

USAIR STRIKE DEFEATS WAGE CUT PLANS

On 5 October, 8,300 ground staff members of the ITF-affiliated International Association of Machinists (IAM) walked off the job at USAir after 22 hours of talks failed to alter drastic cost cutting proposals by the management. The machinists' strike caused the immediate cancellation of 60 per cent of USAir scheduled flights.

The airline was demanding cuts in pay and health care benefits, and in work rule changes which would have shifted the work of skilled engineers to lower paid unskilled workers.

USAir was particularly concerned to reduce its costs at the time it is trying to complete its deal with British Airways (see *ITF News*, August 1992) aimed at creating a transatlantic mega-carrier. The IAM believes that the influence of British Airways, who are trying to gain a large amount of control of the airline, brought a more intransigent attitude from the airline management.

According to IAM Vice President John Peterpaul:

"After 43 years of harmonious relations with the IAM and its members, USAir...abandoned the good will built through seventeen peacefully negotiated contracts and forced a major segment of its employees to strike."

The machinists' strike was immediately supported by the ITF-affiliated Association of Flight Attendants, which instructed its members not to cross picket lines. However, a Pittsburgh federal judge ordered the AFA back to work with a temporary restraining or-

der. The AFA's lawyers have challenged this ruling which effectively out-laws solidarity strikes.

International support was also offered through the ITF by ITF affiliates, the Transport and General Workers' Union in the UK, and ÖTV in Germany. Britain and Germany are the major destinations of USAir in Europe.

After four days of solid strike action by the machinists, USAir negotiators backed down on demands that could have cost hundreds of mechanics' jobs.

The IAM forced the company to take back the main work rule proposals and, significantly, won a no lay off provision for the life of the agreement. Wage concessions are to be temporary with a "snap back" to an increased rate in November 1993.

After the successful outcome of the strike, IAM Airline Co-ordinator Bill Scheri praised his union's members:

"USAir IAM members demonstrated courage by voting to stand up for their rights in today's union-busting environment. Their solidarity overcame all the odds against them and won the day".

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ITF Seminar for Mauritius transport workers

The ITF's first-ever seminar in Mauritius was held for a week (3-7 August) earlier this year.

Under the theme of "The human factor in traffic and transport systems", the five day meeting brought together members and leaders of the ITF affiliated Transport Corporation Employees' Union (TCEU) and the Air Mauritius Cabin Crew Association (AMCCA).

"Mauritius is a unique country with a remarkable record of political stability and parliamentary democracy," ITF African Representative Ben 'Roxy' Udogwu told the meeting, "Both augur well for free trade union activities and I am happy to observe

that the trade union movement of your country has for a long time been part of and has supported the cause of international trade union solidarity".

"The transport industry is a booming one in Mauritius. It has a great role to play in helping the country to develop further," TCEU President Dayachand Gobin told the opening session:

"The human element in the transport sector has to be taken care of at all levels. The world over management is taking as a serious task how to maximise human resources output. There will be no gains in productivity if workers do not identify themselves with the global vision of policy mak-

ers within transport utility companies."

AMCCA President Hugo Arouf emphasised to the seminar the key role unions must play in determining the allocation of human resources.

The seminar broke down into working teams who covered an impressive array of material in the five days.

In a detailed set of recommendations that included basic issues of bus safety, drug and alcohol abuse, education, occupational diseases, communications and industrial relations, the union members demonstrated a clear headed appreciation of the problems and solutions facing transport in Mauritius.

General strike brings Italy to a halt

Angry at cuts in public spending that will drastically cut Italy's pensions and free health care, ITF-affiliated transport workers joined the millions who took action during a general strike that brought Italy to a standstill for four hours on October 13th.

The Italian government wants to cut the 1993 budget by US\$ 76 billion, most of which will come out of welfare. Around 20 million Italians will lose their entitlement to free health care.

Workers are frustrated by the prospect of real wages being eroded next year following the devaluation of the lira. A wage freeze for 3.5 million

public sector workers is envisaged by the reduced spending plan.

The action was a culmination of a series of regional four-hours strikes initiated on September 22nd by the three Italian union confederations, the CGIL, CISL and UIL — whose transport workers are all affiliated to the ITF.

Well over six million workers in all sectors were reported to have taken action. The transport sector pulled off an almost total stoppage, despite Italy's strike laws which make long notice periods for strike action obligatory. The rail network was reported to be paralysed by 08h00 on the 13th, and ports did not operate.

Whilst workers in the manufacturing industries also stopped work, unions in the essential public services were not able to give the statutory two weeks' notice required under the law, and workers in schools, banks, hospitals and government offices could not take action.

Union leaders met prime minister Giuliano Amato on October 14th. Amato agreed a concession which lifted the ceiling imposed on pensions under the budget cuts.

There was also an agreement which widened the scope of free health care, which would be less punitive for those with large families.

Thailand : union rights must be restored

Following Thailand's pro-democracy coalition win in the September general election (see **ITF News**, October 1992), Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai of the largest party, the Democrat Party, has appointed three bankers and a general to the cabinet of the new government.

The leader of the third largest party in the coalition, Chamlong Srimuang, who staged a hunger strike during

February's military coup, declined a cabinet seat.

The General Secretary of the ICFTU's Asian and Pacific Regional Organisation, Takashi Izumi, has congratulated Leekpai on his election, appealing to him to review the regressive labour policies and legislation of the previous regime.

This would earn the support of the

working classes for the new Thailand, Izumi said.

Workers in Thailand's state enterprises are lobbying the new government to reinstate the right to strike and to form unions.

Although no moves to restore trade union rights have yet been made, reports in the Thai press say the government has promised to revive unions in the state sector.

ITF Executive appoints Acting General Secretary

At a meeting in Copenhagen on 20 and 21 October, the ITF Executive Board decided that David Cockroft will take over from Harold Lewis who will retire as General Secretary of the ITF at the end of March 1993.

David will then become Acting General Secretary and will serve until the 37th Congress of the ITF elects a General Secretary (he will be free to run for it) in August 1994. The Board has made it clear that the Acting General Secretary will have "the authority, responsibilities and duties of the General Secretary as prescribed by the ITF Constitution".

In a circular to affiliated organisations, Harold Lewis has stressed that "David has my complete confidence and support". He explained to ITF News that "after almost sixteen years as General Secretary I have naturally been concerned that I should be able to leave the ITF in good hands. David's appointment gave me all the comfort I needed and we shall together make sure that the hand-over goes without a hitch".

The Board also agreed to appoint Shigeru Wada, currently head of the ITF Tokyo office, as ITF Asia/Pacific Regional Secretary from May 1993 on the retirement of Mo Hoda. Wada will be assisted by Mahendra Sharma, presently working for HMS in India, who will be based in Delhi and will act as regional educational co-ordinator.

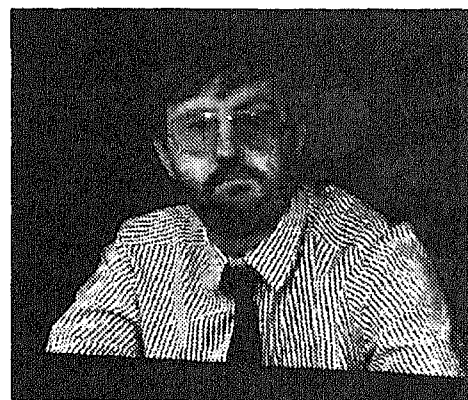
In a historic move, the Board welcomed for the first time two new women members. Ana Isabel Montero Barquero, General Secretary of the Costa Rican Railway and Port Workers' Union, was attending her first meeting following her co-option to the Board in March; and Dilia van der Heem, Board member of Vervoersbond FNV, Netherlands, was co-opted to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Ruud Vreeman of the same union who has become Vice-President of the Dutch Labour Party. At its next meeting, the Board will analyse in depth the responses from affiliates about women's issues in order to fix the agenda for a women transport workers' conference which

is hoped to hold before the next ITF Congress.

The Board agreed in principle to new applications from thirteen new unions, including unions from three African countries which have no current affiliates: Egypt, Congo and Benin. In a move of considerable historical importance, it also approved an application from the Belgian Christian Transport & Diamond Workers' Organisation, a union which was until recently one of the largest affiliates of the "Christian" transport international, FIOST.

In view of the rapidly changing political situation in the former USSR, the Board conducted a careful review of existing affiliations and new requests. It accepted in principle an application from the Russian Railway and Transport Construction Workers' Union which claims a total membership of almost 3 million.

The Board also heard a detailed report from the Secretariat that its existing affiliate, the Independent Federation of Water Transport Workers' Unions of the ex-USSR, had trans-



David Cockroft

formed itself into an international confederation of unions, most but not all of which come from countries inside the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Since the ITF's Constitution assumes a link between an affiliate and an individual country, the affiliation of the IFWTWU is deemed to have lapsed and its constituent unions will be encouraged to apply individually for ITF affiliation. Existing IFWTWU collective agreements for Flag of Convenience ships would continue to be recognised by the ITF under transitional arrangements.



Over 200 people attended the annual ITF Korean Coordinating Committee (KCC) Athletic Meet on Friday October ninth in Ujangsan Athletic Park, Seoul. Korean ITF affiliates have been holding the athletic meet as a means of promoting harmony and solidarity every year since 1989. This year's event was attended by representatives of the Railway Workers' Union (KRWU), the Port and Transport Workers' Union (KFPTWU), the Seafarers (FKSU), the Airline Workers (KALU) and the Automobile and Transport Workers (KATWF) — the Taxi Workers were unable to attend because of an ongoing strike. ITF Asia/Pacific Regional Secretary Mo Hoda also attended as a guest of honour.

Malawian 'trial' to start in November

The trial of Malawian trade union leader Chakufwa Chihana is now set to begin on November 12.

Chihana was originally due to go on trial on September 21, but the trial date was postponed first to October and then to November.

He has been out on bail since early September after being jailed on July 14 for a second time this year only days after he was finally granted bail (see *ITF News*, August 1992).

In an ominous development with such an important trial pending, the Malawian constitution has been amended to allow the authorities to remove any judge who reaches a verdict considered to be "contrary to the national interest".

As Chihana is facing several charges of sedition, there can be little doubt that President for Life Hastings Banda will stop at nothing in his anxiety to secure a conviction at all costs and ensure that Chihana becomes a prisoner of Malawi's notorious penal system.

It was Chihana, as opposition leader, who delivered a moving funeral oration on November first at the burial of Orton Chirwa, the veteran lawyer and politician, who was one of Malawi's best known political prisoners.

Chirwa, with his wife Vera, was serving a life sentence for opposing Banda.

Along with his wife Chirwa had originally been sentenced to death after grossly unfair court proceedings on treason charges in which he was not even allowed a defence lawyer. An international outcry ensued and the death penalties were then commuted to life.

The first African barrister in Nyasaland (as Malawi was then known) Chirwa was active in the independence struggle.

But he crossed swords with Banda and within weeks of independence in 1964 Chirwa, by then Minister of Justice, was sacked. He was forced into exile with his wife, also a lawyer, in Tanzania where he became leader of an opposition group seeking to restore democracy to Malawi.

The couple were abducted by Malawian agents during a visit to a Zambian town close to the Malawian border in December 1981.

During the long years that they have spent apart in Zomba jail, Chirwa and his wife have suffered terrible indignities as a result of the cruel prison regime.

Last month a delegation of lawyers was allowed to see Chirwa (he had been allowed no visitors for eight years) when he was briefly united with his wife whom he had not seen in all that time.

It was a poignant meeting, with the two prisoners exchanging details of the barbarities of their detention — months of malnutrition, illness and solitary confinement, chained hand and foot in a tiny cell.

