border employment of cabin crew

- opposed the involvement of aviation workers by their employers in any duties which violate the international rights of refugees seeking political asylum.

### **AFA SYMPOSIUM—WASHINGTON**

An extra dimension was added to the 1992 ITF World Cabin Crew Meeting, which was hosted this May in Washington DC by the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA). The American union set its own one day annual symposium to run on directly after the ITF meeting, giving ITF affiliates an extra day of information sharing. As one delegate put it, "I do not mind staying another day to talk about these issues. These discussions have been so valuable I would be prepared to spend three weeks doing this, let alone three days" !

The symposium discussed airline mergers and the setting up of overseas cabin crew bases.

# Airline cross-border employment increases

An ITF survey on cross-border employment of cabin crew and reports by affiliates at the ITF Cabin Crew Technical Committee in Washington indicate an increasing trend for airlines to seek to reduce costs through employing numbers of cabin crew based outside the airline's home base at lower wages and inferior conditions. The survey showed that ten per cent of British Airways cabin crew are based outside the UK, almost always on inferior pay and conditions to British crew.

Delegates agreed that international union co-ordination was vital to prevent any potential inter-union con-

flict on this issue and to ensure, wherever possible, union protection for all cabin crew. The meeting agreed, among other things, that:

- ITF unions oppose cross-border employment of cabin crew.
- where a total ban is not achievable, home base unions should seek to negotiate a limit to the percentage of crew based overseas.
- Home base country unions will contact ITF cabin crew unions in the foreign base country and involve them in the negotiations before agreeing to the establishment of a base there.
- foreign based crew should enjoy the pay and conditions either of the host country bargaining agreement or the home country agreement, whichever is superior.
- unions should co-ordinate to ensure access to union membership for all cabin crew, wherever possible. It is

generally preferable that union representation should be by a union in the country where the cabin crew are employed.

## *Orly catering dispute*

Catering workers employed are in a pay dispute with the hotel and catering giant, Trust House Forte, at Orly airport. At the request of their union, the ITF-affiliated FGTE-CFDT, the ITF has requested affiliates organising in airlines which have contracts with THF at Orly to approach their companies to put pressure on THF to settle the dispute. These include Iberia, TAP, American, Continental and Pakistan International Airways.

## **West African unions strike**

The ASECNA francophone West African civil aviation authorities have agreed to meet with union representatives after employees in the ASECNA member organisations went on a two day "warning strike" on 8-9 April.

The ITF-affiliated unions in the Federation des Syndicats des Travailleurs de l'ASECNA (FESTA) which includes unions organising ASECNA employees in Senegal, Gabon, Cameroon, the Congo, Togo, Chad, Niger, Mauritania, Mali, Ivory Coast, Central African Republic, Burkina-Faso, Equatorial Guinea and Benin, had demanded the opportunity to put union demands to the ASECNA board of directors.

The ASECNA employers have been threatening to implement a "single status" (wage harmonisation) for all ASECNA employees, and to adopt, without union consultation, recommendations by a group of management consultants which could lead to job losses.

As a result of the strike, however, the ASECNA Director General agreed to meet with representatives from FESTA (two representatives per country) on 22-26 June and also fixed a schedule of country by country meetings to discuss any proposed changes to pay and working conditions.

## *FAA inspections inadequate*

The Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) airline inspection programme is failing to ensure aviation safety in the US, according to a study by the General Accounting Office (GAO). The GAO is the body set up by the US Congress which scrutinises the efficiency of executive branches of the administration.

According to a GAO report released on 6 February, the FAA has failed to meet its inspection mandate even though the inspection force has dou-

bled since 1984. Citing the FAA's failure to follow up corrective actions after problems are identified, the GAO concludes:

"... the possibility exists that serious problems will remain uncorrected, putting airline passengers at risk." GAO Transportation Issues Director Kenneth M. Mead told lawmakers that Federal investigations of several airline crashes in the 1980s found that "Ineffective inspections were a contributing factor."

