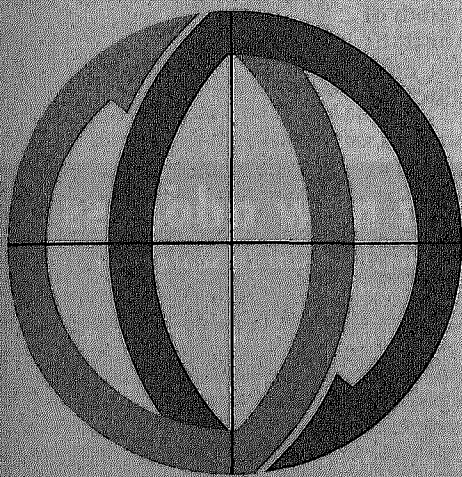


ITF

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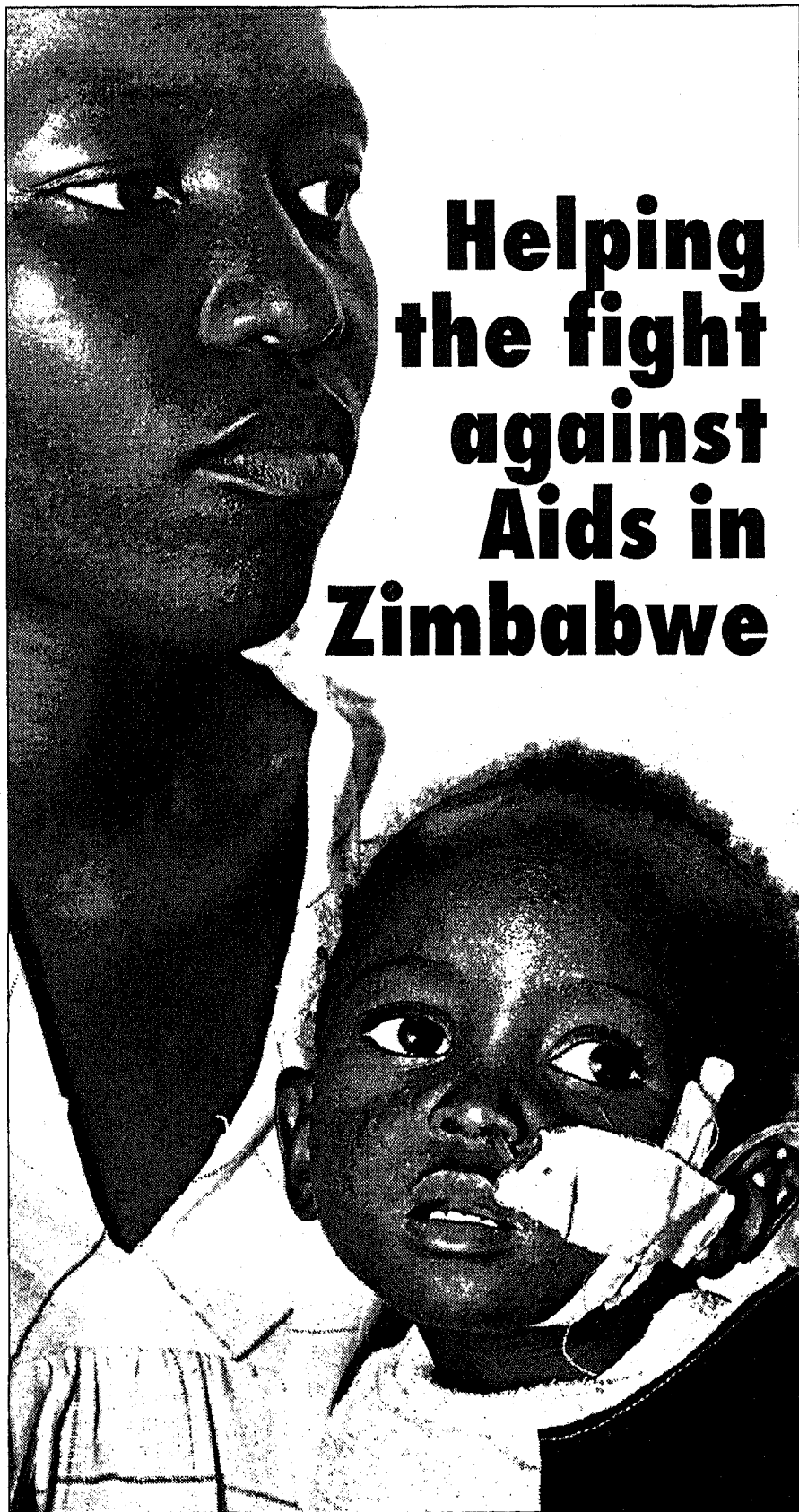
October 1995

No. 7



**INTERNATIONAL
TRANSPORT
WORKERS
FEDERATION**

**INFORMATIONS
NOTICIAS
NYHETER
情報
NACHRICHTEN**



**Helping
the fight
against
Aids in
Zimbabwe**

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ITF News is produced at ITF Head Office by the Communications Department. Send contributions by fax: ■ +44 (171) 407 0319 or via the Internet: ■ comms@itf.org.uk

Focus on Indonesia

MANY Indonesian workers receive between US\$1 and \$3 a day, work in poor labour conditions and are denied rights to form trade unions of their own choosing, according to a review of the current labour situation in Indonesia.

Entitled "Prisoners of Progress" and co-produced by the International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development, the FNV Netherlands Trade Union Confederation and the Indonesian Documentation Centre (INDOC), the report describes how workers participating in strikes are frequently dismissed or forced by security forces to sign their own letters of resignation. Women workers are abused and harassed and the Ministry of Manpower refuses to investigate these abuses. There have even been several cases of trade unionists disappearing in mysterious circumstances.

One out of every 10 children between the ages 10 and 14 years is working in the industrial and informal sector, estimated to total 2.3 to 2.9 million. Due to the lack of income and employment opportunities in Indonesia hundreds of thousands of Indonesians work overseas in "dirty, difficult and dangerous jobs" the review adds.

GLOBAL ROUND-UP

■ The report on Indonesian workers, "Prisoners of Progress", is available from: INDOC, PO Box 11250, 2301 EG Leiden, the Netherlands; fax: +31 (71) 127 233; e-mail: indoc@antenna.nl.

We have a new address

PLEASE note that, effective from 18 September, the ITF head office has moved to:

■ 49/60 Borough Road, London SE1 1DS ■

Telephone, fax, telex and e-mail numbers are unaffected by the move and remain exactly the same as before. The new, larger premises, which are only a few minutes walk away from the previous office in Great Suffolk Street and the annex in Borough High Street, can accommodate the entire head office Secretariat.

■ Yasumasa Yatomi retired from the presidency of the All-Japan Municipal Transport Workers' Union (TOSHIKO) at the union's 60th annual congress in July. Yatomi, who is a member of the Committees of the ITF Railwaymen's and Road Transport Workers' Sections and of the Urban Transport Committee and Sub-Committee on Transport Policy, will continue to serve as chair of the Co-ordinating Committee of Japanese affiliates until the end of the year when his term of office expires. He is succeeded by Hideo Ueda, General Secretary for the past three years. New General Secretary is Shun-ichi Suzuki, a former TOSHIKO Central Executive Committee member who has been with the Rengo trade union confederation since 1989. Tokuju Furuya resigned as Vice President on his election to the presidency of TOSHIKO affiliate, the Yokohama Municipal Transport Workers' Union, and was replaced by Koji Nakagawa.



■ The Swedish Salaried Employees' Union (HTF) has a new President. He is Holger Eriksson (left) who took over earlier in the year as Acting President following the resignation of Lars Hellman. The new Vice President is Sten Persson, who was formerly union Secretary.

■ Jes Bertelsen has resigned as President of the Danish Railwaymen's Association (Jernbaneforeningen) to return to a job with the Danish State Railways. New President, elected unopposed at an extraordinary delegate meeting

in June, is former Vice President Andreas Hasle. The union now has a woman Vice President, Gitte Terndrup.

PEOPLE

...from Japan, Sweden, Denmark and Britain

New face

■ Readers who have noticed that ITF News has been given a new look may be interested to know that the person responsible for the redesign is Jim Jump, former editor of The Seaman, the award-winning journal of the UK's National Union of Seamen (now part of the RMT rail and maritime union). Jim has now joined the staff of the Communications Department following a period of freelance work for the ITF.

All aboard, say Japanese unions

SIX hundred Japanese railway union members volunteered to take disabled people on a four-day rail trip in July to the mountain resort of Biei, one of the most beautiful locations in Japan.