"We thought we had been forgotten," said a frail Chirwa as he greeted his visitors. He knew nothing of international efforts to secure his release by Amnesty International which has adopted the couple as Prisoners of Conscience.

JAIL DEATH OF VETERAN POLITICIAN

A month later, on October 20, the frail 73-year-old was dead. While it was first thought that his death might have been from natural causes, aggravated by the harsh prison conditions, a leaked copy of the official autopsy appears to show that he was strangled.

Now there are renewed fears for the life of Chirwa's widow and international pressure for her release is being stepped up.

The parallels between the two cases — both Chirwa and Chihana were prominent opposition leaders who challenged Banda — gives cause for concern with Chihana's trial about to begin.

Faced with unprecedented pressure from within and outside the country for political reform the President for Life announced on 18 October that the people of Malawi would be allowed to vote "as soon as possible" in a referendum on the future political

system in the country.

However, Chihana and other leading political dissidents are not interpreting the promise of a plebiscite as an indication that the 93-year-old dictator has altered his stance after close on three decades of one-party rule by the Malawi Congress Party.

GROWING RANKS OF OPPOSITION

What is clear is that the popular support for opposition figures (hundreds and later thousands turned out whenever Chihana has appeared before the courts) and the suspension of international aid pending an improvement in the human rights situation has forced the President's hand. He has to look at least as if he is doing something to pacify his critics, who are daily growing in number.

The opposition Alliance for Democracy (Aford), a coalition of pro-democracy supporters founded in September and headed by Chihana, is attracting a strong following. An umbrella group of lawyers, businessmen and politicians is also actively campaigning for multi-party rule.

Banda's tactics are to intimidate the growing ranks of the opposition, to seek sympathy for his role as the architect of Malawian independence and to use the government controlled media to spread his anti-democratic message.

But this appeal could well fail because of the deep and widespread hatred of ordinary citizens for Banda and fear of his hand-picked successor Minister of State John Tembo, who is linked to the murder of several rivals.

Tembo could well be Banda's achilles heel as a multi-party system could well offer the best chance of denying Tembo the succession.

Chihana summed up the public mood well when he said: "People in Malawi need change and the time for that is now". Whether they will be allowed by an ageing despot to have the change they so obviously desire is an open question.

**As we went to press we heard that Aford has been banned.*

Pan-European protection for pregnant workers

The Council of Ministers finally adopted the controversial Directive giving protection to pregnant workers, nursing mothers and workers who have recently given birth, on October 20th.

The Directive, which is part of the Commission's Social Charter action programme, is one of the first concrete measures to be agreed by the Council on workers' rights. It had been threatened with being abandoned up to the last minute.

Italy and the European Commission had opposed the Directive on the grounds that a common position, reached by Ministers in December last year, weakened the original proposal formulated by the Commission in October 1990.

They found particularly unacceptable a clause specifying that payment for maternity leave should be defined as absence for health reasons.

Other states were not keen to reopen the debate on the Directive — particularly the United Kingdom, which maintained that the December 1991 proposal was as far as it was prepared to go on the issue.

Less than a week before the expiry of the three-month deadline for agreement on 19 October, it still looked as if the proposed Directive risked being declared null and void.

The text was eventually agreed on 20 October. It establishes minimum provisions, leaving member states to adopt more favourable arrangements should they wish. The following measures will now apply:

- Pregnant women must take two weeks obligatory maternity leave.
- Actual maternity leave is to be fourteen uninterrupted weeks (improving Portugal's 90 day limit).
- Benefits paid to women may not be less than those received by a worker stopping work for health reasons (the text states that the sick pay reference is purely technical "and implies no analogy between pregnancy and sickness").
- Employers, workers and trade un-

ions are to be informed by the Member States of the Commission guidelines for assessing risks to health and safety at work. These guidelines must cover mental and physical fatigue.

- Employers must assess in advance any risks to the women concerned. If assessment reveals a health and safety hazard, working conditions or working hours must be adjusted accordingly, or the woman should be moved to other work, or given time off (in this case employment rights are maintained, and payment of an adequate allowance to compensate for any loss in pay is provided for).
- Pregnant women may not be dismissed by their employer for reasons connected with their condition.
- Member States must not use the minimum provisions of the Directive to reduce current protection.

European Community update

The Commission has said that it is not entirely happy with the agreement, as the text does not fully meet its concerns that pregnancy should not be equated with sickness.

The terms covering duration and pay during maternity leave, and night work should be targeted for improvement, the Commission said.

But despite its obvious faults the Directive will improve the situation of women workers in some Member States — proving how very necessary it was for a European initiative to be taken on this issue.

The measures prohibiting the dismissal of pregnant workers and nursing mothers, irrespective of the period of employment and regardless of the size of company, will benefit women workers in countries where such restrictions still exist — the

United Kingdom, for example.

A provision giving the right to ante-natal examinations in working time will benefit women in Greece, Ireland, Belgium and France — under current legislation in France, women undergoing the four obligatory medical examinations did so in their own time, or lost pay.

The new assessment of health and safety risks by the employer, with the inclusion of mental fatigue as a potential risk, is an important step forward and will improve conditions community-wide.

Women in the UK — where employment contracts are suspended during maternity leave — will benefit from maintenance of their employment rights (in terms of seniority, annual leave and pension rights, for example) and from the reduction to one year of the qualifying period for maternity benefits.

British women previously had to have worked for the same employer for two years (five years in part-time work) to qualify for maternity benefits at the higher rate of 90% for six weeks plus a weekly flat-rate allowance for the subsequent period.

BRUSSELS TO RESTRICT TOXIC WASTE

EC environment ministers decided on October 20th to allow Member States to ban imports of hazardous waste for disposal.

The in-principle agreement came after two years of negotiations, and was made possible when the Community decided to change the legal basis of the Regulation on the transfer of waste from the free movement of goods section in the Treaty of Rome and to place it firmly in the section covering the environment. Non-radioactive waste had previously been classed as a tradable commodity.

The Council of Ministers thus established that the environment took precedence over the free circulation of goods demanded under the Treaty of Rome. This was an unusual move

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...European restrictions on the toxic waste trade

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that environment and transport Commissioner Karel Van Miert took care to stress was a "unique case".

The regulation will come into force in September 1994, and reinforces the Basle Convention's premise that waste should be dealt with as close to the point of production as possible.

The decision follows the scandal of German hospital waste dumped in France which hit the headlines in August.

France published a decree on August 19th prohibiting the import of domestic waste for disposal in the absence of a waste disposal plan or an agreement concluded between France and the originating country.

The decree also stipulated that permission may be refused to import any waste that could be recovered, or that could be disposed of in the country where it originated and nearer to the waste production site.

German waste disposal laws make recycling expensive, and France has handled a large percentage of its waste since the closure of borders to waste

by some Central and Eastern European countries.

EC MINISTERS FAIL TO AGREE TRANSPORT LIBERALISATION

Measures to liberalise the EC transport industry were given a rough ride at the last meeting of European transport ministers.

Ministers rejected Commission plans for free access to Europe's congested airports at a meeting on October 26th. The Commission had proposed the reallocation of under-used slots at airports to allow new independent carriers easier access to routes.

A proposed agreement to liberalise road haulage by January 1993 was blocked by Germany at the same meeting.

French minister Charles Josselin made a plea for action on shipping in the Community, stressing the importance of the planned Euros register.

Josselin said he wanted an agreement covering the nationality of crews, to include tax and social security incentives for shipowners, as soon as possible.

He said this would counteract the cost effects of proper safety standards to be met under Euros — and allow the register to compete with Flag of convenience and second registers.

EC shipping had lost 15 per cent of its tonnage in the ten years until 1989, and its workforce had been cut by half. Crews on Euros vessels should not include non-EC citizens, he added.

Ministers did manage to agree the outlines of regulations widening the scope of rules to encourage combined road/rail transport to include road/sea operations. Further discussions will be held in December.

EC LINKS WITH CENTRAL EUROPE

The EC, and Poland, Hungary, and the Czech and Slovak Federated Republic agreed to step up political ties at a summit meeting held on October 28th.

Joint meetings of foreign ministers and a regular dialogue on issues, particularly foreign policy, will take place under the agreement, which will strengthen association agreements signed last December.



PEOPLE

David Cockroft, who will serve as ITF Acting General Secretary from next April until the 1994 Congress (see separate story) was appointed Secretary of the ITF Research & Publications Department in October 1984. Since then he has also taken on responsibility for the Dockers', Civil Aviation and Tourism Services Sections and was appointed an Assistant General Secretary in October 1991. David, who is 39 years old, came to the ITF after 6 years working for the Geneva based International Trade Secretariat for white collar workers FIET. Prior to that he was Director of Research at the British office employees union APEX and a policy assistant at the UK national trade union centre the TUC.

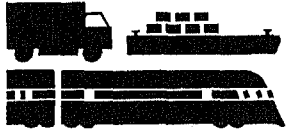
Komi Mawuena Dackey was elected as the new General Secretary of the Togolese civil aviation union STAMAS at its 7th Statutory Congress held in Lomé on 10 and 11 September. He succeeds **M Boukari**. The meeting also elected **Ayao Athyle** as the union's new Treasurer.

Berthold Keller has resigned as President of the International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation (ITGLWF) for personal reasons.

David Lambert, General President of the National Union of Knitwear, Footwear and Apparel Trades (KFAT) of Great Britain, has been appointed as Acting President until the ITGLWF's 6th World Congress. Lambert was previously ITGLWF Vice President.

Margaret Prosser has been appointed National Organiser of the British Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) and is the first woman to be appointed to such a senior position where she will assist the union's most senior officials on the vital issues of recruitment, organisation and campaigning. Prosser was previously TGWU National Women's Secretary, a position she has held for the past eight years.

A new leadership team was elected at the 4th Ordinary Congress of the Seafarers' Union of Turkey held in September. Those elected were: **Turan Uzun** (National President), **Cemil Yeniay** and **Hasan Ayar** (Vice Presidents) and **Kerim Bayraklutun** (General Secretary).



INLAND TRANSPORT

ITF road transport section conference

A decision to intensify ITF work on urban transport issues was taken by road transport workers' unions at the Section Conference held in Yokohama from 30 September to 2 October 1992.

British and German road transport unions TGWU and ÖTV agreed to withdraw a proposal advocating the setting up of a separate ITF Urban Transport Section on the understanding that the work of the Urban Transport Committee would be intensified.

The Section Conference was attended by over seventy representatives from road transport unions in 22 countries, including strong delegations from the Japanese hosts. ITF Vice President T Kubo (All Japan Municipal Transport Workers' Union, TOSHIKO) welcomed the Conference to Japan.

The ITF was represented by General Secretary Harold Lewis and Asia/Pacific Regional Secretary Mo Hoda. Lewis conveyed apologies to the meeting from Assistant General Secretary Graham Brothers who was unable to attend.

After opening addresses from ITF Japanese Coordination Committee Chairman M Tamura, government ministers and civic dignitaries, the conference turned to detailed discussion of a full agenda under the chairmanship of Ricardo Pérez (National Federation of Road Haulage Workers, Argentina).

Don Cunninghame of the New Zealand Transport and General Workers' Union reported to the Conference on the outcome of an informal meeting of delegates from the Asia/Pacific region held the previous day.

Asia/Pacific unions had complained about the effects of deregulation on conditions in the sector. Wage cuts meant that road transport workers had to put in excessive hours to maintain living standards, to the detriment

of health and safety. Liberalisation was also adding to the number of vehicles on the roads and pushing up already high pollution levels, especially in urban centres. Delegates were agreed that there was an urgent need for countries in the region to develop effective controls to counter these trends.

