

GOVERNMENT TEARS UP LAGOS DOCKS AGREEMENT

The crisis in the Nigerian ports industry which began in October last year with the forcible ejection of over 2,000 registered dockworkers from the main ports of Lagos by gangs of hired thugs shows no sign of solution despite mounting national and international protests (see ITF News, April 1992).

Despite agreeing in February to find a negotiated solution to the dispute, the trustee appointed by the Nigerian government to oversee the affairs of the ITF-affiliated Dockworkers' Union of Nigeria (DUN) announced in July that he is going ahead with plans to hold a rigged delegate conference which is clearly designed to remove from office the democratically elected union leadership.

Following the resolution of support for the union adopted by the ITF Executive Board in March, messages of support from ITF dockers' unions worldwide have been flooding into the office of Nigerian President General Ibrahim Babangida. A further request for support from the union to the ITF resulted in a similar message to the President from the entire Workers' Group at the International Labour Conference held in Geneva in June.

These protests, which have been fully backed by the national trade union centre, the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), have boosted the morale of the workers involved, who have been without any financial support since the dispute began. They have also clearly worried the government which arranged for a group of State Security agents to visit the legitimate union lead-

ers at the end of June, but they have not yet secured a change of policy.

According to DUN General Secretary Jonas Abam, the trustee, with the full approval of the minister, "is going ahead to arrange a kangaroo conference of the union without the 2,000 dockworkers brutally forced out of their jobs". Totally disregarding the union's constitution, which provides that only local union branches can elect conference delegates, the trustee has decreed that workplace "contract areas" are to elect representatives to the delegate conference and that the 2,000 ousted workers will be allocated two artificial workplaces each sending three delegates. Despite the fact that three other branches of the union have already declared their refusal to attend any conference unless the ousted dockers are reinstated, this procedure is clearly designed to guarantee victory for the group of employer sponsored thugs who are currently working in the Lagos ports and to ensure the permanent removal of the union's leadership and its effective destruction as an effective representative of Nigerian dockworkers.

ITF protest action so far has clearly rattled the government, but not enough to produce a solution to the dispute. According to Abam, the government

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CMU intensifies fight for union rights

The Ceylon Mercantile, Industrial and General Workers' Union (CMU) is stepping up its campaign for the repeal of the Essential Services Regulations, which are severely restricting the freedom of action of Sri Lankan workers and the organisations they have chosen to represent them.

Invoking the provisions of the Public Security Ordinance, President Premadasa issued on 20 June 1989 the first of a series of emergency regulations that have progressively interfered with the right to conduct legitimate trade union activity.

Under these regulations, strikes in a wide range of so-called "essential services" — these include transport, posts and telecommunications and public utilities, as well as government departments and local authorities and the island's extensive tea plantations — have been banned.

Workers who take part in trade union actions render themselves liable to dismissal and in one particularly

notorious case the entire staff of a leading Sri Lankan garment company was sacked for being involved in a union recognition strike.

Just after the third anniversary of the first presidential emergency decree, CMU General Secretary Bala Tampoe wrote to President Premadasa accusing him of "presidential rule by regulation" and of contravening ILO union rights conventions.

Citing the widespread international concern that the restrictions have aroused, Tampoe urged the president to restore the rights of the majority of Sri Lankan workers and enable the country's unions to conduct their own affairs.

Tampoe's letter failed to elicit a positive response and so the CMU is now seeking renewed international union backing for its opposition to the emergency decrees. Responding to a request from General Secretary Harold Lewis, ITF unions have written to President Premadasa denounc-

ing the outlawing of the right to strike in transport and other "essential services" and the punishment of workers who contravene this controversial regulation.

US, Canada and Mexico sign free trade pact

The USA, Canada and Mexico have ended fourteen months of negotiations with an agreement to set up the world's second largest free trade area.

With their 360 million consumers and a joint annual economic output of US\$6,000 billion the three countries represent a powerful trading zone.

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), as the new body will be known, is being viewed by many as a counterbalance to the 19-nation European Economic Area (EEA).

But the signing of the NAFTA pact on August 12 comes as bad news for workers in the USA and Canada who have been urging their governments over the past year against entering into a three-nation pact.

Well over four hundred and fifty thousand Canadian jobs have already been lost in the first three years of the US-Canada Free Trade Agreement, the forerunner to NAFTA, which the unions view as an unmitigated disaster for Canadian workers and the national economy.

Both Canadian and the US unions fear that the trade agreement with Mexico will lead to job losses on a far greater scale as industries restructure, relocate to Mexico or are wiped out by unfair competition from low-priced Mexican products.

The unions also believe that those who are lucky enough to remain in work will face irresistible pressure to accept greatly reduced salaries to enable US and Canadian industry to survive.

They are also dismayed that, unlike the EEA, absolutely no measures of social harmonisation are planned in the enlarged trading market.

...Nigerian docks crisis

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and employers are hoping that the international protest will die down and the dispute will "fizzle out of existence" sooner or later as long as both the 2,000 dockworkers and the officers of the union have no income at the end of the month. Seven dockworkers have already died of starvation and lack of medical care as a result of losing their livelihood and the situation has now reached "unbearable proportions".

In his most recent letter, dated August third, Abam asks to put on record his union's sincere appreciation of the many protest messages from ITF affiliates which have been sent to the Nigerian authorities since the dispute began. He also asks the ITF to step up the pressure to achieve a peaceful settlement which will allow the workers to return to their jobs and the union to resume its work free from employer and government harassment.

The total disregard of the govern-

ment for basic human and trade union rights in this case is a source of major embarrassment for the entire Nigerian trade union movement. Having received no reply at all from the government to an earlier appeal, NLC General Secretary Lasisi Osunde sent a letter to Labour Minister Musa on July 27 in which he concludes that "It is not just enough for us to be leaders of Africa only to be ridiculed internationally as bad labour managers. It is also embarrassing that on a yearly basis reckless and inconsiderate actions of some government officials put Nigeria in the complaints book of the ILO as a repressive regime that struggles to surpass the totalitarian governments of Peru, Burma, Zaire, etc".

The ITF is now actively considering further action, including industrial action in foreign ports against Nigerian ships and cargoes as well as a formal complaint to the ILO if a speedy and acceptable solution is not found to this appalling dispute.

Transport workers and environmentalists link up to halt toxic waste shipment

ITF affiliates and the environmentalist movement have joined forces on three continents to fight a shipment of highly toxic waste.

The cargo of 18 tonnes of Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and pesticide waste is part of a stockpile of hazardous waste stored in Australia and now destined for incineration in France.

International Regulations as well as ITF Policy on the transport of dangerous goods state that toxic waste should be stored or disposed of as near as where they are made as possible. Shipping them across the world from Australia to France is clearly neither reasonable nor safe.

This shipment is also a serious political embarrassment to both the Australian and French governments.

A recent Australian Federal government task force concluded that waste exports were wrong for Australia. Despite this, the Western Australian state Environmental Minister Bob Pearce has ignored this recommendation and secretly approved the shipment from Fremantle to a state-owned incinerator in France.

The shipment was taken to Fremantle by truck, and left the Western Australian port on July 29 on board the Panamanian registered *MSC Maria Laura*.

The ITF-affiliated Waterside Workers' Federation (WWF) of Australia were outraged by this secret shipment. The WWF opposes all shipments of toxic and hazardous wastes and supports a trade union ban on such shipments. The union and Australian environmentalists are now mobilising to halt future shipments.

Despite the public position of the French Environment Minister Ségolène Royal that France should not become a "dustbin" for the world's waste and her promise that France will ban waste imports, the government-owned St. Vulbas incinerator near Lyons has agreed to accept this shipment.