## **U.S. unions fight for duty time limitation law**

The ITF-affiliated Association of Flight Attendants (AFA) is pushing the US Senate to pass legislation (S101) that would establish Federal limits on flight attendants' consecutive hours of service.

In August of 1991, Congress passed its version (H.R. 14) by a vote of 228-195.

According to AFA President Dee

Mackie, "Flight attendants are the only safety-sensitive group without duty time regulations. Bus drivers, train conductors, mechanics, pilots, baggage screeners and other workers have hours of service and rest rules. In an emergency, the flight attendant has the responsibility of protecting and serving the passengers. That can be done only with sufficient rest".

# Qantas privatisation announced

The Australian government has announced that the country's flag carrier **Qantas** is to be 100 per cent privatised. This goes against current Australian Labour Party policy and will have to be confirmed by a special party conference. Qantas is to buy up the country's biggest domestic operator **Australian Airlines** for A\$400m. The deal will create a mega-carrier similar in size to Japan Airlines. There will be a trade sale this year of a 35 per cent stake in the merged carrier to foreign carriers. Job losses are expected among the combined 26,000 staff.

The Indian government has registered the government-owned **Air India** and **Indian Airlines** as companies. Although the government denies it, unions claim the government's clear intention is privatisation. On June 16 the All India Co-ordinating Committee of Airline Trade Unions, which co-ordinates ITF affiliates, led an aviation strike in protest against the government's privatisation plans (see page).

More airline privatisations are planned in Eastern and Central Europe following the privatisation of the **CSA** in Czech and Slovak Federal Republic.

The Hungarian airline **Malev** issued a June 30 deadline for bids in its privatisation. The airline hopes to benefit from the availability of cheap skilled labour in Hungary. According to US consultants SH & E, using adjusted data from the CSA privatisation prospectus, Eastern European wage rates will not catch up with those in Western Europe until the year 2000, assuming wage inflation of 40 per cent.

A privatisation plan for the Polish carrier **LOT** has been presented to the country's ministry of transport. LOT is already a shareholder of the first ever joint venture in Poland, Lot Ilbau Mariott (**LIM**) which operates a Mariott hotel and office facilities in Warsaw. In preparation for privatisation, LOT cut 1,300 jobs in 1991 and is planning to shed more in order to reach passenger/workforce ratios more comparable to western airlines.

LOT also operates with low labour costs. A LOT pilot earns a fifth of the average western European pilot.

The Dutch carrier **KLM** is currently using television advertising to recruit about 1,000 new cabin crew.

## AIRLINE ROUNDUP



The Dutch cabin crew union **VKC** says it is the means of selection which is more important than the advertising. Nevertheless, it hopes the television ads will be better than the newspaper ads the airline recently ran, which contained a number of mistakes.

The Association of European Airlines, which represents the larger airline employers in Europe, says its member airlines shed 13,000 jobs in 1991, and that more job losses are to come. **Lufthansa** has announced it will shed 1,750 jobs by the end of the year, which it hopes will come from early retirements and non renewal of temporary staff.

The German flag carrier is also putting out its cargo division into a separate air freight company by early summer. **Lufthansa** is re-negotiating contracts with the airline's freighter pilots in order to extend their working hours. This is expected to save 30 per cent in cockpit costs.

Iberia is involved in a row with the Argentinian government. A consortium headed by Iberia owns 85 per cent of **Aerolineas Argentinas**. The Argentinian government, which owns

5 per cent of shares, and a representative of the employee's share ownership scheme, which owns 10 per cent, rejected the company's draft 1991 accounts, saying that it mortgaged seven **Aerolineas** planes and then used the money to purchase its stake in the Argentinian airline.