It was the second year running that unions in the ITF-affiliated JRU rail federation organised such a trip. The 700 passengers travelled in four groups on a sleeper express service with facilities for the disabled.

JRU's Masakazu Takahashi says the annual event is helping to foster better understanding between rail workers and users.

"The unions' initiative has led to some positive changes in train construction by providing wheelchair facilities," he adds. "Japan lags behind in accommodation for the handicapped and it is essential that unions take the lead in demanding these measures." ■



■ Left: Rides on the mini steam locomotive (with a union engineer) proved a popular attraction on the union-organised outing.

■ Below: Rail union members and some of the disabled passengers enjoying the mountain scenery near Biei.



Anger as China and France defy world opinion

IN the face of worldwide condemnation, China conducted its second nuclear bomb test of the year on 17 August.

And on 5 September, the French went ahead with the first of a planned series of tests at the Pacific atoll of Mururoa.

Since June 1995, when China carried out the first of its latest tests and the French government announced plans to resume testing, trade union centres, including the Australian ACTU, Japanese RENGO, French CFDT, New Zealand NZCTU and others in the Pacific states, have decried these actions.

The Asia/Pacific Regional Executive Board meeting of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), held in Taiwan in August, unanimously adopted a resolution supporting union boycotts and industrial

ITF unions join N-test protests

actions against China and France.

ITF affiliates in Australia refused to handle French ships and aircraft. New Zealand unions started French product boycotts.

In Japan, affiliates staged demonstrations and joined mass rallies. ITF unions worldwide have sent protest letters. Series of campaigns in the Pacific culminated in early September as protest boats assembled near the testing waters and thousands of protesters took part in an international mass rally in Tahiti, the main island of French

Polynesia, where the test site is located.

The ICFTU states that the international trade union movement is against any forms of nuclear testing. Millions of hibakusha (radiation victims) exist today not only from the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki but also from numerous experiments and power plant accidents. Considerable negative environmental effects have also been produced.

Trade unions will continue to oppose the current hardliners of the nuclear club and pursue a full test ban. ■

■ In a circular to affiliates sent at the end of July, ITF General Secretary David Cockroft called on unions to protest against the French test decision by writing to Jacques Chirac. In a letter which he sent to the French President, Cockroft said: "I would very strongly urge you to reverse your decision to proceed with the nuclear testing, thus avoiding not only a series of negative ecological and environmental effects, but also averting the disastrous political consequences that a threat to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty by France could well cause."

"At the entrance I was confronted by six or seven security personnel who blocked my way. Within seconds three military people with rifles came running from the direction of the office building."

In brief

Training in Africa

■ West African ITF affiliates will soon be taking part in training courses run by educators from their own ranks after a pioneering training of trainers workshop held in Accra. Twenty trainees from unions in Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone attended the 10-day course – the first the ITF has run for African transport trade unionists – supervised by Regional Secretary Ben "Roxy" Udogwu and Asia/Pacific Assistant Regional Secretary Mahendra Sharma. A second course for Eastern and Southern Africa is planned later in the year.

US super union

■ Three of the largest unions in the United States, including the ITF-affiliate the International Association of Machinists, are to merge by the end of the century to create a powerful force of more than two million members. The new union, made up of the Machinists, the United Auto Workers and the United Steelworkers of America, will be the second biggest in the US. Leaders said the link would give them greater bargaining power and would spread costs. It is expected the merger will take up to five years to complete because of complicated ratification procedures, but coordinated collective bargaining will begin much earlier.

Fact-finding mission by ITF official
Union rights under attack in Turkey

SERIOUS violations of trade union rights in Turkey were discovered by Kees Marges, an ITF special representative sent on an emergency visit to investigate two cases of alleged abuse.

Workers belonging to the ITF-affiliated transport union, TÜMTIS, were found to have been attacked by armed police, beaten up and held in detention. Atılay Ayçin, president of the civil aviation union Hava-Is, was imprisoned in May under anti-terrorism laws. The ITF has joined the campaign for his release.

Marges, head of the ITF's dockers' section, visited the site where 140 workers were locked out by Inchcape Retrans, part of the British-based company Inchcape. The transport workers had been dismissed after refusing to give up union membership in a dispute over social security payments.

They were subsequently beaten by police when staging a sit-down protest and 63 members were detained overnight on 9 July. Police have been used on a number of occasions to remove protesters.

"I attempted to meet with management," said Marges following his visit on 1 August. "At the entrance I was confronted by six or seven security personnel who blocked my way. Within seconds three military people with rifles came running from the direction of the office

building." All requests for a meeting were refused.

In a separate dispute involving members of TÜMTIS at a warehouse complex at Izmir, about 200 sacked workers suffered attacks in February by the Küçükköy-Istanbul police. Six union leaders and 64 workers were arrested and kept in wet and dirty cells for 24 hours.

Investigation of the two disputes and a visit to Ayçin in prison convinced Marges that the labour position in Turkey was at variance with conditions in the European Community. Given moves to reach a landmark Turkey-EU trade agreement, he said attention need to be drawn to breaches of International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions.

"It is time to ask if the Turkish government really takes these issues seriously," he said. "Institutionalised repression – mass arrests of trade unionists, and torture while in custody, continue".

Reforms have been introduced in the past two months

to allow trade unions to participate in politics and state employees are to be given the right to collective bargaining. But public sector workers will still be prevented from going on strike and the potential for industrial action remains severely limited.

The ITF is hoping to organise a high-level delegation to meet the Turkish Prime Minister, Tansu Çiller, to draw attention to the anti-democratic effects of the country's anti-terrorism laws and to breaches of ILO conventions.

It is expected that the delegation will visit the European Parliament immediately after its mission to Turkey, before the Parliament discusses the implementation of the EU-Turkey trade agreement later this autumn.

■ Addressing the congress of the dock workers' union, LIMAN-IS, in July, Kees Marges warned that the whole international trade union movement was closely watching developments in Turkey. ■

Protests at Lesotho clampdown

THE ITF has put its full support behind the demand of the Lesotho Transport, Communications, Electrical and Allied Workers' Union for the withdrawal of Government plans to ban unions in the public sector.

Alpha Mojaki, general secretary of LTCEAU, said the proposed Public Service Bill contravened International Labour Organisation Convention 87 which upholds the right of free association. Lesotho ratified the convention in 1966. The bill also violates a number of articles of the constitution of Lesotho.

Six public sector unions in Lesotho, including LTCEAU, led a mass procession to present a petition to parliament in August. They believe the bill is the latest in a string

of attacks over the past 12 months aimed at suppressing democratic trade union activities.

Both David Cockroft, General Secretary of the ITF, and Andrew Kailembo, General Secretary of the African Regional Organisation of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in Nairobi, have protested to Ntsu Mokhehle, the Lesotho Prime Minister.

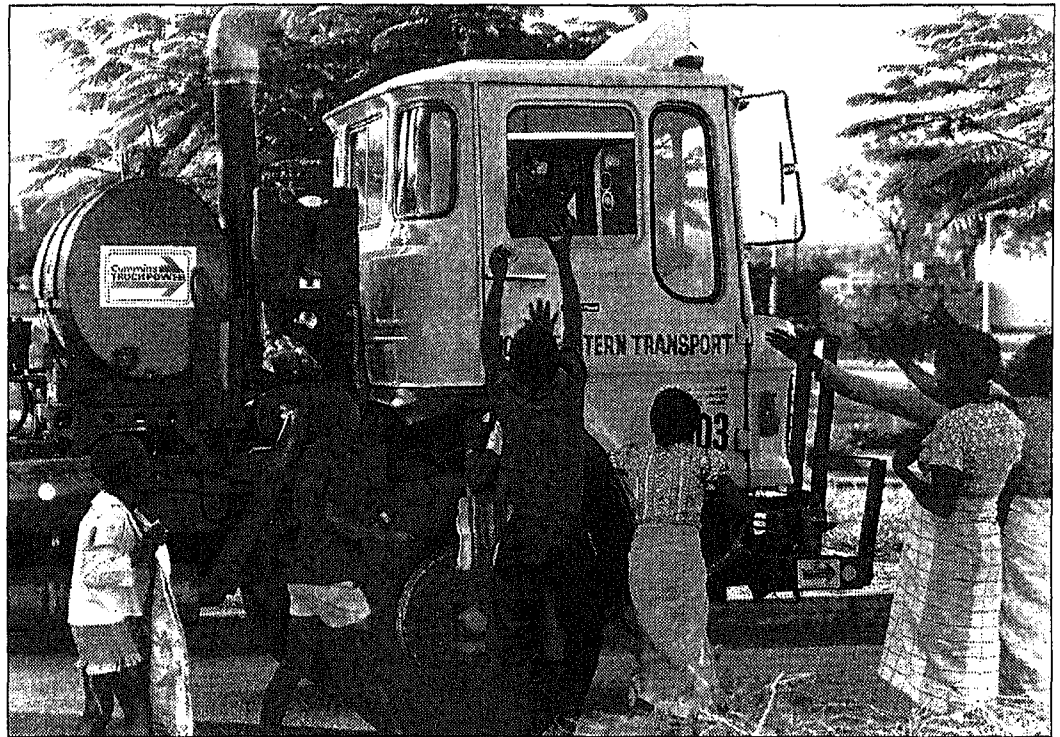
Kailembo said the trade union movement in Africa had played an important role in the campaign for democracy. "It is therefore a matter of regret that the current measures should be introduced by a democratically elected government," he said.