Greenpeace International contacted the ITF to ask for our assistance in mobilising transport workers' opposition to the shipment. ITF Assistant General Secretary Åke Selander faxed the French affiliates on August 11, informing them of the situation. As we go to press, the ITF-affiliated FGTE-CFDT transport federation is demanding that Royal stop this arrangement.

On August 12, the *MSC Maria Laura* arrived in Durban, South Africa.

The ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) immediately joined with Earthlife Africa, the South African Railway and Harbour Workers' Union (SARHWU) and other concerned parties to oppose the shipment.

ITF Inspector Thulani Dlamini led a group that visited the ship.

To their amazement they discovered that there were no Emergency Charts (telling crew how to deal with an accident), no visible ship's articles and that some of the crew (who they talked to) didn't even know there was toxic cargo on board! Other officers claimed there were "specially trained" safety officers on board.

The Master threw the men off the ship, demanding proper ITF authorisation. A letter was faxed to the TGWU from London, but the port authorities prevented a second inspection.

The ship sailed on to Cape Town on August 16, where the unions and campaigners occupied the Port Authority offices.

Agreement was reached that future waste shipments would not be handled — but the ship left, bound for Le Havre in France, that same day.

The TGWU National Executive Committee, which was in session during this episode, affirmed their opposition to such shipments, and stated that Toxic Waste should be disposed of in the country of origin; that workers dealing with such cargoes should be fully trained and have the right to

refuse to handle toxic waste:

"Workers in South African ports shall never have to handle such waste again and the union will strongly support their refusal to do so."

The TGWU also affirmed its support for the decisions taken at the ITF Conference on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (Geneva, 1989) and has appealed to the ITF's Australian affiliates to "do everything in your power to stop any further shipments from your side".

The ship was due in Le Havre at the end of August. But for reasons that are still unclear (perhaps the French government is having second thoughts), it was diverted and arrived in Antwerp, Belgium on August 31.

On September first, the two waste containers were rapidly unloaded from the ship. But the ITF-affiliated Belgian Transport Workers' Union (BTB), in alliance with local Greenpeace activists, has demanded that the container be re-loaded and shipped back to Australia.

Demonstrations took place on the first and second September in the port area, and the BTB announced that the ship would not be able to depart without its toxic cargo.

The stevedoring company stated that they would not handle the container unless transshipment to France was assured. The shipping agents asked the Belgian Environmental Ministry for a permit to transport the waste to Lyons by truck — but this application was rejected on September second.

The containers were loaded back onto the ship on September second and the *MSC Maria Laura* left Antwerp at 1800, bound for Felixstowe, England — the British authorities have already rejected similar cargoes and so it would appear that the waste will now return to Australia.

This case also demonstrates the strength of a campaign that unites popular environmentalists and trade unions.



PEOPLE

Ken Gill, General Secretary of the British union Manufacturing Science Finance (MSF), retired at the end of August. Formerly the leader of the Technical, Administrative and Supervisory Staff union, Gill became joint General Secretary with Clive Jenkins when TASS merged with the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs in 1988 to form the MSF. On Jenkins' retirement in October of that year, Gill became the union's sole General Secretary. A well known and well liked figure in the British trade union movement, he serves on a number of key committees of the Trades Union Congress

and has chaired its Equal Rights Committee since 1980. He also represents British trade unionists on the Executive Committee of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC). Gill is succeeded as General Secretary by **Roger Lyons**.

Makoto Tamura retired from the presidency of SHITETSUSOREN (the General Federation of Private Railway and Bus Workers' Unions of Japan) at its 58th National Convention in July after leading the union since 1988. Becoming a member of the Executive Board at 25, he spent more than

thirty years at SHITETSUSOREN headquarters, where he served as General Secretary for ten years from 1978. It was during this time that the union decided to affiliate to the ITF. A convinced internationalist, Tamura was the chairman of the ITF Japanese Co-ordination Committee as well as the Coordinator of the US/Japan Rail Unions' Exchange Program. Former General Secretary **Kanju Suzuki** succeeds Tamura as president. Other leading officials elected at the Convention were: Vice Presidents **Hakuo Sasaki**, **Takashige Ida** and **Hiroshi Ohtani** and General Secretary **Ryoichi Ikemura**.

OBITUARIES

We have just learned that **Nikolaus Metslov**, founder and General Secretary of the Estonian Seamen's Union in exile, died on 8 March 1992, at the age of 88. A distinguished lawyer and a man of wide cultural interests, Metslov escaped to Sweden in 1944, where he continued to practise his profession and to forge close cultural links between exiled Estonians (he was the moving force behind the Estonian Society of Stockholm) and the peoples of the fellow Baltic Republics of Lithuania and Latvia. He founded the seamen's union in 1949/1950 to protect the interests of the many Estonian seafarers in exile. A convinced internationalist, he took the union into the ITF, where for many years he played an active role within the Seafarers' Section. He was fortunate to live

long enough to see Estonia gain its freedom and independence once more. His funeral took place in Stockholm, the city that he had made his home, but his ashes were returned to Tallinn, so that finally he lies at rest in his native land. ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis has written to the union's president saying that he remembered Metslov from years back as a "very effective and energetic representative" of Estonian seafarers in the ITF Seafarers' Section.

ITF Education Officer **D V K Sastry** has died in a tragic accident. He was travelling to Paradeep Port in the Indian state of Orissa to conduct an ITF education seminar when he fell under a train at Bhubaneshwar station on August ninth and was fatally injured.

Brother Sastry, who was 59, had devoted a long and distinguished career to the trade union cause, having been both Secretary of the national trade union centre Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS) and President of the Visakhapatnam Port Employees' Union. There are many Indian dockers and port workers who have good reason to be grateful to Brother Sastry for the excellent trade union education programme he had drawn up as one of the most experienced of the ITF's team of four Indian education officers. In a letter of condolence, ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis said that he was very shocked and greatly saddened by the death of Brother Sastry. "He did sterling work for us and was liked and respected by everyone who knew him," Lewis added.



SEAFARERS

Japanese relax shore leave rules

The Japanese government has responded to ITF protests against official denial of shore leave to seafarers (see *ITF News*, May 1992).

ITF Assistant General Secretary Åke Selander wrote to Japanese Justice Minister Takashi Tawara in April demanding that the Japanese government — following a number of incidents where crews in Japanese ports were denied shore leave — give assurances that it would not groundlessly deny shore leave to seafarers.

Many ITF seafarers' affiliates wrote as well, supporting the appeal.

The ITF-affiliated All-Japan Seamen's Union (JSU) reports that this action has been instrumental in forcing a response from the government.

In late July, the JSU received a telephone call from the Ministry of Justice.

The authorities say they are concerned with crews jumping ship from certain vessels. They have agreed to separate those ships from which there have been desertions from the vast majority.

If a case of "jump-ship" occurs, the offending vessel will be put on a special watch list for a year (during which shore leave will be denied). However, if the Master and/or seafarers known to have assisted in the "jump-ship" are replaced, the designation will be lifted earlier.

Seafarers serving on such designated ships shall be granted shore leave if the vessel has been at sea for more than ten continuous days and/or is set to visit more than one Japanese port and stay in Japanese waters for over seven days.

Furthermore, seafarers on "designated" ships shall be granted shore leave when the authorities are satisfied that certain "jump-ship" preventative measures have been taken by the Master or company. Documentary proof of concrete measures taken by the company or Master against "jump-ship" and a written

pledge must be deposited with the immigration authorities. Secondly the manning agent used to recruit the seafarer who has deserted must either be changed, or documents must be provided certifying that the agent will make a more appropriate selection of staff in future recruitment.

"The Ministry's communication does give some hope for a relaxation

in future of the measures already in effect," said Selander.

The JSU and the ITF still believe that law-abiding seafarers should not be subject to punitive measures.