A new fares war has erupted in the US, triggered after **American Airlines** introduced a new fares structure. **TWA** has pledged to undercut American's fares by 40 per cent. **Delta** has cut transatlantic fares by up to 45 per cent, spreading the fares war to Europe. This threatens the final collapse of chapter 11 airlines with even further job losses. Continental is asking employees to take a ten per cent pay cut. **TWA** has also announced that it is laying off 300 out of 4,000 workers at its maintenance base in Kansas. **North West Airlines** has said it wants to change its work rules for machinists to lower its costs.

## SMOKING BANS

Smoking will be banned on domestic flights in Spain lasting less than 90 minutes from July 1. On exactly the same date Hong Kong carrier **Cathay Pacific** will ban smoking on all trans-pacific flights. All Cathay's South East Asia services, with the exception of joint operations, have been non-smoking since June 1990.

## AIRPORTS

Airport workers in **Dakar**, Senegal, paralysed the airport on 4 June after a strike protesting against management plans to lay off 588 of the 1,100 workers at the airport.

The Maltese government recently "commercialised" its airport operations, transforming them from being a government department to a state-owned, but commercially-run company—**Malta International Airport**. The ITF-affiliated General Workers' Union has gained an agreement from the government that all wages and conditions will remain the same under the new company, that all seniority will be recognised, and all pension rights retained.

# Nationair: product of deregulation



PHOTO SERGE JONGUE

The lock-out of 450 cabin crew at Canadian carrier Nationair has now lasted more than seven months. On 19 November 1991 the airline owner Robert Obadia unilaterally broke off contract negotiations with cabin crew members and their union, the ITF-affiliated Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) and replaced them with non union labour (ITF News January/February 1992).

The union has countered the company's intransigence with the launch of an impressive national and international campaign in support of the locked-out Nationair employees.

The union has been using some imaginative tactics. Locked-out workers not only picket the airports but meet Nationair passengers off the planes and issue them with questionnaire cards about the quality of service and safety during the flight.

Over 2,000 cards have been returned, some detailing appalling breaches of safety procedure, by inexperienced replacement cabin crew.

In May, representatives of the locked-out workers visited civil avia-

tion union leaders in Britain, Belgium, France, Italy, Spain and Portugal in an ITF-organised tour, to gain international support for the Canadian workers.

Richard Nolan, president of the Airline Division of CUPE, says that Robert Obadia and Nationair are very much a product of Canadian airline deregulation, and this is what makes the strike strategically very important:

"Mr Obadia has been a long-time airline executive and consultant to Transport Canada when the Tories were initiating their plans to deregulate the Canadian airline industry in the early 1980s. Mr Obadia boasts that he started Nationair with less than £920 in his bank account in 1985. With the help of his Tory allies, he has done everything he could in our anti-union, anti-worker climate to build his airline and amass a personal net worth of several million pounds sterling".

Currently Obadia is lobbying for the most radical version of an "open skies" agreement between Canada

and the US. Clearly, in his case, support for deregulation goes along with getting cheap labour (Nationair cabin crew average around US\$13,000 annual salary) and getting rid of unions.

## DEREGULATION JOB LOSSES

In the course of Canadian deregulation seven airlines disappeared through mergers or buy outs, and fourteen others went bankrupt. Thousands of workers (including 2,000 cabin attendants) lost their jobs.

As American Airlines and Canadian International (PWA) finalise a merger deal, airline executives are arguing about how many more jobs will go. An "independent" study commissioned by Air Canada says that if control of both main Canadian carriers shifts to the US more than 3,500 jobs may disappear. The study claims that only 500 jobs would go in an Air Canada-PWA merger in alliance with USAir. PWA chief executive Rhrys Eyton says 2,000 jobs may go as a result of his company's merger with American.

# UAL sets up "stateless" cabin crew — US and French unions co-ordinate opposition

United Airlines (UAL) has been trying to set up a "stateless" cabin crew workforce, in order to escape national laws on benefits and conditions. UAL has been recruiting cabin crew in Paris and in other European capital cities for its Paris base, which operates transatlantic routes and routes between European cities.

