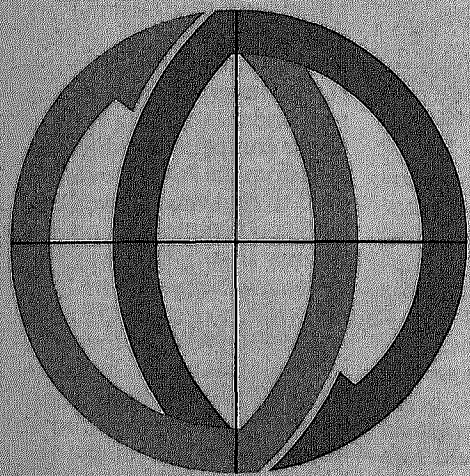


# ITF

# NEWS

August/September 1995

No. 6



## INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS FEDERATION

INFORMATIONS  
NOTICIAS  
NYHETER  
情報  
NACHRICHTEN



### Aviation workers protest in Luxembourg

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# Contents

## Global round-up:

*No to Nafta deregulation; Mission to Liberia; ITF supports protests in Turkey*

## Civil aviation:

*Protest against ground handling liberalisation; Africa Region Committee*

## Tourism services:

*ITSS work together*

## Inland transport:

*Cures for car congestion*

## Seafarers:

*ITF rates increased; campaigning on the Internet; Early success in cruise ship campaign*

## Dockers:

*Now we need solidarity*

## Fisheries:

*No to dumping*

## Obituaries:

## 25 and 50 years ago:

## From the labour press:

*Runaway shipowner abandons crew*

back page

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# Speak softly and carry a big stick

## OPINION

**ITF General Secretary David Cockroft writes**



THE ITF came into existence because of an urgent need to support other unions' struggles through international sympathy strikes.

Our flag of convenience campaign, linking seafarers and dockers, is the best known example of this solidarity, but in other ITF sections and other non-transport industries too the need for solidarity is clear.

The tidal wave of anti-union legislation over the past 15 years has forced unions onto the defensive and promoted the idea that so-called "secondary boycotts" are a suspect form of action.

Yet international trade union solidarity is more important today than at any time in the past 100 years. A global economy requires a global trade union movement.

Where trade unions are treated with respect it is because they have not only good arguments but also power. At national level that power is generally getting weaker. It is the job of organisations like the ITF to build union power internationally to fill the gap.

The FOC campaign gives the ITF a unique experience of bringing together the power of seafarer and docker unions. The idea of using that experience to strengthen unions in other parts of the ITF and the rest of the international trade

union movement is a central theme of "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000" adopted by the ITF's 37th Congress.

In this spirit I presented a paper to a meeting of International Trade Secretariats in June. It suggested that each of the secretariats should begin to think about new practical ways in which we could support each other. I expressed the same concerns in May during the special session of the Executive Board of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

Having industrial muscle doesn't mean that you throw

*'We need to find ways of working with good employers and not against them.'*

■ **Derek Bond**, Deputy General Secretary of the British National Union of Marine, Aviation and Shipping Transport Officers (NUMAST), retired in June after well over 30 years of unbroken service as an official in NUMAST and its predecessor unions the MNAOA and the MMSA. Speaking at his retirement party, NUMAST General Secretary **Brian Orrell** described him as a "guardian to the seafaring profession".

■ **Steen Halkjær** has been elected as the new President of the Danish Ships' Catering Personnel Association. For the first time ever the association has a Vice President, **Annette Ditlevsen**, who comes from the rank and file.

■ **Nazi Kabore** of the Burkina Faso civil aviation workers' union SUMAC has just been appointed as the new ITF Coordinator for francophone Africa. He takes over from **Kokou Fantognon**, of Togo, who has resigned for reasons of ill health.

■ Warmest congratulations go to ITF Executive Board member and Seafarers' Section chair **Anders Lindström** on his 50th birthday, which he celebrated on 30 June.

■ **E Mdlongwa** has been elected as the new President of the Zimbabwe Amalgamated Railwaymen's Union (ZARU) in succession to **Samson Mabheka**.

your weight around all the time. Part of developing a modern trade union strategy for the global economy is knowing how to target the use of trade union strength.

There are many employers and governments in the shipping industry who share the ITF's concern to stamp out substandard shipping and the unfair competition which results from the FOC system. We need to find ways of working with good employers and not against them. This was the purpose of a meeting we hosted in June to explain ITF policies to shipping employers.

The same is true in other areas of ITF activity. In October, we are planning to hold a major conference on the future of the railway industry. Working with employers, governments, transport economists and others, the ITF wants to build a consensus about minimum conditions for running an efficient, socially and environmentally friendly railway network.

We hope that our arguments alone will convince those, whether in government or in international institutions. If not, they should not forget that rail unions – like other transport unions – must still have access to the "big stick" if speaking softly doesn't work. ■

## PEOPLE

...from Britain, Burkina Faso, Denmark, Sweden and Zimbabwe

# First prize for port union leader



■ Kalpana Desai (left), women's co-ordinator/educator, and member of the ITF-affiliated Transport and Dock Workers' Union (TDWU) in Bombay, receives first prize in a national competition for her essay on the role and function of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in India.

The presentation is being made by Labour Minister PA Sangama. Also pictured are (second from right) Leylla Tegmo Reddy, the Deputy Director of the ILO office in New Delhi, and a local television reporter.

The competition was organised to mark the 75th anniversary of the setting-up of the ILO.

In addition to using her writing talents, Kalpana actively works for women in the TDWU. In March she was involved in organising a Women's Convention with Jawaharlar Nehru Port Trust employees.

"I'm proud to say that around 500 women delegates attended," said Kalpana. "It really made history in the port and dock sector that all the women took their own leave and spent a full day at JNPT Port."

## In brief

### No to N-bomb test

■ Delegates at the annual conference of Shitetsu-Soren (the ITF-affiliated Japanese General Federation of Private Railway and Bus Workers' Unions) unanimously denounced the French government's decision to resume nuclear testing in the Pacific. The conference, held in Hiroshima in July, expressed indignation at the decision, taken during the 50th anniversary of the atom bomb dropping. The union pledged to work towards the eradication of nuclear weapons and to oppose nuclear testing by all nations.

### Africa meeting

■ Education programmes aimed at building effective unions, pressure on governments and transport employers to recognise workers' interests, and an organising campaign in the informal road transport sector were among the key tasks for the future identified by the ITF African Regional Committee which held its first ever meeting in Nairobi at the end of May. The meeting, attended by delegates and observers from 11 countries, agreed to create a structure of sub-regional coordinators throughout the African continent and a system of ITF co-ordinating committees which would aim to unify transport unions at national level and bring more unions inside the ITF.

# Bank backs unions

## So practise what you preach, says ITF

"FREE trade unions are a cornerstone of any effective system of industrial relations that seeks to balance the need for enterprises to remain competitive with the aspirations of workers for higher wages and better working conditions."

Not a statement with which many ITF affiliates would disagree, but one which sounds much more radical when contained in an official publication of the World Bank.

The 1995 World Development Report, prepared by

economists at the Washington-based bank, focuses for the first time on labour issues. Entitled "Workers in an Integrating World", it stresses the important role which trade unions have to play - marking an important change of direction. The report accepts that economic restructuring works better in conditions of income security and that active labour market policies are

needed to retrain and re-adapt workers displaced as part of adjustment programmes.

It remains to be seen whether these fine words will be backed up in practice by the World Bank's officials, who administer country programmes in which thousands of workers have found themselves thrown out of work with minimum notice and little or no social protection.

At a meeting in London held to discuss the report's contents with its editor, World Bank official Michael Walton, ITF General Secretary David Cockroft stressed the urgent need for unions in developing countries to be involved at the earliest possible stage in planning structural adjustment programmes, something which has come out again and again at ITF seminars and conferences on this topic.

He hoped that World Bank officials would practise what they preach from now on and be aware that restructuring in the transport industry had widespread social, environmental and safety effects. ■

## ILO in crisis

DOMINATING the behind-the-scenes conversations at the 82nd International Labour Organisation's conference in Geneva in June was the future of the ILO itself.

The ILO has been plunged into crisis by a combination of financial woes and political attacks by governments.

The organisation has found itself as one of the prime targets in the cost-cutting gunshots of the US Republican Party. Even worse, the massive slump in

the value of the US dollar (in which the ILO's income is fixed) against the Swiss franc has created a \$20m gap in its current accounts.

This forced the organisation's tripartite Governing Body at the end of June to postpone virtually all scheduled meetings, including the Maritime Session of the ILO next January and the Ports Restructuring meeting planned for this December.

It is clear too that elements in some governments - the US, UK and some in Asia - want to pull out of the ILO altogether. ■



ITF unions fear impact in Latin America

# No to Nafta deregulation

*'Entire industries, including major parts of the transport sector, would be deregulated and existing controls safeguarding working conditions would be swept away. Thousands of workers, many in transport, would lose their jobs or be forced to accept flexible working conditions.'*

THE North American Free Trade Agreement (Nafta) will institutionalise the exploitation of Mexican workers and lead to a marked deterioration in working conditions throughout Central America.

This was the main conclusion of the 50 trade unionists who came together in April in Mexico City for an ITF seminar – co-sponsored by the German FES foundation – which examined the consequences of the Nafta free trade agreement (covering Canada, United States and Mexico).

