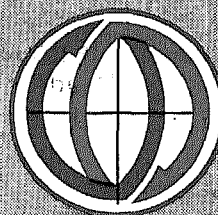


**INFORMATIONS : NOTICIAS**

**ITF NEWS**



**NACHRICHTEN : NYHETER**

# **ROMANIAN DRIVERS FIGHT FUEL PRICE HIKE**

Romania's strongest union, the ITF-affiliated Drivers' Trade Union Federation (Sindicatul Soferilor Din Romania), brought the centre of Bucharest and several other major cities to a complete halt at ten o'clock on the morning of November tenth when they staged a massive protest against October's doubling of petrol prices.

In Bucharest alone, 3,000 truck drivers took part in the one-hour symbolic strike called by the union's national council at an emergency meeting on October 30.

As the founder member of the independent trade union confederation FRATIA, the union knew that it could count on fellow FRATIA unions whose members came out in their thousands in support of the action. Workers flocked to mass demonstrations, meetings and marches which left outgoing Prime Minister Teodor Stolojan in little doubt as to what rank and file trade unionists thought of the price hike.

FRATIA member unions prominent in the action included the Danube Sailors' Federation, the teachers and emergency service workers as well as dockers in the Danube ports of Galati and Braila. Public transport workers and taxi drivers were among key transport groups taking part.

A number of other trade union groups also expressed their solidarity with the drivers, whose liveli-

hoods are in special danger from this steep and arbitrary rise in the price of fuel.

For once, employers and unions find themselves united in their opposition to moves that will push companies out of business and workers out of a job as distribution costs rise.

The truckers' protest met with widespread sympathy from the population at large as almost everyone is affected by the government's decision.

Romania's hard-pressed consumers are facing steep rises in the cost of food items and other essential purchases, putting the health and well-being of whole families at risk. Public transport could soon be beyond the means of whole sections of the community as fare hikes reflect the higher cost of fuel.

An all-out strike threatened by the drivers' union from Monday November 16 was averted when the government agreed to negotiations with FRATIA. However, the price rise has not yet been rescinded and further action may be necessary.

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**AVIATION UNIONS CHALLENGE GLOBALISATION (10-14)**

# Joint plan for European recovery presented

This month European trade unions and employers presented a joint appeal to EC Heads of State and Government over the economic situation in Europe and its consequences for unemployment.

Meeting with Commission President Jacques Delors, Vice-President Henning Christophersen and Social Affairs Commissioner Vasso Papandreou on November 24, the trade union delegation drew the Commissioners' attention to the "new co-operative strategy to promote growth and employment", worked out with employers at their July social dialogue summit.

The social partners demanded a meeting with UK Prime Minister John Major, currently at the head of the Council of Ministers.

## SOCIAL DIMENSION SUFFERING

Unions are worried that enthusiasm for the social dimension is dwindling in the current climate of fear that the recession will deepen and uncertainty over European integration and the Maastricht treaty.

The British Presidency of the Council of Ministers has not proved to be a constructive period for social policy — apart from October's compromise agreement on measures covering pregnant workers (see *ITF News*, November 1992), no single major project has been addressed. Some observers see the lack of progress as "successful sabotage by Britain".

Unions are concerned about the social policy directives that are being blocked by the Council of Ministers (see box), particularly the works' council directive.

Although the envisaged works' councils are only consultative bodies, if it is agreed, the directive could establish a basis for the development of cross-border collective bargaining.

Rumours last month that the proposal was to be dropped were energetically denied by the Commission, but progress is slow, partly due to the United Kingdom's failure to put it on the agenda of any of the Council meetings until the UK term of Presidency ends, in January.

## COMMISSION ADOPTS RAIL TICKETS DECISION

The Commission decided that the International Union of Railways (UIC) infringes competition regulations under Article 85 of the Treaty of Rome, on the grounds that its members lay down uniform conditions for granting approval to travel agencies to sell railway tickets, and the conditions under

which agencies can sell those tickets.

Under the UIC provisions, the appointment of an agency to sell tickets can only be made by the national railway company — the company can thus control the number of sales competitors it has, although a greater number of sales outlets would benefit the customer, the Commission concluded.

The UIC's members also acted together to set a single rate of commission paid to the agencies and uniform conditions for payment of the commission, which forbid the passing on of part of their commission to customers.

This prevented competition between travel agencies, the Commission said, and was particularly serious.

The railway companies have undertaken to conform with competition law in the future, and a "moderate" fine of 1 million ECU would be imposed on the UIC, it added, underlining that the move would help to promote passenger rail transport.

## MARITIME INDUSTRIES' FORUM REPORTS

Nine months after its inaugural session in Brussels, the EC Maritime Industries' Forum presented its final report on 28 and 29 November in Genoa.

The Forum, which includes representatives of trade unions and the research community, as well as government and industry spokespersons, highlighted the variety of issues to be examined — ship safety, electronic data interchange, and the issue of "fair and open" markets were amongst the topics discussed.

The Commission adopted a Communication, "*The European Maritime Industries — Further steps for strengthening their Competitiveness*", which welcomed the initiative.

Three panels on short sea shipping, on marine resources and on ship financing are to be set up under the Forum, and the private sector is to prepare a paper on the possibilities of developing and coordinating research facilities at Community level.

## Key social action programme directives

### Directives passed

- Six health and safety directives
- Written proof of employment directive (91/533/EEC) — requiring contracts of employment (*OJ L 288 18.10.91 p 32*)
- Collective redundancies (revised) directive (75/129/EEC) requiring consultations on job cuts (*OJ L 048 22 02. 75 p 29*)
- Maternity directive — a weakened version of the original proposal giving women minimum pay and time off

### Directives likely to be adopted

- Working time directive — a watered-down version of the proposal limiting the working week — but transport will be excluded
- Protection of young workers directive — a diluted version of limits on child labour

### Blocked directives

- European works' council directive — requiring companies operating in more than two EC countries to set up employee consultation committees
- Atypical workers' directive — measures providing protection for part-time workers
- Posting of workers directive — measures to prevent employers taking workers from another EC country and paying them below national rates

# Spanish agreement on strike law

Spanish unions reached an agreement with their government on the long-disputed strike law on November ninth.

The two big trade union confederations, the Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT) and Comisiones Obreras (CC.OO.), whose transport federations are both ITF affiliates, called a general strike against the double blow of reduced social security provisions and the introduction of the law on 28th May.

The proposed strike legislation threatened to severely limit Spanish workers' right to strike (see *ITF News*, April 1992).

Under the government's original proposal, minimum and essential serv-

ices to be maintained during a strike were arbitrarily fixed, and covered a wide range of industries, including transport and distribution. Individuals and unions found by labour courts to be illegally striking or failing to apply the minima were subject to heavy penalties.

The text agreed in November is a substantial change in direction, and allows for the mutual agreement of minimum services in 17 essential sectors.

Failure to agree will be handled

through government-appointed regional and national arbitration committees. Unions will be asked for recommendations on the membership of the arbitration committees.

Services to be maintained in the health and transport sectors are now to be agreed as a priority.

The long list of individual and collective penalties has disappeared, and clauses which would have led to the dismissal of strikers who did not provide minimum services have been dropped.

## Chihana court ruling this month

The Malawian Supreme Court has just finished hearing prosecution and defence submissions in the case of trade union leader Chakufwa Chihana (see *ITF News*, November 1992).

The court is being asked for its ruling on three sedition charges, which the defence has argued strongly should be quashed. Two further sedition charges are being held in abeyance and will automatically fall if the verdict is favourable.

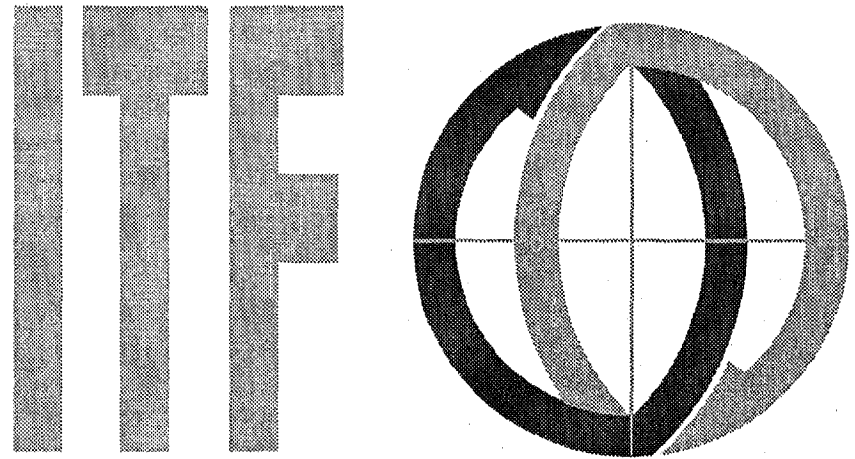
Judgment is expected in December.

There is strong evidence of widespread popular sympathy for Chihana despite the repression of freedom of expression in Malawi.

Some 8,000 pro-democracy activists gathered outside the court to signal their support when Chihana and his lawyer emerged after one day's court hearing.

They were set on by a group of rabble rousers from the youth wing of the Malawi Congress Party, who started throwing stones.

Similar violence faced another large crowd who had massed outside the court the following day and in the ensuing mêlée two demonstrators were killed.