The UAL scheme demonstrates the judicial complexities involved with cross-border employment, and how airlines seek to use new opportunities to escape paying benefits to employees.

Under the UAL scheme applicants are offered contracts under American law which will be signed in Paris, but fictitiously established in Chicago. Most of the employees will be French, will have been recruited in France and will be working from Paris. However, according to the contracts the "establishment" to which they are attached is nothing more than the aircraft on which they will fly (registered in the US).

According to the French cabin crew union, the ITF-affiliated SNPNC, the scheme aims, in this way, to avoid having to pay any of the social benefits to the workforce, required under French law.

The US cabin crew union, the ITF-affiliated Association of Flight Attendants (AFA) says that such cross-border employment also seeks to escape obligations to existing crew in the US. By recruiting new hires in Europe, the company seeks to escape the existing seniority system protected

in the existing agreement by US labour law.

According to Diane Tucker, the AFA Master Executive Council President at United Airlines:

"We all know the value of seniority. Our contract mandates how vacancies are filled. Transfers must be honoured in seniority order before new transfers can be hired..."

The company has clearly and dramatically violated its obligations under the Railway Labour Act".

The AFA has decided to force the legal issue. On 22 June the AFA filed a suit against the company in the Federal Court in New York.

The AFA also points out that, while the Paris crew will be covered by the terms of its US collective bargaining agreement with the AFA, this is only because conditions for US cabin crew are substantially inferior to those of French cabin crew. The company does not offer the terms and conditions of the AFA contract to its Thai crew based in Bangkok.

The AFA and the SNPNC have been co-ordinating closely their concerns over the UAL Paris domicile and about cross-border employment.

They point out that:

- UAL is trying to operate a form of cross-border employment which avoids providing French social benefits required by French law for employees domiciled in France.

- The scheme completely violates the seniority system agreed by the company under the existing AFA contract.

- The Paris-domiciled employees, being mainly non-US nationals, would also be excluded by US immigration rules from many of the benefits of the AFA contract, such as promotional opportunities, which depend on taking up posts in other UAL bases in the US.

- A US airline employing cabin crew based in France under inferior US contracts, represents social dumping, and unfair competition.

Danièle Jullien of the SNPNC says "The UAL scheme is effectively exporting the conditions of US deregulation to France".

Both unions believe the airline is positioning itself to compete in a liberalised European market. According to Diane Tucker, "Nothing (else) requires UAL to have a Paris domicile. It can operate in and out of France without one."

The AFA and SNPNC have issued a joint statement opposing the setting up of the UAL Paris base, and have formally approached the French government to intervene.

They have also agreed to co-ordinate over the union organisation of any employees under the UAL scheme. Both unions have welcomed a proposal that the ITF should set up guidelines covering union organisation and cross-border employment.

ITF unions in EC Countries have been asked to approach their governments in a co-ordinated attempt to exert pressure on the European Community to halt this kind of social dumping.

## ITF flight deck technical committee meets

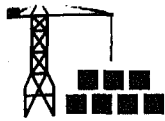
The Flight Deck Technical Committee meeting, held at the ITF office in London on 16 June, reviewed the continuing role and work of the committee. It was agreed that future meet-

ings would mainly focus on industrial issues for flight deck crew.

The meeting also discussed the inadequacy of the Joint Aviation Au-

thorities' proposals for flight and duty times, and gave its support to liaison with pilots organisations in the current campaign to lobby for improvements.





# DOCKERS

## ITF launches cargo handling campaign

Maritime workers worldwide have endorsed a new campaign against ship-owners who use crewmembers to carry out cargo-handling and other work normally done by dockers.

The ITF has received several complaints, both from individual seafarers and from dockworkers' unions, about the practice.