On behalf of the ITF, Cockroft said that all support would be given to LTCEAU, an affiliate, in its fight to protect the legitimate rights of workers in Lesotho. ■



Cover story

■ Long-distance drivers and their sexual partners (right) are identified as a high-risk infection group in the new ITF-backed initiative.



THE ITF is backing a new initiative in Zimbabwe against the Aids epidemic which is ravaging whole sections of society in the southern African country.

With full trade union support, the National Employment Council for the Transport Operating Industry (NECTOI) has decided to tackle the spread of Aids, and the HIV virus which causes it, among long distance transport personnel and their sexual partners along the main transport routes in Zimbabwe.

The NECTOI is composed of representatives from the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union and both employer groups, the Transport Operators' Association and the Zimbabwe Rural Transport Organisation. It covers 1,200 transport operators and some 70,000 workers.

Employers as well as the long distance truck drivers are the focus of the education and prevention policies of the programme.

The first phase is already under way, with over 100 companies introducing prevention schemes and more than 200 "peer health edu-

Drivers are targeted in new campaign in Zimbabwe

cators" trained to spread the word among those at risk of contracting the disease.

The NECTOI has also appointed a qualified Health and Adult Education Officer and Nursing Sister as Aids Co-ordinator and established a sub-committee responsible for the project.

ITF African Regional Secretary Ben "Roxy" Udogwu has strongly welcomed the initiative, which, he says, "will not only significantly reduce the spread of HIV/Aids in Zimbabwe but should also be copied by other countries".

Phase two of the programme will focus directly on the long distance drivers and their sexual partners. It will:

- identify the stopping places for drivers on all main roads in Zimbabwe,
- arrange an initial visit to sites in order to mobilise community leaders, hotel and service station staff and commercial sex workers,
- motivate the target audience to change any high risk behaviour,
- recruit and train a minimum of five educators at each project site,
- promote condom usage among those with multiple sexual partners.

The NECTOI estimates that over 500,000 people will benefit from their intervention programme, including drivers, assistants and their families. The University of Zimbabwe is providing technical assistance, and the programme is also receiving strong support from the National Aids Co-ordinating Programme of the Ministry of Health in Zimbabwe.

■ An Aids sufferer and child (below) talk to a nurse in a special Aids clinic in UGANDA which, like Zimbabwe, has high HIV/Aids infection rates.



Photos: Carlos Guarita/Reportage

The ITF Women's Steering Committee agreed these aims for women workers:

■ **GENDER DEMOCRACY:** The use of measures to better reflect the proportion of women's membership to the highest levels of the transport unions' national and international structures, including encouraging women to stand for elected positions.

■ **EFFECTIVE BARGAINING ON OUR ISSUES:** A focus on the characteristics of women's employment in transport, including health issues, pay, equal opportunities in the workplace, working conditions and the problems of working in a male-dominated field.

■ **FORUMS FOR WOMEN:** Making a place in transport unions for women. Unions are encouraged to widen access for women to all negotiating forums and, where appropriate, to organise women's meetings and/or create women's structures.

■ **AN EMPHASIS ON RECRUITMENT:** The prioritisation of recruitment of women working in the transport industry, both within union-organised workplaces and those which are not already organised by trade unions, and the use of women recruiters.

■ **EMPOWERMENT THROUGH TRAINING:** The use of strategies to encourage women in transport to further their careers through vocational training, and their trade union participation through trade union education. Where necessary, unions are encouraged to work to ensure that women's access to such courses is as open as possible, and is not impeded in any way.

■ **FOCUSED INFORMATION:** Communication with women in the transport industry, both union members and non-members, through the highlighting of issues of women and equality in publications and campaigns.

■ **INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS:** ITF-led campaigns to ensure best practice and the implementation of minimum standards in the transport industry worldwide, including the furthering by the ITF of women's issues in the international organisations within which it works, together with the prioritisation of international exchange, the sharing of information and expertise, and solidarity between ITF unions.

■ *Women working in male-dominated transport industries need effective bargaining to deal with their issues, the ITF delegates decided.*



Our seven aims

Women meet to consider ITF role in ensuring gender equality

WHAT practical measures does the ITF need to implement to ensure issues related to women transport workers' employment are being taken up by its section meetings? And how much should the ITF's women focus on having a separate forum, as opposed to integrating their activities within the ITF?

These were some of the questions addressed at the ITF Women's Interim Steering Committee meeting held in London in July.

The women agreed a set of seven principles encapsulating the aims of the ITF's activities to further the interests of women transport workers worldwide.

It was also proposed that a database of collective bargaining information relevant to women should be created.

"This was a very productive and enthusiastic meeting. The participants really worked hard - and it showed. We had some very good discussions, with concrete results," said Sarah Finke, ITF Acting Women's Officer.

The meeting, which ITF Executive Board member Dilia van der Heem (Vervoersbond FNV, Netherlands) chaired, was attended by 18 delegates from 16 countries.

The meeting felt that the Women's Interim Steering Committee should remain in place until the 1998 ITF Congress, prior to which a full Women Transport Workers' Conference could be held. This conference could then

elect an ITF Women's Committee of around 25 to 30 members.

The meeting went on to agree that there should be a formal link between the ITF Women's Committee and the ITF Women's Network, which was set up at last year's ITF Congress to facilitate the exchange of information on women's issues between affiliated unions.

Participants were keen that the ITF's centenary celebrations in 1996 should highlight the role of women in the trade union movement and the transport workforce in the past and, more vitally, for the future. ■

ITF European structures approved

EUROPEAN transport unions gathered in Vienna for two meetings in July and determined that existing ITF regional structures were suitable for pan-European work.

Rather than calling for the creation of new structures and/or an office for ITF Central and Eastern European activities, the unions confirmed their support for existing structures which bring together transport unions all over Europe (which, for the ITF, includes Russia, Turkey and Israel) and recommended the creation of ad-hoc regional meetings that include affiliates from the old East and West - examples of these include the Baltic Sea

region, the Alpine/Adriatic area and the Black Sea.

Delegates also called for the creation of a European Bulletin to improve the flow of information within Europe. Discussions are underway with the Committee of Transport Workers' Unions in the European Community about making this a joint publication.

Over 100 delegates from 41 unions in 25 European states attended the two-day ITF Seminar for Central and Eastern Europe in July and the subsequent ITF European Committee meeting. ■

Fair skies call goes to ICAO

THE ITF will be at the ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) General Assembly in Montréal from 19 September to 4 October, calling for "Fair Skies, Not Open Skies".

In an ITF statement to be presented to the assembly, Section Secretary Stuart Howard points out that the ICAO Fourth Worldwide Air Trans-

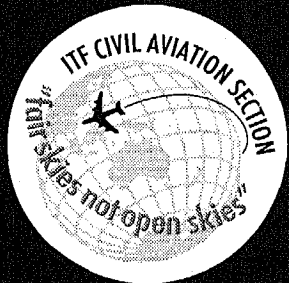
port Conference held in Montréal in November 1994 reached some significant conclusions: "The conference gave voice to a previously silent majority; an international consensus which prefers a Fair Skies strategy based on equality of opportunity and meaningful participation, to an Open Skies Policy based on the survival of the fittest and on boardroom profits."

The statement adds: "It is an important step that the ICAO gives recognition to labour not just as an important component of operating costs but as a stakeholder, a committed actor, in the industry."

The statement calls for a permanent body with regulatory authority to enforce an ICAO Code of Conduct for the economic regulation, including social protection, of air transport operations. This should include a set of minimum labour standards.