As the latest step in the creeping liberalisation of world trade, membership of Nafta would mean an end to state ownership of public utilities and transport companies which would be replaced by privately owned monopolies and transport operators. Entire industries, including major parts of the transport sector, would be deregulated and existing controls safeguarding working conditions would be swept away. Thousands of workers, many in transport, would lose their jobs or be forced to accept flexible working conditions.

Workplace safety would be sacrificed, income levels would drop and more work would be contracted out to small companies

which would ride roughshod over employment rights as they sought to cut prices.

In a climate of increased international competition, good labour relations and worker protection legislation would be a casualty as other countries queued up to join Nafta and share what they saw as the benefits of a compliant labour force.

Deploing the lack of

reliable information available to unions on current developments arising out of the Nafta treaty, the unions pledged to step up co-operation and liaise more closely with fellow unions in the Latin American MERCOSUR group (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay). ■

## New ICFTU survey finds increase in violations of trade union rights worldwide

TRADE union rights abuses are on the increase, according to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) in its annual Survey of Violations of Trade Union Rights published in June.

Last year the number of countries where workers' rights were violated rose to 98, the highest recorded.

The number of trade unionists murdered increased to 528 in 17 countries – twice last year's figure.

Over 300 of the murders took place in Algeria and 178 in Colombia. Around 2,000 trade unionists were injured and 4,300 arrested or detained.

In many countries women workers are subjected to violence or ill-treatment. For example, they make up the majority of workers in Free Trade Zones where unions are forbidden.

The Dominican Republic runs these zones as "virtual concentration camps", says the ICFTU. And in Honduras, workers who do not work fast enough are forced to stand with chairs above their heads for hours or given injections to make them work 48-hour shifts.

In Europe, the survey describes the UK government as one of the "most obsessively anti-union governments in the industrialised world".

Government interference in trade union activities is also on the increase, and among the worst offenders last year were China, Cuba, Sudan, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Dominican Republic and Honduras.

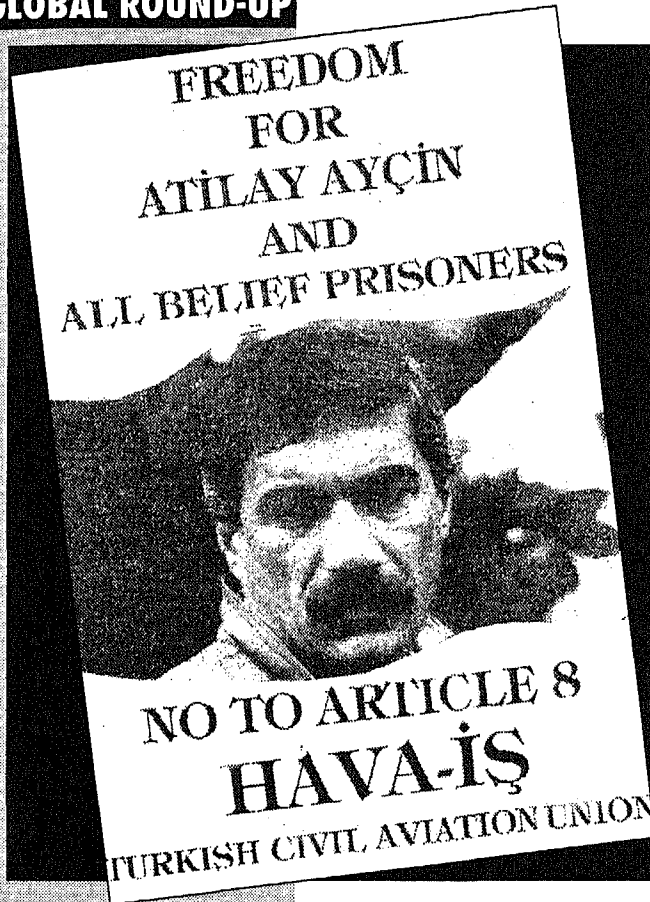
However, there has been some good news, says the survey, as in the case of democracy being restored in Haiti and South Africa and with Chile no longer appearing in the report. ■



■ A Guatemalan union leader during a textile factory occupation: the strike was subsequently broken and she was sacked.

ITF unions fear that an extension of the Nafta free trade area further south into Latin America will worsen the region's trade union rights violations.

# ITF supports protests in Turkey



SUPPORTED by the ITF-affiliated United Transport Workers' Union, Turkey's trade unions took part in a series of national actions in June aimed at defending their rights to strike and bargain collectively.

On 10 June, an estimated 300,000 workers from all over Turkey gathered in Ankara for a march and sit-down protest.

Specifically, the unions are demanding that forced transfers of workers be stopped. Workers sent to other locations against their will should be reinstated to their former positions at work and all disciplinary actions taken should be cancelled.

Unions are also seeking the withdrawal of the draft amendments adopted by the Parliamentary Commission dealing with the constitution, which do not recognise

trade union rights to bargain collectively and strike.

ITF General Secretary David Cockroft, in a letter of support which was read at the sit-down, said: "We wish you every success with your protest as it is clear that the Turkish government's policy of repressing trade union rights and freedom of workers must stop.

"The disciplinary measures that have been taken against trade unionists for attempting to exercise their basic rights are unacceptable. Together with many trade unionists all over the world, we are increasingly shocked at the aggressive behaviour of the Turkish state against its working people."

He added: "The hearts of the 5 million transport workers represented by the ITF are with you as you fight for your rights." ■

## Ayçin campaign grows

TURKISH civil aviation union Hava-İş has distributed 20,000 posters in major towns around Turkey demanding the release of the union president Atılay Ayçin (pictured above) and the repeal of Article 8 of the Anti Terrorism Act under which many political prisoners have been detained.

The union collected 30,000 signatures in three days supporting their campaign.

ITF affiliates should send messages of protest to Prime Minister Tansu Çiller (fax number: +90 312 417 04 76). ■

## ITF officer braves bullets in quest for trade union unity

# Mission to Liberia

ORGANISING during a civil war is dangerous and difficult, but Liberian transport workers received a very welcome boost to their efforts with the visit of the ITF African Regional Secretary to Monrovia in May.

The Liberian civil war began in December 1989 and has claimed the lives of 150,000 people so far (out of a population of 1.9 million).

Ben "Roxy" Udogwu's ITF mission was postponed a number of times because of various security problems. In the end he was provided with a Nigerian military escort and was welcomed by a large crowd of trade unionists when he arrived at Monrovia airport.

The ITF has long wished to visit Liberia – a number of affiliation applications have

been put on hold by the Executive Board, which has been confused by multiple applications from unions and federations with similar sounding names claiming to organise the same groups of workers. Compounded by the obvious communications problems created by the fighting, a visit was clearly needed.

Udogwu spells out the problems in his mission report: "The war has left the country in virtual ruins and has not spared the unions and trade union activities in a country where viable trade unionism was never established despite a history of independence.

"This was the result of disguised 'apartheid' as less than 12 American Liberians (returned slaves from the US)

dominated the economy and politics with utter disregard for indigenous Liberians."

A series of meetings with the maritime trade unions was held. After much heated discussion – and a break for the 1900 hours curfew – the transport unions agreed a reorganisation plan: the dockworkers' union and the fisheries union will remain on their own for now and the four organisations competing for seafarers, port and general workers will merge and apply as one for ITF affiliation.

The meeting set up a merger committee to oversee the practicalities of the plan.

Udogwu also met with Liberian Labour Minister JT Woewiyu and received assurances that the ministry would co-operate with the union merger:

"I left Monrovia with a strong belief that the unions were sincere in their agreement to merge, but it would be an over-simplification to expect the process to be hitch-free, given that factional trade unionism is as old as Liberia itself," said Udogwu. ■

## CIVIL AVIATION



### Cover story

# Protest against ground handling free-for-all

■ Above and below: civil aviation workers at the demonstration in Luxembourg on 20 June.



EUROPEAN Commission plans for opening airport services to more competition are a "step too far" according to the 1,000 airport baggage handlers, reservations staff, cleaners, engineers and other ground services workers from across Europe who protested at the doors of a meeting of transport ministers where the plans were being discussed.

For the demonstration, which was organised by the Committee of Transport Workers' Unions in the European Community (CTWUEC), planes and coaches were chartered from half a dozen countries, bringing delegations from as far afield as Athens, Rome and Hamburg. The demonstration was part of a campaign developed by the CTWUEC Working Group on Ground Handling, of which the ITF is a part.

Hugues de Villèle, Secretary of the CTWUEC, highlighted the impact of the demonstration on the Transport Ministers' meeting: "Many delegations stressed the total absence of social considerations as well as the fact that the Commission did not wait for the results of its own surveys before presenting its proposal."

ITF Civil Aviation Secretary, Stuart Howard commented: "This rally was a great success but we should remind the Commission that civil aviation unions should not have to be mass lobbying the Council of Ministers in order to get our voice heard. Unions will continue to fight these measures as they stand, for the sake of the many thousands of jobs that are at stake." ■

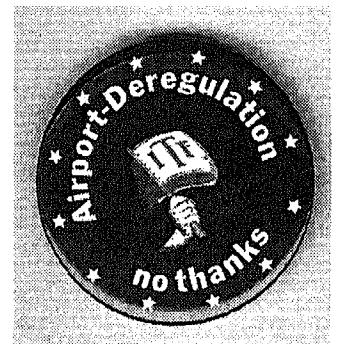
## 20,000 ways to say 'no thanks'

TWENTY thousand button badges have been produced by the ÖTV in Germany. The badges carry a straight forward trade union message "Airport Deregulation: No thanks!" with an ITF logo.