"DUTY TIME" CONCEPT

Working hours — or more exactly the concept of "duty time" — as well as global attacks on industry conditions were major themes running through the conference.

A specimen regulation on Duty Time and Rest Periods of Drivers of Commercial Road Transport Vehicles drafted by the Secretariat to assist unions in pressing governments to accept the duty time concept in domestic and international operations was agreed by the conference on the recommendation of the Section Committee as a basis for negotiations on a country by country basis.

Reflecting the importance which the Section attaches to this issue, the Conference adopted a resolution committing the ITF Secretariat and affiliates to press international bodies and national governments to amend the existing body of regulations on driving time and rest time to take account of the time that the driver is actually on duty performing safety and other work related tasks.

The value of international cooperation in protecting road transport workers against the erosion of their conditions was underlined by an agreement that the sub-regional office for the Southern Cone should be asked to organise regular meetings of the four countries — Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay — represented in the economic grouping Mercosur, after delegates complained that the Mercosur authorities were ignoring

pleas for an examination of the social aspects of closer regional economic integration.

ASSISTANCE TO DRIVERS ABROAD

Many road transport unions already operate mutual assistance schemes but there are limits to the extent of such help, especially in the legal field.

It was agreed that a system of bilateral agreements in the different regions would offer drivers the best deal and that the Section should continue to pursue efforts to persuade employers to make the necessary changes to their existing schemes.

Delegates also endorsed a joint ITF/International Road Transport Union (IRU) recommendation on improving international traffic flows and minimising hardship to drivers caught up in frontier blockades.

This specifies the facilities that governments should provide in border areas for drivers, their vehicles and cargoes; measures that professional transport operators should take to ensure that traffic flows are not unduly impeded by action at borders; and steps that drivers themselves should take to reduce the risk of delays to international journeys.

ITF DESIGN STANDARDS

Other important topics included a recommendation that road transport affiliates discuss revised ITF draft design and construction standards for trucks with their own countries' manufacturers.

These standards, worked out by the Section over a number of years, cover important areas such as cab size and controls, ventilation and heating, noise insulation and rest facilities.

An initial outline of possible specifications for bus and coach construction was also adopted and a small Working Group will now draw up

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Uniform European truck tax plan

The European Commission has adopted a plan for a mutually agreed system of road tax discs for EC trucks using motorways.

Announced on 30 September, the objective of the tax is to enable member states to recover infrastructure costs from their road networks.

This will be done by requiring trucks over 12 tonnes to pay an agreed charge based on the actual period of time they spend on the motorways of a member state, ie the more the trucks use the motorways the more they will have to pay.

Member states will have a degree of flexibility in introducing charges during a transitional period prior to the eventual introduction of a definitive Community system.

Under the scheme countries which currently have no motor-

way tolls will be allowed to introduce a tax disc, which trucks must purchase and display.

Charges will be considerably lower than had originally been envisaged, with a voluntary charging structure based on weight and the number of axles.

The minimum rate of tax (of ECU 929 a year for a 40 tonne truck with 3 + two axles) has been substantially reduced to take account of objections to the earlier higher rates. Countries on the periphery of Europe, such as Portugal and Greece, whose trucks would otherwise be unfairly penalised, have been granted a 50 per cent reduction on the minimum until 31 December 1996.

EC member states have been told that the introduction of charges must not interfere with freedom of movement or discriminate between hauliers from different countries.

States will not be allowed to carry out border checks and the Commission is insisting that whatever schemes are introduced in the different countries must not involve too much red tape.

The proposals, an amended form of a proposal for a Directive, were discussed by Community Transport Ministers at their meeting in October and will come up for further examination at the Ministers' next meeting in December when it is hoped that a broad measure of agreement can be reached. However, ministers said that there were still considerable obstacles to be overcome.

The Commission is anxious that there should be a prompt decision on the matter which is linked to freedom to engage in Community road cabotage, a vital aspect of the completion of the single market.

...solidarity expressed with Japanese affiliates' campaign for shorter road transport work week

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standards on impact resistance and collision protection and design of the driver's compartment.

With the growth in night work, more researchers are turning their attention to the link between night driving and traffic accidents.

Delegates were informed about a Swedish research project and a number of measures aimed at reducing the accident risk were discussed, notably restrictions on driving between 04h00 and 06h00 when alertness is at its lowest.

The conference also examined future cooperation with the Interna-

tional Road Transport Union (IRU) and levels of unionisation and collective bargaining coverage in express package delivery companies, as well as endorsing a Section Committee decision on the setting up of a European Road Transport Workers' Committee.

JAPANESE UNION DEMANDS BACKED

Two resolutions submitted by the Japanese unions were adopted, one urging the expansion of bus transport and the other supporting Japanese road transport affiliates in their campaign for shorter working hours, the application of the 40-hour week to the road transport sector and Japanese

ratification of ILO Convention No. 153.

A third resolution submitted by unions belonging to the Nordic Transport Workers' Federation was withdrawn on the understanding that the ITF Secretariat would initiate comparative studies of the costs of road transport operations in Europe.

In closing the conference Section Chairman Ricardo Pérez pointed out that this would be the last Section Conference the General Secretary would be attending before he retired and wished him all the best for the future. He also thanked the Japanese hosts for their excellent arrangements for the Conference.

European rail workers' day of action

A successful European Day of Action in defence of the railways and rail jobs took place on October 27.

In the first event of its kind, rail workers' unions in the twelve nations of the European Community staged a series of stoppages and organised a range of events drawing attention to the social consequences of measures for the liberalisation of the railways announced last year.

The action took different forms from country to country. In Spain, for example, 55,000 rail workers (90 per cent of the workforce) stopped work for an hour. Many French rail workers also walked off their jobs for a whole day. In other countries, where rail workers are not allowed to strike or where strike action was felt to be inappropriate, workers staged rallies and demonstrations to get the pro-rail message across.

Extensive press coverage of the event and a series of press conferences ensured that the rail unions' arguments reached the general public.

In all, a total of 26 unions took part in the action, witnessing to the strength of feeling of rail unions across Europe.

By staging the action, rail workers were expressing their dissatisfaction with the liberalisation measures contained in EC Directive 440 of 20 June 1991, which Karel van Miert has described as a "breach of the rail monopoly".

The Directive proposes the separation of operations from the infrastructure and the freeing of access to the network, measures which the unions insist will encourage the creation of private "charter" companies, thus endangering rail safety, undermining working conditions, and weakening the financial position of the national railway companies.

Fragmentation of rail services and a loss of coherence in the network would be other consequences of the breakup of single responsibility for the infrastructure and rail operations, the unions say.

It is the unions' view that the Directive effectively legitimises privatisation and they fear that Britain could well be only the first of the European nations to take this route.

In a statement setting out the reasons for their action on the 27th, ITF rail unions reaffirmed their commitment to the public service role of the

railways and called on the European Community's political decision-makers to make proper use of the advantages of the railways as an energy efficient, environmentally friendly and safe form of transport.

Fair conditions of competition between the different transport modes should be an urgent priority, as should harmonisation of the social conditions of Europe's rail workers, the unions said. Increased investment in the railways was urgently necessary to provide a modern railway system that would win back both passengers and freight business and prove a viable and attractive alternative to air and road transport, the unions added.

This was the message that rail union leaders conveyed to EC Transport Commissioner Karel Van Miert when they met him in Luxembourg on the 27th.

The Day of Action sent a clear warning to European institutions, states and rail companies that rail workers are dissatisfied by the lack of any real agreement with rail workers' representatives on the future role of the railways in Europe at a time when far-reaching changes are taking place that will seriously affect their interests.

'Dry canal' planned for Central America

Ships arriving at the Honduran Atlantic port of Puerto Cortés — the largest container port in Central America — may soon be able to unload their cargo for trans-shipment by rail across the isthmus to the port of Acajutla on El Salvador's Pacific coast.

This prospect is being held out as a result of an agreement signed by Honduras and El Salvador to build a 320 km rail link between the two great oceans. According to press reports, construction of the new land bridge will begin in May 1993. However, completion of the rail crossing could well take some time, given the massive injection of private capital that it will entail.

But the fact that costs will be shared between two countries and any private backers they can attract could

well give the planned "dry canal" the edge over a similar single nation project.

This second project involves a proposed 315 km rail route from coast to coast across Costa Rica which has just been put out to private tender.

Total costs are estimated at US\$ 1.2 billion, with Costa Rica hoping to raise most of the finance from the private sector. Given the economic crisis in the region, this could well prove a serious stumbling block.

Certainly no previous rivals to the Panama Canal, that vital and strategic waterway linking the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans — and there have been several, including a second Panama canal and an alternative Nicaraguan waterway — have ever got off the ground.

Announcing details of the latest plan, Honduran Communications Minister Mauro Membrenos said that the project was part of efforts to bring about the economic integration of Central America.

Honduras and El Salvador, together with Guatemala, have just initialled an agreement on a "Central American Federation" inspired by the model chosen when they won their independence from Spain in 1821.

The Presidents of all three republics have announced the immediate creation of national commissions which will work out the framework of regional political union.

They are hoping that the three other Central American states — Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Panamá — will join them in the Federation.

Swiss voters back alpine rail tunnels

The most ambitious Alpine construction project this century has been given the green light by the people of Switzerland.

In a referendum on 27 September, the Swiss voted decisively (by 63.5 per cent) in favour of the so-called NEAT project. This involves the building of two new north/south rail tunnels under the Alps — through the Lötschberg and Gotthard passes — in the direction of the Italian border.

The yes vote is vitally important to Switzerland because of its position as one of Europe's key transit nations. When they are built the new tunnels will form an essential link in the Swiss rail network, enabling the 28 tonne trucks that currently transit Switzerland to be taken off the roads and their cargoes carried piggy back by rail.

Rail passenger traffic will also receive a significant boost as a result of the pro-NEAT decision. With the closer integration of Switzerland into the wider European rail network journey times between Swiss cities and major European cities will be slashed, making Swiss rail a viable and attractive alternative to air and private road transport for both business and leisure travel.

Rail employees will also share in the benefits, as new and attractive jobs are created to handle the extra passenger and freight traffic generated by the two rail links. It is estimated, for example, that freight capacity could double from 35 to 70 million tonnes a year and while no estimates of future passenger traffic volumes are available, these are likely to be considerable.

When the project nears completion major orders (probably in the range of Sfrs 1.2 billion) will be placed for new locomotives and rolling stock, giving a fillip to the railway engineering workshops.

The most significant aspect of this latest pro-rail decision is the positive impact it will have on the environment. Truck exhaust emissions that are seriously damaging the delicate Alpine ecostructure will be drastically reduced.

The high costs of the project — currently estimated at Sfrs 14.9 billion but likely to rise to Sfrs 24 billion over its twenty year life — had caused some to question the wisdom of going ahead with the NEAT initiative. Energetic publicity campaigns by supporters of the plan — foremost among them Swiss rail workers (see below) — convinced many doubters to endorse an important new Swiss transport policy initiative that complements the already highly successful "Bahn und Bus 2000".

The Swiss yes has defused the row with the European Community which has been pressing the confederation

to allow bigger trucks on its roads and has helped pave the way for Switzerland to join the new European Economic Area (EEA).

EC Transport Commissioner Karel Van Miert, as well as the International Union of Railways and the Community of European Railways, have hailed the Swiss decision as a major step towards a more environmentally friendly European transport system. Similar decisions in neighbouring Alpine nations such as Austria, which is pressing ahead with a Brenner rail tunnel to ease the pressure on its roads, augur well for the future.