JSU President Soshiro Nakanishi met with the Minister of Justice on July 29 — he protested strongly against the continuing sanctions imposed against seafarers.

ILO says Kerguelen is "discriminatory"

Different pay rates on board Kerguelen flag ships have been declared by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to contravene ILO Convention 111 on Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation.

The ILO Committee on the Application of Standards, in ruling against discriminatory pay rates for different nationalities of seafarers on the French Second Register, has laid down a challenge to the established practice in all the second registers. It could also have implications for the proposed EUROS European register.

The Convention defines "discrimi-

nation" as:

"Any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin, which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation."

The Kerguelen register allows French shipowners to employ a minimum of 4 French officers and 35 per cent ratings. The French government reported to the ILO in October 1991 that there were 755 seafarers working on Kerguelen ships — of these 60 officers and 386 ratings were non-French.

New global safety body set up

International cooperation on maritime safety has been given a welcome boost with the news that casualty investigators in countries making up over half the world fleet have agreed to come together in an informal network.

Following a recent meeting in Canada, marine accident investigation chiefs from seventeen countries have agreed to set up a new organisation — to be known as the Marine Accident Investigators' International Forum (MAIIF) — to pool information and lobby for changes in national and international regulations to encourage closer collaboration.

Under its first director, Canada's marine investigation department head Captain Brian Thorne, the MAIIF will seek to persuade major maritime nations such as Greece, Norway, Sweden, Japan, Russia and China, which though not present at the Canadian meeting are known to be sympathetic to MAIIF's aims, to join the organisation, thus making it even more representative of international shipping.

Noting that there has traditionally been less inter-country cooperation on safety in the maritime industry than in say aviation, the Forum will set out to redress this imbalance.

Lloyd Brasileiro carrier collapses

In the midst of **Brazil's** continuing political crisis, the country's state-owned carrier Lloyd Brasileiro seems close to collapse — and nobody really seems to have any time to worry about it. As we go to press, the momentum of the popular movement to impeach the corrupt President Fernando Collor de Mello seems unstoppable.

Amongst everything else,

Collor's maritime reform package is now, effectively, dead.

Collor had announced his intention to privatise Lloyd Brasileiro — the carrier was reported to be debt free and ripe for sale. Like many other of Collor's financial statements, this has now been exposed as a lie. The company announced in

late August that it could no longer pay the monthly wage bill. Banco do Brasil is apparently owed \$86 million by Lloyd Brasileiro — the government \$292 million, and suppliers \$97 million. Several Lloyd Brasileiro ships are apparently mortgaged two or three times over. Clearly the company owes far more than it is worth and the Banco do Brasil has announced it will not extend any more credit. The fate of the company, like the future of Brazil itself, is now uncertain.

Last ditch efforts to revive the **Caribbean** government-owned West Indies Shipping Corporation (WISCO) as a joint venture with private money have failed. The Trinidad and Tobago government has been formally appointed as liquidator. A feasibility study based upon using the private Caribbean Line as the nucleus of a new scheme was accepted, in principle, by Caricom states but they failed to agree the necessary funds.

The **Liberian** mission to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) is complaining (again) about the way the UN body is financed. Currently, the IMO raises the nearly \$30 million it needs to operate from contributions based on the tonnage registered in various registries. Because the Flag of convenience states have been so suc-

cessful in persuading shipowners to

abandon their

national

flags,

they now

have to pay a

lot to the

IMO.

Liberia, Panama

and Cyprus

are the major

IMO financiers.

George Cooper,

head of Liberia's

permanent IMO

Mission in London,

has written a letter

to IMO Secretary General

William O'Neil

expressing his concern

at the "dramatic growth"

in the IMO budget.

He says that much of the IMO's work is now related to port state control and it is "unfair" that the "poorer" flag states should have to carry the burden of financing the IMO. Cooper seems to have got this the wrong way round. Port State Control is an unfortunate necessity because Foc states (like Liberia, Panama and Cyprus) have utterly and disgracefully abandoned their responsibilities to enforce the vaguest safety standards on their runaway registers (see story on page 9). If anything, port state control authorities should be demanding money from Liberia and the gang for doing their job for them. It should also be remembered that having a lot of ships on your Foc register is not a burden imposed by nature or history — it is an economic choice made by regimes who want to make money by undercutting

traditional registers — what is Cooper complaining about? That they aren't making enough money because they aren't charging enough? If we look at these protestations a little closer, however, the truth about these registers reveals itself. What they are saying is that the ships flying their flags aren't really "theirs" anyway, and so someone else should pay for their safety. Perhaps shipowners should contribute directly to the IMO, and owners and unions be given a vote in what is decided. And also, if Liberia wants to pay less, a serious examination of the ratification system for IMO Conventions (registers plus a percentage of tonnage) should also take place. If "poor" Focs want to pay less, presumably they should have less voting strength.

Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel has announced that a Turkish Second Register will be established within the next two months. The register promises to offer Turkish shipowners a saving of 30 per cent. Although reported to be based on the Norwegian NIS, the government has stated that they do not intend to replace Turkish crews.

Seafarers' advice service

A confidential advice and counselling service for seafarers and their families has been launched in Australia.

The Seafarers' Assistance Service (SAS) is a joint maritime employer/union initiative funded by employers.

The scheme — launched in August — has the endorsement of the ITF-affiliated seafarers' unions. A comprehensive promotional campaign aimed at informing all Australian seafarers of the service is being funded by government grants. Colour posters, brochures and a video have all been produced.

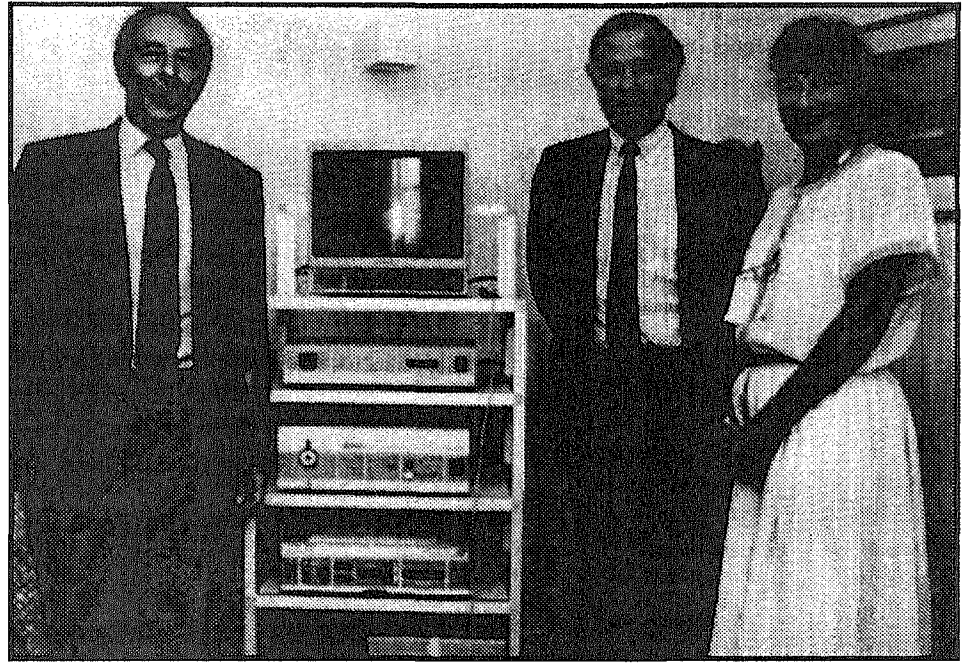
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ITF backs Seafarers' knee research

The bow-legged sailor may not be just a landlubbers' myth. Ongoing medical research — supported by the ITF — indicates that the seafaring working environment may place extra strain on the knees, leading to a unusually high incidence of knee injuries. The following article by Mr Richard Brueton (MD FRCS) — the senior lecturer in Orthopaedics and Honorary Consultant Surgeon at the Dreadnought Unit, St. Thomas' Hospital in London, England — explains the state of present medical research.