According to Manfred Maertzke of the ÖTV: "Workers in every airport in Germany are wearing them."

"This is a message that airport workers in all the countries involved in this fight can wear to show their international solidarity with each other on this issue."

Already other unions have been asking for sets of the badges to distribute to their workers to wear at airports. The ÖTV is not making any charge for the badges, which can be ordered by writing to the ITF Secretariat. ■



# Turning the tide of deregulation

"THE world aviation industry is in a process of change. The compromise system set up at Chicago does need reform. But this change cannot be one of total liberalisation and free market access."

This was the message given by guest speaker, Vijay Poonoosamy, addressing civil aviation union representatives attending the ITF Civil Aviation Section Africa Region Committee meeting held in Nairobi, in June. He had been invited to address the meeting during its discussions on follow up by the ITF to the ICAO Conference on the future regulation of air transport held in Montreal in November-December 1994. Vijay Poonoosamy is chair of the 4th ICAO Worldwide Air Transport Conference.

The meeting was also addressed by ZM Baliddawa, the ICAO Regional Representative for Eastern and Southern Africa. He stressed that while various moves towards increased liberalisation would continue, global open skies had been rejected by the consensus achieved among ICAO states. He summarised the conference conclusions as calling for orderly change in the regulatory system, including guarantees for all countries to be able to maintain their aviation sovereignty; equality of opportunity and recognition of the wider economic role of air transport.

The conclusions also took note of the problems posed to aviation in developing countries by the economic disparities between rich and poor countries.

Vijay Poonoosamy stressed that three objectives had gained broad support during the conference: the meaningful participation of all states in aviation; the safeguarding of the interests of all member states; and, significantly, recognition that the interests of all stakeholders in the industry, including labour, must be given consideration.

"No one should doubt our commitment to this element of the conclusions," he told participants. "The industry has to accept that the views of labour are extremely important in any process of shaping the direction of world aviation. The concept of labour as a stakeholder in the industry is very important." He noted

that the conclusions of the ICAO conference had by no means been predetermined. Indeed, he said, the conference had given some of the more powerful governments a rude shock.

"There was something of a surprise that the African states, in particular, had been so organised in presenting joint proposals which in turn had created a wider solidarity among developing countries on key issues," he said.

"The presentations made by the ITF ensured that the interests of labour were included, with the famous ITF amendment. The ITF contributions in this debate have been extremely positive and we very much recognise that. I hope my presence at this meeting will be seen as evidence of that."

The significance of these achievements in influencing the debate should not be underestimated.

He noted it was important to move forward and to translate ideas for orderly change into action.

The next stage would be the ICAO General Assembly in September 1995.

Stuart Howard, Section Secretary told the meeting that the ITF would maintain its lobbying for economic and social measures for the industry later in the year at the ICAO General Assembly.

David Cockroft ITF General Secretary told the meeting that the outcome of the 1994 Montreal Conference was remarkable.

"Until now," he said "everything being heard in the aviation industry was that the option for comprehensive orderly regulation had been closed.

"It is clear that it is now being widely recognised that there is a need for new international regulatory measures which meet the changed conditions of aviation but which also maintain the vital role that aviation plays in economic development, and which provide a safe and high quality service for users."

He added: "Trade unions must continue to work to build alliances with others in the industry in this debate within ICAO to turn the deregulation tide." ■



*'When our union organised a public rally to mark the ITF 2 December 1994 Day of Action, in which we protested against global open skies, many people said it was a waste of time. They said that we could never have any effect. The presence of people from ICAO here today, putting forward ideas which challenge unrestricted liberalisation, and when I hear what we, as ITF have done, I know that we were right. Our union voice has helped to change things.'*

**Nazi Kabore,  
SUMAC,  
Burkina Faso**

■ More reporting from the Africa Region Committee overleaf

# Gaining presence on aviation bodies

THE ITF Civil Aviation Section Africa Region Committee is making steady progress in getting union influence into African intergovernmental regional strategies, according to Akwei Adoté (STRANAVITTO, Togo), secretary of the Committee. He was reporting on his participation on behalf of the ITF at the 13th plenary of the African Civil Aviation Commission during May in Abuja, Nigeria.

This was the first time that the ITF has been invited to attend this body and it will now have permanent observer status.

He also reported on ITF participation in the caucus of African governments during the ICAO Conference in November 1994.

The Regional Committee proposed that

the ITF should seek dialogue with the African airlines organisation AFFRA, with the aim of holding a tripartite conference on the future of African aviation.

Other topics under discussion during the meeting included health and safety; liberalisation of ground handling; and the privatisation of airlines. The meeting also called for stronger regional solidarity between African unions in cases of violations of trade union and human rights.

The main focus of the meeting was continued discussions on the impact of globalisation on the industry and an African aviation strategy. ■



## In brief

### US dispute continues

■ The US Machinists' Union (IAM), with the support of the ITF's Italian affiliates, continues to pursue Alitalia over the lockout of 150 ground handling workers, who were replaced by subcontract labour. As the dispute enters its second year the IAM has called on the US government to apply President Clinton's Executive Order banning federal contracts with companies that replace lawfully striking employees. Alitalia holds contracts with the US Postal Service. Meanwhile, in June, a court case began in Rome on behalf of the 50 Italian nationals among those replaced.

### Talks in Italy

■ Following a series of one-day strikes and the threat of ongoing industrial action, Alitalia was forced to withdraw restructuring proposals and enter into negotiations over change. In the government-brokered deal, the unions committed themselves to suspend further industrial action for six months as long as the company negotiates in good faith.

### Turkish settlement

■ The dispute between the ITF affiliate Hava-Is and the recently privatised Turkish ground handling company HAVAS has been settled following a bitter 125-day strike. The company reached agreement with the union on clauses in the collective agreement where it had proposed unilateral changes. In a message to the ITF, the union thanked the Secretariat and all affiliates for their support and solidarity.

# Co-operate to survive

THE ITF has produced a paper *Restructuring African Aviation* which summarises the conclusions of the discussion at the ITF Civil Aviation Section Africa Region Committee meeting on globalisation and an African aviation strategy.

The document argues that privatisation will not provide for the capital needs of African aviation and airlines should remain under public ownership.

It favours regional airline co-operation and even integration of African airlines, noting that the alternative may be the complete disappearance of many national airlines. It says state aid must continue though within the aim of heading towards commercial

## ITF report spells out strategy to keep airlines in business

viability. It calls on governments to protect the viability of airlines by refusing to allow destructive forms of competition. This should include keeping new entrants out of markets which cannot sustain them.

It calls on African governments to:

- reject privatisation
- appoint a stable and professional management for airlines
- refrain from political interference
- maintain state aid and guar-

antee the public service role of aviation

- retain control over market access
- promote regional co-operation

- guarantee union rights.

It calls on ICAO to:

- provide economic regulatory safeguards for African airlines
- promote measures favourable to developing countries within international air agreements
- provide more material assistance to African airlines
- establish minimum labour standards.

The ITF paper "Restructuring African Aviation" is available from the ITF Secretariat. ■

## ITs work together

THE three International Trade Secretariats (ITs) with membership amongst tourism workers' unions (the ITF, the IUF, representing workers in hotels, and FIET, the white-collar international) have agreed to establish closer co-operation.

In July the three ITs organised a Joint Seminar for Tourism Workers in the Asia/Pacific Region, in Penang, part-funded by the ITF Japanese affiliate KENKO-ROREN. The meeting discussed mechanisms for closer regional co-operation in the sector and adopted a number of resolutions calling for a boycott or disruption of "Visit Myanmar Year 1995", on child sex prostitution, on nuclear testing in the South Pacific, and on a continuing dispute in Garuda International Airlines.

The ITs have also formed a European Joint Tourism Liaison Committee with an office in Brussels. The committee is to press for minimum labour standards and union rights in the industry within the European Union. ■

## TOURISM SERVICES

...in Asia/Pacific region and Europe



**In brief**

**Rail campaign week**

■ A campaign week in October, coinciding with an ITF conference in Budapest on railway structure and ownership, marks the latest stage in international action by the ITF and its affiliates in support of the railways. Plans for the campaign were agreed at the May meeting of the ITF Railworkers' Section's Transport Policy Sub-Committee in Oslo. István Gaskó of the Hungarian Free Trade Union of Railway Workers said moves to privatise and restructure the railways were under active consideration in their region.

**Turks sacked**

■ The ITF-affiliated road transport union, TUMTIS, reported more trade union rights violations in the Turkish town of Gebze last month. On 30 June, following the successful and legal organisation of 140 workers employed in loading and unloading operations by Incheape Retrans, the company threatened members with dismissal unless they gave up their union membership. The workers were attacked by private security staff and local state security forces when they arrived for work on 3 July. The ITF has written to the Turkish Prime Minister backing demands for the reinstatement of the workers and full recognition of their union rights.

**Changing owners**

■ A trade union strategy for dealing with structural changes in the ownership of transport undertakings in Central and Eastern Europe was drawn up at an ITF Seminar on Privatisation of Public Transport Services in Bratislava in June. Representatives of transport unions in 13 countries insisted that new forms of ownership should be introduced gradually and should be limited to measures which serve a real economic and social purpose. Unions must be an integral part of this process and should demand that job security, pay and working conditions and workplace health and safety were properly safeguarded.