Ship's crews are often asked and even obliged to carry out this kind of work, and in many cases they receive no extra pay for doing it:

"The company is obliging us to drive the crane for self-loading and discharging operations without extra pay. We all believe this work is not for seamen, and is the stevedores job" wrote one Filipino seafarer on a second register Norwegian (NIS) vessel in a letter to the ITF.

Some shipping companies have even begun to use low-paid "flying dockers" — extra personnel kept on board, and signed on specifically to carry out loading and unloading operations in

the ship's ports of call.

ITF seafarers' and dockers' representatives met in London on June tenth. Following the 1989, 1990 and 1991 decisions of unions from both sectors — that members of ITF-affiliated seafarers' unions should not do this work — delegates to the meeting agreed to step up the campaign by including a clause in national collective agreements and in ITF agreements concluded for Flag-of-convenience (Foc) and second register vessels.

The clause will provide a layer of protection for seafarers forced to carry out extra work for no extra pay, and will go some way towards counteracting the use of cheap deregulated labour in the world's ports.

In a parallel campaign, unions will actively lobby their governments for the ratification and application of the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) Convention No. 137 on social protection for dock workers — which

clearly lays down the principal that cargo-handling work should be reserved for dockers.

A number of ITF unions, notably those in the Scandinavian NTF (Nordic Transport Workers' Federation), have been pressurising their governments over the last year to ratify Convention 137 in response to the increasing use of eastern European crews to handle cargo.

Others, like the Swedish Seamen's Union (SSU) had already addressed the problem in national collective agreements, adding a cargo-handling clause.

Another example is the Seafarers' and Dockers' Union of Croatia (SDUC), recently affiliated to the ITF. Reacting to ITF policy on cargo-handling, the SDUC had already incorporated a clause in crewing agreements signed for 117 Croatian-owned Foc vessels. The new ITF clause is in the process of being drafted, and will be examined by the Fair Practices

## Port deregulation efforts are intensifying

Governments, many of them under pressure from international financial institutions, have been intensifying efforts to deregulate their ports over the past year. This became clear at the annual meeting of the ITF Dockers' Section.

Delegates from port workers' unions all over the world met in London 8th and 9th June to discuss trends in the ports industry. The meeting was chaired by John Connolly, of the UK Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU).

Reports were heard from port unions which have been involved in industrial action in Southern Europe, Latin America, Africa and India. Governmental attempts to erode trade union organisation and collective agreement conditions were also of

concern. Unions continued to be concerned about the attack on dockworkers' traditional tasks — practical measures to combat cargo handling by seafarers (see separate story) were discussed at the meeting.

Other issues debated included port training and the transport by sea of irradiated nuclear fuel (INF).

Delegates were asked to consider the specific industrial issues and problems affecting women workers in the ports industry and forward their comments to the Secretariat.

Assistant General Secretary David Cockroft informed the meeting of the crisis faced by the Dockworkers' Union of Nigeria (see **ITF News**, March and April 1992), and the meeting adopted a resolution of support condemning the actions of the port em-

ployers and calling upon the Nigerian government to intervene immediately in the dispute. After the meeting the resolution was passed to the International Labour Conference in Geneva, where the Workers' Group endorsed it.

Dockers in Trinidad and Tobago were also given the meeting's full support. High unemployment and the loss of over 40 per cent of jobs on the waterfront are being compounded by a new Port Authority plan to contract out dockers' work.

A resolution declaring solidarity for Brazilian port workers was also adopted (see separate story), and dockers' representatives from Nicaragua and Mexico detailed their problems and the ITF was requested to send solidarity messages.

# ITF European port workers' week

Transport Unions in over Europe organised events to mark the European Port Workers' Week, on 11th — 15th May

Agreed by affiliates at the European Regional Dockers' Committee meeting in November 1991, the event was planned as a week of simultaneous information campaigns and action across Europe to promote the European Port Workers' Charter.

On 14th and 15 May, Assistant General Secretary David Cockroft attended a meeting in Venice organised by Italian affiliates FILT-CGIL to publicise the problems faced by portworkers in Europe.