Rail union's campaigning helped boost 'yes' vote

The Swiss railwaymen's union SEV staged an action day on September ninth across Switzerland in a bid to persuade their fellow citizens to back the Alpine tunnel project.

Early morning commuters were met by rail workers who pressed a pro-NEAT magazine into their hands and engaged them in discussion on the importance of the new rail links.

350,000 copies of the magazine were snapped up and trade was so brisk that many local branches had to ask for new stocks from head office.

As the day progressed over thirty separate events were staged around the country, attracting the attention of passers-by, often in a light-hearted fashion, while serving the more serious purpose of presenting the pro-NEAT case.

The SEV head office officials who spent the day touring the country to see how things were progressing returned to Bern exhausted but delighted at the degree of commitment shown by the many rail workers who took part.

As clear up operations were still going on, headquarters gave their verdict: the day had been an out and out success.

This optimistic mood was vindicated

by the yes vote when it came which was far higher than expected and a fitting reward for the union's efforts.

While welcoming the popular decision as an important step in the right direction the SEV does not see its work as over yet.

It intends to use its representation on a number of public transport committees to monitor progress of the NEAT initiative and ensure that the environmental advantages of the additional rail tunnels are exploited to the full.

Union president Charly Pasche has insisted that the escalating costs of the project must not be at the expense of the employees, thus giving the SBB due notice that its privatisation plans will meet with fierce resistance. Nor would the union allow money to be taken from other areas, such as regional transport, to finance the NEAT project.

The SEV would be demanding greater involvement in transport policy decisions in the future, he concluded. Rail workers had shown that they could shoulder their share of the responsibility and deserved to be actively involved as partners when key policy decisions were being discussed and implemented.



CIVIL AVIATION

Air Niugini wants to evict strikers' families

130 families of sacked ground crew and flight attendants face eviction from their homes by Air Niugini.

Hili Nai Igome has worked for Air Niugini for 17 years, from the day the airline was set up. "I have worked in the company from its first day. I have worked and worked and given my service for all the years the airline has flown. But the company disregards loyal service when workers try to assert their rights. They treat us like dogs," he says.

Hili Nai is president of the ITF-affiliated Flight Attendants' Association (FAA). He and other flight attendants, and over one hundred ground staff employees, members of the ITF-affiliated National Airline Employees' Association (N.A.E.A.), have not only been sacked for taking part in the current dispute with Air

Niugini (see *ITF News*, October 1992), they have received notices evicting them from their company-owned homes.

Hili Nai and his wife have three children. The eldest is their daughter Lisa, who is 11 years old. His sons Brian and Raga are 9 years and 7 years old. They have lived in their house for six years.

"An eviction will be terrifying for the children," says Hili Nai, "The company brings police with dogs. The police carry their big M16 guns, to push us out of the house. Everyone will be scared, even the adults".

Hili Nai does not know what will happen to his family. He comes from another province, but he will not go back there while the union continues its fight with the company.

"My fight is here," he says, "An eviction is inhuman, but the eviction

will not get rid of me. It will probably mean I have to sleep in the streets. My family do not want to leave me. They may have to sleep in the street too. That happens when there is such an eviction. All of the families will be facing such hardship. Most will try and cram in with relatives if they have any here."

Hili Nai says the company is clearly determined to force the unions out of existence:

"The company does this because it wants to break the union, and whatever happens the company must not be allowed to break our union."

The N.A.E.A. is still locked in a court case in the National Court, where it is fighting against the company's mass dismissals. The ITF has requested maximum support for the N.A.E.A. and FAA from ITF affiliates.

Nationair rejects official mediation proposal

Nationair management has refused latest moves by the government-appointed mediator aimed at resolving the Nationair dispute (see *ITF News*, June/July 1992).

In October, the Federal Mediator put forward a proposal that the management and the union, the ITF-affiliated Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), should get back to the negotiating table. He proposed that the temperature of the dispute be lowered, by the management dropping its lock-out and the union suspending its boycott campaign.

Union members balloted a narrow majority agreeing to the proposal as a move towards resolving the dispute. However, Nationair management refused the mediator's proposal.

Richard Nolan, president of the Airline Division of CUPE, says "We have done our bit to make positive moves for resolving this dispute. The company seems not prepared to do

anything. The boycott continues".

The Ministry of Labour has now appointed Alan Gold, an ex Supreme Court judge, who recently gained fame

for his role in resolving a recent dispute between Mohawk Indians and the Canadian authorities, as special mediator in the dispute.

ITF WORLD MEETING ON GLOBALISATION

The holding of the ITF Civil Aviation Section Conference on *The Globalisation of the Civil Aviation Industry and its Impact on Aviation Workers*, could hardly be more timely on the very eve of European liberalisation of civil aviation, with the rise of global mega-carriers, with governments wrestling over "open skies" agreements, and as airlines ruthlessly cut costs to face intensifying global competition in the industry.

Over 100 delegates from over 30 countries are expected for the conference being held in the Great Hall, in Queen Mary College (University of London) in London on November 11-13 to discuss international union strategies.



The ITF has produced an 80 page analysis on airline industry globalisation for the conference, along with the first ITF international survey of working conditions in civil aviation. Professor Paul Dempsey of the University of Denver, an expert on airline strategies in the US, will address the conference.

Swissair union rejects more concessions

The ITF-affiliated VPOD is mounting a mass campaign against job cuts and worsening conditions at Swissair. The airline has announced it will eliminate 1,000 jobs, more than five per cent of the workforce, by the end of next year, after the union rejected company demands for more concessions.

The new cuts follow a previous announcement of 400 job losses among administrative staff. The airline already has 1,300 less employees than it had two years ago.

The airline has saved around 50m francs during 1992 from union concessions on cost of living allowances and seniority pay by 10,000 ground staff. The airline's productivity for May 1992 was 18 per cent up on the previous year.

The company has now demanded further concessions for 1993. But the union has said employees have been squeezed enough and refuses to sign further concessions. As a result, the union says, the company has declared war on the VPOD.

On 1 October the union held a day



of protest against worsening conditions at Swissair. In mass rallies at Zürich and Geneva airports, workers wore T shirts and badges showing Swissair squeezing a lemon with the slogan "squeezed enough". Other shirts carried a picture of a belt with the slogan "Belts are already tight-

ened enough".

Speaking at one of the rallies, VPOD General Secretary and President of the Swiss Trade Union Confederation (SGB), Walter Renschler, emphasised the threat to the country's tradition of social partnership by one of Switzerland's largest employers:

"It is regrettable in the extreme that the Swissair board appears to be looking on helplessly as the Swissair management endangers industrial peace. Representatives of the Swiss Confederation (federal government), the cantons and cities are among the members of the board. By remaining silent, they are effectively giving official approval to the Swissair managers who are ahead of the field in deregulating working conditions, undermining the collective agreement, disregarding social partnership and a union's right to only enter an agreement freely".

The union is ready to take industrial action against lay offs. It says the redundancies will have catastrophic effects on safety and quality of service.

The VPOD also points out that under the terms of the 1992 agreement, if the union and management fail to reach an agreement for 1993, the company is bound to return all the concessions granted by the union for the first half of 1992.

Swissair catering contracted out

Swissair has contracted out its catering operations at Zürich and Geneva airports to a newly created subsidiary Gate Gourmet.

At the end of December the airline will dismiss its 2,000 catering staff. These workers will then have to sign individual contracts with Gate Gourmet.

Gate Gourmet will operate a more flexible system of pay and allowances, longer working hours and a redistribution of superannuation payments. The company's intention is to cut costs by SF15m. The VPOD says these measures could result in a ten per cent loss of earnings for staff.

Even more serious is the proposal that the collective agreement would only apply to those staff working at least 50 per cent of full time hours. The current agreement applies to all staff working more than 12 hours per week.

This means that seasonal and part time staff, mainly women, would not be covered by the agreement. Hourly rates will almost certainly fall and social protection is unlikely to be anything more than the legal minimum.

VPOD catering staff have rejected the new contracts and on 24 August staged a day of protest, demonstrating outside Swissair Catering at Zurich airport.

Many staff going in to work braved threats of disciplinary action by their managers and put on VPOD T-shirts bearing the slogan "Belts are already tightened enough".

BA takes over Dan-Air and demands wage cuts from Gatwick staff

Dan-Air, the UK's oldest independent airline, has been taken over by British Airways. The deal saves 400 jobs, but loses 1,600 full time and 400 temporary jobs. There is a further knock on effect with FLS Aerospace, the UK-based aircraft maintenance subsidiary of FLS Industries (Denmark) announcing that it will have to shed 700 jobs as a direct result of Dan-Air's closure as an independent operator.

The ITF-affiliated TGWU has accepted the deal as the only way of saving at least some Dan-Air jobs. However, the union totally opposes the new conditions which BA is trying to impose at its Gatwick base as a result of the purchase.

British Airways intends to employ the Dan-Air employees in a new operation out of Gatwick under the BA livery. The existing BA Gatwick operations will be combined into this new operation. The former Dan-Air employees will have to accept lower salaries than at Dan-Air, and 2,000

current BA employees based at Gatwick will be required to take pay cuts of up to 35 per cent. This fits into BA's wider strategy of putting short haul operation into separate lower cost subsidiary airlines.

The TGWU is currently balloting its members for industrial action over these proposals.

BA INCREASES DOMINANCE

The Dan-Air buy out calls into question the UK government's multi-airline policy.

BA bought out its major domestic competitor British Caledonian in 1989. The purchase of Dan-Air will give BA more than 70 per cent of scheduled UK traffic.

In addition, on October 25 two UK regional airlines Brymon and Birmingham European Airways merged to form Brymon European Airways. British Airways and Maersk Air of Denmark each hold a 40 per cent share in the new airline.

The purchase of Dan-Air gives BA

a number of valuable slots at Gatwick and Heathrow. The acquisition of Dan-Air's routes takes BA's share of Gatwick slots from 11 to 21 per cent.

However, it is not clear if BA will maintain the same Dan-Air routes. For example, given the current value of a slot at Heathrow and given the fact that BA has already dropped unprofitable short haul routes such as London-Dublin, it must be questionable as to how long BA will maintain Dan-Air's loss-making Heathrow-Inverness flights. Yet these flights are regarded as vital to the economic development of the Scottish Highlands.

The Dan-Air acquisition represents a continuing pattern of concentration in domestic aviation markets in Europe. In October, Dortmund-based Regionflug and Nuremberg-based NFD Luftverkehr merged to form Eurowings in Germany. Some months ago in France Bourdeaux-based Airlec and Nantes-based Air Vendée merged to form a new carrier under the name of Regional Airlines.

Sabena workers react with anger against mass redundancies announcement

The announcement by Sabena, in October, of up to 1,000 new redundancies, along with the immediate arbitrary dismissal of 250 workers, brought spontaneous strikes and worker protests at Zaventem Airport in Brussels.

The new redundancies are in addition to the 2,200 redundancies planned as part of the airline's two year restructuring plan.

The ITF-affiliated CGSP had already threatened a one day strike for October 30 when the company refused to move its position on the conditions for the redundancies.

The company is insisting on a selective early retirement scheme at the level of government-legislated mini-

mum provisions. The union wants early retirement to be open to all staff and under the superior conditions of the Sabena retirement scheme.

The union also opposes the company's demand to arbitrarily pick certain "problem" staff for compulsory redundancy, and to subcontract a number of jobs.

It was the arbitrary sacking of 250 employees on Monday 26 October that triggered spontaneous worker protests.