On 18th June this year, ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis, on behalf of the ITF Seafarers' Trust, generously presented an Arthroscopic Camera to the Dreadnought Unit at St. Thomas' Hospital (London, England) to help in the management of knee problems of seafarers.

This equipment enables the examination of the inside of the knee joint by the insertion of a telescope and fibre-optic light source. The image can then be projected onto a screen and surgery, such as the removal of a



ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis (left) presenting the Arthroscopic Camera to the Dreadnought unit with Surgeon Richard Brueton and Dreadnought Administrator Phil Lake. A torn fragment of cartilage, can be carried out by a "minimally invasive" technique. This is less traumatic to the patient, enabling a more rapid return to normal activity.

We have the "clinical impression" at the Dreadnought Unit that seafarers, and especially engineers, have a higher incidence of knee problems than the general population. A retrospective study is in progress to determine whether this is in fact true.

The mechanism of damage to the knee in seafarers is of particular interest and probably begins with repeated acute minor trauma such as may occur in twisting, kneeling and lifting in confined spaces.

Superimposed on this picture of repetitive acute minor injury is the long term damage to such a knee produced by the working environment. Three factors can be implicated: the vertical environment, the ship's motion and vibration.

Seafarers live in an abnormally vertical environment, climbing hundreds of stairs each day. This is accentuated in cargo vessels where the crew's accommodation is concentrated in one zone to provide more room for freight. The ship's motion continuously imparts rotatory forces to the weight-bearing joints that are particularly poorly tolerated by the knee. Whether

vibration actually damages the knee or is just registered as painful in an already damaged joint remains controversial.

Engineers would appear to be more at risk from these factors than the rest of the crew as they inflict more acute minor trauma to their knees, they climb more stairs than their colleagues and are closer to engine vibration.

The overall effect is to damage the medial or inner cartilage that, over a period of years, will result in degenerative change particularly in the inner rather than the outer compartment of the knee joint. The subsequent narrowing of the inner compartment will, in the long term, result in "varus knees" or bow-legs. It would therefore seem that the bow-legged sailor is not just a figment of the imagination or the music hall.

The arthroscopic camera will enable better assessment and treatment of seafarers with knee problems. We will continue our study into the environmental factors that may cause knee damage in seafarers.

We cannot stop the water from moving under our feet, but improved engine-room design, the installation of lifts from bottom plates to bridge and a reduction in engine vibration may be the route to follow in the future.

...Australian SAS

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The SAS aims to provide free and confidential assistance to seafarers who have personal problems at home or work — the service is also available to seafarers' families.

The scheme is administered by a tripartite body (government, unions and employers).

A network of Australia-wide SAS counsellors is in place. Trained, professional counsellors will deal with any problem in an informal and non-judgmental way.

SAS aims to cover all problems, including marital and family matters, financial difficulties, alcohol and drug problems, work related difficulties, gambling worries and stress.

All counselling is totally confidential and totally respects the privacy of any individual.

The SAS is certainly a first in Australia, and organisers claim that it is unique in the maritime world.

Hamburg police denounce unsafe ships

Low standards on Flag of Convenience ships are blamed by the Hamburg river police for an alarming increase in collisions on the river Elbe. 82 collisions were recorded on this

Irish labour court victory

Officers employed by the Irish ferry line B+I and their union SIPTU (an ITF affiliate) have welcomed July's Dublin Labour Court recommendation on future pay and conditions under the company's new owners Irish Continental Group as a "victory for common sense".

In 1991, the Irish government sold the loss making company, which operates regular services between Ireland and Britain, to the Irish Continental Group for Punt 8.5 million (US\$15.3 m).

Both the officers and the union recognise that the ferry company has to be made more cost effective in order to compete with its already streamlined rivals but differ over how the company's proposals, which have been under discussion for most of this year, are to be implemented.

The officers began industrial action in mid-July in a bid to persuade the company to refer the dispute to the Labour Court. Action was limited to freight ships so as not to affect holiday sailings.

Anxious that the dispute might spread, B+I gave way and after four days of intensive talks the Labour Court produced its recommendation. This was immediately accepted by the SIPTU strike committee and the action called off.

Under staged proposals, crew/ship ratios will be reduced from 3.75 to 2.6 by September 1993 and rates of pay will be brought into line with those on ICG's Irish Ferries by May 1993. However, additional percentage and lump-sum payments included in the Labour Court recommendation mean that on average officers will get a 22 per cent pay rise.

busy waterway last year compared with 64 in 1989.

The river police say that their spot checks on vessels entering the port of Hamburg reveal a growing number of badly maintained ships, with poorly trained crews.

It is not unusual for the river police to have to show seafarers how to operate vital machinery on board their vessels.

Though many of the ships putting into Hamburg have undergone safety inspections within the past six months, they don't look as though they meet safety criteria, says river police chief Joachim Peters.

But the river police's hands are tied. Under existing Port State Control rules they are unable to inspect these ships unless they have obvious safety deficiencies.

German flag ships and ships of the traditional maritime nations using the port and its waterway do not escape criticism, with a significant proportion of incidents being attributed to the use of the sole lookout, unwillingness to take on river pilots and reduced manning levels.

The seafarers' union ÖTV accuses

Danish officers' unions merge

A milestone in Danish maritime union history will be reached at the beginning of next month when five navigating unions merge in a new organisation to be known as the Dansk Navigatørforening or Danish Navigators' Union.

Denmark's two largest navigating unions — the Shipmasters and the Deck Officers, both long standing and active ITF affiliates — are being joined in the new union by three smaller associations — the pilots, skippers and Port of Copenhagen harbour masters. The new organisation will represent just short of three thousand of Denmark's most highly skilled seagoing personnel.

The Shipmasters and Deck Officers will provide the new union's top officials: Arne Fischer Henrichsen of the masters is the Navigatørforening's first President and Peter Funch of the deck

the Seeberufsgenossenschaft (the authority with overall responsibility for ship safety) of itself contributing to falling safety standards by failing to take firm enough action against defective ships. It is angry that ships with serious deficiencies are often allowed to leave the port of Hamburg to undergo major repairs in cheaper Polish yards.

A frightening example of the dangers of undermaintained ships occurred on 18 August 1992 when the aptly-named Bahamas flag passenger ferry *Hamburg* suffered a total main engine failure and drifted off course in the immediate vicinity of the water supply to the cooling systems of Hamburg's nuclear power facility at Stade.

This incident prompted Opposition Social Democrat MP Dr Magrit Wetzel to call for urgent measures to be taken to protect the plant's vital cooling system from potentially catastrophic damage as the result of a ship casualty.

She also urged Transport Minister Günther Krause to come to grips with the problem of undertrained crews on ships entering the port of Hamburg.



A new union and a new logo — a compass rose with the letter N in each of the four quarters of the globe.

officers its first Vice President, while ITF Seafarers' Section Chairman Mols Sørensen (recently retired from the deck officers' union) will draw on the wealth of his international experience in his capacity as International Consultant to the new merged union.

Report demonstrates lousy Foc safety — again

The flag of convenience registers have demonstrated, yet again, their lack of safety standards.

The 1991 Report of the Secretariat of the Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control (MOUPSC) documents a year's work for the European coastal states' inspection system.

The MOUPSC inspects ships of all flags and enforces basic safety standards — detaining the worst cases and forcing repairs.

"Experience has shown," says the 1991 Report, "that many Flag States are unable to maintain a proper control on ships on their respective registers".

Port State Control begins from this acknowledgement of the inadequacy of many registers.