Since 1991 a parliamentary committee has been debating port reform in Italy. Following general elections in April, discussions are now expected to continue.

In the face of government attempts to introduce reform that would totally eliminate labour regulation in the ports sector, the union has carried out a national campaign on the basis of the European Port Workers' Charter.

The unions are preparing a proposal to be put to the new parliament, advocating alternative reform that, whilst not opposing pluralistic company structures in the ports, would maintain the specific regulation of the workforce and guarantee job security.

Italian workers at the conference expressed their concerns about the December European Court of Justice decision which found that the Genoese port company's monopoly of port labour was abusive under EC competition laws.

The judgement also found that the port company's exclusive employment of Italian nationals was discriminatory under the Treaty of Rome.

The interpretation of the judgement has been in dispute, and the situation is not yet sufficiently clear for its provisions to be applied. The unions have commissioned lawyers to research the legal situation.

Port labour users are campaigning for the release of certain private entities from the monopoly agreement; intermodal operators have already

achieved this. Underlying all these arguments is the desire to privatise cargo handling operations in the ports, unions said.

So far all the companies operating in Genoa have reached private arrangements with the company — with the exception of the shipper Bruno Masser whose vessel *Vento di Levante* was forced to abandon attempts to discharge at the end of June, when he insisted on using his own employees to discharge cargoes. Hundreds of workers from FILT-CGIL demonstrated on the docks on two consecutive Tuesdays, preventing unloading.

The ITF was also represented by Sarah Finke of the Secretariat at a ports conference organised to publicise the charter and address national concerns, held in Valencia on 15 May by FETTC-UGT.

Spanish port workers are opposing the provisions of a port reform law whose effects may be to further liberalise Spain's port labour, extending measures introduced in 1987.

Existing state-controlled cargo-handling companies are to be incorporated within new port administration bodies under the law.

The main ports, currently autono-

mous under Spain's regional government system, would come under central control.

Forced early retirement is already being implemented on a large scale, and unions say that the Madrid government intends to reduce the number of dock workers employed by the state companies to a minimal number, thus encouraging private employers.

National port authorities are further reducing numbers by forcing the state stevedoring companies to merge with each other.

To combat the government's plans, the Spanish unions have formulated a model collective agreement which sets minimum wages and working conditions to be applied nationally. This agreement has been submitted to the authorities.

In a speech by Vitoriano Sanchez, ITF Executive Board member and national transport secretary, pointed out the challenges faced by union members — not only in relation to the port law, but also due to the planned strike law, and projected reductions in social security benefits tabled in a law-decree likely to be implemented over the next few months (see separate story.)

## New Zealand maritime union leaders jailed for picketing

The General Secretaries of the ITF-affiliated maritime unions in New Zealand spent a night in jail in April, when they led members in pickets against a ship with a non-union crew which tried to use casual labour to load its cargo.

The ITF-affiliated New Zealand Waterfront Workers' Union has reported on the dispute over the vessel *Straitsman*, a livestock ferry vessel which connects Wellington on the North Island with the South Island ports of Nelson and Picton.

The company, a runaway from Australia's regulations on working conditions, had decided to flag out to New Zealand and employ non-union labour.

Before starting the route, the company attended discussions with both the Waterfront Union and the Seamen's Union in New Zealand, making it clear that it would be likely to seek alternative sources of labour for loading and unloading operations in the port.

Both unions decided to picket the vessel when it arrived in New Zealand in mid-April. At 05h00 on 17th April, around 100 seafarers and dockers gathered on the wharf and prevented a cattle truck moving its load on board — just.

"I am convinced that unless the police had intervened when the truck was only inches from the picket line,

Continued on page 27

# Dock unions throughout the world fight back

Pressure to privatise and deregulate the ports sector and to attack trade union and employment rights, is growing in virtually every region of the world. The European Port Workers' Charter is one response to this. Similar regional strategies will be planned at meetings in Latin America and the Asia/Pacific region later this year. Some of the most recent developments...