On October 27 flights from Brussels were disrupted after Sabena ground staff workers blocked entrances to the international airport.

Police used strong arm tactics to escort out of the Sabena building

workers who refused to sign their redundancy forms.

On Thursday, October 29, on the eve of the one day strike, the company agreed to enter talks with the union again. The strike action was suspended while the company agreed to review individually the cases of the 250 workers made redundant, to suspend any further redundancies and to freeze plans to contract out canteen work, pending negotiations with the union.

Freddy Tack, secretary of the CGSP civil aviation section, says:

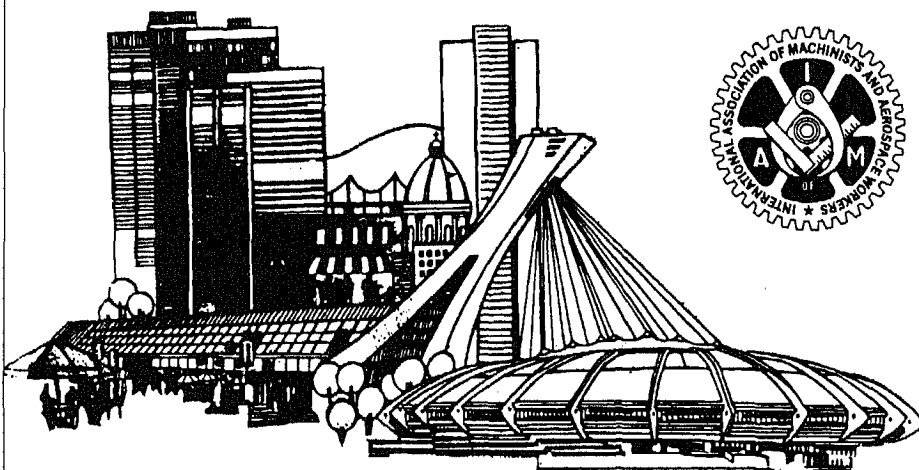
"The company, at last appears to realise that it needs to deal with the union if it is going to make changes in Sabena".

Global solidarity theme at IAM Convention

"International Solidarity—Strength-Security-Success". That was the slogan under which the 33rd Grand Lodge Convention of the ITF-affiliated International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers took place in Montréal, Canada from 28 September until 6 October.

The Convention brought together more than 1,500 delegates from locals throughout the USA and Canada under the chairmanship of IAM International President George Kourpias and the theme of international solidarity ran through the entire proceedings, right up to the Convention backdrop which featured a world globe flanked by the symbols of the IAM, the ITF and the International Metalworkers' Federation (IMF).

The ITF was represented at the Convention by Assistant General Secretary David Cockroft. In his address to the delegates, he paid special tribute to two IAM officials who play key roles in the ITF — union General Vice-President John Peterpaul who has served for many years on the ITF Executive Board, and Airline Coordinator Bill Scheri who has for seven years been chairman of the Civil Avia-



tion Section.

In his speech he concentrated attention on the dramatic changes which are taking place in the airline industry. "Everywhere unions in the industry are facing the same things — deregulation, open skies, privatisation," he said. They were different terms but for workers they meant the same thing: fewer jobs, worse conditions, weaker unions or, if possible, no unions at all. The problems had started in the USA

but had spread worldwide, he said. Unions now had no choice but to confront them internationally. "Luckily the airline industry is one of the best organised in the world and we intend to keep it that way," he added, recalling the bitter fight which the IAM had waged against union buster Frank Lorenzo, and emphasising the importance for labour unions worldwide of a Clinton victory in the forthcoming US presidential elections.

Clinton victory puts brake on BA-USAir deal

US airlines have been putting intense pressure on the US government to block the BA-USAir deal unless the UK government concedes an "open skies agreement" in current air treaty talks between the US and Britain.

If campaign speeches are anything to go by they now have the backing of the new President of the United States.

The US airlines complain that the deal gives BA access to the US market, while they are blocked out of Europe (see *ITF News*, August 1992). Bob Crandall of American Airlines has threatened to put his airline up for sale if the deal goes through.

On their side BA and USAir have threatened the loss of hundreds of US aircraft manufacturing jobs, by switching their aircraft purchases away from American Boeing to the French Air-

bus, if the deal is blocked.

The UK government is currently offering a phasing-in of open skies in three stages over a number of years. The US airlines reply that if this happens the BA-USAir deal should be held up until after the final phase has been completed.

The BA-USAir deal featured in US election campaign statements by both Clinton and Perot, both of whom pledged themselves to block it.

The Bush administration, however, was keen to reach a quick agreement with Britain which would include approval of the BA-USAir deal. This was meant to boost President Bush's flagging election campaign by enabling him to claim credit for saving hundreds of USAir jobs.

At one point US Transportation

Secretary Andrew Card personally jetted in to London to hurry along the talks. This was the first time any US cabinet level officer had ever personally attended such talks.

But the rapid completion of such a complex agreement proved impossible. Talks, held in October, were adjourned with the major issues still not resolved in time for the US elections. Talks are set to resume on November 10.

The deadline agreed between BA-USAir for finalising the deal is December 24. This was set before it became clear that a Clinton victory was likely. This may now be revised.

It is unlikely that George Bush will give the go ahead to the BA-USAir deal, during the remainder of his "lame duck" administration.

ICAO refuses to study cabin crew licensing

While underlining the importance of high quality training in safety matters for cabin crew, the 29th Assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organization did not support the ITF's proposal for a study into the need for international cabin crew licensing provisions.

The ITF was represented at the three-week Assembly, which brings together representatives of virtually all the states in the world plus international organisations active in the aviation industry, by Assistant General Secretary David Cockroft, ITF ICAO representative Stu Johns and Cabin Crew Technical Committee Chairman Danièle Jullien.

LICENSING PROPOSAL VOTED DOWN

The ITF working paper making the proposal for licensing was introduced in the Technical Commission of the Assembly by Stu Johns. Backed up by Jullien, he stressed that passengers have a right to properly trained cabin crew and that it was not enough to leave the responsibility for training to the operators. The debate on the question lasted for more than an hour. Governments which spoke in favour were those of France, Chile, Iran and Turkey. Strong opposition was however encountered from the representatives of Kenya, Canada, Australia, Germany and the United Kingdom. No other country, even those which currently have licensing provisions, intervened in the discussion. The conclusion of the Commission, which was later endorsed by the Assembly in its plenary session, was that although ICAO should pay close attention to cabin crew training standards, there was no majority support for a study along the lines proposed by the ITF.

REVIEW OF AVIATION INDUSTRY

Cockroft was the last of more than 150 speakers to address the Assembly's plenary session. He criticised the over-optimistic view which many industry commentators seemed to have of the benefits of deregulation, privatisation and liberalisation and



drew attention to the fact that over 50,000 airline workers had lost their jobs in North America in 1991 with another 20,000 going in Europe. Increasing competition is leading airlines into a cost cutting spiral which was having serious effects on aviation safety, he said, adding that: "People want to fly cheaply it is true; but they also want to fly safely to the destination of their choice and at the time of their choice. These things are not always compatible and it is dishonest to claim otherwise."

Pointing out that you cannot have fair global competition unless there is also an effective and functioning global regulatory framework, he informed delegates of the ITF's long experience of the exploitative practices common in the flag of convenience shipping industry, and expressed the hope that governments would prevent aviation from going down the same path. ICAO would be even more important in the future than it had been in its almost 50 years of existence, he concluded, stressing that as the industry becomes more global, governments must retain a central role in the regulation of the air transport industry.

NO SMOKING FROM 1996

During his speech Cockroft also referred to the decision taken by the ITF Civil Aviation Section to campaign for a ban on smoking on all commercial flights. Here, at least, more progress was made when the Assembly agreed to a resolution calling on all member states to take measures to restrict smoking progressively on all international flights with the objective of implementing complete smoking bans by 1 July 1996.

Other ITF successes during the Assembly included agreement to extend the Organization's work programme on aviation medicine to include all aircraft crew members and not only flight deck personnel, and recognition of the fact that the existing ICAO Cabin Crew training manual needs to be brought up to date. Despite these, however, the Assembly's refusal even to carry out a study into the need for cabin crew licences represents an important setback for the long standing ITF campaign to secure proper recognition for cabin crews' safety role. Attention in the immediate future will need to concentrate on giving real teeth to the cabin crew training provisions in Annex 6 (operational rules) to the Chicago Convention.

EUROPEAN AIRLINE JOB LOSSES

Aer Lingus and Air France have joined Sabena and Swissair in announcing large scale redundancies.

Aer Lingus has threatened a possible 1,000 redundancies resulting from cost cutting measures. Prime Minister Albert Reynolds has also made comments on Irish radio suggesting a possible privatisation of the airline. Bill Attley, joint president of ITF-affiliated SIPTU, called the remarks "totally unacceptable and unrealistic". Attley points out: "The small state investment in the company has paid handsome dividends not only in jobs, but also in promoting Ireland abroad, in underpinning foreign investments in Ireland and in the development of the tourist industry". The airline is also looking at merger deals with other airlines.

Air France has announced 1,500 fresh job cuts on top of 1,000 jobs lost last year and the 2,500 already planned to go this year and in 1993. Among cabin crew the airline wants to cut 300 jobs within two years, and review all existing union agreements in order to reduce rest periods and crew complements. It wants to increase the number of employees on temporary contracts, and introduce two tier wages. Unions have rejected the proposals outright and are considering what action to take.

Finnair is implementing cost cutting measures and shedding 500 jobs through voluntary redundancy.

Aviation workers' jobs are being openly bargained in the dealings between airlines and government regulators. British Airways and USAir have threatened jobs at Boeing if the US government blocks its merger deal (see page 14) and BA threatened to drop its purchase of Dan-Air causing more job losses if the UK government referred the deal to its Monopolies and Mergers Commission. However, four rival UK airlines, Virgin, British Midland, Britannia and Air UK are making a complaint about the deal to the European Commission's competition authorities.

MERGERS AND BIDS

Lufthansa is holding talks to buy up to 38 per cent of Luxair as part of its expansion plans.

Lufthansa has withdrawn from bidding for Continental Airlines, but says it is determined to continue its search for a North American partner to match BA's deal with USAir. SAS has also declared it is not interested. An employee share ownership scheme which would give employees 52 per cent of the company has also dropped out. Separate bids involving Air Canada and Aeromexico are still in place.

Iberia has seeking to extend its Latin American empire yet further with a bid for up to 51 per cent of Pluna, which is currently being privatised by the Uruguayan government.

Canadian Airlines (CAI) is back in talks with American Airlines after merger talks between CAI and Air Canada appear to have stalled. Employees in CAI are pushing for an employee investment plan linked to a deal with American Airlines.

Qantas has completed its take-over of Australian Airlines. The airline has now conceded that more than 600 jobs may be lost as a result of the merger. The airline has announced a 209 per cent increase in net profit for the year to the end of June 1992. Singapore Airlines has joined BA as a leading bidder in the Qantas privatisation.

MEXICO

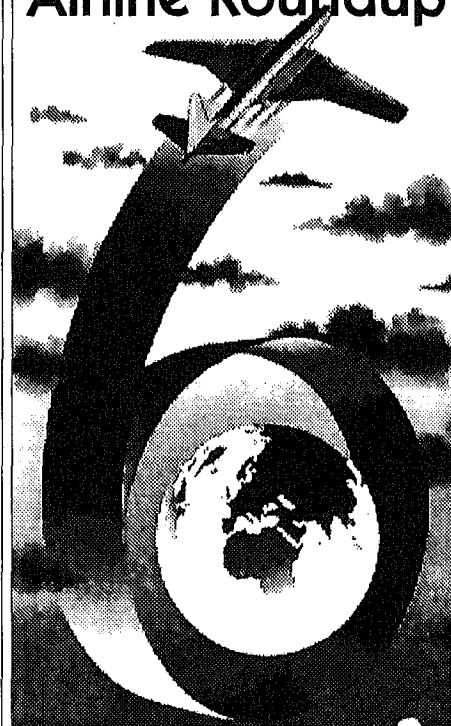
The Mexican airline Mexicana has announced it will shed 4,000 jobs, a third of its workforce, by the end of 1992. Mexicana recently signed a co-operation deal with KLM.