**Free passenger service laid on by bus strikers**

■ A passenger alights from a free bus operated during a seven-month bus dispute in Chelmsford, UK.

The dispute began in November when workers of the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) carried out a legal industrial action – of only a few hours duration – in disapproval of extended driving shifts imposed by Eastern National. The action resulted in the sacking of 105 drivers. The union launched an intensive campaign, which included the running of the free bus service in Chelmsford.

A union spokesperson said that the free buses were a "landmark in industrial action".

At the end of June union members voted four to one to accept a £400 per year of service compensation package. This compared with the company's original £150 per year offer.



**Cures for car congestion**

**Use public transport, say ITF unions at meetings in Bangkok and Bratislava**

CHRONIC traffic congestion in the fast growing cities of many Asian and Pacific countries can only be overcome if the public authorities recognise that urban development and city transport systems must be properly integrated. Economic resources must no longer be concentrated in the metropolitan areas, and funds should be provided for an adequate urban transport infrastructure.

These were the findings of the ITF Urban Transport Seminar, co-sponsored by the German FES foundation, held in Bangkok in May and addressed by the country's former Deputy Minister of Transport, Sudarat Keyurapan. She gave a graphic description of traffic problems in the Thai capital, Bangkok, which delegates also experienced at first-hand.

Mass transit systems – such as those being introduced in some countries in the region – are best suited to meet the transport needs of the populations of large cities, the seminar agreed. Intermodal transport systems should be encouraged, with urban rail systems being complemented by extensive bus networks and a taxi service.

Excessive use of private transport, which makes daily commuting a nightmare, must be curbed.

National, regional and municipal public authorities must draw up long-term urban plans and transport policies, in consultation with transport unions and organisations representing transport users, the participants insisted.

The ITF was urged to co-operate closely with the International Labour Organisation in developing standards to protect urban transport workers.

Concrete measures to improve working conditions and drastically reduce stress levels must include regulations on duty times and rest periods, the seminar concluded. ☐

A CAMPAIGN aimed at encouraging the inhabitants of large cities and the major conurbations to make more use of buses, trams and light rail was unanimously agreed at the ITF Urban Transport Committee meeting in Bratislava in June.

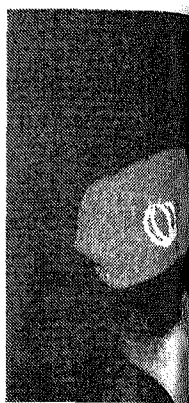
Publicity material that road and rail affiliates can adapt for their own national campaign activities will now be prepared, and the International Union of Public Transport – the international body for public transport operators – will be invited to help with this task.

Plans were also laid for the development of ITF design and construction standards for the cabs of trams and light rail vehicles for implementation in Europe and for the next stage of the draft ITF Bus Design and Construction Standards.

A new study of working conditions in urban transport is being undertaken, while an international symposium scheduled for next year will examine health and safety problems. ☐

At the Fair Practices Committee...

# ITF rates increased



## Shipowners briefed

REPRESENTATIVES from more than 40 shipping companies and shipowners' associations from around the world met senior ITF officials in London in July to be briefed on developments in the ITF campaign against flag of convenience shipping.

Hosted by ITF General Secretary David Cockcroft and Seafarers' Section Chair Anders Lindström, the meeting gave shipowners the opportunity to question the ITF on campaign tactics and objectives, in particular the new decision to draw up a blacklist of employers, including crewing agencies, with an especially poor record. ■

ITF WAGES on flag of convenience ships will increase by 9 per cent from the beginning of 1998 – an annual hike of 3 per cent per year from this year's increase (which was the first for 10 years).

The ITF basic for an able seaman (under the Standard Agreement) rises from \$856 to \$934 per month, while the "total crew-cost benchmark" for the same grade increases to \$1,200 from \$1,100. (The TCC rate, set at 61 per cent of the Standard basic, is a consolidated package that includes overtime and other benefits.)

Nearly 3,000 FOC vessels have ITF agreements, and ITF policy now states that seafarers serving on second registers and non-domiciles on national flag ships must also receive at least the TCC benchmark.

These decisions were taken by the annual meeting of the ITF Fair Practices Committee (FPC), held in June in London. The FPC – a joint body of seafarers' and dockers' unions – supervises the ITF FOC campaign.

The FPC discussed second registers, noting that both the German and Spanish second registers have already been declared FOC. Existing policy (TCC rates on these ships) was confirmed, and the Norwegian NIS register was given a one-year deadline during which the Norwegian unions must be granted full bargaining rights and the register must be closed to non-Norwegian ownership – the FPC will review developments next year with a view to adding NIS to the FOC list.

The official FOC list expanded as well, with the addition of Barbados.

The committee reiterated the objective of ITF policy being the achievement of national conditions for all seafarers. As a minimum, any non-domiciled seafarer not covered by national conditions, irrespective of whether they are employed on national-flag, second register or FOC ships, should receive (at least) the ITF TCC rate.

The FPC endorsed the principles underlying the creation of an ITF "blacklist" – which will target owners, managers and manning agents. Now that criteria have been agreed, a list will be prepared for publication by the end of the year.

The committee also approved policy guidelines governing approval of ITF agreements for FOC cruise ships, and the ITF cruiseship campaign objectives, which detail a plan of action

for the inclusion of cruise ships in the campaign.

It was stressed at the meeting that affiliates which hold agreements for FOC vessels are responsible for providing trade union services to seafarers on covered ships. More and more, the ITF Secretariat has to deal with individual claims for death and disability, when in fact many of the cases processed are those of members of ITF affiliates.

It was stressed that member unions should take increased responsibility for their own members and provide them with appropriate services in order to alleviate the burden imposed on the ITF in London.

Motions adopted by the FPC included: one opposing proposed amendments to the Polish Maritime Code, which would effectively create a Polish second register; and a resolution from African affiliates calling for increased support for African shipping. A final emergency motion was passed in support of the US seafaring unions, who face severe job losses as two US-flag companies flag out. ■

## In brief

### Too long to wait

■ Delays by maritime insurance companies in settling personal injury and loss of life claims were condemned by the ITF at an international conference in June organised by one of the largest of the companies, the Liverpool and London P&I Club. Speaking at the conference in Monte-Carlo, ITF Assistant General Secretary Ake Selander criticised the difficulty in obtaining interim awards in cases where seafarers underwent long recuperation. He said: "The ITF is always amenable to fruitful discussions regarding realistic settlement of claims. The alternative is industrial or legal action with its resultant high costs."

### Tonnage warning

■ The 16 member states of the Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control, meeting in Utrecht, the Netherlands, in June, decided to insist on the enforcement of the 1969 Tonnage Convention. Flag states are to be warned that ships without valid tonnage certificates should be detained.

### UK rule eased

■ The British government has ignored protests by the ITF-affiliated ship's officers' union, NUMAST, and decided to scrap the legal requirement to employ British senior officers on UK-flag ships. From 1 August the nationality rule for masters, chief officers and chief engineers will apply only to cruiseships, ro-ro ferries, product tankers and large fishing vessels.

# South African unions discuss FOC campaign



■ Monde Mthembu (second from left), TGWU Education Officer, makes a point during discussions at the ITF's flag of convenience seminar in South Africa.

THE first ever ITF South African flag of convenience seminar, held in Durban in June, concluded with a pledge to put the country on the map as a no-go area for flag of convenience shipping.

The seminar was attended by over 30 union officials and workers' delegates from the ports of Durban, Cape Town, East London, Port Elizabeth, Richards Bay, Saldanha Bay and Mossel Bay representing the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU), the Transport and Allied Workers' Union, the Trawler and Line Fishermen's Union and the non-ITF affiliated South African Railway and Harbour Workers' Union.

Participants drew up a strategy for expanding the FOC campaign in South Africa, including strengthening the role of the ITF Inspectors and the support given to them by dockers and other maritime workers. The seminar also made a number of recommendations, including:

- campaigning for government and employer support for the objectives of the FOC campaign,
- campaigning for ratification of International Labour Organisation Convention 147 by the South African government and the establishment of an effective port state control system in South Africa,
- building the necessary unity, solidarity and support for the campaign amongst the transport workers' unions on South Africa,
- better training, support and better technology for the inspectorate,
- campaigning for foreign-registered South African-owned ships to be brought back to the national flag.

Randall Howard, General Secretary of the TGWU in South Africa, said: "We want everyone to understand that ship-owners who abuse and exploit their crews are not welcome in South African ports and that the South African unions will take whatever action is necessary in pursuance of the ITF's FOC campaign policies." ■

## Asia/Pacific Inspectors meet

"NO Asia/Pacific port will be ITF-safe," was the clear message sent from a meeting of the region's ITF Inspectors, held in Tokyo in May.

Hosted by the All-Japan Seamen's Union, the meeting was attended by Inspectors and coordinators as well as seafarers' and dockers' union representatives from the seven Pacific

Rim countries of Australia, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, Singapore, New Zealand and the USA. It was hailed as a great success, and an important step in establishing the Asia/Pacific region as a no-go zone for substandard shipping.

Specifically, the seminar presented plans to launch a campaign against foreign-owned vessels registered in the Philippines, which are abusing the bare-boat charter arrangements in order to circumvent ITF policy. The campaign would include a special targeting of such ships by ITF inspectors.