The actual number of ships inspected in 1991 rose to 14,379 from 13,955 in 1990 and 12,459 in 1989. The number of ships detained in 1991 increased to 525 (448:1990, 344:1989). As a percentage of the number of individual ships involved, 5.2 per cent were detained (4.41:1990, 3.75:1989).

The general pattern of deficiencies remains the same as it has for a number of years. The most common defects are uncovered in life saving and fire-fighting appliances and in general areas of safety.

The MOUPSC report lists all detentions by flag. They also publish a list of the states whose ship detentions exceeded the average detention percentage.

Romania ranks first, and other national flag fleets feature in the 19 — Iran (4), Syria (7), India (8), Burma (11), Brazil (13), Spain (14), Algeria (19) — but the majority are the ITF-designated Foc countries — St. Vincent (2), Malta (3), Lebanon (5), Honduras (6), Panama (9), Cyprus (10), Liberia (12), Antigua and Barbuda (16), and Bahamas (17).

But while much is made of this percentage table, percentages can be — and are — misleading because, in many cases, they represent a "statistically insignificant" sample of ships.

Spain appears on the list with a de-

tention percentage 1.47 above the average. They rank 14, higher than the Bahamas (17) — yet only seven actual Spanish ships were detained whereas 28 Bahamas ships were stopped.

Percentage ranking could only work if every ship on each register were inspected.

The ITF believes that the real list of shame should be the actual number of ships physically detained. Out of a

Bulk carrier safety — reduction in casualties, but concerns remain

An apparently dramatic decline in the appalling rate of losses of bulk carriers this year is very welcome news, but it is no reason for complacency.

Between 1975 and 1990, 279 bulkers were lost — an average of 17 vessels per year (see *ITF News*, October 1991). In the first six months of 1991, six bulkers were lost.

In the same period this year, there have only been three casualties — the *Karadeniz S.* (which broke in two off Gibraltar on April first); the *Great Eagle* which sank last month in the Indian Ocean; and the *Arisan*, which sank off the Norwegian coast in January.

This dramatic reduction in casualties coincides with a host of bulk carrier safety initiatives taken in the last year by governments, classification societies, hull underwriters and loading terminal operators.

Action by the joint hull underwriters (who have introduced new structural surveys with the Salvage Association), new, tighter inspection regimes in Norway, Canada and Australia and measures adopted by owners and operators of the major ore loading terminals to ensure slower and safer loading have all contributed to a heightened global awareness of the problem. Welcome as they may be, the question must still be asked, is the problem now solved:

"...is it now safe to assume that we have seen an end to the tragic loss of bulk vessels?" asks Captain Tye, a solicitor in the shipping department of Barlow Lyde & Gilbert (London) in *Lloyd's List* of August 14, 1992,

total of 441 detentions, only seven flags had more than 20 detentions — accounting for 202 (nearly half of all detentions). The worst was Cyprus (49), followed by Malta (44), Panama (42), Liberia (24), St Vincent (23), Norway (23) and Honduras (20) — all Foc, except for Norway.

What these figures demonstrate is where the sub-standard ships are — it is clear that they are concentrated in a handful of registers.

"Unfortunately the answer must still be No.

"It would be simplistic to imagine that all the sub-standard bulkers have now either sunk or been scrapped. While scrapping levels are increasing, there are still more than 500 bulk carriers over 20 years old currently trading — of which 80 are in excess of 25 years old."

As Tye points out, no operator scraps a ship that still turns a profit. Only external intervention — through financial incentives that make it more attractive to scrap than keep sailing — will ensure the long term safety of the bulk fleet.

*Age is only one factor in bulker losses. Trade unionists, maritime experts and relatives of the crew who died in 1980 when the largest ship on the British register sank in the Pacific have long maintained that catastrophic structural failure was the cause of the sudden loss.

A new book (*A Ship Too Far: The Mystery of the Derbyshire* by Captain Dave Ramwell and Tim Madge, Hodder & Stoughton, July 1992 price £14.99) recounts the story of the loss of the *Derbyshire* and the long struggles of the families of the dead crew to secure a proper accounting of the disaster. Despite a farcical public enquiry, many years after the incident, what can only be described as an official cover-up by the British authorities continues to this day.

If anyone is in any doubt that the true cause of the *Derbyshire's* loss was catastrophic structural failure at Frame 65 then they should read this book immediately.

Energy crew paid off and repatriated

The Polish crew of the Bahamian flag VLCC *Energy*, abandoned in **Chittagong** (see *ITF News*, August, June/July and April 1992) have now been paid off and repatriated to Warsaw. The pay off and re-provisioning of the vessel took place in the first week of August — the Master received US\$250,000 for crew wages. After being promised money and supplies so many times, it was a great relief to the crew to be finally paid. The crew sent a telex to the ITF on August 14: "We would like to say thanks for everything you have done for us. Now we have provisions, fresh water, gas, oil etc. All wages are paid until August 18th and our tickets to Warsaw are confirmed and booked by Eurocrewing. The owner simply did not answer on any request for arranging tickets for offsigning crew. But this is only one item in a long serial of neglects from owners' side. Anyway now is all over. The crew is fully satisfied and wish you many successes in your hard work." And so the Stamford Tanker saga rolls on — so far, the cases that have been settled include the *Charger*, *Challenger*, *Empress*, *Energy* and *Pacific Dawn* (see *ITF News*, August 1992 — the *Pacific Dawn* is part of the same group). The Latvian-crewed *Knightsbridge*, stranded in **Guadeloupe**, has reportedly received some money, but this has yet to be confirmed. It would appear that senior echelons of the banks which effectively own these ships have finally decided to settle all claims.

Another infamous shipping group whose collapse is well known to regular readers of this column is the Pakistani-based Gokal brothers' Gulf East Shipmanagement, whose fortunes were linked to the collapsed BCCI bank. Over the past year, a number of Gokal cases have been dealt with by the ITF — and it is fair to say that a rough pattern has emerged — the ship is abandoned for a number of months and then, finally, some settlement is made. There are still, however, a number of Gokal ships in crisis. The *Endurance Sea*, in **Chittagong** (see

ITF News, June/July & August 1992) is one — the crew, having received emergency help from the ITF, are still on the ship. The *Halron* is still detained for unpaid port charges in **Douala** with an abandoned crew of 19 who are owed \$150,000. Terra-Marine of Karachi, who are acting for Gokal, have said that the crews of both ships will eventually be paid if they stay on board — the *Halron* is now expected to be sold. Gulf East still owns 19 vessels, and the plan is to sell some to pay off the outstanding claims. Another ship in the group is the *Al Samad* bulker, stranded in **Colombo** — the crew are refusing to move the ship because of outstanding

wages. Meanwhile the *New Fortune* is still in **Korea** and the *Neptunian* in **Malta**. The *New Fortune* crew have been repatriated to Pakistan, but the others remain stranded.

The saga of the German-owned *Peter* (now *Swan 1*) was covered in detail in this year's *ITF Seafarers' Bulletin* (No.7) — if there is anyone reading this who doesn't receive the Bulletin, they should write to us and get a copy. The Filipino crew were underpaid, and through the intervention of ITF German Campaign Co-ordinator Hans Kreitlow, arrest proceedings and some very difficult negotiations, \$21,000 and repatriation at owner's expense was achieved. The owner Leo Krings (or his shady broker Willy Haas) then tried to cheat the returning crew by not booking their Frankfurt-Manila tickets (so they were stranded in Frankfurt airport and had to buy their own tickets). Once again, swift action by Kreitlow ensured that they got this money back. It was a difficult case, and the crew have shown their appreciation. One of them has written to Kreitlow, thanking him for all his work. Regular readers of this column will certainly notice that there are always many stories from Germany — a very active ITF presence

exists there. While these stories usually recount the activities of the Hamburg and Bremen ITF Inspectors it is worth remembering that the effectiveness of the German campaign relies not only on the hard work of the Inspectors, but also on the crucial support of the German transport workers' union ÖTV and on the daily co-ordinating work done by Kreitlow.