Aeromexico is cutting 1,000 staff to cut labour costs by 12 per cent.

FARES WAR

A new transatlantic fares war is about to take off. Continental Airlines has announced winter fares cuts on transatlantic routes. American Airlines responded with its own fare cuts. A domestic fares war in the US has already produced dramatic third quarter losses at Delta Airlines, USAir, UAL and Northwest. American has announced job cuts of between 500 and 1,000 mainly administrative jobs

Airline Roundup



in its Texas headquarters. Delta has announced it will lay off 103 pilots, the first time it has laid off any full time employees since 1957.

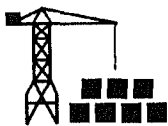
EASTERN PAY OUT

Former Eastern Airlines employees are to share out \$52 million in redundancy payments under a bankruptcy court order. The average amount is about \$4,300 per employee. In most cases this will equal 70 per cent of two weeks' salary plus 70 per cent of a severance package based on years of service.

CROSS BORDER EMPLOYMENT

Singapore Airlines (SIA) is transferring its accountancy and computer departments to India to benefit from cheap labour. The move follows Swissair's shifting of its accounts department to Bombay earlier this year. SIA has been studying the Swissair experience. SIA has also separated its cargo operations into a subsidiary company. SIA also intends to recruit cabin crew from Malaysia and Indonesia.

British Airways cabin crew in the ITF-affiliated TGWU claim that they have documented evidence that certain British Airways officials are instructing overseas based cabin crew to contravene UK Civil Aviation Authority flight time limitations.



Asia/Pacific union rights under attack

Attacks on dockworkers' employment security and trade union rights are spreading throughout Asia and the Pacific Rim.

That was one clear conclusion of a seminar of ITF dockers' unions from the region which took place in Yokohama, Japan from 5-7 October. The meeting, which was chaired by Tas Bull, WWF Australia and Vice-Chairman of the ITF Dockers' Section, brought together port workers' unions from Australia, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vanuatu and the USA. The three days of discussion focused on the rapid structural change taking place in the ports industry and the need to forge closer international solidarity, particularly between unions in the Pacific Rim countries which deal with virtually the same shipping companies. In many developing countries, governments were transferring port ownership from the public sector to private companies with drastic consequences for employment and working conditions. After hearing a report from the ITF Secretariat on the experiences of European unions and their decision to adopt the ITF European Port Workers' Charter, the delegates adopted their own "Yokohama Declaration" on port workers' rights. The declaration supports the ITF Dockers' Section's worldwide campaign for the application of ILO Convention 137 and in particular the principle that each port should establish a register of dockworkers and that all dock work should be reserved for registered dockworkers. It also demands the establishment of common minimum standards of wages, hours and conditions of work in the region in order to prevent the further escalation of cut-throat competition between ports. It calls on unions to oppose the sale or transfer of government ports to the private sector except under strict

conditions which guarantee the rights of the workers concerned.

The meeting also approved an ITF policy statement on the training of port workers which emphasised the need for joint union-management control of training programmes, and made suggestions for future ITF work in the field of port workers' health and safety.

The meeting was followed by a special meeting of Pacific Rim unions (from Japan, Australia and the USA) which adopted a statement pledging common action in defence of jobs and working conditions and undertook to begin co-ordinated bargaining with the major shipping companies oper-

Private capital and 'free competition' plan for Argentinian ports

The Argentinian national ports authority (AGP) has announced that it has decided to permit private investment in the port of Buenos Aires "within a framework of free competition".

This will be followed by similar changes at other state-owned ports in Argentina.

Either 20 or 25-year concessions will be granted to either national or foreign bidders for Buenos Aires' six terminals, which will have to guarantee a minimum tonnage turnover.

Under a decree passed in May, the port authority is soon to become defunct (see *ITF News*, June/July 1992). A new port board is to be created in its place to include representatives of port users.

Cuts, which have already reduced the port labour force from 3,200 to 1,200, are to be implemented to shed a further 200 workers, and the port will be divided into three independent administrative areas.

ITF-affiliated portworkers' union SEAM (Sindicato de Empleados Apuntadores Marítimos), whose representatives attended an ITF Latin

ating across the Pacific. The Pacific Rim meeting was hosted by the National Council of Dockworkers' Unions of Japan (Zenkoku-kowan) whose officers also attended the ITF Seminar as observers.

While in Japan Tas Bull, together with the Presidents of the two US dockers' unions David Arian (ILWU) and John Bowers (ILA) and ITF Assistant General Secretary David Cockcroft attended and addressed the Conference of Zenkoku-kowan, a union which has long had close fraternal relations with the ITF and which, it is hoped, will soon decide to become an affiliate.

American Dockers' Meeting in September (see *ITF News*, October 1992), has been protesting to the government over Decree 817/92, deregulating the maritime sector, since its issue in May.

"Soon after Decree 817/92 came into effect, and because it left a legislative vacuum in the regulation of port labour relations, the employers' sector began to unilaterally fix the conditions and procedures, contracting — in many cases — people who are not trained to do this work," said SEAM's Juan Carlos Avalos in a recent letter to the ITF.

SEAM are now fighting a government attempt to overturn a court judgment in the union's favour, which found the sections of the decree cancelling collective agreements to be unconstitutional.

"It is true that we are in a situation that is difficult and crucial for port employment, but we know that with perseverance and using our intelligence we will succeed in overcoming the obstacles and achieve a solution that benefits SEAM workers," said Avalos.

Italian unions strike against ports decree

Following the introduction of a decree abolishing the exclusive right of port labour companies to cargo handling operations in Italy (see *ITF News*, October 1992), ITF-affiliated port workers' unions called a four-day ports industry general strike on October 15th.

The action brought Italy's 144 ports to a standstill over the next few days. Genoa, Naples, Venice and Palermo were paralysed and operations were hampered in other ports.

Unions are concerned that the implementation of the new legislation by decree — circumventing parliament — is undemocratic.

Genoa's port labour cooperative, Compagnia Unica (CU), whose employees are members of the ITF-affiliated FILT-CGIL, will be particularly seriously affected by the decree, which entered into effect on the 15th.

Although the CU reached agree-

ments to provide all or part of the labour for private companies which have been permitted to operate certain terminals in the port since the summer, it now has six months to turn itself into a private company which must then bid for cargo-handling work alongside others.

A dispute over outstanding payments owed to the CU by the port authority has aggravated the situation in Genoa, and led to a visit to the port on October 18th by transport minister Giancarlo Tesini, who offered to arbitrate an agreement.

Dockers in Genoa had been taking industrial action for more than two months, working only one shift of four in the port.

As a back-to-work deadline set by the port authority for 14h00 on October 28th expired, quick settlement of the dispute over the outstanding payments looked unlikely. A further dead-

line was set for 08h00 on November third.

If the CU workers did not return to work by that time, port president Magnani said, they would all be replaced and effectively sacked.

As yet the Genoa port authority has not tried to exercise its newly-acquired right to use non-CU workers in the Genoa terminals.

Around 1,200 port authority employees in Genoa also started an intermittent strike on October 20th over planned port reform that could affect their job security.

Companies using Genoa say their businesses have been badly affected by the strikes. Port users have held protest marches and demonstrations.

ITF Assistant General Secretary David Cockroft, together with FILT-CGIL national port industry secretary Gianni Moscherini, met with Magnani on 29th October to discuss the current dispute in Genoa and its relationship to the wider changes taking place in the ports industry in Europe and other regions.

Turkish port privatisations

The Turkish government has announced that the Mediterranean ports of Mersin and Iskenderun are to be leased to the private sector.

Transport minister Yasar Topcu claimed the private sector would ensure the ports worked more efficiently. Plans to restructure Iskenderun and expand Mersin would be carried out with private investment, he said.

Turkish dockers' affiliate Liman-Is, is concerned about the recent developments.

"We know for sure that what they have in mind is to give out stevedoring and supporting work to private companies," said Hasan Biber, Liman-Is President. Liman-Is has announced its intention to take responsibility for the supply and coordination of port labour.

Turkey's first privately-owned container port, Gemport, near Gemlik on the Sea of Marmara, 224 km from Istanbul, opened in August.

Nearly 2,000 Liman-Is members in Mersin port stopped work over two days in October to protest about a decision by management to operate

in the port with its own workers.

Workers paralysed operations from October 11th after the port management rented a tugboat from a pipeline company and tried to operate it on two occasions with 12 workers who were not members of the union.

By doing so the port authority was violating the terms of Liman-Is's collective agreement which stipulates that this work is reserved for existing port workers, unless (in an exceptional case) agreement is reached between the union and port management.

Although management at first refused to discuss the issue with Liman-Is, an agreement was signed on October 14th after the dockers took action.

The new tugboat will be used in the port until March 1993, when its contract will be revised, and of the twelve workers on the boat, four will be Liman-Is members.

"The new tugboat is more powerful than the existing tugboats and we believe Mersin port needs such a tugboat," said Biber, explaining why the union agreed it was important to negotiate a quick solution to the dispute.

Portuguese ports law

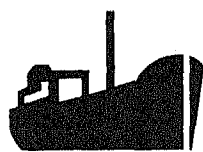
A plan to amend Portuguese ports legislation has been submitted by the government to parliament.

The proposal follows others approved in 1989 and 1990, which began a process of deregulation which has been unpopular with portworkers' unions.

The most recent amendments, approved by ministers on June 17th, do not answer the workers' concerns that social questions such as job security and employment protection have not been adequately answered, say ITF affiliate, the FNSTP.

The proposals allow port labour management to employ port workers on individual employment contracts, to permit the setting up of private stevedoring and cargo handling companies or cooperatives, and to end any restrictions on the use of port labour.

The proposals may allow seafarers and other transport workers to handle cargo in specific circumstances.



SEAFARERS

Swedish government scraps 'special section'

The Swedish coalition government has backed away from plans to introduce a Special Section on the Swedish register (see **ITF News**, April and May 1992) after the country's shipowners and unions reached an agreement at the beginning of October on a series of rationalisation measures that are expected to lead to substantial operating cost savings. Negotiations will now take place on a company by company basis on bringing down overall costs.

When the talks began, the government promised that if the two sides could come to an agreement it would complement their efforts with measures to improve the competitiveness of the Swedish fleet.

These were unveiled on November second when an interim support package estimated to be worth around Skr 450 million (US\$82 million) was announced.

Rather than heralding the start of a new long-term shipping policy as they had hoped, the unions are disappointed that the support measures — effectively an extension of a previous government accord that was originally to have been phased out on July first

1992 — are too short-term to revitalise Swedish shipping.

Instead the government is making more lasting support for the industry conditional on the effectiveness of the joint shipowner/union rationalisation exercise that has just started.

The package includes details of income tax rebates and the level of contributions towards employers' social security costs.

All seafarers on ships trading internationally will receive a full tax rebate. Assistance is also being offered with owners' social security costs. Shipowners will receive Skr 38,000 per seafarer per year for the second half of 1992, reducing to Skr 29,000 kr from the beginning of January 1993 when owners' contributions go down by 4.3 per cent.