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Season's Greetings

Meilleurs Voeux

Felices Fiestas

God Jul och Gott Nytt År

Frohe Festtage

Поздравляю

**Due to annual holidays our next issue of ITF News will be the joint January/February edition. This will appear at the end of January 1993. Best wishes for the new year to all our readers.**



# PEOPLE

**Masahiko Nakamura** assumes his duties as the new Director of the ITF's Japanese Office at the beginning of December. He succeeds **Shigeru Wada**, who will be coming to London early next year to take up the post of Secretary of the ITF's Asia/Pacific Region. Nakamura was previously the Director of the International Affairs Department of the All-Japan Seamen's Union (JSU) and has been for many years an active member of the ITF Seafarers' Section, serving on the Fair Practices Committee which oversees the conduct of the Foc campaign. The new director of the JSU International Affairs Department is **Yuji Iijima**.

**Sidsel Bauck** was unanimously re-elected as President of the Norwegian Commercial and Clerical Employees' Union (HK) at the union's 28th Ordinary Congress held in Oslo from 26 September to 1 October. As she will be retiring from the presidency in two years' time, the Congress also had to make arrangements to ensure a smooth hand-over of office. The next HK President will be **Sture Arntzen**, who will be the union's first Vice President in the meantime. When he takes over the union's top post **Karin Torp**, the new Second Vice President, will move up to First Vice President. She will be replaced in her turn by **Anne-Grete Lindström**.

**Noirín Greene** has been elected to the newly-titled post of Equality Officer of the Irish Services, Industrial, Professional and Technical Union (SIPTU).

The two organisations representing navigating and engineering officers in the Nordic countries have elected fresh leadership teams. **Markus Sinisalo** (Finland) is now the President of the Nordic Navigating Officers' Congress and with new Vice Chairman **Arne**

**Hansen** (Norway) will hold office for the next two years. **Eli Davidsen** (Faroes) heads the Nordic Engineering Officers' Federation (NMF), with **Helgi Laxdal** (Iceland) as Vice President, both being elected to a three-year term. Metal Søfart of Denmark (part of the Metal Workers' Union) has joined the NMF for the first time. **Anders Lindström**, President of the Nordic Transport Workers' Federation (NTF), was re-elected unopposed at the NTF Congress in November.

**Gerry McCullough**, aged 64, is retiring on December 31st as ITF Inspector in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Gerry, who has been an ITF Inspector since 1979, has helped to maintain Vancouver's reputation as an ITF Port, and is well known to seafarers of many nationalities who have been lucky enough to have received Gerry's practical solidarity. Gerry was born in Waterloo, Québec and began his working life at the age of 16 working as a seafarer on the Canadian Great Lakes before the Second World War. When war began, the Canadians created a massive deepsea fleet that formed the backbone of the North Atlantic shipping convoys which provided a lifeline to Britain during the war. As soon as war broke out, Gerry transferred to the deepsea fleet. During the "Battle of the Atlantic" Gerry served honourably with thousands of other seafarers of many nationalities in the treacherous and deadly trade — the success of the convoys and the heroism of the merchant seafarers who served on those ships must certainly be one of the main causes for the Allied victory in that war. Gerry was always a union activist — he joined the Canadian Seamen's Union (CSU) and remained a member till its dissolution. The ITF-affiliated CSU, like many ITF maritime unions, combined support for the war against Nazism with a militant

and effective campaign to improve the wages and working conditions of crews. This overall improvement led to a counter-attack by shipowners after the war, with the beginning of shipping transfers to the first Flags of convenience (Panama, Liberia and Honduras) and even to the United Kingdom register. It was the Canadians who suffered first — in 1945 the Canadian fleet was the third largest in the world. Following the war, most of this fleet was wound up and many vessels were transferred to the early Foc registers. Flag transfers were often effected in foreign ports, with Canadian CSU crews being discharged without repatriation and replaced with stateless Europeans (the first crews of convenience). Wages were slashed and union agreements torn up. In a tactic all too familiar to today's seafarers, the Canadian shipowners demanded wage cuts and contract concessions from the CSU for the fleet that was left. Two major worldwide CSU strikes followed (in 1946 and 1949 — in which Gerry played an active role), which were defeated by a combination of government and shipowner sponsored thuggery. Following this, the CSU in Eastern Canada was destroyed. Many CSU members have never worked at sea since. The remnants of the CSU on the West Coast became Local 400 of the ITF affiliated Canadian Brotherhood of Railway, Transport and General Workers (CBRT). Local 400, often known as "Vocal 400", has earned a proud place in the Canadian labour movement as a staunch defender of its members' rights. Gerry joined Local 400 in 1961, after a decade of working on foreign flag (mainly Norwegian) ships. Local 400, along with the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) — who organise the West Coast dockers — has also always played a very major part in the ITF Campaign against Focs.





# SEAFARERS

## Dutch dockers and German seafarers strike against Olau Lines reflagging

Dutch dockers in the port of Flushing, members of the ITF-affiliated Vervoersbond FNV, took action in solidarity with striking German seafarers on November 13th.

The FNV contacted the ITF when it heard that the ferry company Olau-Line had announced that it was leaving the German second register (GIS) to put its ships under the Luxembourg flag — under ITF policy, this would make them Flag of convenience vessels.

Officials of the company, owned by Hamburg shipowner A. Bolten, and currently managed by Olau-Line UK in Sheerness, told the German seafarers on November third that their current collective agreement, signed with the German ITF-affiliate ÖTV, would be renegotiated, and inferior contracts would be signed under Luxembourg law. The crew and their union refused to accept these conditions.

British catering crew on board the ship would also be affected by the changes. Other employees of the company include FNV members who work in Olau's Netherlands offices.

The company blamed its cost-cutting plan on the devaluation of sterling and the effects this has had on the ferries' earnings.

The two ferries, *Olau Hollandia* and *Olau Britannia*, run between Sheerness and Flushing. When the *Olau Hollandia* arrived in Flushing on the 13th, the crew held a stop-work meeting on the car deck. An ÖTV official informed the Captain that the crew were taking strike action from 19h30, and a three-person picket was mounted on the car ramp. The FNV distributed a circular to its members in the port explaining the company's plan to flag out.

Dutch portworkers, employed by a Dutch stevedoring company which provides port services to Olau, re-

fused to work in support of the crew despite intense pressure by the company to break the strike.

"The company used everything it could against us," said FNV official Kees Marges, describing how Flushing FNV representative Ad Eekels had received a letter from the employers claiming that he was on the berth without permission.

"There was a lot of sympathy for the way we handled the strike," said Marges, adding that the 2-hour delay to the *Olau Hollandia's* schedule was

not a normal occurrence for an Olau-Line vessel — and would certainly have troubled the company.

Meanwhile, the ÖTV have been contesting the flag change in the Hamburg courts.

A hearing on November fifth resulted in a ruling that the company and the unions had to reach a mutual agreement before this could be done.

Negotiations have not been fruitful, and a further court case is now expected.

### Turkish union rights restricted

The Turkish government may have made some progress towards democratising political institutions, but workers are still suffering from widespread violations of their basic rights.

That is the message the ITF-affiliated Turkish Seafarers' Union (TDS) brings to the ITF. They are appealing for ITF maritime unions to back them in campaigning for a repeal of draconian anti-strike clauses in Turkish law.

Turkish legislation prohibits strike action in a very broadly defined "public sector" that includes all state employees, and urban transport workers.

In Istanbul, nearly 5,000 members work on the city ferries. The law not only bans them from striking, but extends to any worker employed by a company that is partially covered by the "essential services" definition. Because the state shipping company which operates the ferries also owns many deep sea ships, the strike ban covers nearly half the TDS' seafarer membership.

This restriction on the right to strike disables the union in their negotiations. Because the employers know that the union has no right to strike, they are less willing to negotiate in good faith.

ITF affiliates should express their displeasure at the restriction of fundamental trade union rights for Turkish Seafarers in a protest message to the government, with copies to the TDS and the ITF:

Protest to Turkish Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel Fax:904-117-0476

Copies to the ITF and  
President Turan Uzun, TDS  
Rihtim Cad Denizciler Sokak  
Tophane Istanbul  
Turkey Fax 901 244 5221

# Lloyd Brasileiro enquiry launched

Following a wave of ship arrests, **Brazil's** interim president Itamar Franco has launched an enquiry into the future of state owned shipping line Lloyd Brasileiro. With most of its 20 ships either lying idle or under arrest in foreign ports, world confidence in the line has plummeted since the government indicated that it will not be able to cover the company's existing debts (4,292 million cruzeiros). In addition, the Banco do Brasil has announced that it will no longer cover for operating losses.

The **Cypriot** government and shipowners have launched a counterattack on the growing criticisms of their Flag of convenience. These attacks (which the ITF has always been proud to be in the forefront of) include a British Labour MP — shadow transport minister, former seafarer John Prescott — the “media” and, most significantly for Cypriots, local Socialist MP Renos Prentzas. Prentzas has already proven himself to be one of the leading domestic critics of the Foc. He has raised numerous questions in Parliament, and has protested against the lack of democratic accountability of the Foc operation. Prentzas has now succeeded in convincing Parliament to ask a Committee to hold a comprehensive, public enquiry into Cypriot maritime affairs (see **ITF News**, November 1992). The report will then be publicly debated in Parliament. The government may feel assured that they can command a voting majority, that it will “pass like a cloud, without leaving any traces” Communications Minister Renos Stravrakis has said — but the world community will be paying close attention to the passing cloud. President of the Cyprus Shipowners' Council Klaus Oldendorff tells Lloyd's List newspaper that he rejects the designation of Cyprus as a Flag of convenience. The paper reports that Oldendorff claims that Cyprus is “conducting a close dialogue with the International Federation of Transport Workers (sic) in an attempt to have Cyprus deleted from the ITF's list of flag of conven-

ience registers”. He then goes on to say that Cyprus is finally going to ratify ILO 147 — one of the ITF's “prerequisites” for list removal. It is wrong to characterise routine conversations in which ITF policies have



been explained to the Cypriot authorities and shipowners as a “close dialogue”. So long as the vast majority of Cypriot flag ships are owned by foreigners — a fact openly acknowledged by everyone — there can be no question of the ITF removing its designation. The register must also improve its disgraceful safety record (putting 147 into force would help) — the heart of any maritime strategy for Cyprus must involve closing the register to

non-Cypriots and significantly improving the conditions for crew and safety of the genuinely owned vessels.