It's the month for crew thank you messages, it seems. The Bulgarian crew of Maltese flag *Alexander Courage* arrived in **Ravenna**, Italy on April first. The crew hadn't been paid for four months, and the ship was arrested by other parties — after two

FLAG OF CONVENIENCE CAMPAIGN NEWS

months in Ravenna, the crew still hadn't received anything. In June, the crew contacted ITF Inspector Bruno de Bonis — "Since then," the crew say in a letter from Bulgaria that the ITF has just received, "we felt we had a professional and sure protection. We understood the real power of your organisation when on 4 July 1992 the vessel was berthed and on 9 July 1992 the whole amount of our earnings was paid. On the next day we were repatriated to Bulgaria. We would like to express our gratitude to your organization and to Mr. De Bonis in particular, who showed proficiency and patience, spending so much of his personal time. Thank you very much!"

The 15 Philippine seamen signed on board the Liberian flag *Taeping* have also written to the ITF. They entered a dispute demanding an ITF Agreement and backwages, and their ship was stopped for eight days in **Taranto, Italy**. The men received \$75,000 and an ITF Standard Agreement was signed. The crew thank the ITF and ITF Inspector Giovambattista Leoncini, in particular for "good co-operation/assistance in carrying out the labour dispute... Mr. Leoncini has given us one's best assistance, and we are proud to belong to ITF," they say.



INLAND TRANSPORT

45 killed in Spanish "pirate" bus crash : the risks of uncontrolled road transport

Forty five coach passengers were killed at Torreblanca (Castellón) in Spain on 19 August when a Pegaso coach overturned on an exit from the motorway which runs south along the Mediterranean coast.

The accident revealed a horrific catalogue of circumstances which demonstrate how the uncontrolled road transport market places all road users at risk.

The coach was a "pirate" and belonged to a company which did not possess a licence to operate passenger services; it was carrying passengers under subcontract. Unfortunately, as this tragedy demonstrated, it is all too common for holiday organisers who do not employ professional drivers themselves to subcontract work to owner-drivers or small companies which do not comply with the regulations. Competing with one another to

offer the cheapest price, these pirate operators seriously undermine the regular transport market, compromising safety and working conditions.

The investigation indicated from the tachograph records that the coach was travelling at 105 kph when it left the motorway by an exit with a speed limit of 40 kph.

In the subsequent roll-over, the roof of the coach was crushed. The lack of physical protection for passengers and crews in the case of many tourist coaches is manifest. The large glazed areas and their pillars which support the roof offer little safeguard in an accident. Furthermore, the lack of a requirement for passengers to wear seat-belts ensures that when an accident of this nature does occur they are thrown around inside and out of the vehicle.

Regulation No. 66 of the UN Eco-

nomie Commission for Europe on Uniform Provisions concerning the Approval of Large Passenger Vehicles with regard to the Strength of their Superstructure lays down some minimum standards of construction. The Regulation entered into force on 1 December 1986, but only a handful of countries have signed it and Spain is not among them.

Given the lack of protection for bus crews and passengers, the ITF's Road Transport Workers' Section decided in May 1991 to set up a Bus and Coach Construction Working Group to draw up improved design and construction standards. A progress report will be given to the Section Conference which meets in Yokohama, Japan in September-October this year. The urgency of improving standards on passenger vehicles has been highlighted by this most recent accident in Spain.

Green plan for Danish State Railways

Danish State Railways (DSB) is embarking on an ambitious new four year plan aimed at giving the entire undertaking a green profile.

An extra 200 million Danish kroner have been set aside for this important new initiative in which both the unions and DSB employees will be actively involved.

The effects of the new environmental strategy will be far-reaching as DSB is a multi-modal company operating ferries and bus services as well as trains.

DSB environment division chief Mette Lis Andersen says that she intends to use the new money at her disposal on cleaning up existing and preventing future pollution.

She says that she is actively consid-

ering offering financial incentives, possibly in the form of a "green bonus", to DSB employees, who will be encouraged to take more individual responsibility for safeguarding the environment in the course of their work.

As a first step, DSB will move to less polluting fuels, starting with the ferries, which account for thirty per cent of the pollution caused by DSB. Once all transport modes have switched to light diesel, there will be a further move to ultralight diesel right across the company.

The company will then look at its use of chemicals, with a target being set of a thirty per cent cutback over the next two years.

Finally, a series of measures will be

taken to bring down noise levels, with the aim of ensuring maximum noise levels of 65 decibels throughout DSB by the year 2005.

DSB's purchasing policy will come under close scrutiny, with all new buses, trains and ferries having to meet stringent anti-pollution standards. Revised maintenance procedures will ensure that all new equipment continues to conform to the highest standards throughout its working life.

Training forms an important plank in the programme, as DSB employees will have to adapt to new work practices. Each DSB division will also have its own environmental coordinator and all management personnel will be contractually obliged to take part in the environment programme.



CIVIL AVIATION

Victory at last for US cabin crew in achieving legal duty time limits

In a major victory for US cabin crew, on July ninth, the US Senate passed legislation (HR 5518) limiting flight attendant duty time and imposing rest requirements.

Dee Mackie, president of the ITF-affiliated Association of Flight Attendants, says,

"This is a victory, not only for flight attendants, but for the flying public. Since 1952, the FAA has required that flight attendants be on board for the safety of passengers. This legislation will ensure they are rested and alert enough to perform their role as safety professionals aboard that plane. Every person who flies aboard com-

mercial aircraft in this country will be safer because of this".

Flight attendants, the only predominantly female workforce in the aviation industry, are the only transport workers who do not have duty time protections in the US.

Only last November the FAA reiterated its refusal to apply duty limitations to flight attendants (see *ITF News*, December 1991).

For domestic and international flights, the law establishes a maximum of 14 hours of scheduled duty time and a minimum of at least 10 and a half hours of consecutive rest after

each duty period. The legislation allows for higher duty times and rest periods for intercontinental flying.

The new legislation is the result of continuing efforts by the Coalition of Flight Attendant Unions. The coalition represents more than 70,000 US flight attendants on 24 US carriers. Formed in 1988 exclusively to achieve flight duty time limits for flight attendants, the coalition includes the ITF affiliates, the AFA and IAMAW, as well as the Association of Professional Flight Attendants, and the Independent Federation of Flight Attendants.

TWA unions/creditors are now joint owners

Unions and creditors have taken over as TWA's owners after Carl Icahn stepped down from running the airline.

Unions will hold a hefty 45 per cent of the stock and creditors the remaining 55 per cent.

For their share of the airline, union members gave \$180 million in concessions or a 15 per cent cut in wages and benefits annually. The creditors have given up \$1bn of TWA's 1.5bn debt.

Carl Icahn crippled TWA with debt in 1988 when he converted it from a public company into a private company. TWA is currently in chapter 11 bankruptcy.

Icahn's removal from any position on the board was a precondition of union involvement in any wage investment programme (WIP).

The scale of union investment in the airline is unprecedented. Most previous WIPs in US airlines have been substantially lower stakes such as at

Eastern (18-22 per cent), Western (10 per cent), Pan Am (30 per cent) and Republic (15 per cent).

The union experience of such WIPs has generally not been good. At Eastern the airline was sold out from under employees to Frank Lorenzo.

Indeed in 1985 unions entered a WIP with Carl Icahn at TWA. Icahn's response to this "partnership" was to start selling off the airline's assets, resulting in the machinists' union (IAMAW) taking out a fraudulent conveyance suit against the carrier.