The one element in the support package that is causing the unions the most concern is the opening up of the Swedish labour market in respect of shipping.

From the beginning of next year, owners will be allowed to employ foreign nationals on ships trading internationally. In the domestic trades, which include the ferries, there will be

access for all citizens of the European Economic Area.

According to Swedish Transport and Communications Minister, Mats Odell it will be up to the social partners to agree the pay and employment conditions of these seafarers. "I expect them to use this freedom to conclude agreements that are to the long-term benefit of Swedish shipping," he said.

But the Swedish Seafarers' Union is insisting that this cannot be taken to mean that it will permit foreign seafarers to be employed on so-called "local" agreements. "Our position is that any foreign seafarers would be employed on Swedish rates of pay and conditions," says SSU secretary Lars-Göran Holmgren.

"Unfortunately what is missing from the package are any long-term proposals. Uncertainty about the future of the industry will mean that owners will be less willing to invest. Long-term shipping policy objectives are what are needed to create lasting confidence," complains Holmgren.

These views were echoed by Swedish Ships' Officers' Association President Christer Lindvall in a comment on the package.

Cyprus parliament sets up enquiry into register

The growing chorus of criticism against the appalling standards of the Cyprus Flag of Convenience register has led to Members of Parliament setting up an enquiry.

Public unease about the register led members of the Cyprus House of Representatives to pass a motion proposed by Nicosia representative Renos Prentzas in early October. The resolution called for an examination of the situation of Cyprus navigation and authorised the Committee on Communications and Public Works to invite the government, shipowners, seafarers (including the ITF) and other interested parties to participate in an open hearing. The Committee will

then present a report to the whole house for debate.

The ITF welcomes this enquiry, and will present evidence to the Cyprus House of Representatives.

The Cypriot government's Ministry of Transport, Communications and Works has been trying to ridicule criticism of its shoddy flag. In a public statement, covered by the Greek press, the ITF is accused of "disreputable allegations" and "tasteless criticism" in the "articles appearing in an ITF Magazine, which have now received wider criticism".

The ITF is apparently "maligning" the glorious Cypriot flag.

"The Cypriot flag is indeed a flag of convenience, let's not have any illusions about that; the ITF is doing its job properly," replied Federation of Transport, Petroleum and Agricultural Workers General Secretary Homer Neocleous to the Alithia newspaper (in Cyprus):

"The problems faced by ships flying the Cypriot flag are extremely serious, especially as regards seamen's living conditions, rates of pay and safety," he said.

It remains to be seen whether the Cypriot Parliament will agree with the government or the unions — whatever they decide, however, the public enquiry is a very welcome idea.

European Commission calls for mandatory application of selected IMO Resolutions

European waters will become radically safer if new EC proposals — including the use of a hit list to single out the most dangerous ships — come into operation.

The European Commission is preparing measures that will make some International Maritime Organization (IMO) resolutions mandatory on all member states and harmonise port state control inspections on all vessels.

The measures will enforce Community-wide compliance with IMO rules on safety and pollution, and will mean that EC Member States will have to adopt and apply a selected 40 or 45 IMO resolutions

The Commission has said it will make changes to those resolutions if it sees them as lacking in detail for use in European waters.

It will draw up a list of hit vessels and specific deficiencies that European port state control inspectors should focus on.

The ship types to be listed may include tankers, bulk carriers and passenger ships, all of which would have to undergo stricter inspection. Age, cargo and crewing factors would also be taken into consideration.

It would be up to individual governments to implement the inspections, the Commission has said.

The proposals are due for completion at the end of 1992, and could be approved by ministers next year.

The move has thrown up criticism that the EC is trying to supersede the role of Member States at the IMO.

Christopher Horrocks of the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) has criticised the direct adoption of

the IMO resolutions.

IMO resolutions are not mandatory on states, and have generally been seen as "encouragement" to take action on an issue, he claimed, adding that the attitude taken by the EC is simplistic.

There are also worries that this is another separatist move away from the IMO's global sphere of influence, following the anti-pollution OPA '90 rules adopted in the United States and British implementation of ro-ro stability measures.

But the Commission is emphasising that the whole approach is based on the implementation of international standards, not the EC's own unilateral standards.

Any move to improve safety standards and upgrade and harmonise port state control is a welcome one.

22-year-old capesize bulker Daeyang Honey sinks... after passing safety inspection

As Japan's search and rescue services failed to find traces of survivors from the South Korean capesize bulker *Daeyang Honey*, which went missing in a typhoon near the Pacific island of Guam on 22nd October, Australian authorities resolved to further toughen safety regulations.

The 22-year-old bulker was en route from Yampi Sound in Australia to Japan with a 122,000 tonne cargo of iron ore and 28 seafarers on board when it went down with all crew.

The incident has caused consternation amongst shipowners, as the *Daeyang Honey* had only been allowed to trade in Australia after a thorough inspection by the authorities there, who have been operating an unofficial ban on bulkers over fifteen years old.

The ship underwent a US\$ 3 million

upgrading of its internal structures between December 1991 and February this year in an attempt to prolong the life of the ship, and which was given the go-ahead by owners **Pan Ocean Shipping** because they could not afford new tonnage.

The work done on the ship included the renewal of a large part of the framework within the cargo holds and double bottom tanks, which had deteriorated.

Other Pan Ocean vessels that were scheduled for the same treatment were eventually scrapped when the company's credit banks made funds available for a fleet replacement programme.

Maritime regulators in Australia were shocked that this happened to a vessel that had been well maintained.

An official said that the whole ques-

tion of old bulkers would have to be reexamined.

"It is obvious that these old vessels cannot cope with the stresses and strains involved in the transportation of iron ore," he continued. "Their owners should realise this and they should be sent to the scrapyard."

Criticism has also been levelled at charterers, who, it has been suggested, should make sure they only employ modern tonnage.

Wherever the industry wishes to rest the blame, it is obvious that the category of bulker disasters that recently shook the shipping world has not come to an end.

An Australian decision to insist on a stricter ban would be a step towards putting old and unsafe bulkers where they belong — in the scrapyard.

European plan for maritime recovery

The **European Maritime Industries Forum (MIF)** — a maritime industry body that unites associations in the European Community and European Free Trade Area member states and the European Commission (EC) — has published a set of radical proposals to boost the size and competitiveness of the “European-flag” fleet. The MIF has called upon the EC to alleviate crew costs through income tax exemptions for EC seafarers on EC ships and drastic reductions in social security contributions. Overall tax reductions for EC shipping are called for. The EC Council of Ministers will consider the MIF proposals by the end of December, according to Commission Vice President Martin Bangemann. Meanwhile, the French

Secretary of State for Maritime Affairs, Charles Josselin, has publicly called upon the EC to “accelerate” the establishment of a “EUROS” registry — now that shipping liberalisation has been agreed, Josselin says, the register should be set up as soon as possible. A high level working group has been established which will report to the next EC Transport Ministers’ Council.

The **Norwegian** government’s crack down on sub-

standard Flag of convenience shipping appears to have successfully deterred such ships from calling in their ports. Norwegian Maritime Directorate (NMD) assistant director Karl Lundero says the amount of sub-standard tonnage visiting the country has declined drastically. Inspections in the port

of Narvik are being scaled down because, according to Lundero, fewer ships are calling there for the first time.

The **New Zealand** government is inviting shipowners to launch union busting attacks under the guise of their harsh new laws in order to break the Trans-Tasman Shipping Accord. Under the Accord, trans-Tasman trade between New Zealand and Australia is reserved for national flag ships and crews. Attempts by the fanatically pro-deregulation New Zealand government to enlist the support of the Australian government in smashing the accord have failed. Now New Zealand Trade Minister Philip Burdon has stated that existing legislation could be used by shipowners to break the Accord. He seems upset by the fact that owners opposed to the Accord have not been able to “translate words into deeds”. If the owners want new, even tougher laws, says Burdon, his government will oblige.

The **Spanish** government have announced that the Canary Islands Second Register will be operational by the end of the year. With only one or two Spanish seafarers required by each ship, the proposal threatens up to 7,000 Spanish jobs.

Yugoslavian owned Focs

The UN embargo on shipments for rump Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) has been causing problems in Europe’s ports.

The United Nations embargo on oil, trade, as well as air routes and sporting links issued on June first has been hitting Serbian and Montenegrin ships in the ports of the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany.

The owners of the *Orjen* thought they could avoid sanctions by changing their ship’s flag — promptly adopting the Maltese Flag of convenience on June first.

But when the vessel showed up in Ghent in September, the Belgian authorities arrested the ship, halting its unloading of 51,000 tonnes of Brazilian soya meal.

Another Foc register, that of St. Vincent, was used to disguise the origins of the bulker *Skarlidja* (ex-*Lakestar*) which was held in Amsterdam in late August under suspicion of being owned by Serbian interests. It was later released.

After that fake flags were discovered in a multitude of European ports. It is reported that there are around 40 ships owned in Serbia or Montenegro sporting Malta’s colours.

On September the 18th a Dutch court decided that the *Crna Gora*, should be treated under the terms of the embargo, despite its Maltese flag. The ship was denied access to Rotterdam port.

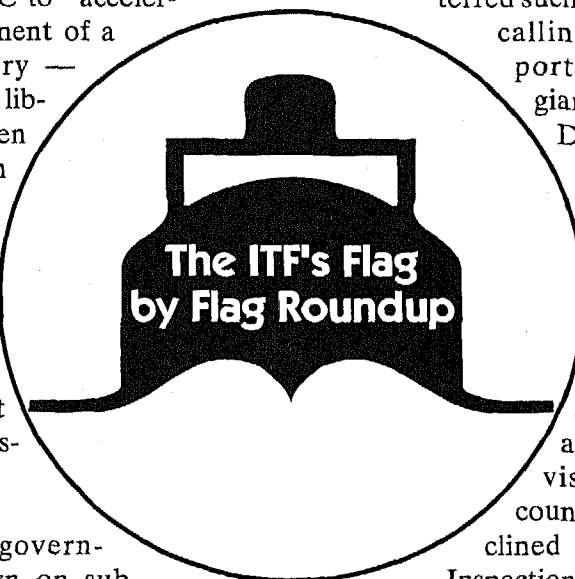
The vessel was finally controlled and owned by Jugoslovenska Oceanska Plovidba, Montenegro, the court said.

Meanwhile, a scandal broke out in German ports when it was reported that the German ports of Brake, Bremen and Hamburg had been breaking the embargo.

German customs covered their blushes by saying that it was up to Malta to ensure that the embargo was not evaded.

Port officials explained that it was not always easy to check the ownership of Maltese vessels before they put into port. It was not enough to stop unloading a ship because somebody hinted that it may come from Yugoslavia, they added.

But the UN embargo would be applied to Serbian and Montenegrin vessels flying the flag of another country, said German customs chief Karl-Heinz Welling, adding that the flag state was of “no significance”.