The **Spanish** Parliament has ignored the concerted opposition of the maritime trade unions, and agreed the legislation which allows the establishment of a Spanish Second Register in the Canary Islands. The Register may be operational within the next month. In addition to providing tax breaks for Spanish shipowners, the law allows owners to virtually eliminate all Spanish nationals from crewing Second Register ships. The open ended legislation allows the government to decree the percentage of non-nationals in crews. They are talking about a fifty-fifty split, but that would be unlikely to be enforced nor to last long (look at how quickly Norwegians have disappeared from NIS ships). The Spanish government have stated that a “genuine link” will be maintained — only Spanish owners may operate under the new register. Spain has also linked the creation of the register to a doubling of its maritime safety inspectors and a commitment to tighten up their port state control.

## Maltese Focs and UN sanctions

A political storm has broken out in Malta about the reported use of the Island's Flag of convenience register by Serbian companies wishing to evade UN Sanctions.

The UN Sanctions against rump Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) came into effect on May 30. In an attempt to evade the restrictions, a number of shell companies operating Maltese and St. Vincent Focs have been set up by Serbian shipping companies (see **ITF News**, November 1992).

A recent German television program (*Monitor on Westdeutscher Rundfunk*) alleged that Malta is a “haven for money laundering” and that the country was being used as a base for evading the UN embargo. The TV programme identified one Maltese company — Milena — as a

direct conduit for arms purchases for Serbia and Montenegro.

Milena appears to be controlled by Jugoslavenska Oceanska — a rump Yugoslav shipping company whose 40 ships have now been registered in Malta.

The leader of the Maltese opposition, Labour MP Dr Alfred Sant has condemned Malta's “open skies” offshore company laws as allowing sanctions busting. He has publicly denounced Milena as “a screen” for Serbian and Montenegrin shipping companies to break the embargo. He has called for the Maltese government to carry out a full enquiry into the matter.

The Maltese government has said that they will not allow Malta to be used to break the UN embargo — and yet it appears they already have.

# ITF issues warning to Baltic ship registers

The governments of the Baltic republics of Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia must not permit their recently created shipping registries to become flags of convenience. This stern warning was delivered by the ITF Seafarers' Section Conference which met in Genoa, Italy from 27-29 October.

The ITF Secretariat was asked to contact representatives of the three countries to express concern following a number of cases of Nordic owned ships reflagging to the Estonian register in order to take advantage of the drastically lower wages available. If this continues, the Conference warned that the registries concerned would be added to the ITF's Foc blacklist.

The Conference, which was attended by representatives of 69 seafarers' unions from 38 countries, elected John Fay (Seafarers' International Union, United States) as Section Vice-Chairman by a large majority. An election became necessary as a result of the resignation of Shannon Wall (also from the USA). K Mols Sørensen of Denmark remains Section Chairman.

The conference followed a session of the ITF Maritime Safety Committee and adopted a number of key resolutions on maritime safety. Two dealt specifically with fatigue. The first called on national governments to ban trials in which the officer of the watch acts as the sole look-out during periods of darkness on ships flying their flags and visiting their waters and ports. Following a decision of the IMO on the application of its STCW (Training, Certification and Watchkeeping) Convention, such trials became possible for the first time from first December this year. The Conference reiterated the ITF's total opposition to the practice and called on all seafarer unions to take action where possible to prevent the trials taking place on ships operated by their members. A second resolution, dealing with fatigue amongst seafarers, called on the IMO to establish international standards on working hours and rest periods and urged a revision of ILO Convention 109.

The conference discussions on flagging out and unemployment focused

particular attention on the position of seafarers from Latin America. A resolution was passed asking the ITF to help its Latin American affiliates secure acceptable agreements particularly on Second Register vessels. The increasing proliferation of second registers came up again and again during the discussions. The ITF was asked to exert pressure on the Portuguese government to achieve acceptable conditions for the operation of the Madeira shipping registry, Spanish unions warned that they may have to ask the Canary Islands flag to be added to the ITF's Foc list and serious concern was expressed about the Luxembourg flag. All three countries' operations will be carefully monitored over the coming months.

The Conference adopted a strong resolution of support for ITF seafarer and docker affiliates in Argentina following a government decree which has revoked all their collective agreements. It also discussed European seafarers' representation, radio-communications matters, and cruise ships.

# UK study proves ship stress is increasing

Solid evidence that stress and fatigue for seafarers is increasing has been produced by the ITF-affiliated British officers' union NUMAST.

NUMAST have just published *Conditions for Change*, a report based on replies from over 300 serving British officers on national and foreign flag ships to a NUMAST survey on the effects of cost-cutting and crew reductions.

While seafarers' unions and the ITF have long argued that there is a direct link between crewing cuts and the health and safety of seafarers, this report provides hard evidence that can be used in the international campaign for regulation of maritime working hours.

The survey reveals that 80 per cent of officers consider levels of stress to have worsened, and 78 per cent thought fatigue had increased. Morale and company loyalty have also plummeted.

In asking respondents which measures would do most to improve life at sea, reduced working hours and shorter tours were rated "essential" or "significant" by over two thirds of the officers.

The vast majority of officers also felt that their working conditions did not reflect their status as professional seafarers.

The report recommends more research into the social and psychological impact of recent cuts in crewing

and calls for regulations to limit working hours, duty and rest periods and "careful controls over minimum crew numbers and policies designed to increase job interest and stimulation".

In general, NUMAST calls for a change in the legal and regulatory framework to create a "supportive rather than a 'blame' culture".

The ITF is strongly committed to achieving practical international rules to limit working hours — the recent Seafarers' Section Conference (see separate story) re-affirmed this goal. Research projects like this one will help to provide the ammunition necessary for arguments with governments and owners in international bodies.

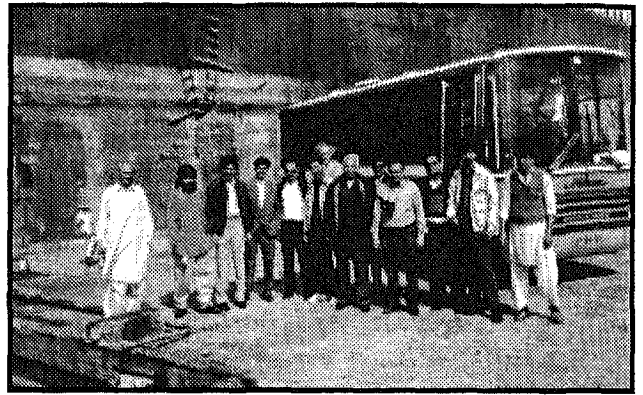
# 1992 ends with more Danish Foc boycotts

As 1992 draws to a close, the ITF campaign enters its 45-year fighting fit. The German Inspectorate celebrates ten years of solid success in helping Flag of convenience crews, and the reinvigorated Danish campaign — fresh from the first solidarity boycott in many years last month — has seen four more actions (three in Denmark and one co-ordinated in Norway) in the last month.

The victorious boycott action against the *Ana* in Århus, Denmark in October (see *ITF News*, November 1992) has now been followed by a number of actions. ITF Danish Inspector John Jacobsen, and the ITF-affiliated SiD dockers, are intensifying the campaign in their ports with dramatic results. On November ninth, in the port of **Esbjerg**, the German owned Antigua flag *Hilros* was boycotted. The German owner agreed, in consultation with ITF German Co-ordinator Hans Kreitlow, to enter the vessel in the ITF approved fleet agreement with Marlow Shipping. The vessel's charterers (DLG) also agreed to ensure that all their ships have ITF Agreements (two more were bound for Denmark at the time of the *Hilros* action). The same afternoon as the boycott, the manager rang ITF Hamburg Inspector Ulf Christiansen to complain about the ITF's methods. He then asked "politely" if the ÖTV was aware how dangerous it was to have a "foreigner" working as an ITF Inspector in Bremen. (Ali Memon, the ITF Inspector in Bremen, was born in Pakistan but has lived and worked in Germany for many years.) Within the current atmosphere of racist violence in Germany, this kind of ignorant chauvinism by a "respectable" businessman is of grave concern. The Hamburg manager was clearly not the man to do business with the ITF and another German manager was duly instructed to conclude the agreement for the *Hilros*.