The ICAO General Assembly takes place every three years. It is attended by delegations from 183 member states. The ITF has observer status at the assembly.

Other issues the ITF will be pressing during the assembly include aircraft maintenance engineers' licensing, cabin crew licensing and the safety role of cabin crew, cabin air quality, flight and duty times, and aviation safety. ■



■ The ITF's opening statement to the ICAO Assembly will mark the start of a "Fair Skies, Not Open Skies" campaign. On International Trade Union Campaign Day on 1 December, all civil aviation affiliates are being asked to present a copy of the ITF statement to their government. The ITF is also producing stickers which, along with the statement, can be ordered from the Secretariat.

In brief

Inter Austral probe

■ The AAA, the ITF's Argentinian cabin crew affiliate, is campaigning to find the true cause of a fatal accident to one of its members in August. Lilian Almada was sucked out of a plane during an internal flight in Cordoba province following the failure of the main door on a CASA CN235. Previous complaints by cabin crew about the failure of the doors to operate properly had gone unheeded by management. The union has succeeded in grounding both of Inter Austral's CASA CN235s and pledged not to fly them until a full inquiry is held. The ITF is assisting with collecting information about the accident record of these aircraft.

Survey published

■ The ITF has published its 1995 International Survey of Cross Border Employment among cabin crew. Cross border employment is defined as the recruitment by airlines of crew based outside the airline's home country to perform full crew duties as part of the normal crew complement (excluding interpreters). This is the second such survey the ITF has undertaken. The first was produced in 1992. Copies are available from the ITF Secretariat.

Duty hours strike

■ Cabin crews in Air France are being asked to work longer duty hours in a new restructuring plan being put forward by the company. The plan aims to raise overall productivity by 30 per cent by 1997. The SNPNC union says that the new demands contravene the existing agreement with the company and are risking dangerous levels of fatigue. Ninety per cent of cabin crew followed a two-day strike called by the union on 19/20 July.

Swissair go-ahead

■ Swissair is set to buy 49.5 per cent of Sabena after a go-ahead from the European Commission. The deal gives Swissair limited access to the European single market. ITF unions (FGTB-CMB, FGTB-CGSP and VPOD) organising in the two airlines met in Zurich in July to discuss the sharing of information and establishing a common strategy.

Safeguards needed, says EU social committee

THE Economic and Social Committee of the European Union has called for a report on the impact of liberalisation on civil aviation staff.

The Brussels-based committee has criticised the European Commission's report "The Way Forward For Civil Aviation In Europe" for being "vague and inadequate" in its recommendations relating to social issues. It accuses the commission of giving "the impression that the implications for employees are an afterthought".

It calls for detailed proposals concerning, among other things, the safeguarding of working conditions.

The formal opinion goes on to say that the liberalisation process has been under way long enough to allow a first report to be drawn up on its social impact, particularly as it affects employment and working conditions. "This will make it possible to pinpoint any adverse effects and to examine how these can be corrected."

The Committee of Transport Workers' Unions in the European Community have called on the Commission to begin the monitoring with unions and employers. ■

Local difficulties

■ Passengers are paying double the air fares of six years ago in India's deregulated air transport system and many Indian communities have lost their air links altogether.

■ When Pakistan experimented with open skies on international routes in 1993, PIA lost US\$19 million when foreign carriers began capacity dumping on the lucrative routes to the Middle East.

■ In December 1994 just as the fourth ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) Worldwide Air Transport

Conference confirmed the right of all nations to participate in international air transport the World Bank pressured the Zambian government to put its national airline into liquidation.

THESE are some of the facts contained in two new ITF bulletins which spotlight aviation in particular world regions.

The bulletins produced to date are: Africa and Global Open Skies and South Asia and Global Open Skies. Each bulletin aims at acting as a resource for regional or subregional meetings of ITF aviation unions and links regional aviation issues to the globalisation of the industry.

The South Asia bulletin was prepared for a meeting of South Asia unions taking place in Kathmandu on 29/30 August. ■

PRIVATISATION: BA was the first (1987) and remains the only wholly privatised European flag carrier.

HUMAN RESOURCES: BA introduced new "human resources" methods such as "quality circles", "team management" and other techniques, all aimed at undermining existing bargaining structures.

CUTTING JOBS: In 1991 European airlines shed 19,000 jobs as they prepared for liberalisation. Then 4,000 jobs were lost in BA alone. The unions, however, have ensured there has not been a single compulsory redundancy.

COST CUTTING: Cutbacks have, with union co-operation, saved an estimated UK£750 million (US\$485 million) in the past four years alone.

CROSS-BORDER EMPLOYMENT: Currently an estimated one in 10 of BA cabin crew is foreign-based. These crew receive lower pay and conditions than British crew and do not have union representation. After industrial action in 1993 by TGWU-BASSA the company has been prevented from extending this practice.

BA leads the way?

CONTRACTING OUT: BA has contracted out "non-core" activities earlier and more extensively than other European airlines, including cleaning, property services, maintenance, catering and even security.

EXPORTING JOBS: BA plans to transfer some data handling operations to Bombay, where labour is cheaper.

FRANCHISING: BA has expanded its shorthaul route network by franchising routes to airlines such as Manx Airlines, Brymon and City

Flyer Express. Many of these franchise airlines are non-union.

GOING EUROPEAN: BA has bought small European airlines, including TAT in France and Deutsche BA in Germany, to act as low cost competitors to its main European rivals Lufthansa and Air France in their own markets. At Deutsche BA the company derecognised the union of the old company.

GOING GLOBAL: BA was the first major airline to proclaim itself a global airline. Its mergers with USAir and Qantas have still not been matched by any other global airline equity link up. ITF unions have organised international links between the unions in this global airline group.

LOW COST SUBSIDIARIES: BA has broken up some of its main operations in an attempt to create separate sets of conditions for different bases in Britain. BA regional operations from Gatwick and Manchester have lower conditions. Its Euro Gatwick operation is effectively a lower cost European subsidiary with staff on lower pay. In 1993 after a national strike the TGWU prevented the company setting up any further subsidiaries without union consent.

British Airways: Staff reject 'divide and rule' tactics

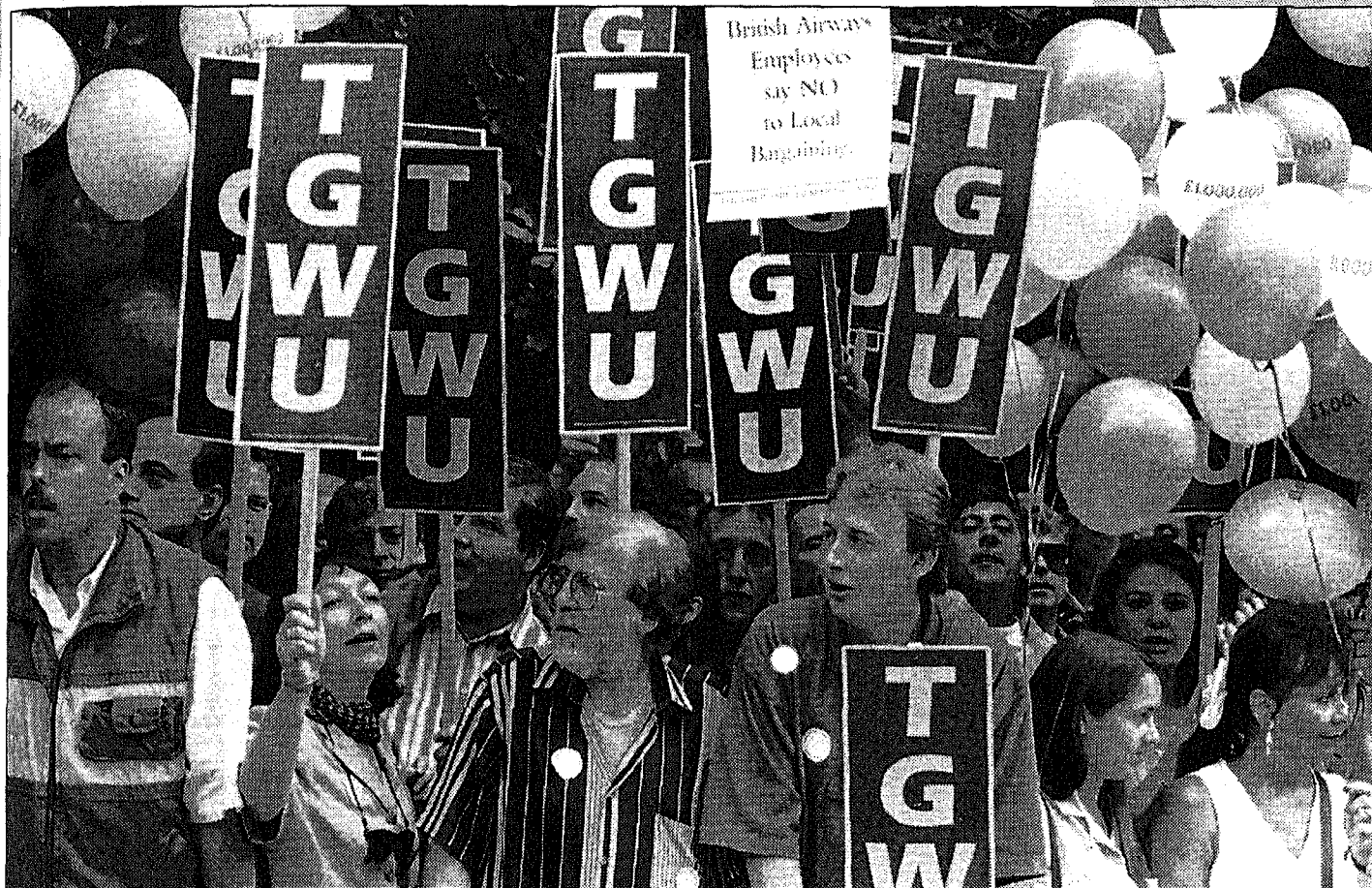
BRITISH Airways is arguably the most successful airline in the world. It is also a trend setter. There can hardly be an international carrier that does not look to BA for ideas on how to thrive in the new era of liberalised global air transport. In July, however, it was the airline's major union, the ITF-affiliated TGWU, that was giving out the lessons.