DANISH BOYCOTT

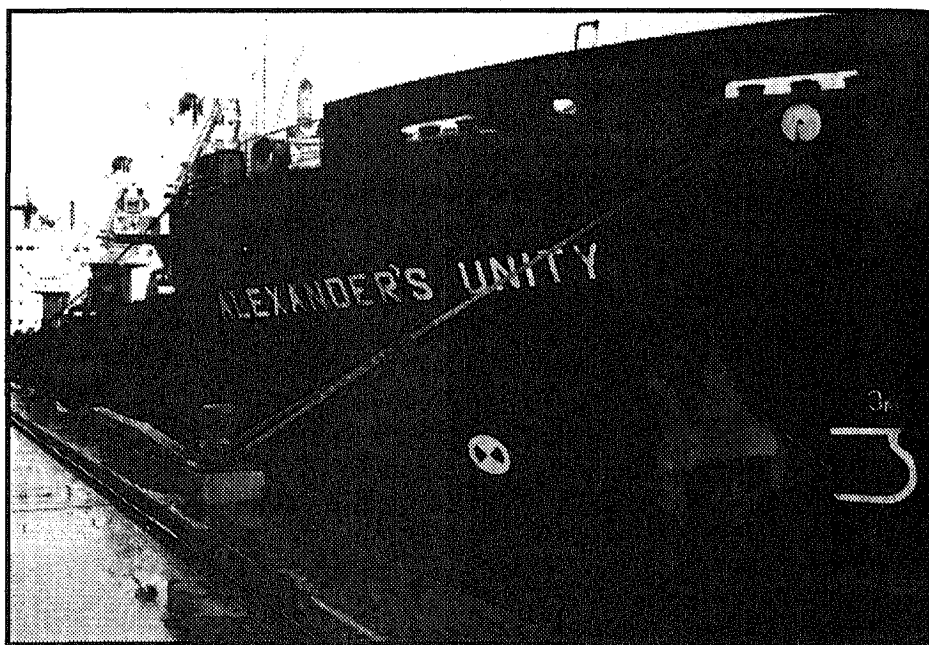
Solidarity action by Danish dock workers in Århus secured repatriation and substantial backpay for a Croatian crew last month.

The boycott action was taken by members of the ITF-affiliated Specialarbejderforbundet i Danmark (SiD) in response to an appeal from ITF Inspector John Jacobsen.

This was the first flag of convenience campaign boycott in recent Danish history. SiD dockers have been prepared to act, but they have not been needed till now. The action demonstrates the vitality of the campaign in Denmark — which, in recent years, has become a country where seafarers know they can get effective assistance.

On October sixth, Jacobsen received word that Croatian crew on the German-owned Croatian-flag* *Ana* had not been paid for seven months and were shortly to be repatriated without pay.

Jacobsen met with the crew, 12 of whom wanted backpay and repatriation (their contracts had expired). They also complained that their family allotments had never been paid.



The *Alexander's Unity* in New Orleans.

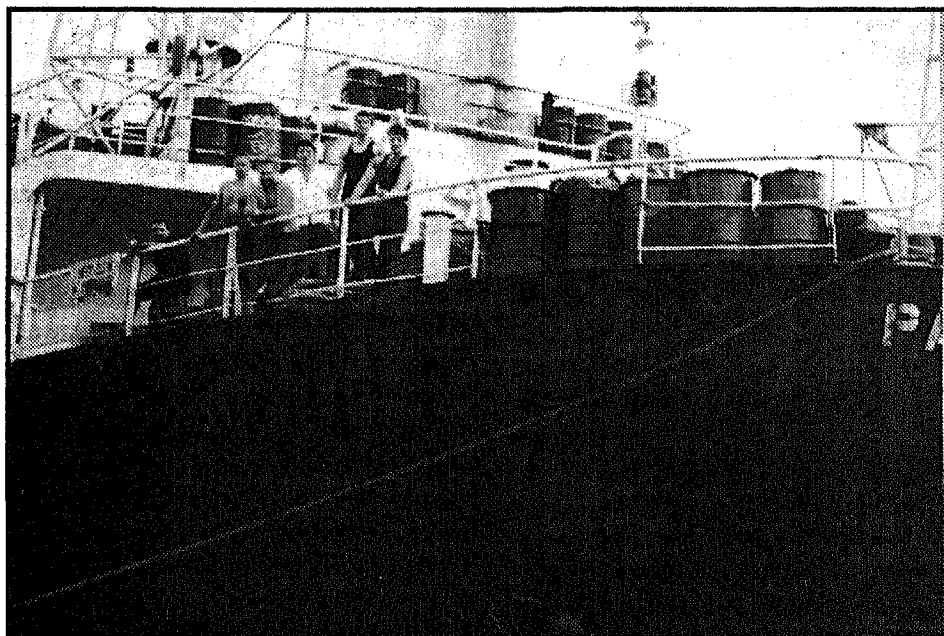
Jacobsen contacted the Master who was:

“...very upset, regarding my interference in this matter. I explained to him that the crew should receive all their money including leave pay, allotments not received

and outstanding wages or else I would take action against the vessel — which he did not believe.”

The next day (Friday October ninth), Jacobsen asked for, and received, sympathy action from the Dockers. Within five minutes of

FLAG OF CONVENIENCE CAMPAIGN NEWS



The *Pacific Dawn* in New York.

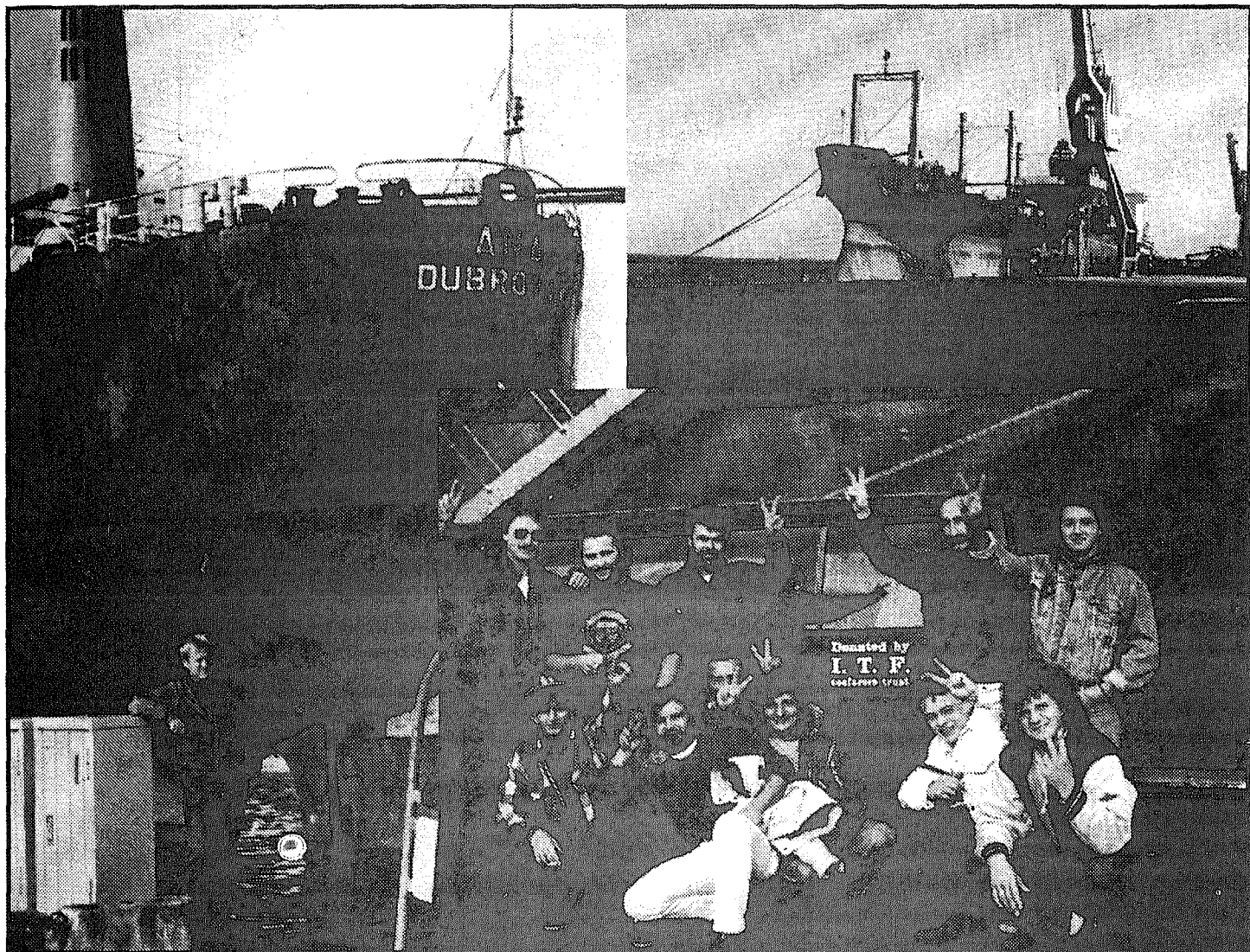
the boycott starting, the agent asked for a meeting.

It was agreed that in exchange for the ship depositing various certificates ashore (so that she couldn't run away), unloading would be resumed the following Monday.

However, the company refused to continue negotiations and so, once again, the dockers were asked to act. The unloading was stopped and the ship was boycotted for the rest of Monday and all of Tuesday and Wednesday.

Jacobsen informed the Master that unloading would not begin again until US\$70,000 was paid in cash to the 12 crew.

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The *Ana* in Århus — ITF Inspector John Jacobsen (left) and the crew celebrating their victory.

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On October 14 (the Wednesday) the agent informed Jacobsen that the company had relented and that he had received a telex transfer and was going to pay \$70,000 to the crew the next day.

It was agreed to restart the unloading the next day, with the threat of reimposing the boycott if the money didn't arrive by lunchtime.

It did, and the crewmembers were paid off and repatriated the next day.

[*It is disturbing to see the newly-established Croatian flag being used as a Flag of Convenience. ITF Policy regards any ship owned by a different national than the nationality of the register as a Flag of

Convenience — so, in this case, a Croatian flag ship was *Foc*. If this continues, the ITF will have to consider adding Croatia to its list of *Foc* ships.]

The European owned, Maltese flag *Alexander's Unity*, crewed by Bulgarians, is covered by an ITF Standard Agreement from last February, but the crew were not being paid. The vessel arrived in **New Orleans** in August. Contact was made with ITF U.S. *Foc* Campaign Co-ordinator John Sansone. In addition to being unpaid, the 31 crew were also running out of food and supplies. The vessel was arrested and after lengthy and difficult negotiations with the International Bank of Luxembourg (the

ship was owned on paper by a Swiss ship management company), the case was finally settled. Nearly US\$500,000 was paid out to the crew in September and they were all repatriated.

The Russian crew of the Bahamas flag *Pacific Dawn* suffered a ten day breakdown while in the middle of the Atlantic. Their ship arrived in **New York** in July where ITF Inspector Spiro Varras assisted the hungry men with food and water and emergency cash. The crew's wages were settled when the ship was auctioned on September 25.

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...bulker with cracked hull let out of Hamburg



The *Trave Ore* in Hamburg: ITF Inspector Ulf Christiansen aboard, and details of rust and deterioration on the ship.

Continued from page 23

German port state control authorities have often allowed ships to sail on the promise of repairs in the next port. ITF Inspector Ulf Christiansen (Hamburg) was alerted to serious deficiencies on board the Hong Kong managed, Norwegian International Register (NIS) flag *Trave Ore* in late September. Four crewmembers complained that there were cracks in the deck of the bulk carrier — clearly an important defect that is recognised these days as a something to look out for on bulkers. But German port state control ordered only a few repairs and allowed the ship to sail from Hamburg on September 19 for Lisbon dry docks. "This is just another case where the German port state

control allowed a vessel to sail although only a few repairs had been done in Hamburg. We contacted Det Norske Veritas [the classification society] and requested them to reinspect the vessel as in our opinion the vessel was not seaworthy," said

Christiansen. This didn't happen, and the vessel limped out of Hamburg on September 19 and arrived in Lisbon a week later. Unless the port state control authorities tighten up, one of these ships is going to sink en route for repairs.

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