Jacobsen was set to visit the Greek-owned, Maltese Flag of convenience *Anglia*, where there was an outstanding wage claim and no ITF Agree-

ment. But the vessel was diverted to **Sarpsborg, Norway**, so Jacobsen sent all the prepared documents to the Norwegian ITF Inspectorate. ITF Inspector Nils Pedersen visited the vessel on November 23, and received the solidarity of the dockers in calling a boycott on the ship. A backwages claim of US\$93,903 for



Going home at last — the caretaker crew of the Liberian flag *Eastray*, sold recently in Rotterdam who have spent a year in Holland. (Photo by ITF Inspector Gert-Jan Harmsen.)

## FLAG OF CONVENIENCE CAMPAIGN NEWS

six crewmembers was recovered and after four hours of boycott an ITF Agreement was signed for the ship. Successful actions in the campaign often involve this kind of cross border co-operation between Inspectors.

Jacobsen — the Inspector who never sleeps — caught the Antigua flag *Beers* and *Gala* in **Esbjerg** on November 27. After a quick boycott the owner agreed to sign ITF Agreements for both vessels.

"This ship is a danger to the crew, its cargo and the environment," is how ITF Inspector Ali Memon summed up the state of the Panamanian flag freighter *Legend*, which has been detained in **Bremen** for the past three weeks. Grossly overloaded, the 20-year-old Greek-owned ship finally put in to the north German port at the beginning of November after the long and perilous voyage from Venezuela. Memon was shocked by what he found when he went on board for a routine inspection. The hull was extensively corroded and water was seeping through the portholes into the cabins. Ships' logs had not been properly kept and it was suspected that the ship had been dumping oil waste at sea. Only one toilet was in working order and all the hand basins were blocked. There

were cockroaches everywhere; they regularly got into the food as it was being prepared for the crew and fell into their plates as they ate. Supplies of food and water were in any case inadequate; because of the extra cargo, the ship had not taken on enough drinking water when it left Latin America and the food was of poor quality (the rice was contaminated with sand) and there was not enough of it. The crewmembers (15 Pakistanis and one Egyptian) were visibly undernourished, Memon reported to ITF headquarters. As well as living in these atrocious conditions, crewmembers were regularly working 12 to 18 hours a day and getting a paltry US\$550 a month all in. After considerable effort, Memon was able to persuade the ship's Greek owners to pay up US\$ 23,400 in outstanding wages (based on the ILO minimum) but was unable to sign an ITF agreement for the ship. After Memon sounded the alarm, the port authorities visited the ship day after day drawing up a long list of defects. These were eventually put right and the ship left port on 21 November after taking on a cargo of flour for Croatia.

The German ITF inspectorate is ten years old on December first. In that time they have dealt with 2,250 ships (signing agreements for just under a third of these) and secured over 10 million DM in backpay for hundreds of seafarers — a proud record to set against any insults that disgruntled owners and their representatives might wish to hurl against our highly effective three-man team.



# Asia/Pacific and Latin American port state control systems agreed

In one of the most important ship safety and pollution prevention initiatives of recent years, ten Latin American countries have signed the Viña del Mar accord setting up a Port State Control regime in the region.

The accord is named after the Chilean port where maritime officials from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela meeting at the beginning of November decided to take action aimed at driving sub-standard shipping out of their waters.

Closely modelled on the 1982 Paris Memorandum of Understanding, the accord is all the more remarkable in that the framework for a comprehensive regional ship inspection system has been put in place in less than a year.

The IMO, which has been pressing other regions to follow the European lead in instituting rigorous systems of port state control, has hailed the swift signing of the Latin American accord as a "tremendous achievement".

While the Europeans aim for an inspection rate of 25 per cent of foreign-flag ships, the Latin Americans have set themselves a target of 15 per cent of foreignships within three years.

Implementation of the scheme will be phased in from January 1993, with PSC inspections limited at first to ships entering the ports of Argentina, Chile, Peru and Uruguay. The other six countries will join in as soon as all the

necessary arrangements can be made.

Although the proportion of ships undergoing inspection will be lower than in Europe, the Latin American co-signatories have agreed to concentrate their efforts on ships that, if poorly maintained, would pose a serious safety or pollution hazard.

Thus certain ship types have been earmarked for special attention — heading the list are oil tankers, chemical and gas carriers, and older bulk carriers. But PSC inspections will also take in passenger and ro-ro ships.

Buenos Aires will provide the regional Secretariat and in a welcome gesture the Dutch-based Secretariat of the Memorandum of Understanding has agreed to make their expertise available to their Argentinian colleagues.

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## ASIA/PACIFIC PORT STATE CONTROL FROM 1994

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Similar moves are underway on a co-ordinated regional ship inspection programme involving fourteen countries in the Asia/Pacific region.

Only days after the Viña del Mar conference, officials from the maritime administrations in Australia, Canada, China, Fiji, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vanuatu and Vietnam held their own three day meeting in Sydney.

But the relatively high number of countries in the region that do not yet have fully fledged maritime administrations means that plans for the introduction of an Asia/Pacific PSC regime will inevitably take a little longer.

Nonetheless, delegates were able to agree a firm target date of early 1994 for the introduction of regular inspections of ships entering ports in the region.

An interim secretariat funded by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority and two further meetings next year will pave the way for the start-up of the scheme. Japan has already agreed to run training programmes.

Development of an international communications network and database will take place with help from the Canadian Coast Guard, which already cooperates closely with the Paris Memorandum countries, and the Asia/Pacific PSC partners will be seeking access to the European ship database.

The previous experience of port states in Europe and elsewhere confirms that there is a significant lack of compliance with vital IMO safety and pollution prevention conventions and protocols.

A worldwide network of port state control is the only chance of dealing effectively with unsafe ships as long as a significant number of flag states fail to exercise the vigilance they should over ships flying their flag.

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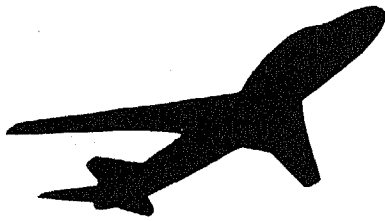
## OBITUARIES

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**Max Harvøe**, former President of the Danish Commercial and Clerical Employees' Union (HK), has died at the age of 71. Elected to the HK presidency in 1969, Harvøe led the union for ten years before moving to the Danish LO trade union confederation as the LO's Chief Treasurer.

**H P Larsen**, President of the Danish Engineering Officers' Association from 1953 to 1967, died on 20 October. During the fourteen years that he headed the union, Larsen worked tirelessly to improve the professional status of Danish engineering officers.

**Leif Skau**, President of the Norwegian Metal Workers' Union from 1970 to 1976, died recently at the age of 76. A union official for twenty seven years, Skau was an influential leader of the biggest union within the Norwegian trade union confederation LO.



## Ground staff meeting

51 delegates from 31 unions in 26 countries attended the Ground Staff Technical Committee in London on November 10.

The meeting dealt with reports on licensing of aircraft engineers, the increase in sub contracting of ground services such as catering and baggage handling, and problems in aviation security posed by sub contracting.

The major item of the agenda was a discussion on health and safety and demands for practical work by the ITF in producing a health and safety handbook for aviation workers. This resulted in a proposal to set up a health and safety working group (see opposite).

The meeting also stressed the importance of the section in terms of numbers of employees, and the key role that ground staff unions play in any form of international solidarity action.

**In preparation for the Section Conference, the publications department of the ITF produced a 90 page report, *The Globalisation of the Civil Aviation Industry and its Impact on Aviation Workers*.**

**The report uses cartoons, graphic illustrations and tables, covering such issues as airline privatisation; deregulation and open skies; computer reservation systems; mergers and alliances; cross border employment; and international sub-contracting — in fact almost everything you wanted to know about airline globalisation.**

**It will be published in the New Year incorporating the conclusions of the globalisation debate and a summary of the discussions at the Section Conference. Advanced orders for copies may be placed with the ITF publications department.**

# UNIONS MEET THE CHALLENGE — ITF Civil Aviation section

• Biggest ever Section Conference • Union International /

The 1992 Civil Aviation Section Conference marked a historic point in the development of the Section. It was the largest ever section conference with 110 delegates representing 59 unions from 34 countries.

In addition to the usual wide-ranging business agenda, a whole day was set aside for a comprehensive international union forum on the topic of *The globalisation of the civil aviation industry and its impact on aviation workers*.

Preparations for this forum included an address to the conference by Professor Paul Dempsey, a US

## We have the choice between

**Extracts from the keynote speech by David Cockroft, ITF Assistant General Secretary**

This conference is a historic meeting for many reasons. It is the largest conference of its kind we have ever held. More delegates from more unions are represented here than at any other aviation conference we have held in the past.

The reason for this is not hard to see. Hardly a day passes now without a new international merger or alliance being announced, usually accompanied by large scale job cuts, demands for wage and benefit concessions or both.

Never before has the international nature of the airline industry been brought so clearly and directly home to the unions representing the industry's workforce.

Despite the record losses recorded by most airlines last year, future world scheduled passenger traffic growth is forecast to grow by more than four per cent this year rising to over six per cent by 1993. The crisis is therefore financial and temporary, not structural and permanent. There is no need to worry about the airline

expert on globalisation and deregulation, and the publication of a 90 page report by the ITF along with the first ITF International Survey of Working Conditions in Civil Aviation.

It was a historic meeting which resulted in a major debate and decisions which will have major significance for the future of union organisation in the industry.

Of particular significance was the conference's decision that unions in different countries organising in the same airline or airline grouping should set up international airline councils, with the aim of devising common

industry as a whole going out of business, only about who will be the winners and who the losers.

Much of the industry's current precarious situation can be traced back to the effects of deregulation, effects which our unions predicted with chilling accuracy more than a decade ago.