## BRAZIL'S PORTS PARALYSED

Brazilian port workers brought cargo handling operations to a total halt in a week-long strike from June tenth.

Unions took action following a vote by a parliamentary committee for drastic deregulation of the ports.

Under the changes, dockers will become self-employed workers contracted directly by shipowners. Ports will be run by private enterprise.

Private terminals will be allowed to function as cargo-handling companies for third-party clients, and ports will be able to function on a continuous 24-hour basis (they were previously restricted to weekday working).

A 50 per cent tax levied on incoming cargoes and used for infrastructure improvements, will be abolished — port will charge what they like,

Continued on page 28

## ...Repressive anti-union laws in New Zealand

Continued from page 27

the truck would have backed on to the picket line", said Trevor Hanson, General Secretary of the Waterfront Workers' Union, in a letter to the ITF.

After that incident, negotiations continued all day. Any hope of a solution was dashed when the crew of the *Straitsman* refused to become members of the Seamen's Union. General Secretary Dave Morgan boarded the vessel in the hope of changing their minds, but to no avail.

A joint round-the-clock picket was organised by the two unions.

On the evening of Saturday 18th April it became clear that the ship would be moved to a berth within Port Company limits. Around 80 picketers there soon found themselves surrounded by police.

"At nine pm a truck with a telescopic crane arrived, and it was decided that to prevent the crane from taking the gangway away, we would place some of our pickets on the gangway", said Hanson.

Both Hanson and Morgan, were arrested as a result; a considerable amount of violence was used by the police in deterring the picketers, over 20 of whom were arrested.

Further demonstrations were held at Picton, and after a negotiating meeting on 21st April it looked as though agreement had been reached.

But on the 23rd the company changed its position and served an injunction, to be heard in the labour court on the 24th. Eighteen people

were to be charged with trespassing.

Company representatives informed the waterfront workers that the company was prepared to abide by its former offer to employ at least one docker every time the vessel discharged in Wellington — but members felt that this solution was unacceptable.

"It was unlikely any watersider in Wellington would accept the job", said Hanson.

The hearing was postponed until 31st April, when the judge ordered an interim injunction which prohibited the union from "unlawfully picketing" the ship.

"We have casualisation spreading throughout our industry," said Hanson. "The next step will be for an outside operator to arrive at a port and discharge ship's cargo with the crew."

"I can only but hope that the events surrounding the *Straitsman* will discourage any company from going down a similar path."

The situation in New Zealand has been deteriorating since the introduction of the Employment Contracts Act (see separate story)

The move to permanent company employment on the waterfront, visible before the introduction of this legislation, has snowballed since its introduction.

The union has had to negotiate 32 separate contracts with differing conditions in 12 ports around the country.

"This has taken a full 12 months to

achieve and at the time of writing this report we still have two employers refusing to negotiate collective employment contracts", explained Hanson.

An increase use of casual labour, redundancies and demands for "more flexibility" are repeated employers' requirements during these negotiations.

Casualisation is tending to create a bad atmosphere on the waterfront, with workers competing with each other for jobs.

Meanwhile the increased competition between New Zealand's ports has spawned over-investment in a proliferation of services and machinery.

Hanson says "the best example of this is a complete new container facility at the port of Tauranga. This facility with two new Post-Panamax container cranes was built in the complete knowledge of no guaranteed shipping. It appears the entire object is taking cargo from its nearest neighbour, Auckland — some 200 kilometres away. The cost to our members will be reduced wages as the two ports battle it out for a market share."

Port companies are meanwhile being pressurised by the government to begin privatisation by selling off shares.

This plan seems to have backfired. The only port to make a serious attempt at selling itself has been the port of Auckland — and the company had to withdraw when local opposition to the sale became too strong.