This year the company launched an assault against national bargaining, announcing it was to replace national bargaining with local bargaining in 22 "business centres". It spent hundreds of thousands of pounds employing a public relations company which produced a slick propaganda campaign aimed at convincing employees that this change was in their interest.

According to TGWU National Secretary and ITF Civil Aviation Section Chair George Ryde: "The company's new system would have divided BA workers against each other. Any concession given in one bargaining unit would have been used to force employees to give the same concession in all the other units. We would have ended up bargaining conditions down against each other."

The union easily matched the company's propaganda with its own clear message carried into mass rallies and in union leaflets: "Say no to divide and rule".

On 11 July the management discovered how much it had misjudged the mood of its own workforce, when the company's annual shareholder meeting was picketed by over 1,000



TGWU members and their families. When the union threatened a strike during the peak holiday period at the end of August the company had no doubts about the level of support such a strike call would command. On 13 July management withdrew all its proposals to impose local bargaining.

George Ryde commented: "It is no longer good enough for the company to say that international competition means that unions have to throw away good conditions and effective union representation. That is a never ending spiral. A high quality, profitable, commercial operation is not incompatible with decent working conditions. The company, I hope, has learned it will achieve more through co-operation than conflict. We hope that such co-operation can be the example that BA offers to the international aviation world in the future."

BA's record explains why so many other airlines have sought to emulate it. The airline ranks number two in the world league table (behind American Airlines) for highest operating profits (US\$961.1 million) and is only behind Singapore Airlines for the world's highest net profits (\$388.8 million). No other European airline comes near to BA's profitability.

Imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery, but has not always proved welcome in the eyes of unions who have seen their major air carriers take up some of the more unorthodox and ruthless personnel management practices introduced at BA.

In 1991, in the run up to liberalisation, 19,000 aviation jobs were lost in Europe. Some 4,000 of these were at BA even though the company was already the most profitable airline in Europe. Nevertheless the TGWU and other BA unions ensured that none of the job losses was through compulsory redundancies.

For management at British Airways the national bargaining structure has continued to represent the major obstacle in the way of the company's desire for total flexibility to change employee conditions.

Throughout the 1990s the company hired an army of human resources managers, industrial psychologists and consultants. They introduced quality circles and quality teams and other new management methods aimed at undermining the position of the union at the workplace. The company put employees through courses and produced dazzling audio visual presentations to imbibe them with a new corporate culture. Yet for all its efforts, and for all its success in attacking many employee conditions at a period when unions in general were in retreat in the UK, the company was never able to detach the loyalty of employees to the union. ■

■ Over 1,000 British Airways employees, mostly members of the TGWU, picketed the airline's annual general meeting in London in July. Two days later the company announced that it would no longer be introducing local bargaining.

Photo: Peter Arkell

Confrontation in Denmark

'The sacked workers, however, decided not to give in, but to meet force with force. They started a blockade of the company's garage in order to prevent the buses from going into service.'

IN the Danish city of Esbjerg 82 bus drivers have been on strike for over seven months. Although the number of workers involved is not high, the dispute has become the focus of concern for public transport workers in Denmark and throughout Scandinavia. The strike also reflects the general unease in the Danish labour market after 10 peaceful years.

The dispute dates back to the decision of the conservative town council of Esbjerg to introduce a tender system for the bus public transport services. However, the publicly-owned bus company, which until then had run the services, was not allowed to bid.

The outcome was that a new, private company, Ri-Bus, was given the licence to operate, and

How 82 Esbjerg bus drivers have shaken the country's privatisation policies

the resources and workers were transferred to this new private company.

The company then demanded an immediate transfer of the drivers to a new private sector agreement, which would have resulted in a wage cut of between DKR16,000-32,000 (US\$2,800-5,600) a year and a reduction of other benefits.

During 1994 there were three strikes of different lengths. The fourth and on-going one started on 10 February this year. It was immediately ruled illegal by the Danish Labour Court and the 82 bus drivers were sacked.

The company tried to keep a bus service going with the help of management, family members and by recruiting unemployed scab workers. The sacked workers, however, decided not to give in, but to meet force with force. They started a blockade of the company's garage in order to prevent the buses from going into service.

The dispute escalated when the police were called in. The striking workers arrive each morning to blockade the garage, and the police turn up to break it, often with the help of police dogs. In this way the company has been able to operate a limited service, although no buses are running in the early morning or evening.

The police actions transformed the local dispute into a national fight on general political principles and privatisation policies in general, including the undemocratic implementation of unsocial deregulation policy by the European Union.

Other workers, trade union branches, shop stewards and trade unions reacted spontaneously to what was going on in Esbjerg. The treatment of the 82 bus drivers and their local fight released a landslide of discontent with and protests against the increasing privatisation process in Denmark.

The blockade of the garage has therefore been supported by workers from all over Denmark. There have also been actions against other bus companies owned by one of the major shareholders of Ri-Bus.

There have been solidarity strikes, national stoppages and demonstrations in Copenhagen. A national day of action was organised on 20 April and resulted in the greatest solidarity strike ever in Denmark, with nearly 250,000 workers participating. More than 10,000 workers surrounded the parliament building in Copenhagen.

On 1 June, one year since the first strike took place at Ri-Bus, nearly 1,500 workers were mobilised on the picket line. A 200-strong police force with about 50 dogs could not get the buses on to the streets that day, and the blockade changed into a strike-supporting celebration.

There have been bitter confrontations between the pickets and the police. Hundreds of people have been taken into custody for short periods, three of them are still being held due to more serious indictments, and people on the picket line have been wounded by police dogs and have had to be taken to hospital for treatment. One of the strike



■ The seven-month strike has halted the privatisation process in Denmark.

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leaders received death threats and had to go underground for a while.

The trade union involved, the ITF-affiliated SiD general workers' union, has withheld official support for the strike due to tough trade union legislation which can impose heavy fines on unions breaking collectively-bargained agreements on pay and conditions.