What we are confronted with today, however, aspires to go one vital step further than deregulation and eliminate the restrictions imposed by national frontiers. The ultimate objective of many airline managers today is to achieve the removal of all barriers and to give themselves total freedom to operate in a global market, including the freedom to exploit a global labour market.

This globalisation process has already started and we have the choice between being spectators or actors in the process. If we are to act, however, it can only be on a global basis.

If we are weak and divided in our response to the attacks which are now being launched on our members virtually every day; if we play the airline game of accepting the principle of uncontrolled competition and of a downwards spiral of ever lower wages

# AGE OF AIRLINE GLOBALISATION in conference, London 1992

## Airline Councils to be set up • More effective solidarity planned

collective bargaining and organising strategies.

Unions also pledged closer co-ordination and more imaginative tactics in international support for workers in specific airlines, whose conditions come under attack from globalisation strategies.

Certain disputes will become priority targets for international action. Strong support was voiced for British workers whose wages and conditions are currently threatened by the attempt by British Airways to set up a low cost subsidiary at Gatwick as part of its

globalisation strategy (see *ITF News*, November 1992).

David Cockroft, ITF Assistant General Secretary says: "This has been the most important aviation conference ever held by the ITF. The decisions made show unions understand that a globalised industry requires a global union response. This requires more than rhetoric by unions, it requires new organisational priorities, and different ways of working which put international union co-ordination right to the fore of trade union action."

Below we report on highlights of this important event for aviation unions.

## en being spectators or actors

and working conditions and ever more job cuts in search of a marginally higher market share then we shall be signing the death warrant for trade unionism in what is one of the best organised industries in the world and one of the very few well organised industries which is still growing.

Our unions live in the real world. They know they need to make compromises.

But they also know that every friendly negotiating session, every consultation meeting with an employer to be effective must be capable of being backed up, as a last resort, by action. We must have and we must retain the ability to take effective industrial action including strike action against airlines when all other avenues fail.

As airlines' ability to avoid or weaken the effects of such action through their growing global links grows so too must our ability to forge stronger global links between unions.

This, in my view, is at the heart of the debate on globalisation of the industry.

We must have the capability to fight and to do so internationally. International Solidarity has to become much more than just a slogan or the occa-

sional act of sympathy of a strong union for a weak one. It must become part of the everyday work of trade union officials, shops stewards and works' council members.

International meetings have to become a normal part of the daily organising and bargaining timetable of our unions and not an optional extra to be fitted in if there is enough time or money to spare.

Campaigns must be planned, coordinated and executed jointly by unions organising within the same airline or the same airline group in different countries and in such a way as to minimise the exposure of unions to legal attack.

International solidarity is not and can never be a substitute for action at the national level but it can be a powerful additional tool and one which is all the more powerful for being unexpected.

Above all our job here is to send a clear message both to governments and to aviation employers that we are prepared to fight back, and fight back hard, using any weapon that works — both traditional ones and some new ones as well. Aviation trade unions will not be kicked around any longer.

## Danish union to host first health and safety group meeting

The Section Conference voted to set up a Health and Safety Working Group made up of experts put forward by affiliated unions. This will combine work on health and safety among all categories of civil aviation work. Claus Lindegaard of the Danish SiD union pointed out the need for an integrated approach:

"The aircraft is the workplace at different times for cabin crew, loaders, caterers and cleaners, so when we look at aircraft design we need to co-operate in studying how to create the safest and most comfortable working environment."

The Working Group will aim to produce an occupational health and safety handbook looking at health and safety issues of major concern to aviation workers.

Proposed issues include aircraft cabin design, cosmic radiation, aircraft noise and fumes, the handling of heavy weights by baggage handlers and cabin crew, transmeridian travel and fatigue.

Unions will be asked to nominate health and safety experts to the working group. The conference accepted the invitation by Claus Lindegaard for his union to host the first meeting which will take place in spring 1993.



# Regional reports



## **EASTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE**

"Our civil aviation unions are now facing new and previously unknown problems," B. Kracmer (Civil Aviation Trade Union, Czech and Slovak Federated Republic, CSFR) told delegates in a historic first ever presentation by an Eastern European union to a Civil Aviation Section Conference, "Privatisation, which is taking place in Czechoslovak industry, is giving rise to changes in ownership and rising levels of unemployment."

He also reported fundamental changes taking place in social legislation, including labour laws, now overlaid by new problems of sovereignty connected with the splitting of the country into two republics.

## **WESTERN EUROPE — NO SAFE HAVEN**

"European liberalisation means that Europe is no longer a safe haven for aviation," reported René Valladon (Force Ouvrière, France), "European airlines will now be far more vulnerable to global competition".

In the preparation for liberalisation airlines were seeking mergers and cutting costs, with large job losses. However, unions were not accepting things entirely passively. There had been recent strikes at Sabena and Air France and a major dispute was brewing at British Airways.

Valladon pointed out that widely varying union rights, living standards and labour costs in different European countries will not make any Europe-wide bargaining strategy easy to reach. Nevertheless European unions must co-ordinate if they are to effectively face the difficulties that lie ahead.

## **NORTH AMERICA— END OF NATIONAL CARRIERS?**

"It is increasingly difficult to discuss the US airline industry in conven-

tional national or regional terms," reported Joe Guerreri (legal counsel, IAMAW, United States).

Guerreri reported that European carriers were rushing to stake claims in US carriers. At the same time American, Delta and United are opposing the BA-USAir deal and pressuring the US government to win bilateral concessions from the United Kingdom to open up Heathrow and Gatwick airports.

"If the BA-USAir deal goes ahead it is envisioned that the two carriers will co-mingle operations to give passengers the impression they are indeed flying on the same airline under combined managements. Northwest has announced it may begin to share ticket offices and ground crews, and design a common logo with KLM, to meld the identities of the two carriers. Experts are now asking: are we witnessing the end of the national carrier?"

"In order to survive globalisation, the world's labour organisations must forge closer ties and greater solidarity than ever before."

## **ASIA-PACIFIC— NO "FLAGS OF CONVENIENCE"**

"Unions must co-ordinate through the ITF to prevent Flags of Convenience becoming part of the aviation industry," H Kato (JCAL, Japan) told the conference, reporting the increased employment by Japan Airlines of cheaper foreign cabin crew, under inferior conditions and without any union representation.

Kato reported how different countries in the region were preparing to take advantage of the fastest growing aviation market in the world.

"The Australian government has announced the second wave of deregulation creating a common aviation market in Australia and New Zealand."

Kato reported how New Zealand and Australia had already privatised or were in the process of privatising their airlines. In New Zealand this had been accompanied by an unprecedented attack on union rights with the Employment Contracts Act.

Philippine Airlines had recently privatised and the Indian government

was only being restrained from pursuing privatisation by militant union resistance.

In cheap labour countries such as India and Bangladesh airlines were trying to get even cheaper labour through subcontracting and with government offensives against legal labour protections.

## **LATIN AMERICA— "NEW CONQUISTADORS"**

"Argentinian aviation has been systematically plundered since privatisation," reported Alicia Castro (AAA, Argentina). The carrier was now in a state of disguised bankruptcy.

Castro pointed out that "Iberia, like a modern day conquistador, has effective control of the national carrier Aerolíneas Argentinas and the domestic carrier Austral, which it had turned into domestic feeders for Iberia operations. Iberia is gaining regional dominance in Latin America through its buy outs of other airlines such as Viasa (Venezuela) and Ladeco (Chile)".

In Brazil the government operates deregulation or "flexibilisation" of air transport. This brought privatisation along with damaging fares wars.

"Air transportation was ransacked with the privatisation of Vasp," according to Jim Pereira (ACVAR, Brazil), "Nowadays Vasp looks like a company close to breakdown, sacrificing some aircraft in order to keep others in the air, laying off many workers, and with passengers facing frequent delays and cancelled flights".

## **AFRICA— AIRLINES FACE EXTINCTION**

"Many airline in Africa are heading for extinction because of lack of equipment. They simply cannot afford to re-equip with the latest generation of cost-saving and fuel-efficient aircraft. It is slowly becoming clearer that many governments are considering deregulating and privatising airlines," Ken Chipato, (NAWU, Zimbabwe) told the conference,

"When this happens many airlines will be in difficulties. The mega-carriers will take the largest share of the cake, while workers in the state-owned airlines will find themselves out of a job".



# Prof. Dempsey — union response is of “immense importance”

“Since deregulation the US airline industry has lost all of the money it made since the Wright brothers inaugural flight at Kitty Hawk in 1903. In 1991 fully thirty per cent of the nation’s fleet capacity was in bankruptcy or close to it. After more than 150 bankruptcies and 50 mergers the US now flies the oldest most repainted fleet in the developed world.”

This was how guest speaker Paul Stephen Dempsey, Professor of Law and Director of the Transportation Law Programme at the University of Denver, summed up the experience of 14 years of US deregulation. Professor Dempsey formerly served with the US Civil Aeronautics Board and the Interstate Commerce Commission. He is author of several books on the airline industry, including his latest, *Airline Deregulation and Laissez Faire Mythology* (Quorum Books,

1992).

Professor Dempsey described how three airlines: American, Delta and Northwest now control about two thirds of the US market. This unprecedented level of concentration is reinforced by the dominance of a few airlines of key airport hubs. Professor Dempsey is one of the only economists to have analysed real airline fare trends. He described how, despite the claims of deregulation supporters that consumers had benefited from cheaper fares, average real fuel-adjusted ticket prices are actually higher than they would have been had the pre-deregulation trend continued.