ITF Special Seafarers Department Secretary, Bruno de Bonis, said: "It is clear that the ITF's campaign against FOCs is about to come of age in the Asia/Pacific region."

As proof of its promises, the ITF agreed in conjunction with the seminar to appoint an additional Inspector in Japan, to cover the Osaka-Kobe area.

More ITF appointments will also be forthcoming, not only in Japan, but in a number of other major ports of the region. ■

■ Below: ITF Inspectors and union representatives at the Asia/Pacific meeting.



**'An agreement was finally reached on 20 June – less than an hour before major industrial action, which would have badly hit exports of Swedish cars and paper products, was due to begin.'**

# Swedish strike pays off

THE Swedish Seafarers' Union (SSU) went on strike in June to secure a new collective agreement for 1995/6.

An agreement was finally reached on 20 June – less than an hour before major industrial action, which would have badly hit exports of Swedish cars and paper products, was due to begin.

The new agreement for the SSU's 10,000 plus members will give the biggest pay hikes to the most experienced seafarers – about 80 per cent of its membership – who will receive rises of between Skr 555 and 590 a month for 1995. A further increase of Skr 545 comes into effect on 1 January 1996.

Discussions with the Swedish shipowners' association broke down at the beginning of June after the shipowners had failed for two months to make any offer.

The SSU was convinced there was no point

in further discussions. So its members in the deck and engineroom departments on some deep-sea ships were called out on strike. ABS and motormen on a number of passenger ships also took strike action for periods of between 12 and 15 hours.

The response from the owners was to lock out all SSU members on the strike-bound ships.

"I am sure that but for the strike we would never have got this excellent agreement," says SSU negotiating secretary Roger Sjöstrand.

"The members who went out on strike were very active and stood firmly behind our demands.

"In fact it was the first big strike since 1933. Even so some shipowners are stating that the SSU is too militant and is always striking." ■

## FOC ferries must pay Greek rates

**'The jobs of Greek seafarers will be protected, and non-Greeks will only be employed if Greeks are not available.'**

A MAJOR success in the campaign against flag of convenience ferries in the Adriatic Sea has been scored by the ITF-affiliated Pan HELLENIC Seamen's Federation (PNO). The Greek-based companies operating FOC ships between Italy and Greece have bowed to pressure exerted by the Greek unions and agreed to adopt Greek-flag pay scales, crewing requirements and pension arrangements.

Under the terms of a peace deal reached in May, the Greek collective agreement will apply to six ferries running between Patras and Italy. The jobs of Greek seafarers will be protected, and non-Greeks will only be employed if Greeks are not available.

Three ferries were prevented from leaving Patras before the owners signed the agreement with the PNO.

The unions are claiming to have achieved a great success. "The action taken by our federation against Greek FOC ferry operators is un-

doubtedly a victory for the PNO and the ITF campaign against FOC tonnage," said PNO General Secretary John Halas.

The agreement applies initially to six vessels – the Maltese-flag *Brindisi* and *Poseidon*, the Cypriot-flag *Afrodite II*, *Sea Seranafde* and *Valentino* and the Panamanian-flag *Arion* – but is likely to be extended to cover more ferries brought on to the route during the summer season.

■ Members of the PNO staged a four-day strike at the end of June in a protest over long-standing grievances involving pensions, which are felt to be too low, and plans to increase income tax which, the unions say, will penalise seafarers in the home trade. The strike brought domestic ferry services to a halt and ended with the PNO threatening further action unless progress was made in talks with the government. ■

## Fighting together for European jobs

MEASURES to safeguard the jobs of European seafarers and European Union training and safety standards were adopted at the May meeting in Brussels of the Maritime Transport Section (MTS) of the Committee of Transport Workers' Unions in the European Community after a debate on a European Union policy paper which stressed the importance of close co-operation between the ITF and the MTS.

Also agreed were the principles of a Code of Good Conduct for European ferry services aimed at banishing flags of convenience from the short-sea ferry trades and outlawing social dumping in European waters.

An extensive question and answer session with the head of the European Commission's Maritime Transport Directorate left delegates with the clear impression that they would have to fight very hard to overcome the economic considerations which strongly influence the Commission's maritime decisions.

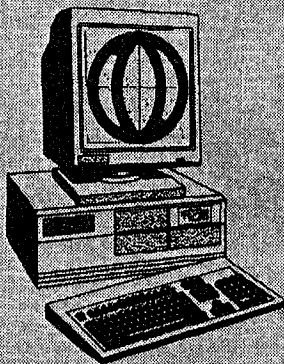
The session was preceded by a meeting of the ITF European Seafarers' Regional Committee, which prepared its position on the ITF benchmark. ■

# Campaigning on the Internet

**Global trade union organisations can be slow-moving giants but when it comes to the Internet, the ITF is ahead of the race.**

**The ITF is now launching itself into cyberspace to make its flag of convenience campaign more effective, especially by freeing ITF Inspectors from having to fit in with office hours at the Head Office in London.**

**Anita Fors of the Swedish Seafarers' Union magazine Sjömannen attended the recent ITF seminar at which the new system was unveiled. Here she reports on its significance for the ITF.**



*The strength of the ITF's new system is that we can catch the master and the owner out if they try to deceive us about negotiations and agreements. I can check out what they say directly. The ITF system will tell me whether there is an agreement!*

**Jatta Mollanen,  
ITF Inspector,  
Finland**

"THIS is a totally new way of using the Internet. I can't think of any other organisation that has done anything like it. Generally people use the Internet to advertise themselves and to seek information from other Internet users. At the same time you could say that we are going back to the original idea behind the Internet - that of holding an organisation together. It's ideal for a global organisation like the ITF."

So says Colin Anstey, ITF Computer Services Manager. And what he is talking about is the ITF's new "Vessels System". This is a computerised system which has been developed to link up ITF Inspectors around the world and to make it more difficult for flag of convenience shipowners to give the ITF the slip anywhere on the world's oceans.

The Internet is the tool that makes all this possible.

Anstey continues: "It is information that underpins the work of an ITF Inspector. Until now they have had to ring head office during office hours to ask for help in searching out the information they need. From now on Inspectors will be able to look up a ship on the system by themselves 24 hours a day, seven days a week."

What information is there on the ITF's campaign database? Bruno de Bonis, Special Seafarers Department Secretary, answers.

"Any ship we have ever had anything to do with has been entered on the system. That is just about every FOC ship. The database in-

cludes information about the owner, any previous or recent court judgements, crew size and nationality, ship inspections and so on.

"An Inspector's notepad is also a feature of the Vessels System. Inspectors can write reports of their ship inspections and these are linked to the ship concerned. We are ready for action no matter what port in the world a ship puts in to.

"The more the system is used the better it will become. What we are building up is a truly amazing intelligence system. We will also be able to collate reliable statistics from the system."

Work on the Vessels System began 18 months ago. This was day one - any ship of interest to the ITF at that date was included and the amount of information in the system has grown quickly since then.

During the past six months the Vessels System has been checked out by three ITF Inspectors who have helped pinpoint its weak points. Their experience of using the system has enabled the ITF to polish and improve it. Dutch Inspector Ruud Touwen was one of the three 'test pilots'. "The strength of the system lies in the reporting system that is linked to it," says Touwen.

"Naturally we used to send in reports before too but we weren't able to read other Inspectors' reports on a ship. Now I can find out what they have been able to do and what they haven't been able to do, and what there is still to be done. The system is a good one, and can only get better the more people actually use it," he adds.

The first to take to the network are the Inspectors in northern Europe, who were hooked up to the Internet at the end of April. Expectations are high.

"It's an excellent idea," says one of the ITF's three Swedish inspectors, Johan Skottborn. "We get information much faster, we update it ourselves, and there are fewer risks of misinterpretation. We have access to comprehensive information, before we only got the information we asked for. And we can make direct contact with other Inspectors by e-mail, which will make it much easier to maintain regular contact between Inspectors."

Jatta Mollanen from Finland adds: "The strength of the ITF's new system is that we can catch the master and the owner out if they try to deceive us about negotiations and agreements. I can check out what they say directly. The ITF system will tell me whether there is an agreement." ■

## Vietnamese stand firm for victory

TWENTY Vietnamese seafarers on a Greek-owned tanker refused to be bought off when given only some of the wages owed to them. With the help of the ITF they insisted on their full back pay – and as a result won over \$70,000 in cash.

The crew of the Panamanian-flag *Adriatic Prestige* called on the services of ITF Inspector Nils Pedersen on arrival in Porsgrunn, Norway, in May, explaining that strike action taken by them in Tenerife, Spain, had resulted in 40 per cent of their wages being paid to them by the owners, Adriatic Tankers.

Now they wanted the rest of the money they had



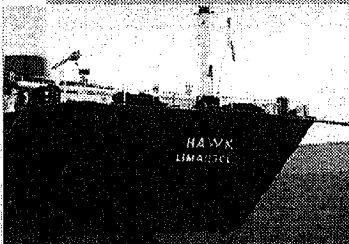
■ Victory signs from the crew of the *Adriatic Prestige*, with ITF Inspector Nils Pedersen in the middle.

earned since December and were prepared to go on strike again to get it.