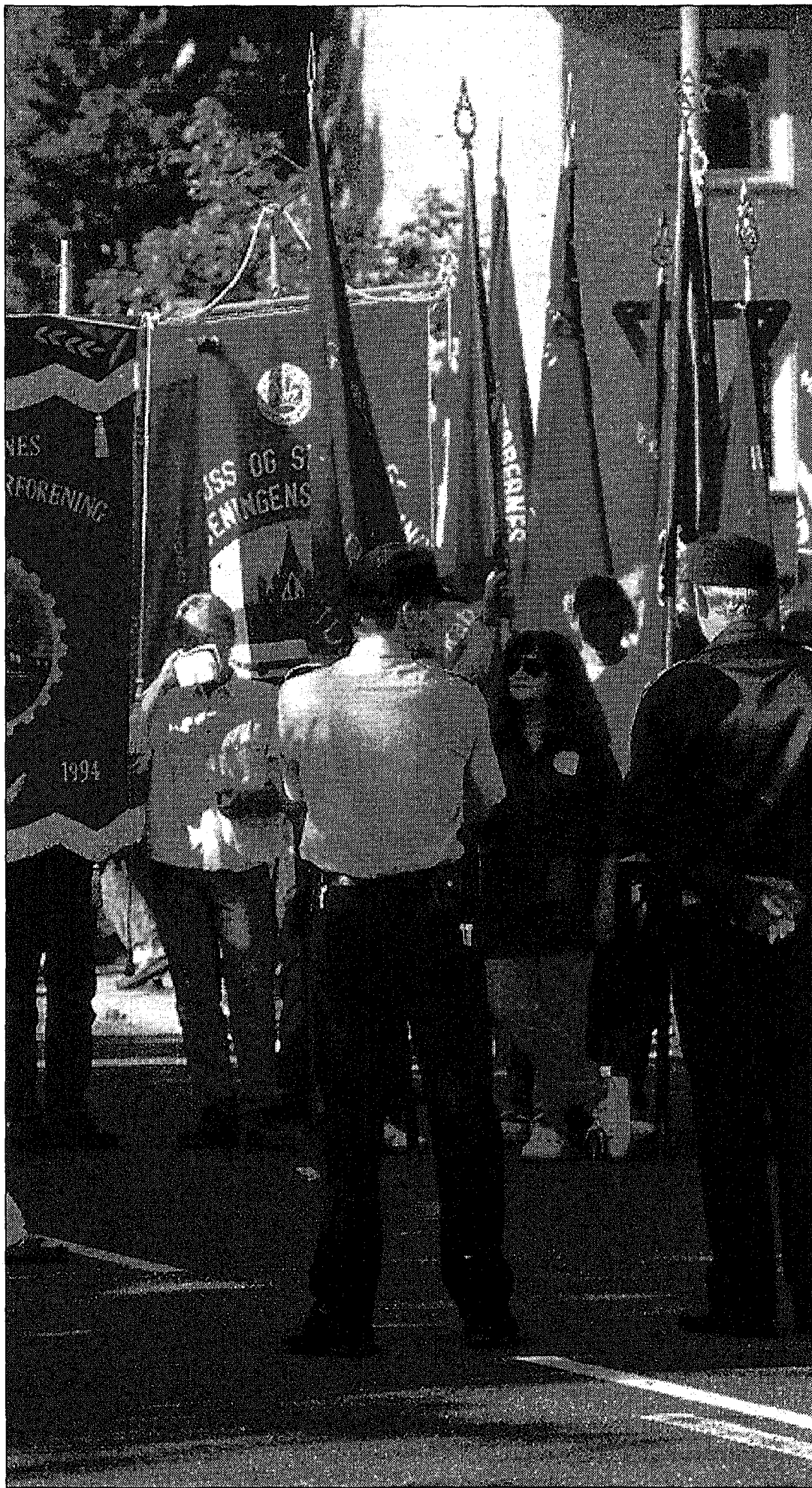
The Danish Association of Employers, however, is not satisfied, and has threatened to take the union to court, demanding massive damages for not having opposed the strike sufficiently.

The pace of the privatisation process has slowed down in Denmark as a result of the dispute. The debate over privatisation has also spread to Norway, where transport workers are facing the same development. Most of the Norwegian transport unions have therefore donated money to the strikers and expressed their support, and buses of transport workers from Norway have visited Esbjerg and taken part in the picketing.

Because trade union legislation makes it illegal for the SiD to support the strike, international solidarity turns out to be even more important.

■ Messages of support or financial donations should be sent to: Chaufførernes Fagforening, Esbjerg, Postboks 215, 6700 Esbjerg, Denmark (telephone +45-75-12 22 62, fax +45-75-45 34 48). ■

■ *Workers from all over Denmark and Scandinavia (right) have shown support for the strikers on the strike picket line.*



French driver goes missing in Russia

THE ITF has asked all its Russian affiliates to help find a French truck driver who disappeared while in the area of Smolensk.

Guy Rouget, 50, a driver from Reims in northern France, went missing on 1 August while delivering a load of hi-fi goods from Laon to Moscow.

His truck, owned by the French company Le Fret, was found by police three days later, but was being driven by a Russian driver, who was arrested.

The French papers were still in the vehicle and the Russian driver admitted stealing the truck, but denied all knowledge of Rouget. Fears are mounting for his safety.

Rouget, a married man with four children, was a member of the French union

Fédération Générale des Transports et de l'Équipement (FGTE-CFDT), an ITF affiliate.

The route he was taking across Poland, Belarus and Russia is increasingly being used by Western drivers, but is considered dangerous.

Many drivers seek to keep to well-known routes and travel in convoy through the most hazardous sections, where robbery has become common.

Graham Brothers, ITF Assistant General Secretary, responded to a request from the FGTE-CFDT to ask Russian ITF affiliates to assist in the search for Rouget.

"His wife and family are distraught," he told them. "Has he been killed, the victim of a robbery? Can you help us find him?" ■



■ International operators would have increased access to passenger and freight services under new proposals from the European Commission.

Plans to open Europe's tracks

EUROPEAN Union Transport Commissioner Neil Kinnock has unveiled new proposals for the liberalisation of EU rail services.

The aim, he says, is to reverse the steady decline of European rail transport and solve some of the problems of under-investment.

The Commission is proposing amendments to existing 1991 legislation establishing conditional rights of access to railway networks. The changes would extend access rights for international passenger services and for international and domestic freight services.

For the ITF, Assistant General Secretary Graham Brothers said he was concerned that the proposals tended towards the destruction of vertically integrated networks and towards the separation of operations from infrastructure. ■

New bullet trains are unsafe, say Japanese unions

"THESE test runs with passengers as guinea pigs should be halted right now," says technical expert Kyoshi Sakurai, referring to Japan's high speed rail service provided by a new generation of bullet trains, the Nozomi.

The trains, which link Tokyo with Hakata in southern Japan and can reach speeds of up to 270 km/hour, have had so many safety problems in the three years since they were introduced that the Japan rail workers' union placed an advertisement in the New York Times to point out the train's shortcomings.

The most serious incident occurred last year on the Tokyo-Osaka stretch of the line when, at around 270 km/h, the train's emergency brakes engaged without warning and the train shuddered violently to a halt. An aluminium bolt securing one of the engines had sheared off and the engine had fallen on to a brake-line, activating the emergency brakes. Passengers and crew had a narrow escape from a catastrophic derailment.

As it was the train blocked the track for five hours, delaying rail passengers and creating panic within JR Central –

one of the four rail companies that operate the country's high speed trains.

There have been other incidents involving faults developing in electrical transformers, train bodies cracking and doors that wouldn't open. Windows have been shattered near bullet trains and passengers have been injured by objects flying round the train compartment.

Drivers have reported trains losing contact with the rails. When passing other bullet trains at a combined speed of 540 km/hour the Nozomi trains shake violently.

Rail workers who have complained about the safety defects have been sacked, while JR Central has dismissed the incidents as "teething problems that have now been sorted out".

But the ITF-affiliated Japan Confederation of Railway Workers' Unions is convinced that the new ultra-light trains are simply too fast for a narrow gauge railway.

Far from listening to the rail unions, two rail companies have recently started preliminary trials with even faster bullet trains at speeds of 350 km/hour. ■

Help us create a nursery and day centre

■ *Women members of the Kenyan Railway Workers' Union (RAWU), pictured outside their newly acquired premises for a nursery and day-care centre in Eldoret, are appealing for financial and material help to ensure that their project is a success.*

The building has been donated by Kenya Railways, but the women now need help to renovate and equip it.

Another RAWU women's group, based in Mombasa, is planning a similar project.

The Eldoret and Mombasa women's committees were set up following the creation of the union's National Women's Committee in 1991. One of the objectives of the committee is to support local self-help groups, like the ones in Eldoret and Mombasa.

■ *The Railway Workers' Union can be contacted at: PO Box 72029, Nairobi 51110 (telephone +254 (2) 22 61 31.*



Danube blues

■ One of the oldest names in the history of inland navigation, the *Donaudampfschiffahrtsgesellschaft (DDSG)* or Danube Steamship Company, will soon be no more. The company, founded in 1829 and once one of the world's largest river boat operators, with an 11,000 strong workforce and a large fleet of ships plying the Danube between the Black Forest and the Black Sea, has been in decline for some time. Its cargo activities were sold two years back to a German transport company. The opening of the Rhine-Main-Danube canal failed to give a boost to its failing river cruise business. So at the end of this year the company will cease shipping activities and its remaining 138 staff will lose their jobs.