Dempsey warned that the concentration of the industry into a few large mega-carriers was not resulting in industry stability as airline competition was now widening into global competition.

Dempsey claimed the solution lay somewhere between the US regulatory regime established in 1938 and the contemporary environment of laissez-faire market Darwinism.

He observed that the only organised constituency capable of challenging uncontrolled market forces appeared to be trade unions. “The consumer is confused and consumer groups are not operating on a global scale. It is of immense importance that such a global debate as this is taking place between trade unions, and that you are co-ordinating a global response.”

Copies of the paper: *Globalisation and Cartelisation in Aviation*, produced by Professor Dempsey for the ITF Civil Aviation Section Conference, are available on request from the ITF Secretariat.

## ***Former Soviet wet leases nearest thing yet to “flags of convenience”***

Cheap aircraft and crews from parts of the former Soviet Union are up for hire to any airline that wants a temporary addition to their operations at very low cost.

Japanese unions have previously reported that 500 former Soviet civil aviation pilots and large numbers of cabin crew are currently on offer to Japan Airlines. But now former Soviet aircraft complete with flight deck and cabin crews and accompanying maintenance technicians are turning up in cheap wet lease deals.

Former Soviet aircraft and crews have turned up in Turkey. O. Atay (Hava-Is) told the Section Conference:

“One of our Turkish carriers, Sultan Air, is using these planes. We do

not know exactly where the planes come from. They slap on Sultan’s colours, but you can clearly see the hammer and sickle through the thin layer of paint. The flight deck and cabin crew come with the planes. They are paid at rates around one sixth or one seventh of ours.”

The planes even come with their own technicians and maintenance crew. O. Atay says:

“We have no details of the contracts for these planes and crew. Crew and aircraft are put up for hire like stateless mercenaries. Nor do we know about the history of the particular aircraft, how many hours they have flown, what kind of inspections they have had, or any previous mechanical problems. We do not know if they

meet international airworthiness and safety standards, and the government does not seem very bothered.”

A similar story was reported by Captain Feroze Aftab of the Pakistan Airline Pilots’ Association. He told the conference:

“Pakistan International Airlines are leasing aircraft and crew from Uzbek Airlines. These crew are paid a fraction of our wages. They have no union representation. We do not know what hours they fly. This practice exploits them and totally undermines the conditions of Pakistani crew.”

The Conference noted that this kind of wet leasing was the nearest yet that aviation had come to the “flag of convenience” practices of the maritime industry. The ITF will support all union campaigns to halt this practice.”

# ITF civil aviation working conditions survey

The first comprehensive international survey of working conditions in Civil Aviation was launched during the Section Conference. The survey amasses an enormous volume of information on wages and conditions for all categories of aviation work.

It is the first time that the ITF has conducted such a comprehensive survey which provides basic bargaining information covering nearly 30 major airlines.

It is hoped that many more airlines will be covered in the future as more unions join the database.

The survey shows, among other things, the encouraging fact that the industry still has trade union membership levels in the region of 75-100 per cent of the total workforce in the airlines covered.

The survey shows some wide dis-

parities in earnings. A cabin crew member working for Air Zimbabwe earns a yearly minimum of \$3,038. This compares with \$27,799 at Air France and \$26,850 at JAL. These pay rates are not adjusted to take account of different living standards, but that is something airlines looking at cross border employment of crew are not much concerned about either.

The comparison of conditions is particularly enlightening. The survey shows that a number of countries, including the USA and New Zealand, still have no legal limitations on flight and duty times for cabin crew.

There is a comparison of airline rules concerning crew flying during pregnancy, and a comprehensive comparison of maternity benefits.

A comparison of basic weekly working hours shows ground staff working

42.5 hours per week in Zimbabwe compared to 35 hours per week in Denmark.

It is hoped that the survey will provide useful bargaining comparisons for aviation workers.

Ken Chipato of the National Airways Workers' Union (Zimbabwe) told the conference: "The survey proved of immediate practical use to us. It arrived when we were in negotiations with Air Zimbabwe who were trying to tell us various conditions applied in British Airways. The survey was the ammunition we needed to challenge them with confidence. In fact, faced by the union's presentation of information taken from the survey, the company were forced to withdraw many of the things that they were saying."

## Conclusions of Civil Aviation section conference

The main conclusions agreed after the debate on airline globalisation included:

- Establishing a comprehensive and constructive policy approach to the regulatory system governing civil aviation, challenging the uncontrolled application of market forces to the industry.

- Developing specific trade union strategies to defend working conditions against the negative impact of globalisation. Such strategies should involve well co-ordinated union action on such issues as cross border employment of aircraft crew, contracting out of "non core" transborder operations to firms with inferior wages, working conditions and union rights, leasing out of low cost aircraft and crews, and the transfer of ground operations such as maintenance and data processing to countries with sub standard wages, working conditions and union rights.


- Improving international union co-

ordination, including more regular, rapid and efficient information exchange between unions in different countries; a rolling campaign of international trade union action to focus attention on the impact of airline globalisation; and more effective international solidarity actions in support of workers under attack from the globalisation plans of specific airlines.

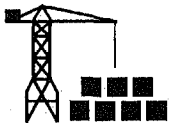
- Developing new organisational structures to meet the challenge of globalisation. Crucially, a specific call was made for the setting up of international airline company councils, involving unions in different countries, organising within particular airlines or airline groupings, meeting together to form joint union strategies and co-ordinate bargaining.

- The Section Committee was asked to meet early in 1993 in order to work out a detailed plan of action to implement the strategy agreed at the Conference. To reinforce the commitment of ITF civil aviation workers to the Conference's decisions, each union

will be asked to submit the conclusions to its relevant governing body for formal ratification.



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# DOCKERS

## ITF to intensify port workers' charter campaign

ITF Dockers' affiliates are to look at ways to intensify action on the issues of port deregulation and to strengthen the ITF's role in the industry world-wide.

ITF News has documented an ever-increasing trend to privatise the industry over the last two years. The Dock Labour Scheme in the United Kingdom, abolished in 1989, was one of the first victims of aggressive government plans to deregulate the ports; since then, port workers in Australia, France, India, Nigeria, New Zealand and Peru — to name a few — have dealt with dramatic and rapid port privatisation with varying degrees of success and, in some countries, in the face of violent action by employers or their agents.

Bill Morris, General Secretary of the British Transport and General Workers' Union, which was at the fore of the fight to save docks jobs in 1989, has written to ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis requesting that the ITF broaden the campaign for a

### Strikes continue in Genoa

The Italian port of Genoa is still paralysed despite the resolution of the Compagnia Unica (CU) dispute in November (see ITF News, November 1992).

Members of the ITF-affiliated union FILT-CGIL employed by the CU accepted a settlement offer from the port authority of nine billion lire (US\$6.7 million) on November sixth.

But 1,300 port authority employees in Genoa have been working two of three shifts a day at most, since November twelfth, in protest at planned port reform that will privatise Italy's port authorities, turning them into joint stock companies. The reform bill is currently being examined by a Senate committee.

The CU is not involved in this new dispute.

Port Workers' Charter beyond the European sphere.

"An extended role by the ITF would... raise the issues regarding the effects on dock workers to a much higher prominence," said Morris.

This request was very much in the same spirit as a resolution of the Joint Seafarers' and Dockers' Meeting held in June 1992, which advocated a campaign for all portworkers' affiliates to work actively for the ratification and application of ILO Convention 137 on the social protection of dock workers, which lays down clear measures for the regulation of port labour.

Both the Latin American Dockers' Conference in Brazil in September and the Asia-Pacific Rim meeting in Japan in October agreed resolutions on the theme, and the Secretariat plans to put the subject on the agenda for extensive discussion at the Section Conference planned for May 1993 in Hamburg.

Lewis has written to Morris supporting the idea, adding

"It will be important to consider in concrete terms what form of action by affiliated unions should take place as part of the campaign for a Port Workers' Charter".

## Legal victory for Argentinian maritime trade unions

Argentinian dockers won an historic legal victory against port reform on November 18th when an appeal court found Decree 817/92, which deregulated the maritime industries and cancelled seafarers' and dockers' existing collective agreements earlier this year, to be unconstitutional.

An earlier court case had also found in favour of the trade union that originally brought the case, the ITF-affiliated port workers' union, Sindicato de Empleados Apuntadores Marítimos (SEAM).

More than seventy trade unions in Argentina were affected by the government's action, part of President Carlos Menem's plan for wholesale privatisation of the state sector in Argentina.

Now their collective agreements will have to be reinstated.

Apart from declaring the measure unconstitutional, the appeal court found that decree 817/92 "violated free trade union rights, upheld by the conventions of the International Labour Organisation, because it breached the autonomy of both sides".

The government action was taken

on the pretence of cutting labour costs — although in no part of the maritime sector did labour costs account for more than seven per cent of total expenditure, the court said.

SEAM General Secretary Jorge Cocchia was pleased with the decision which vindicated his union's campaign against the legislation (see ITF News, November 1992).

"At last we have justice. We were not wrong to say that issuing a decree was not a legitimate or a constitutionally correct way to take us back to a situation that we had already overcome, to colonial-type legislation whose aim is to destroy the workers' gains over hard years of struggle. Now all the bonuses, holiday pay, sick pay, and other benefits must be paid. The collective agreements are robust — and should be respected by the companies," he stated.