Within a few days \$70,713, the full amount which was owed to them under the terms of their ITF agreement,

arrived on board in cash, and the jubilant crew members were repatriated to Vietnam. Their places have been taken by British officers and Polish ratings. ■

### In brief



#### Caught in Denmark

■ Two Cypriot-flag ships were caught by the ITF in the Danish port of Aarhus in successive months and forced to make hefty backpay settlements totalling nearly \$180,000 and sign ITF agreements. In June, the 29-strong Filipino crew of the *Hawk* (above) won \$60,999 after the ship was visited by ITF Inspector John Jacobsen. He found that the Greek-based owners, Oceanfocus Shipping, were paying seafarers less than International Labour Organisation minimum rates. In the previous month the owners of the *Sea Esquaro*, Dorabella Marina, of Greece, paid \$118,661 to the ship's Filipino crew of 21, again following an inspection by Jacobsen.

#### Filipinos win \$38,000

■ ITF action in the Swedish port of Gothenburg in June resulted in \$38,000 in backpay for the 16 Filipino crew members of the *Spring Panda* and an ITF collective agreement for the ship, which is Dutch-owned and registered in the Netherlands Antilles. ITF Inspector Peter Christoph found that the crew were on individual employment contracts, a state of affairs which he soon put right in negotiations with the owner.

#### Topaz crew waits

■ Four ex-crew members of the Antigua-flag *Topaz* – three Polish ratings and a German engineer – have yet to receive the \$35,000 owed to them, despite a court order obtained by the ITF in March against Horst Mussohl, managing director of the German shipping company Saruno Schiffahrt. Mussohl has lodged an appeal.

## Strike retrieves five months wages

### ITF German Co-ordinator Hans Kretlow describes how a Vietnamese crew extracted backpay from Adriatic Tankers

A STRIKE by the 13-strong Vietnamese crew of a Panamanian-registered ship which docked in Germany at the end of May succeeded in winning five months wages owed to them.

The chemical tanker *Stainless Commander* was also stopped from unloading and leaving port because of its atrocious state and the threat it posed to the environment.

It is perhaps a miracle that the ship survived the voyage from Varna, Bulgaria, to Wilhelmshaven.

On arrival in the port the crew went on strike at the berth of the chemical firm EVC, formerly ICI. Before docking, a call for assistance was received at the ITF office in Bremen.

The authorities were alerted to the ship's state through the strike – with banners hanging on the side of the ship declaring "We need help from the ITF" and "No money, no work". Port state inspectors discovered a long list of security defects on board the ship carrying 6,300 tons of ethyldichloride.

The condition of the tanker – which carries chemicals which can cause cancer – was so bad that the authorities automatically prevented the ship from unloading and ordered it to be towed away.

Later that day the tanker was towed by four ships away from the loading bay and the city.



■ In gratitude to the ITF the Vietnamese crew of the *Stainless Commander* presented a signed banner thanking the ITF.

During this manoeuvre the main engine was not used due to the potential risk of an explosion. A pilot had to be placed on board the ship 24 hours because of security risks.

Fellow ITF Inspector Ali Memon and I were shocked by what we saw. We have plenty of experience of flag of convenience ships, but the *Stainless Commander* was something special.

It is unbelievable that in November 1994 the classification society Det Norske Veritas in Alexandria renewed all certificates for this ship.

After the wage demands for the seafarers were calculated, contact was established with the shipowner, Adriatic Tankers, of Piraeus, Greece. The company was asked to pay \$60,000 immediately and to organise the repatriation of the crew, otherwise the strike would continue indefinitely. By the evening of 1 June the first instalment of \$32,000 was brought on board by an agent from Hamburg. The seafarers interrupted their strike and started to carry out repairs on the following day. It was agreed that the remaining sum of \$34,000 would be brought on board on the same day, or the strike would be resumed. At 22.45 the money was finally on board.

With the agreement of the seafarers it was agreed that they would remain on board until 14 June (their wages being paid until this time) and that they would be repatriated at the expense of the shipowner. ■

# Early success in cruiseship campaign

PAY increases of 32 per cent have been won for a cruiseship crew in the first action taken by the ITF following the decision earlier this year to target the cruise sector as part of the campaign against flags of convenience.

The beneficiaries are the mainly Ukrainian crew of CTC Cruise Line's *Southern Cross*, which was visited by ITF Inspector Ruud Touwen in Amsterdam. He found the wage levels to be unacceptable, and warned the employer, Monaco-based V-Ships, that the pay rates had to be improved.

By the time the Bahamas-registered vessel returned to Amsterdam, it emerged that V-Ships was in negotiations with ITF-affiliated transport union FIT/CISL. However, proper ITF-approved rates had still not been agreed, so the crew – following discussions with Touwen – issued

a threat to take strike action.

The new pay scales, effective from 1 June plus back pay totalling \$35,365, were eventually agreed in June in talks in Rome between the employer, Touwen and Remo di Fiore of FIT/CISL.

Touwen afterwards visited the crew in Amsterdam, and found them very grateful for what the ITF had done for them. "They could not believe that we were able to succeed in this way," he told ITF News.

The ITF Cruiseship Campaign Steering Committee met in Vancouver, Canada, in May and decided to renew efforts to include cruiseships in the FOC campaign. Among tactics to be used are "information picketing", in which passengers will be alerted to the record of certain cruiseship employers. ■



■ The *Southern Cross*, first target of the ITF's cruiseship campaign.



■ A new leaflet has been published by the ITF to accompany the cruiseship campaign.

## ITF pay for Estonians

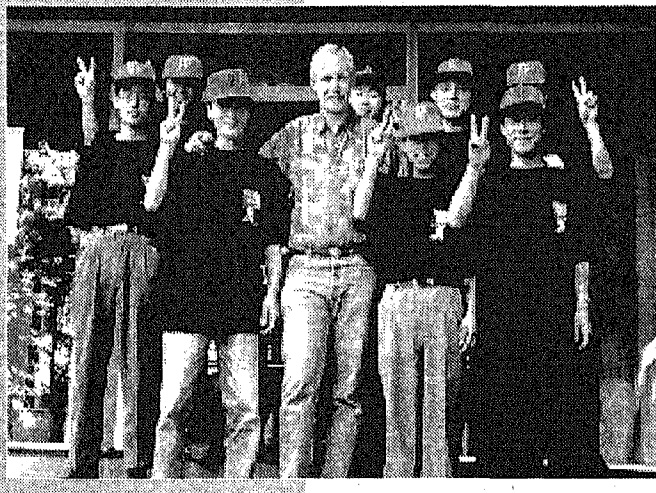
A TOTAL of \$61,901 was secured by the ITF for the Estonian crew of a Maltese-flag vessel which called at the Danish port of Køge late in May after local ITF Inspector Kjartan Gudmundsson discovered that they were not being paid in accordance with the ship's ITF standard agreement.

A routine inspection by Gudmundsson found that there were no wage accounts for the crew of the *Birta*. Nor were there any records of overtime and leave pay – despite the fact that the ship was covered by an ITF agreement.

Individual crew members confirmed that

they were only receiving basic rates of pay, and five of the seven Estonians on board – plus a Spanish master and Finnish chief officer – signed powers of attorney authorising the ITF to negotiate with the Helsinki office of their employer, Hansabella, to recover the money owed to them. Meanwhile dockers in the port, who are members of the local branch of the ITF-affiliated SiD general workers' union, began a boycott of the vessel.

The dispute was settled on the next day with the arrival of the outstanding money, plus the cost of repatriating two of the crew who had requested to return home to Tallinn. ■



■ The Chinese crew of the Panamanian-flag *Ocean Breeze 1*, donning ITF caps and T-shirts, were in jubilant mood after ITF Inspector Ruud Touwen, pictured centre, won them \$21,040 in backpay, plus free repatriation, from their Greek employers, Adriatic Tankers. The ship was arrested in the Dutch port of Schiedam after the crew complained to the ITF that they had not been paid for the five months they had been on board. The boycott was lifted early in May after the company agreed to meet the backpay claim in full.



■ Four of the *Birta*'s Estonian crew members say thanks after the ITF-negotiated settlement.

# Deregulation is bad for your health and safety



■ Deregulation and port privatisation worldwide mean that dock workers will now be calling on seafarers to give support.

## Now we need solidarity

A RISE in union busting activity among stevedoring companies in ports worldwide was reported by union leaders at the ITF Dockers' Section meeting held in London in June.

A direct result of privatisation and restructuring, this alarming trend has produced a big increase in the number of non-organised ports the world over, thus posing great threats to all ITF-affiliated dockers' unions.

Addressing the meeting, ITF General Secretary David Cockroft pointed out that the Dockers' Section had been at the heart of the organisation's industrial strength.

It was also the case, he added, that when other groups of workers requested solidarity gestures from the ITF – for example, by boycotting certain goods – it was generally from the dockers.

"And usually, the dockers lend their support, without question," Cockroft said. "But now things are changing on the waterfronts, as a result of privatisation and deregulation, and it is the dockers now who need support from other industrial sections."

Specifically, the dockers' sec-

tion is seeking solidarity action from the seafarers' section, of the sort that dockers have always lent seafarers.

The cargo-handling clause, which aims to limit the amount and kinds of dock work carried out by seafarers, is just such an area where supportive action might be required, and a resolution was approved concerning the development of a campaign to explain and enforce the clause.

But still more needs to be done, and dockers are, for instance, calling on seafarers to refuse to take ships into non-union ports. Port workers realise, of course, that this is difficult to obtain, but even among dock worker unions, they say, new and innovative methods of offering support in acts of international solidarity need to be developed and carried out.