In 1987 the union calculated it had received \$260 from profit sharing, while \$50 million per year had been given up in concessions. Nor did the WIP stop the airline employing an anti-union management.

In the current programme, however, the unions hold almost half the stock. A new "professional" airline management has been agreed as a precon-

dition of the deal. The easing of the airline's debt to the tune of \$1bn also reduces the chances of the airline being sold off.

Bill Scheri, Airline Co-ordinator of the ITF-affiliated IAMAW, says:

"The IAM is not fond of entering these Wage Investment Programmes. At this point we haven't found any alternative to them, because the bottom line is saving the jobs of our members. Like all the others we had no real choice with this scheme."

But he hopes this new arrangement is weighted much more to the benefit of employees than any previous airline WIP.

Bill O'Driscoll, president of IAMAW District 142 says "We have 28,000 TWA employees, who are now airline owners.

"Our first goal is to lift TWA out of bankruptcy and begin the process of rebuilding our airline".

Aerolíneas Argentinas privatisation fails

Two years after privatising Aerolíneas Argentinas, the experience has proved so disastrous that the Argentinian government has bought back 28 per cent of the shares.

However, aviation unions say that the government has simply bought into an \$800m debt and still does not control the company.

When Aerolíneas Argentinas was privatised in November 1990 the Spanish carrier Iberia bought 30 per cent of the shares, but quickly acquired real control over 80 per cent of the company.

The AA sale had the ironical result of a privatisation placing the Argentinian flag carrier into the hands of a loss-making state-owned carrier—dependent on its own government's subsidies, and which followed aviation policies set in Madrid.

As Argentinian aviation unions put it: "Instead of being a case of privatisation, only a transnationalisation was achieved, in this case in favour of the Spanish state."

Air Niugini strike

Workers in Air Niugini are facing a hard line reaction from the airline management once again (see *ITF News*, May 1992).

After negotiations for a 15 per cent pay increase were getting nowhere after a year of talks, the ITF-affiliated National Airlines Employees' Association (NAEA) held a four day strike from midnight on Thursday August 27 until August 31.

In response to the strike the company took out injunctions against union leaders, and threatened mass dismissal of the strikers.

The company also threatened that the union would be de-registered by the Labour Department. The NAEA is refusing to appear before a Department of Labour tribunal on the dispute until the management withdraws these threats and injunctions.

Since AA has bought the domestic carrier Austral, Iberia now effectively controls Argentinian civil air transport.

At the time of privatisation aviation unions were split between support for and opposition to the sell off. However, the privatisation resulted in such a drop in working conditions, accompanied by such a systematic pillaging of the company, that all six unions in AA came together on June sixth to issue a joint statement condemning the state of the airline. The unions included the ITF-affiliated Asociación Argentina de Aeronavegantes (AAA) and the Asociación de Personal Aeronáutico (APA). The statement notes:

"(Iberia) is proposing to reduce Aerolíneas Argentinas to a mere subsidiary... This is detrimental to the interests of our country, of users and of workers, who are, after all, those who end up paying the price of such plundering."

The unions say that the company has reduced service quality, and allowed Iberia to take over many AA international routes. They say AA's telecommunications system was ripped out and transferred to Iberia.

According to Alicia Castro, General Secretary of the AAA, working conditions deteriorated rapidly as the company tried to cut labour costs. This involved mass dismissals, a fall in real wages, the breaking of wages agreements, breaches of flight and duty time limitations and minimum rest periods, the subcontracting of ground services, compulsory flexibility arrangements and a disregard for trade union organisation.

There has been widespread public concern about the financial management of AA. At the time of privatisation AA was a profitable company. (Between 1980 and 1981 it even lent money to the national treasury.) However, soon after privatisation the airline was rumoured to be losing up to \$11m per month. The current debts of AA are estimated at \$800m.

The crisis at AA reached a new pitch this year when it became known



A cartoon in the Argentinian financial press depicts Edmundo Soria, Secretary of Transport, pursued by the crashing of Aerolíneas Argentinas.

that in order to finance its purchase of AA shares Iberia had mortgaged seven of AA's own aircraft.

It was this scandal which finally precipitated the repurchase of 28 per cent of AA shares from Iberia, giving the government a total 43 per cent holding.

The unions say that this provides no solution. A joint union statement issued on August eighth says that the government has reached the agreement on the buy-back without any consultation with the unions, has whitewashed the mismanagement of the airline, and is effectively "nationalising private debt". The agreement provides no safeguards against further asset stripping or run down of service standards; it provides no guarantees of improvements in working conditions or job security, or of future financial competence.

Furthermore it still "relinquishes decisions about the national air policy...into the hands of a foreign country". The statement says the unions will be "opposing with all means and in every way possible the perpetuation of this historic scandal".

Canadian deregulation causes airline crisis

Canadian aviation is in turmoil. For the two carriers Canadian Airlines (CAI) and Air Canada which dominate the airline industry it is the time to choose.

Since privatisation, of course, the Canadian people no longer have any direct say in that choice. Nevertheless what is haggled out in closed executive boardrooms over the next months will decide the future of Canadian air transport.

The choices are:

- a merger between Air Canada and CAI to form one Canadian mega-carrier (currently dubbed "Mapleflot"). This option is favoured by the government,
- a merger between CAI and American Airlines, which would lead to Air Canada also seeking a major US partner,
- An Air Canada-CAI mega-carrier which forms an alliance with a major US carrier.

All of these options would involve thousands of job losses.

In a joint statement submitted to Jean Corbeil, the Canadian Transport Minister, the three ITF-affiliated

civil aviation unions, the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW), the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) and the Canadian Auto Workers, which between them represent 32,000 airline workers, have declared that other options should be sought for the future of the industry. The statement says,

"Canadians are left with impossible choices. In all three cases, there will be a reduction of service to Canadians and substantial job losses. In one case we will have a deregulated monopoly airline while in the other cases we will not have a viable Canadian airline industry. The only possible winners will be the private airline investors, speculating on these take-overs, in some cases American. The losers will be the airline workers, the communities we serve, and Canada's future in the aviation industry.

"We do not believe that these are the only alternatives facing our industry. Rather, we believe that Canada can maintain two viable international/domestic carriers in a stable economic environment".



This 1986 union anti-privatisation cartoon shows Prime Minister Brian Mulroney offering: "Let's make a deal". Unions fear the next deal will sell off Canadian aviation to US carriers.

The unions say that the current crisis shows that deregulation has failed in Air Canada. Airline competition has virtually disappeared and the two remaining dominant carriers are both making massive losses (combined losses of US\$337m for the first half of 1992).

They say some form of re-regulation is urgently needed to save the Canadian airline industry from extinction.

Canadian Airlines wants workers to pay

Managers at Canadian Airlines (CAI) have been deliberately whipping up anxieties among employees about job losses in order to push them into a mandatory wages investment programme.

The company wants the workers to provide it with extra capital in order to reject a buy-out by Air Canada and to enter an alliance with American Airlines (AMR).

The ITF-affiliated Canadian Auto Workers has rejected the deal outright. It says that "Giving up a percentage of your salary whether in this scheme or directly to the employer is taking a cut in salary. You would be agreeing to take concessions before the employer even demands it.

"According to a number of sources, as a condition of the alliance with CAI, American Airlines is demanding a four year wage freeze plus rollbacks. If this is true, employees

would have committed up to 15 per cent of their salary just to get the deal with AMR back on the table to then have to face further demands for concessions".

CUPE is also against the scheme, though many of their members in CAI are clearly in fear of massive job losses unless they accept.

CUPE says that the issue of job losses goes beyond those immediately threatened by the bullying CAI management:

"It is understandable that employees would be under tremendous pressure to initiate an employee buy-in scheme at CAI because the alternative presented was an immediate job loss on a massive scale. We share the concern of some industry analysts, however, that the AMR/CAI deal is only the thin edge of the wedge, with substantially higher job losses in the

longer term as AMR gains greater control in the next few years."