One of the most worrying effects of the introduction of Decree 817/92, SEAM explained in a letter to the ITF, was the freedom to act with impunity that port employers felt they had been given.

# New pamphlet exposes appalling conditions in deregulated UK port

Reviewed by Jack Jones (former TGWU General Secretary and ITF Vice President)

Trade unionism in Britain has suffered considerably in recent years and not least in dockland. Since the abolition of the Dock Labour Board and the introduction of deregulation trade union representation in the ports has been severely restricted. The result has been the virtual destruction of safeguards for labour protection in the ports and management practices have reverted to the "hire and fire" attitudes of the thirties, indeed in some aspects to the Victorian era.

A forcible exposure of conditions in the Port of Hull is contained in a new booklet by Tony Topham, a highly respected University lecturer and author of many books on labour conditions, including joint authorship of the history of the TGWU. Topham puts the searchlight on a horrendous incident relating to the handling of nuclear substances in drums (or flasks) of two tons weight, and an accident with a 20 ton fork lift. Hazardous circumstances led to a nuclear alert and evacuation of the area of operation, following which a docker was instructed to transfer to the work. He refused, and was dismissed.

The publicity which emerged from the dismissal demonstrated that Health and Safety provisions are no longer enforced as they should be. Men are working in some cases 80 to 90 hours a week, and it is not unknown for men to work up to 36 hours at a stretch. Dangerous working practices and accident hazards are on the increase.

Topham writes "the dockers themselves live in fear of dismissal. The unemployment rate is so high that they cannot expect alterna-



tive work in that event". A sad commentary on the state of an industry that was once so highly organised and well regulated. The statement of Ernest Bevin to the famous Shaw Inquiry in 1920 is still valid. He said, "I am convinced that the employers have always had at the back of their minds that economic poverty producing economic fear was their best weapon for controlling labour. I do not think a civilisation built upon that is worth having..."

The case of the Hull docker provides an example of the general onslaught on port workers' conditions and security by employers and governments in Europe and, in fact, throughout the world. It most certainly underlines the need for enforcing the ITF policy contained in the "European Port Workers' Charter", and it is this whole aspect which is the purpose of Tony Topham's book. A purpose he achieves efficiently and well in a most readable fashion. He

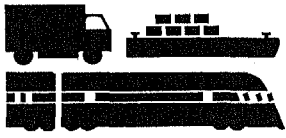
calls for the assembly of information from the ports to provide ammunition in the fight back which unions need to organise, for as he writes: "The issue is really very simple: are we to enter the 21st century with new variants of 19th century working conditions, burdened with new forms of what used to be called 'wage slavery'? Or can we summon up the will, and equip our organisations to resist all this in the name of human rights?"

Port workers and trade unionists generally should obtain copies of this booklet. It is compelling and interesting reading — a strong contribution to the campaigning leadership of the ITF in the interests of port workers.

*Summary Dismissal: A Suitable Case for Protest* by Tony Topham.

Published by the Russell Press. Price £1.95 (plus £1 postage for bulk orders) from Bertrand Russell House, Gamble Street, Nottingham NGM 4ET





# INLAND TRANSPORT

## Change dominates agenda at German rail workers' congress

Under the motto "influencing change", the ITF-affiliated German Railwaymen's Union (GdED) held its 14th Ordinary Congress in Cologne from 22 to 28 November 1992.

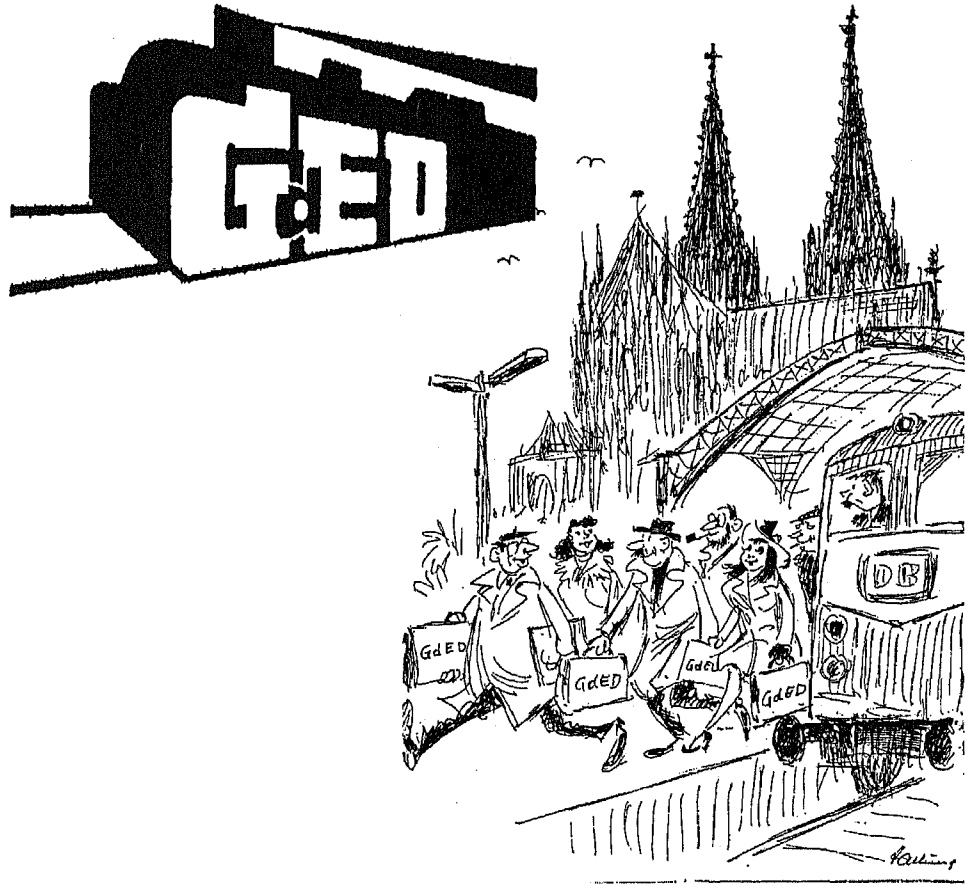
This was the first GdED Congress since the extraordinary Congress of October 1990 when the GdED formally welcomed the rail workers in eastern Germany into its ranks.

After the bringing together of the two formerly separate rail unions in the western and eastern halves of the country, the GdED today represents 475,000 rail workers (of which 172,000 come from the new Länder in the east) in a united Germany.

To ringing applause German Transport Minister Günther Krause promised Congress delegates during the opening ceremony that there would be no compulsory redundancies among rail workers as a result of the government's plans for the merger of the west German Bundesbahn and the east German Reichsbahn which is due to take effect at the beginning of 1994. The government was firmly committed to finding suitable alternative employment for any rail workers who could not be found jobs in the new rail company Deutsche Bahnen AG (German Railways Ltd), Krause assured his audience.

Krause said that he was greatly concerned at the growing financial losses of the railways and the shrinking of rail markets in both the west and the east and was convinced that only the reform path on which the government was currently embarked could halt the debt spiral.

He met with an enthusiastic response when he asked delegates to support the proposed structural changes. The strong backing of the workforce was even more vital to the success of such a fundamental reform



(it is the biggest financial reorganisation in the history of the Federal Republic) than broad public consensus, he stressed.

The reform of the railways in Germany is clearly an extremely important issue and we intend to publish an in-depth analysis of the government's plans in a forthcoming edition of ITF News.

In his introductory address to the Congress, GdED President Rudi Schäfer spoke of his fears for the future of European Community railway undertakings following the introduction of the single market in 1993.

"We are concerned that the railways could be forced into merciless competition that they would not be able to withstand," said Schäfer. The only way to ensue that all modes of transport are treated fairly is for the

politicians to insist that not just the railways are required to meet their own costs, he demanded.

Among the many foreign guests present at the opening ceremony was ITF Assistant General Secretary David Cockroft. Rail union leaders from right across Europe from Belgium to Russia as well as from North America also followed the proceedings of the Congress.

German invited guests, who addressed the opening ceremony, included President of the German Trade Union Confederation DGB Heinz-Werner Meyer, as well as SPD Vice Chairman Herta Däubler-Gmelin.

In elections, the Congress returned Rudi Schäfer (an ITF Executive Board member), who has been GdED President since 1988, unopposed to a further term of office.

# Union fights Hungarian rail restructuring

The management of the Hungarian State Railways MAV seems set on a collision course with the ITF-affiliated Hungarian Free Trade Union of Railway Workers (VDSzSz).

Plans for a drastic restructuring of the railways are being pushed through despite strong rail union objections at the effect on local communities, prospects of industrial regeneration and the job security of rail staff.

MAV intends to close 1,500 km of track, depriving 360 villages of a vital transport link. Operating supervision is also being reduced by one third to 16 hours a day in a move that is without parallel in Europe.

Transport sector jobs are being savagely cut back: 30,000 public transport workers have already been forced out of their jobs and a

further 38,000 redundancies have been announced, among them 20,000 rail workers. Even those rail workers who keep their jobs will face a cut of 30 per cent in real wages.

Responding to a call from the VDSzSz, all five Hungarian rail unions staged a two hour warning strike on November 23 in a bid to persuade the government and the rail management to heed their concerns.

The VDSzSz is also threatening an all-out strike from early December if it is unable to come to a satisfactory agreement on the rail plans.