Lastly, the General Secretary mentioned that, in line with the Secretariat's intention of intensifying the FOC campaign, dockers would be called upon for continued support.

But serious efforts would also be made to find ways of strengthening solidarity for the dockers. ■

FIGURES released in June from the UK's Ports' Safety Organisation (PSO) reveal that accident rates among British port workers have risen since the demise in 1989 of the National Dock Labour Scheme (NDLS).

The PSO is an independent ports industry body, set up in 1993 following the breakdown of the employers' organisation, the British Ports Federation, and its latest survey confirms the fact that deregulation has markedly lowered the industry's health and safety record.

Dockers, now termed "cargo handlers", suffered 5.2 accidents per 1,000 immediately following the end of the NDLS (1990), whereas 1993 figures show an accident rate of 7.2 per 1,000.

It is reported that the industry, trade unions and the government's Health and Safety Executive are attempting to tackle the problem through improved education and training.

A PSO official said that the main factors responsible for the worsening safety record were the loss of experienced dockers and their replacement by young and untrained staff, as well as the increased use of casual labour by ports.

Design deficiencies in container ships are also cited as imposing a safety risk for dock workers, who are often forced to work high container stacks without safety equipment such as guard rails or harnesses.

ITF Dockers' Section Secretary Kees Marges noted that the UK statistics serve as a warning to unions, employers and authorities in ports worldwide of the dire consequences of deregulation.

"Taking measures afterwards is not enough," he insisted. ■

### In brief

#### Sunday work in Japan

■ Two of Japan's leading dockers' unions, Zenkowan (the National Dock Workers' Union Council of Japan), and the Japanese Confederation of Ports and Transport Workers' Unions have agreed for the first time in three years to limited weekend stevedoring at six of the country's container ports. In return, management will continue to discuss improvements to working conditions. Dockers are restricted to working no more than two Sundays a month, for which they will receive two days off per month.

#### Pensions deal

■ The Indian government has accepted the recommendations of a pay commission to provide improved pension benefits to port and dock workers, a decision that will benefit around 60,000 retired workers from 11 major ports. The settlement was arrived at in May between the All India Port and Dock Workers' Federation and the government in New Delhi. Increased benefits will be paid from January 1986.



ITF joins successful protest against oil giant's plan

# No to dumping

THE ITF has welcomed the decision by the Shell oil company in June not to dump a huge floating oil installation, the Brent Spar, in the Atlantic and thereby pollute the marine environment and north Atlantic fisheries.

The ITF joined several European governments in protesting to Shell UK and to the British government for approving the disposal of the offshore loading facility at sea.

The Anglo-Dutch multinational company was forced to abandon the dumping plan in the face of this international opposition and, particularly in Denmark and Germany, a consumer boycott of Shell petrol stations.

Much of the campaign which turned public opinion against Shell was organised by the environmental pressure group Greenpeace, whose activists also twice occupied the platform – first in the North Sea and then while it was being towed to the proposed dumping ground north west of Scotland.

On behalf of the ITF Peter Sand Mortensen of the Danish SiD transport union wrote to the European Union Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, Emma Bonino, as well as the Danish government urging them to put pressure on Shell and the British government to reverse the company's plans.

"The decision to permit dumping of the Brent Spar will lead to the leakage of large amounts of oil, poison and radioactive waste into the sea, to the great detriment of the already limited resources on which the fishermen try to make ends meet," he told Bonino.

The 14,500 ton Brent Spar was used by Shell as an oil storage installation in the UK sector of the North Sea from 1976 until 1991. It is one of the installations to come to the end of its working life and its method of disposal is therefore seen as a precedent for the rest of the North sea oil industry.

Before Shell's last-minute decision to opt for land disposal of the Brent Spar, it was feared that up to 50 more offshore installations – out of a total of over 200 in the North Sea – might subsequently have been approved by the UK and Norway for dumping at sea.

Critics of Shell pointed out that dumping would have released 50 tons of oil sludge into the sea, along with 30 tons of radioactive waste (a by-product of oil production), 13.8 tons of zinc, 13.5 tons of copper and smaller amounts of cadmium, titanium, arsenic, chromium, lead, nickel and mercury.

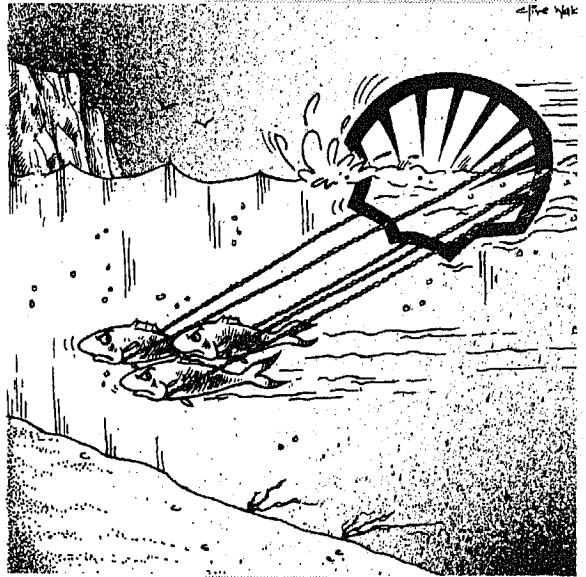
The installation has now been towed to a deep-sea berth in Norway pending a final decision by Shell on how to dispose of the Brent Spar. Already the German port of Wilhelmshaven has put in a preliminary offer to dismantle the installation, and Norwegian shipyards are also said to be interested in the disposal contract.

Even after its dramatic change of mind, Shell was insisting that, according to independent experts, deep sea disposal would have been the best practicable environmental option for the Brent Spar. This view was strongly contested by Greenpeace, which said that dumping would have been in breach of the Oslo Convention on the prevention of pollution by dumping from ships and aircraft.

Meanwhile the ITF said that Shell was bound by the international standard set by the Geneva Convention on the Continental Shelf in 1958, requiring that "any installations which are abandoned or disused must be entirely removed".

The ITF also asked the British government to follow the example set by the United States government, which insists on the total removal of abandoned or disused offshore structures.

Both the British and Norwegian governments say they will take a "case by case" approach to dismantling offshore structures, including the disposal at sea option. ■



## In brief

### Icelandic strike

■ A strike by 6,000 Icelandic fishery workers organised by the ITF's Icelandic fishing affiliates was called off on 15 June after a renewed collective agreement met the unions' demands. The strike, which lasted 22 days, was called to secure an agreement on the price of fish, leave between fishing trips and sharing the cost of fuel. A committee of representatives from the unions, employers and an independent chair will now determine the price of fish sold outside the fish market system.

### Extinction threat

■ Some North Sea fish stocks face extinction because governments have failed to live up to plans to protect the marine environment, the International Conference on the Protection of the North Sea, in London, was told in June. Only some of the nine countries bordering the North Sea had halved damaging effluents, as required to do by the 1990 conference. Even more stringent controls were now needed, they insisted – a view shared by the ITF representative at the conference, Peter Sand Mortensen of the SiD Danish transport union.

THE International Whaling Commission (IWC), meeting in Dublin, Ireland, in June, moved closer to an all-out worldwide ban on whaling.

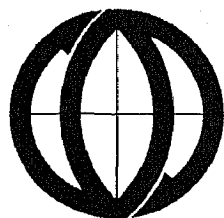
The Commission condemned Norway for continuing to hunt commercially, and put further pressure on Japan to stop all whaling, refusing Japan's request to resume small-scale commercial whaling in its coastal waters.

## ITF concern at whaling ban

Norway, which opposed the IWC 1982 moratorium on commercial whaling, signalled that it may pull out of the organisation, leaving Japan as the only pro-whaling member of the body.

Jan Skrede, who represented the ITF Fishermen's

Section at the meeting (the ITF has observer status in the body), expressed alarm at the direction in which the IWC is moving, noting that its current work is in direct violation of its own constitution. He referred to the ITF whaling policy, which "calls on the IWC to abide by its constitution and address the issue of managing the whale stocks solely on scientific criteria". ■



## Vacancy: ITF Librarian

As a consequence of the move to a new HQ building, the ITF is recreating a central library. A new position, the Librarian, is therefore being created. The Librarian will be responsible for building up a library/information centre of books, periodicals, video cassettes, CD-Roms etc. using appropriate classification and indexing schemes.

The successful candidate will have responsibility for the ITF library/information centre, working under the supervision of the Communications Department.

S/he will have a key role in the planning and delivery of library/information services to ITF sections and departments, transport trade unions and other interested bodies. S/he will have good organisational and administrative skills and be committed to promoting and developing the use of the ITF library/information centre as a resource for a wide range of users.

A professional qualification in librarianship or information science is required and the candidate should have experience of subject indexing and classification. Experience of electronic retrieval systems is essential, and a commitment to the aims and objectives of the trade union movement and a knowledge of international organisations is highly desirable.

S/he will have complete fluency in English, together with a high degree of proficiency in at least one other of the ITF's official languages: French, German, Japanese, Spanish and Swedish.

Salary is on an incremental scale, ranging from UKE20,000 to UKE26,000.

The ITF is an equal opportunities employer and the conditions of employment include a 35-hour flexible week, contributory pension scheme and 22-30 days' annual leave on an incremental scale.