The union believes that the scheme is unlikely to be effective in any case, with CAI's current debt at \$4bn and the company haemorrhaging \$1m a day, CUPE says:

"Will this be enough to save their airline? Will it provide any job security? Given the track record of similar efforts in the US, where concessions have been traded for stock ownership, carriers who were failing at the time of the initiative have still been closed or merged with stronger, larger carriers."

Unions are now working to obtain accurate information and analysis to examine what the different choices being presented by the airlines really mean for their members. They are also appealing for provincial and federal government financial assistance for Canadian airlines.

COURT RULES AGAINST PARIS UAL BASE

On July 16 US District Court Judge Charles Sifton issued a preliminary injunction against **United Airlines**, restraining the company from filling vacancies in its new Paris domicile.

The company is seeking to employ French cabin crew on US contracts at pay well below the norm for French cabin crew. Employees would be excluded from French sick pay and pension benefits while they would also be unable to obtain the full benefits of their US contract. The company wants to exclude US cabin crew from the Paris base (see **ITF News**, June/July 1992). This ruling initially backs the case brought by the ITF-affiliated Association of Flight Attendants.

The AFA says "That ruling recognised that UAL actions with respect to the foreign domicile were totally at odds with the contract and the Railway Labor Act, and undertaken in bad faith". UAL are appealing against the injunction.

The AFA and the ITF-affiliated French cabin crew union SNPNC continue to co-ordinate a campaign against the UAL Paris base.

JAL SEEKS CHEAP FOREIGN CREW

JAL has announced a restructuring programme which will involve the loss of 900 ground staff jobs, and a reduction in new hirings. 400 jobs were shed in late June.

The plan also involves increasing the use of cheaper foreign cabin crew at the expense of Japanese cabin crew. **JAL** says the number of foreign cabin crew will be increased from 450 currently to 1,600 by 1996, when one third of the cabin attendants will be foreigners. Japanese cabin crew unions are not allowed to represent foreign cabin crew.

Both Japanese cabin crew unions **JCAL** and **JACAU**, both ITF affiliates, say that foreign cabin crew should only be employed in addition to, not instead of, Japanese crew.

The airline will similarly increase the number of foreign cockpit crew from 84 currently to about 300 in 1994. **JAL** has just been offered the services

of 500 Russian pilots and flight engineers who are now considered surplus to the needs of Aeroflot.

OVERSEAS POSTS UNDER THREAT

The take-over of the Venezuelan flag-carrier by Iberia threatens job losses among **Viasa** employees abroad. In March, the company said it would eliminate 27 of its 86 Miami-based employees as Iberia integrated the staff of its subsidiaries. However a US District Court prevented the company abrogating the contracts in the middle of ongoing union negotiations.

London-based **Viasa** staff still do not know about the future of their jobs. The UK Transport and General Workers' Union has failed to obtain any reply from the company about the company's plans for its London employees.

PRIVATISATIONS & DE-PRIVATISATION

As the Argentinian government has re-nationalised 28 per cent of **Aerolíneas Argentinas** (see page 13), a public inquiry into the sale of shares of the privatised Brazilian carrier **Vasp** to Wagner Cahedo, the airline's current president, may lead to all these shares being sold back to the state of São Paulo.

The new Ecuadorian government is expected to privatise the state-owned flag carrier **Ecuatoriana** in the near future. The new prime minister is Roberto Dunn, owner of **Seate**, **Ecuatoriana's** private sector rival.

Only three months after privatisation **Philippine Airlines** has grounded its fleet of commuter aircraft serving non profitable island routes in the south of the country.

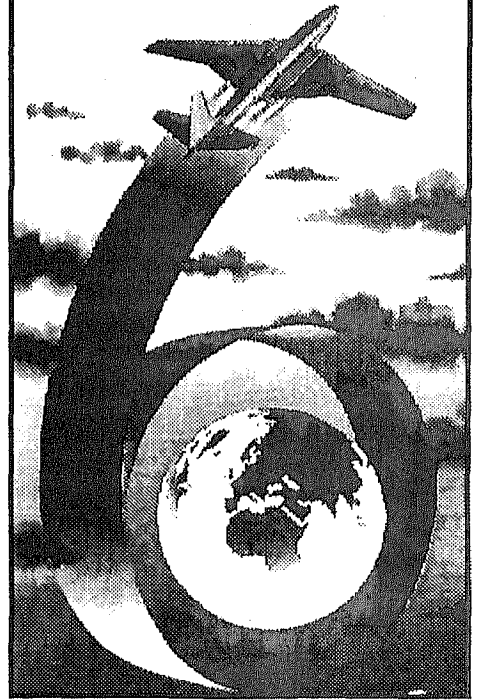
Balkan Bulgarian Airlines have announced they are seeking foreign partners for a privatisation of the airline.

AIRLINES' LOW COST SUBSIDIARIES

Lufthansa has announced 6,000 job cuts over the next two years in preparation for privatisation. It is currently proposing pay cuts in **Lufthansa Express**, a lower cost subsidiary operating domestic routes

After **British Airways** cabin crew in the ITF-affiliated **TGWU** held one day strikes in Manchester and Birmingham over loss of pay resulting

AIRLINE ROUNDUP



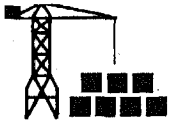
from their operations being transferred into **BA's** new low cost subsidiary **BA Regional**, the airline threatened to sell off these services. The union is threatening more industrial action.

JAL is also switching some international routes to its low cost subsidiaries **Japan Asia Airways** and **Japan Air Charter**.

MALTA STRIKE

An industrial dispute, which erupted between the ITF-affiliated **General Workers' Union** and the state-owned national airline **Air Malta** over overseas allowances for engineers who carry out work on the company's airliners abroad, led to strikes in almost all the airline's divisions and a number of flights were affected.

The engineers were supported by workers in passenger handling and ramp workers after management attempted to do the work of engineers who were involved in an initial stoppage. When management tried to defy the union by handling passengers and baggage themselves the strike spread to the whole airline and all flights were grounded. At this point the government intervened and negotiated a settlement with the **GWU**.



DOCKERS

Unions unite in jobs campaign

The US dockers' unions have launched a campaign against the State Department's interpretation of the law which prohibits certain seafarers from carrying out cargo handling in US ports.

The "Campaign to Save American Longshore Jobs", launched in August, is a joint initiative of the ITF-affiliated International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) and the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) that aims to get the government to reconsider its interpretation of the new sections of the Immigration and

Nationality Act.

The Act (see *ITF News*, January/February 1992 and February 1991) bans seafarers of ships registered or owned in countries that prohibit US seafarers from carrying out cargo handling in their ports from doing the same in the USA.

The State Department issues a list of these countries (53 in May 1991) but its interpretation is very narrow — only when countries have explicit laws against cargo handling are they added to the list.

The unions' position (which is also ITF policy) is that no cargo handling

should be carried out by seafarers, but the present rules are at least a positive step.

However, the narrowness of the State Department's interpretation is a big problem. They ignore the existence of regulation by collective agreement and established practices in many countries and will only add countries to the list which have passed laws.

The two unions have declared that they will vigorously fight for a more realistic interpretation. A national day of action, and a possible legal challenge are under consideration.



FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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-	Road Transport Section	Yokohama,
2 October	Conference	Japan
5-7 October	Asia/Pacific Dockers' Conference	Yokohama, Japan
16 October	Rhine Shipping Committee	Strasbourg
20 October	Management Committee	Copenhagen
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

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International Transport Workers' Federation
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 Internationale Transportarbeiter-Föderation
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