While it is not against restructuring in principle, the VDSzSz strongly rejects moves that will endanger yet more rail jobs and lower the standard of living of its members.

It also points out that the measures will prevent the railways from assisting in the regeneration of vital industries and interfere with the freedom of mobility of many Hungarian citizens. What is needed they say is a policy which takes account of the needs of passengers and freight users, while balancing the need of the workforce for secure employment.

ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis has written to Prime Minister Jozsef Antall pledging the full support of the ITF and its affiliated rail unions for its Hungarian affiliates.

Hungary should live up to its obligations as a member of the ILO and commence immediate discussions with the trade unions with the aim of minimising the adverse consequences of the restructuring proposals, he said.

# Turkish rail workers' union congress

Strong opposition to the privatisation of state-owned enterprises was expressed by delegates attending the 4th Congress of the Turkish Railway Workers' Trade Union DEMIRYOL-IS held in Ankara from 23 to 25 October.

In two separate resolutions representatives of Turkey's rail workers denounced moves to privatise leading public companies and categorically rejected the transfer of the Turkish State Railways (TCDD) and its subsidiaries, either in whole or in part, to the private sector.

Delegates also called on the government to adopt positive transport policies promoting the advantages of the railways. Turkey's railway system, they argued, had been neglected for too long.

Respect for essential human rights and freedoms was at the core of other resolutions urging the amendment of legislation conflicting with these basic principles and

the repeal of the 1982 Constitution drafted by the military administration, which was in essence anti-democratic.

In the social and industrial spheres, the railway workers' Congress sought improved public health and education provision, a decent living wage and an equitable tax system, backed up by measures of job creation, and the universal payment of unemployment benefits.

The Congress also threw down a challenge to the coalition government that has been in power in Turkey for the past eleven months, demanding that it recognise the right to organise and bargain collectively and the universal right to strike. As well as showing respect for ILO conventions, delegates wanted the government to outlaw arbitrary dismissals and establish a legally-binding definition of the minimum wage as being take-home

pay sufficient to meet the basic necessities of a worker and his family.

Other demands were directed at employers who were asked to involve their employees in the decision-making process and to stop transferring work to non-union sub-contractors. Improved safety at work and better occupational health services were other areas of special concern.

By means of a closing declaration, delegates thanked the union for taking such a decisive lead in the workers' struggle and pledged themselves to defend and extend recent gains. They also committed themselves to the common struggle with rail workers in other countries.

Following leadership elections, the Congress returned all five members of the Executive Board, including President Enver Toçoglu and General Secretary Nurettin Girginer, to office.

# ITF inland navigation seminar for ex-USSR unions

Twelve union representatives from the inland navigation and inland port sectors in the former USSR attended a seminar in Strasbourg organised by the ITF from 17 to 19 November 1992.

Nominated by water transport unions from the now independent republics of the former USSR, the following countries were represented: Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tadjikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The unions are members of the International Confederation (formerly Independent Federation) of Water Transport Workers' Unions and between them represent some 100,000 workers in the inland navigation sector.

The seminar was held at the Palais du Rhin in Strasbourg, at the invitation of the Central Commission for Rhine Navigation.

Inland navigation companies in the republics which formerly constituted the USSR are still government-owned, although in some cases steps have already been taken to change the legal status to that of joint-stock companies with a view to eventual privatisation.

Foreign companies in the inland navigation sector have already expressed an interest in acquiring shares, establishing joint ventures and chartering ships.

The main theme of the seminar was the development of collective bargaining and of collective agreements. Fons Geeraerts, ITF Inland Navigation Section chairman, and Emil Van den Bosch from the Belgian Transport Workers' Union (BTB), Hans Baumgartner from the Swiss Transport and Commercial Workers' Union (VHTL), Albert Heintz from the French Transport and Equipment Workers' Union, FO, Frank Kloosterman of the Dutch Transport Workers' Federation FNV

and Andreas Hess of the German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (ÖTV) all described the structure of the inland navigation sector in their countries, including negotiating rights, relations between inland navigation employers and unions, the way negotiations were conducted and the form and content of their collective agreements. Paulette Hofman of the French Confederation Force Ouvrière discussed with the seminar participants the organisational structure of the trade union movement in France as well as workers' and trade union rights guaranteed by legislation. Frank Kloosterman described the regulations applying to the manning of ships navigating on the River Rhine and the trade unions' experience with the application of these regulations.

It is clear that, while manning levels are somewhat higher on ships on the waterways of Eastern Europe than they are on the Rhine, where modern tonnage is concerned there is not a great deal of difference and workers in Eastern Europe are coming under pressure to accept lower manning.

Raymond Doerflinger, Secretary General of the Central Commission for Rhine Navigation, described the work of the Commission, its responsibilities and functions. Similarly, Albert Bour, Secretary of the Administrative Centre for the Social Security Agreement for Rhine Boatmen, described the work of the Centre and discussed the negotiations taking place for the conclusion of the European Agreement concerning the Social Security of Boatmen engaged in Inland Navigation. The second international conference, which it is hoped will adopt a final text of the Agreement, is due to

take place in Strasbourg in March 1993.

Daniel Appave of the ILO's Maritime Industry Branch spoke on the ILO's standards for maritime workers in general and for inland navigation workers in particular. He also described the services which the ILO can provide to trade unions and governments seeking to establish labour standards and workers' protection legislation.

ITF Assistant General Secretary Graham Brothers, who organised the seminar, described the ITF's work for the protection of inland navigation workers and the ways in which the ITF can assist unions to develop their services for the benefit of their members. He also spoke about the ways in which the ITF represents affiliates' interests at the international level.

At the end of the seminar Alexei Didkovski, President of the Inland Navigation Workers' Union of Ukraine, who was spokesman on behalf of the seminar participants, expressed their appreciation towards the ITF and the affiliates who had contributed their valuable experiences and knowledge of the inland navigation industry and towards Albert Heintz, who had assisted in the organisation of the seminar.

Visits were made to the Autonomous Port of Strasbourg and to the French Rhine Navigation Company, CFNR. On the final evening, the seminar participants were invited by the Mayor of Strasbourg to a reception at the Town Hall.

Following the conclusion of the meeting, the delegates were put up for a night in Paris and given a tour of the city organised by ITF Executive Board member and FO Transport Federation General Secretary René Valladon.

# 100 years of railway trade unionism in Norway

Norwegian railway workers are marking the centenary of their union at anniversary celebrations being held in six major cities.

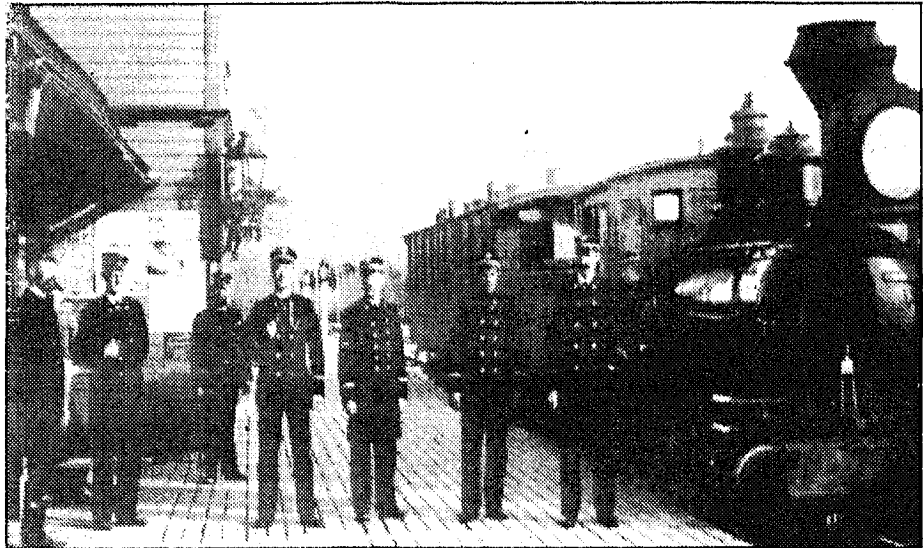
The festivities began on 20 November in Oslo, the city where one hundred years ago 48 representatives from eleven railwaymen's friendly associations gathered and founded the Railwaymen's Union.

Passers-by were surprised to see a train, its old-fashioned interior lovingly recreated by retired rail workers, parked on a section of narrow gauge line outside the city centre hotel where the union celebrations were being held.

A special centenary exhibition which has attracted a steady stream of visitors this autumn at Oslo's central station will move around the country as rail union members spend the next two weeks commemorating one hundred years of trade union organisation.

To mark the anniversary historian John L Kamsvåg has been commissioned to write a history of the rail union. Entitled "100 years of struggle on behalf of rail workers" the book chronicles the efforts of the union from its earliest beginnings to improve the living and working conditions of its members. Its very first campaign, for example, was for a ten hour working day and a six day week.

The first two sections cover the period 1892 to 1945, including the "illegal" activities during the occupation, and the post-war period



to the present day. Other chapters deal with pay policy and collective bargaining, railway policy and the railways as a workplace.

Organising the festivities has been the job of a special centenary committee headed by Leif Thue, who retires at the end of this year after eight years as union president.

His successor will be Ove Dalsheim, who was elected unopposed to the presidency by the union's 56th Congress in October. Also elected by the Congress as Vice President was Arthur Skåtøy.

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PUBLICATIONS OFFICER : **DAVID COCKROFT**

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