Privatisation would halve current workforce

PLANS to more than halve the workforce of Ghana Railways in a planned privatisation are being resisted by the country's rail workers' union.

Leaders of the ITF-affiliated Railway Workers' Union believes the plans, drawn up by the Government and the Dan-Rail Consultancy of Denmark, could mean the reduction of the workforce from 5,000 to 2,100.

The National Executive of the union at a meeting in June condemned the proposals as a "theoretical joke" and said that the workforce had already been reduced by 50 per cent due to natural wastage and retirement.

It called on the government to exploit the potential of the 950 km network and to invest in new locomotives, rolling stock and infrastructure rather than adopt a "minimum railway" strategy. The union said it was not opposed to change and reform, but objected to plans being drawn up with no consultation with the workers involved.

David Cockroft, ITF General Secretary, wrote to the office of the President in Ghana reminding the Government of international conven-

Rethink rail plan, ITF urges Ghana

tions covering the restructuring of organisations, which allow for full consultation.

"The ITF therefore requests you to review urgently the proposed restructuring and retrenchments, which unnecessarily threaten the rail network in Ghana and the livelihoods of the railway workers and their families, in consultation with the Railway Workers' Union and other railway workers' unions," he added. ■

Major overhaul for key IMO convention

"Of course we did not achieve all of our goals, but we have retained the integrity of the professions. We have also retained the watchkeeping provisions in the convention, with the lookout provision unchanged."

MANDATORY rest periods for watchkeepers, the retention of a lookout during periods of darkness and extra training for crews of ro-ro passenger ships have all been included in the biggest review of the main seafaring training and watchkeeping convention to take place since it was drawn up in 1978.

Intense activity by the ITF in recent months and by ITF delegates during the two week conference of the International Maritime Organization prevented shipowners and governments from undermining training standards and reducing watchkeeping requirements.

The revision of the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping Convention will mean the new regulations will come into force on 1 February 1997.

Training on simulators has been recognised for the first time in the convention, but there will be no reductions in the sea-service requirements for certificates where simulator training has been provided.

Sven-Erik Nylund, the ITF's IMO Co-ordinator, said the maritime unions should be quite satisfied with the outcome of the revision process. "Of course we did not achieve all of our goals, but we have retained the integrity of the professions. We have also retained the watchkeeping provisions in the convention, with the lookout provision unchanged."

He praised all the work of ITF affiliates who had participated in the IMO process over the past three years. "Without the team-work which was evident during the conference, the final result could have been quite different," he added.

Many of the new regulations have been transferred to a new code, part of which is mandatory. It is hoped the use of the code will enable the convention to be modernised more easily before it becomes out of date. All countries will have to submit to the IMO details of their compliance procedures.

The ITF considered the move to the "functional approach" to deck and engine certificates, which allows more flexibility between ship departments, to be unstoppable. However,

THE Australian government has given the go-ahead in principle for the sale of the ANL shipping line to the UK-owned P&O group after a peace deal, forged in a meeting between ministers and maritime unions, averted the threat of a national strike.

The sale will proceed, however, only if the concerns of the unions are resolved by the end of October.

ITF lobbying ensures satisfactory outcome

it successfully resisted attempts by some countries to have most job definitions swept away.

Moreover, flag states will have to endorse seafarers' certificates of competency within three months of them taking up service on one of their ships.

The regulation governing the issue of alternative certificates requires that it will not be used in itself to reduce the number of crew on board nor to "lower the integrity of the profession" or to justify a single certificate holder performing engine and deck watches during the same watch. It also ensures that seafarers are not trained for specific shipboard duties in a way that would not enable them to take the skills elsewhere.

Under the new rules, mandatory rest periods of 10 hours in a period of 24 hours are to be introduced for watchkeepers. The 10 hours can be divided into two periods, but one must be of at least six hours.

Trade union representatives at the IMO conference were unable to achieve the adoption of maximum working hours or training provisions for those crew members not covered by the convention, mainly catering and maintenance personnel.

Following the *Estonia* disaster, crews on ro-ro passenger ferries will have to have extra training in the technical aspects of the ship and in crowd management and human behaviour.

Also as a result of this resolution, which was tabled by the ITF, the IMO will in future look at applying the training requirements for ro-ro vessels to passenger ships.

This is the first time that specific regulations, apart from those for tankers, have been applied for any type of vessel and the ITF resolution ensured that comparable rules will now be considered for adoption for all passenger ships. ■

Australians seek guarantees

A committee comprising ANL, P&O and union representatives will work through the outstanding issues before the government's final assent is given.

The committee has been given a deadline of 31 October by when to reach a settlement on demands from

the ITF-affiliated Maritime Union of Australia on job security for ANL employees and the retention of existing conditions on the company's fleet. Another ITF affiliate, the Australian Services Union, wants a redundancy package for 150 clerical staff whose jobs are threatened. ■

Wage rates doubled by Norway boycott...

ANOTHER major success in the ITF's newly launched campaign to improve pay and conditions in the cruiseship sector was achieved in August following boycott action in Norway.

The Cyprus-flag *Kazakhstan II*, owned by the Black Sea Shipping Company (Blasco) of the Ukraine, was detained in Bergen as a result of co-ordinated action by Norwegian unions, including the withdrawal of services by dockers.

Blasco was thereby forced to sign an ITF standard agreement for the marine crew and a total crew concept agreement for the non-marine crew. The result is that wages have been almost doubled to around US\$700 a month.

The *Kazakhstan II* has a total crew of 249, most of whom are Ukrainians. ITF Inspectors found that their wages were below the minimum rate set by the International Labour Organisation.

Earlier this year pay increases of 32 per cent were won in Holland for the crew of CTC Cruise Line's Bahamas-flag *Southern Cross*.

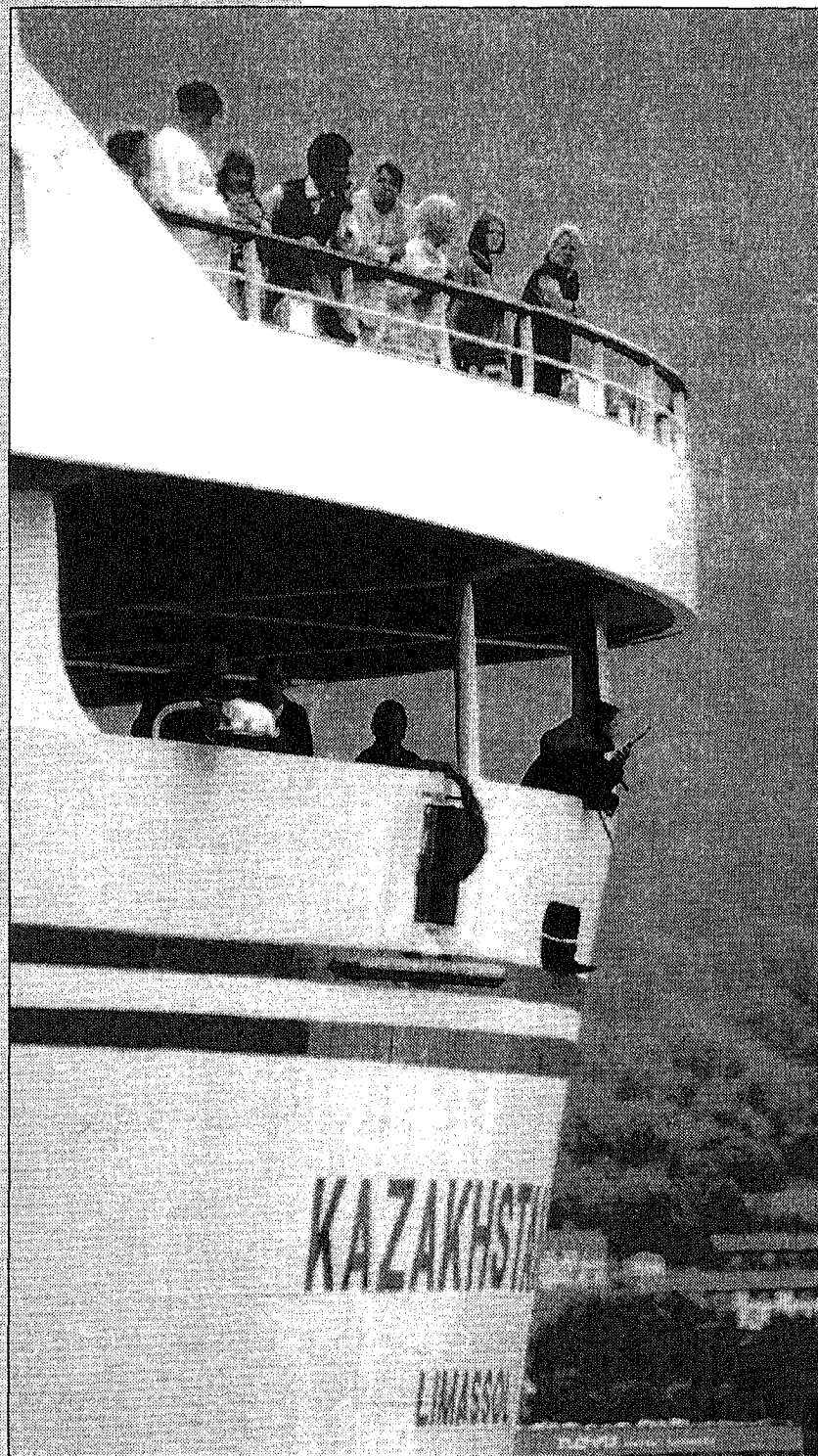
One of the weapons used by the Norwegian unions in the action against the *Kazakhstan II* was a publicity campaign against the company which, if a deal had not been reached, would have culminated in a picket line being organised to dissuade the mainly Norwegian passengers from joining the ship. ■