Applicants should apply in writing, enclosing their curriculum vitae, by September 15, 1995 to: Desmond Reid, ITF Administration Officer 133-135 Great Suffolk Street, London SE1 1PD

## ITF NEWS

Please note that the English language version of ITF News is the first of the various language editions to be published. Affiliated unions who are on the mailing list to receive non-English editions can also be sent an advance copy or copies in English in order to familiarise themselves with the stories to appear in their translated edition.

In addition, unions can, on request, be sent advance pages of the English language ITF News by fax or electronic mail if required for translation or other immediate use.

Requests to be placed on the English language mailing list should be sent to the ITF Communications Department. See the inside back page for Head Office details.

## OBITUARIES

### Ricardo Pérez

FORMER ITF Vice President Ricardo M Pérez, who retired as ITF Road Transport Workers' Section Chair at the 37th ITF Congress in Geneva last year, died suddenly in the night of 24/25 June.

Pérez was for many years General Secretary of the Argentinian Road Transport Workers' Federation, retiring at the union's congress in late 1992 and acting as the union's adviser on international affairs after his retirement.

His long and close links with the ITF go back to the mid-1970s when he was elected on to the Committee of the Road Transport Workers' Section. He soon made his mark and at the 1983 Madrid Congress was formally endorsed as one of the Latin American members of the ITF's Executive Board, serving for a single term until the 1986 Congress.

At the 1990 Florence Congress he was back again on the Board and the respect he had won as a trade union leader in Argentina won him election as the ITF's Latin American Vice President. The Road Transport Workers' Section also voted him in as their Section Chair.

ITF General Secretary David Cockroft adds this tribute: "The sudden death of Ricardo Pérez is a deep loss for everyone in the ITF and most of all for the transport workers of Argentina and Latin America. He was deeply respected for his honesty and his dedication to the cause of workers' rights by everyone with whom he came into contact. A great internationalist, who was always capable of understanding other countries' problems as well as those of Argentina, Ricardo was one of the ITF's most effective and loyal friends." ❧

### Albert Bousser

ALBERT Bousser, President emeritus of the Luxembourg Federation of Railway and Transport Workers FNCITFEL, died on 2 May, aged 89.

One of grand duchy's most prominent union leaders in the postwar period, Bousser served as General Secretary from 1945 to 1954 when he

succeeded Miez Leick as President. For the next 10 years he led the union, steering it successfully through a very difficult period, resigning in 1964 to become Minister of Transport. ❧

### Matthew Guinan

MATTHEW Guinan, President from 1966 to 1979 of the Transport Workers' Union of America and the last of the TWU leaders jailed during the 1966 New York City transit strike, has died in New York, aged 84.

Irish by birth, Guinan emigrated to the United States as a young man just before the depression and got a job as a trolley car operator.

A passionate advocate of mass transit - he once said public transport should be free, paid for out of taxes - Guinan was soon busy organising New York transit workers into the union in the 1930s.

By the 1940s he had become a full time organiser with Local 100 and in 1948 took office at national level, as International Vice President.

In 1952, Guinan became the union's first International Executive Vice President and three years later Secretary-Treasurer, before finally taking office as national President. ❧

### Au-Yeung Ming

AU-YEUNG Ming, General Secretary of the Hong Kong Amalgamated Union of Seafarers, died on 1 June. ❧

### Jan Skrede

FISHERMEN'S Section Vice Chair Jan Skrede, who was in charge of the Norwegian Seafarers' Union office in Ålesund, died on 10 July, aged 58, after a short illness.

A former fisherman, who first went to sea in 1953 and later became a skipper, Jan was a union representative on board in the fishing fleet almost from the very start.

Jan played a leading role in the ITF Fishermen's Section for many years, helping forge ITF policy as Vice Chair of the Section, a post he has held ever since he was first elected at the 1980 Miami Congress. ❧

## Forthcoming ITF meetings

- **Latin American Seafarers' Regional Committee, Cartagena, 29-30 August**
- **Latin American Fisheries Seminar, Cartagena, 31 August-1 September**
- **Cruise Ship Working Party, Montreal, 6 September**
- **Cruise Ship Committee, Montreal, 7-8 September**
- **Civil Aviation Steering Committee, London, 6-7 September**
- **Asia/Pacific Dockers' Meeting, Tokyo, 7-8 September**
- **European Ferry Conference, Athens, 2-3 October**
- **European Fisheries Regional Committee, Kaliningrad, 3-4 October**
- **Education Working Party, London, 16 October**
- **Executive Board meeting, London, 17-18 October**
- **Latin American Trainers' Seminar, Costa Rica, 30 October-3 November**
- **Latin American Trainers' Seminar, Brazil, 6-10 November**
- **Asia/Pacific Railwayworkers' Seminar, Kuala Lumpur, 7-9 November**
- **Asia/Pacific Inland Navigation Seminar, Calcutta, 7-8 November**
- **Latin American Trainers' Seminar, Uruguay, 13-17 November**
- **North American Civil Aviation Regional Committee, Washington, 29-30 November**

## Spanish shootings condemned

### 25 YEARS AGO

THE underground system in Madrid was virtually paralysed at the end of last month when its workers came out on strike. The men were acting in support of their claims for a basic wage of £1.15s per day for a 40-hour week; speedier negotiations on a collective labour agreement; and the right to form their own free trade union.

The strike had to be called off when the government threatened to draft the strikers into the army if they did not return to work.

The Spanish capital is also threatened by a strike of municipal bus workers who have said that they will stop work if their demands are not met soon.

The underground strike was just one in a wave of strikes which hit Spain after police in Granada opened fire on striking construction workers who

were demonstrating in front of the official trade union building, killing three demonstrators and injuring many others.

Numerous arrests were also made. The workers were protesting against the delay by the government-controlled Sindicatos trade unions in concluding a new works contract.

In a statement issued on 22 July, the day after the shootings the General Secretary of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Harm G Buijer, expressed the sympathy of the free trade union movement with the relatives of the victims.

He declared: "These brutal shootings, which amount to cold-blooded murder, show the lengths the Franco dictatorship is prepared to go to in trying to suppress the ever-growing opposition of the working class."

■ **ITF Newsletter, August 1970.**

## How the ITF survived in wartime

### 50 YEARS AGO

THE leaders of the ITF early realised that the steady growth of fascism, unless checked, was bound to lead to war, and while carrying on constant propaganda designed to awaken the working class to a consciousness of the danger, they laid plans to ensure that, come what might, the international work of the organisation should continue.

Mindful of what happened during the First World War, when all ITF files were in Berlin, and out of reach, they sent complete sets of all important papers and documents from the office in Amsterdam to Sweden, England and Canada, so that they should be available for use in any of the many possibilities that could be foreseen. And when war became imminent, arrangements were made to divide the staff into four groups and send one each to London, Paris, Stockholm, while a

fourth remained in Amsterdam to look after affairs there.

In the event, circumstances made it necessary to abandon the plan to open an office in Stockholm, and the groups in Paris and Amsterdam were eventually moved to England, where the chief office has been throughout the war.

Thanks to this foresight the work of the ITF has never been interrupted for an instant and the amount of practical trade union work has certainly been no less than in any similar period in the past, though owing to the changed circumstances there was necessarily a shifting of emphasis. The vital importance of shipping in the effort to overthrow the fascist powers led to more attention than usual being devoted to seamen's affairs.

■ **The International Transport Workers' Journal, May/June 1945.**

## ITF

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**FROM THE  
LABOUR PRESS**

Seafarers Log  
(Seafarers  
International  
Union, USA),  
May 1995

# Runaway shipowner abandons crew

MOST people would think it unconscionable for a shipowner to abandon his vessel and strand his crew members thousands of miles from their homes. But such shameful actions are all too common among shipowners who operate their vessels under runaway flags.

One recent example of this despicable system is the ordeal of a stranded, multinational crew of the Greek-owned, Cyprus-flag bulk freighter *Taxiarchis*. Last June, 17 crew members from the *Taxiarchis* were marooned in Virginia's Tidewater area by the shipowner Kent Trading Corporation of Piraeus. The seamen spent eight months living on the arrested vessel, then were kicked off the ship when a US court forced the heavily indebted owner to sell the *Taxiarchis*.

Comprised of citizens from Pakistan, Romania, Guatemala, Honduras, Greece and the Philippines, the crew spent the next two months living in donated hotel rooms in Newport News, Virginia.

Through the tireless assistance of the International Seamen's Friend house in Newport News, as well as the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) and other groups, including the SIU (Seafarers International Union) and the Hampton Roads Port Council of the AFL-CIO Maritime Trades Department, the crew members received aid to survive winter on the inoperable ship, as well as legal counsel, airfare back home to their respective countries (they flew home on 15 April) and other assistance.

Alice Reese Thomas, director of the Seamen's Friend house, a non-profit, church-funded organisation, said she was both saddened and angered about the way the *Taxiarchis* crew members were deserted.

"It's criminal, the way those men were treated. Some of them had deaths in their families but couldn't return home," says Thomas, who has worked at the centre for 13 years. "The seamen were little more than indentured slaves."

*'It's criminal, the way those men were treated. Some of them had deaths in their families but couldn't return home...the seamen were little more than indentured slaves.'*

FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE  
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DE LOS TRABAJADORES DEL TRANSPORTE

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TRANSPORTARBETAREFEDERATIONEN

國際運輸勞連

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TRANSPORTARBEITER-FÖDERATION