# ...Brazilian strike suspended for negotiations

Continued from page 27

with an upper limit of 20 per cent.

Unions fear that these proposals will lead to a widespread loss of jobs in the industry, and the introduction of non-casual labour in the ports.

ITF delegates attending the Dockers' Section meeting on the 8th and 9th June adopted a resolution declaring their support for the port workers, who are members of the ITF Brazilian affiliate CONTTMAF.

In a protest letter to parliamentarians, ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis urged recognition of the provisions of the International Labour Organisation's Convention No. 137 on the social protection of dock workers.

After negotiations with ministers, the strike was suspended on June 17th pending a decision by Congress.

## UK DOCKERS WIN DISMISSAL CASE

UK dockers sacked during the 1989 strike have won considerable compensation.

Around 100 workers who lost their jobs at the Port of London Authority (PLA) have been paid nearly two million dollars (£1,028,220). Last year a similar tribunal hearing awarded even heftier claims to 19 shop stewards sacked over the strike (see *ITF News*, September 1991).

## ARGENTINA'S REFORM GOES AHEAD

A presidential decree deregulating Argentina's ports has gone ahead.

Signed by president Carlos Menem on 28th May, the decree annulled existing labour agreements and abolished the national port authority.

The changes follow Menem's transferral of many ports to provincial control last month. Although the Buenos Aires ports of Quequen and

Bahia Blanca have so far been exempted, they are likely to fall to provincial control when the National Port Bill is passed by the government.

Unions called a 24 hour nationwide strike on June fourth in protest against pay cuts and dismissals as a result of deregulation. The ITF has declared its full support. ITF affiliates meeting in London in June adopted a statement of solidarity with Argentinian maritime workers (see separate story).

## FRENCH DOCKERS' ACTION

The disputes in French ports continue. Although ITF affiliates in France oppose the loss of over 50 per cent of jobs in the industry, they have been critical of the inflexible attitude of the non-affiliated CGT docks union.

"ITF affiliated French unions have approved the reform statute", said René Valladon, ITF Executive Board member and General Secretary of the Fédération de l'Équipement, des Transports et des Services-FO. Although French affiliates regret job losses, ... "this situation is essentially due to the policies of the CGT, which has prohibited any kind of trade union pluralism on the docks", says Valladon.

Port workers not directly involved in cargo-handling were involved in the latest action taken by the CGT, which goes ahead despite the reform becoming law on June tenth. The CGT have indicated though, that they were finally prepared to negotiate both on a national and on local level. In a statement on June 19th, they said that national talks should be aimed at drawing up a new national agreement for the cargo-handling industry, whilst local talks would deal with

the integration of dockers into the new stevedoring companies.

## CHILEANS CONSIDER HUNGER STRIKE

ITF affiliate Confederación Marítima de Chile (COMACH) has told the ITF that in the face of their government's refusal to restore collective negotiation rights and the dock labour register, members are considering a hunger strike.

COMACH expresses thanks to affiliates who have sent protest messages in response to the ITF's recent circular (see *ITF News*, May 1992).

The union has asked ITF affiliates for further solidarity support, possibly including the blocking of Chilean cargoes.

Union President Eduardo Rios stressed the union's disappointment with the Aylwin government.

"For the majority of Chilean workers, the conduct of this government is quite incomprehensible, as its task — or so we thought — was to reinstate the rights taken from the workers by the military dictatorship," he said

## DUTCH BUYOUT

In Holland, the managing board of Royal Pakhoed N.V., Rotterdam, has announced that negotiations are taking place on the possibility of a Pakhoed purchase of the tank storage company Panocean Storage and Transport Ltd, which is linked with the London enterprise Ocean Group Plc.

## PERUVIAN DOCKERS PROTEST

Workers in the Peruvian national port company ENAPU SA stopped work for 24 hours on 17th June in protest at the government's violation of internationally recognised rights, including the right of collective negotiation.

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