...and even bigger rises for sistership in Netherlands

THE 200 crew members of the cruiseship *Azerbaijhan* left the Dutch port of Amsterdam in August five times better off than when they arrived, thanks to the latest successful settlement achieved in the cruise sector campaign. Within a couple of hours the ITF had won them pay increases of 500 per cent.

ITF Inspector Ruud Touwen visited the Ukrainian vessel after receiving a complaint about pay from the mainly Ukrainian crew. The ABs had to work for a monthly wage of US\$220, and the master received just \$660.

The ship was due to leave at 18.00, with 600 passengers on board, but negotiations with the owners, the Black Sea Shipping Company, on a new contract were still taking place. They went on for another two hours and the vessel left at 20.30 pm after wages were increased to \$1,107 for an AB and \$3,450 for the master. ■



■ Above: Passengers await news as pay talks delay the sailing from Bergen. A publicity campaign among passengers if the pay dispute was not resolved was threatened by ITF negotiators.

■ Right: ITF Inspector Birger Pedersen confers with the Norwegian pilot.



Photos: Truls Brekke

In brief

Help from French

■ The crew of the Cyprus-flag *Ballatrix* sailed from the French port of Marseille USS30,944 better off between them thanks to the intervention of the local CFTD transport union. CFTD officials found that the mixed Greek, Ukrainian and Filipino crew were not being paid according to their Cypriot collective agreement. The threat of boycott action was sufficient to persuade the Greek employers, Bonyad Marine Services, to pay the money owed to the seafarers.

Stricter rules

■ The world's leading classification societies are tightening their rules in a bid to clamp down on unscrupulous shipowners. A vessel's classification certificate will in future be automatically suspended if an owner fails to carry out regular five-year surveys or if essential repairs or maintenance work is not carried out. Vessels will also be barred from switching societies unless outstanding repairs and maintenance have been completed. The classification societies have in recent years been criticised — by the ITF and others — for lax standards and for allowing "classification hopping" to take place.

Piracy warning

■ A series of piracy attacks against merchant shipping has prompted a warning from the Maritime Liaison Office in Bahrain of the need to maintain vigilance in areas including the Red Sea, South China Sea, Somalia and Indonesia. All kinds of vessels have come under attack in incidents this year, ranging from small fishing craft to large merchant ships — and even a Hong Kong-bound hydrofoil ferry.

Service for the dead

■ In the 50th anniversary year of the cessation of hostilities in Europe and the Far East, the annual ecumenical merchant navy service on Merseyside, a part of Britain with a great maritime tradition, is to be held in Liverpool's Roman Catholic cathedral at 15.00 on Sunday 12 November 1995. The service will be one of thanksgiving for merchant navy personnel, past and present, their relatives, friends and ships. There will be a special act of remembrance in the service for those who gave their lives in times of peace and war.

Increase in port detentions

TARGETED inspections on vessels from flag states with the worst records led to a dramatic increase in the number of ship detentions by the 16 nations operating under the Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control.

A total of 1,597 ships were detained last year compared with 926 in 1993 and 588 a year earlier, according to the annual report of the Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control. The number of deficiencies found doubled since 1992.

Inspectors found "alarming" levels of corrosion in essential structures, particularly in older bulk carriers. There was also said to be a "remarkable" increase in the number of pollution reports.

The number of inspections carried out was virtually static at about 17,000, involving

Flag states with worst records targeted

ships of 112 different flag states. However, the targeted approach, introduced in 1993, led to a substantial increase in detentions.

The Paris Memorandum came into operation in 1982 and covers the western European coastal nations. Canada became a member in 1994. The annual report rejects complaints from some shipowners that detentions had been caused by "overzealous" inspectors.

"Port states only exercise their powers to detain a vessel prudently and confine

themselves to cases where they are confident that they will be able to successfully defend their actions in a court of law," it states.

"This would leave no room for detaining ships on trivial grounds and those engaged in circulating 'tabloid-like' stories within the maritime community would make a much more constructive effort if only they were prepared to accept that the level of maintenance of the world merchant fleet is still deteriorating as is, in many cases, the level of proficiency of ships' crews."

The Syrian Arab Republic, Cuba, Honduras, Romania and Morocco had the highest proportion of detentions in 1994. They all had more than one ship detained for every five inspected and will become the leading cases for priority inspections in 1995/6. ■

Study points to greater safety of national flags

A NEW study into crew competence by a British academic indicates that national-flag ships with crews of nationals show higher levels of competence than flag of convenience ships operating with crews of mixed nationalities.

The research has been carried out by Tony Lane, an ex-merchant seafarer and now senior lecturer in sociology at the University of Liverpool. He started the work three years ago, based on reports carried out by local pilots in a middle size north European port. The study covered 85 ships flying 23 different flags.

Danish and British flagged ships consistently performed well in the study, while the majority of flag of convenience ships occupied lower rankings. Lane believes that there is a need for a much larger study employing more sophisticated measuring techniques.

The research findings underline the view of underwriters, P&I clubs, classification societies, trade unions and some charterers and shippers that standards of crew competence have slipped in recent years.

There was a training gap in the period from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s, says Lane, and seafarer training in most of the traditional maritime nations fell dramatically while training in the new labour supply countries in most of Asia was mainly rudimentary and certification often corrupt. "Owners who paid relatively little often got relatively little in return," he adds.

Only British and Danish ships consistently score in the top three and Holland and Sweden in the top five. German and Norwegian (NIS) ships are placed in the middle order, a possible reflection of the mixed nationality composition of their crew, adds the report. ■

Pilots warn of collision danger

THE failure to implement compulsory deep-sea pilotage in the congested waters of the English Channel, the North Sea and the Baltic Sea was risking lives and serious environmental pollution, according to European maritime pilots.

Meeting in Gothenburg, the European Maritime Pilots' Association warned that less responsible shipowners could avoid the cost of deep-sea pilots despite increasing recognition of their value.

"Lower crew numbers, often with less well qualified navigation officers, was on many occasions risking stranding or collision with the attendant loss of life or serious environmental consequences," said a statement issued at the conference.

The meeting, held in June, was attended by Wulf Steinvoth, of the ITF Seafarers' Section. ■

Trinidad union opposes contract labour

MEMBERS of the ITF-affiliated Seamen and Waterfront Workers' Trade Union of Trinidad and Tobago (SWWTU) have been in dispute with the country's port authority over its use of cheap labour and refusal to enter into pay talks.

Industrial action by the union in August, which affected work on six ships, resulted in management agreeing to enter into negotiations on these issues.

The authority has been violating the existing collective agreement, says the SWWTU, by hiring non-union contract labour. As a result,

jobs have been lost, and contract workers have been employed to work alongside permanent staff at 40 per cent below the regular rate.

Francis Mungroo, SWWTU President, in a letter to Kees Marges, ITF Dockers' Secretary, expressed his union's gratitude for "the prompt expression of solidarity to the SWWTU, in its time of struggle".

He added: "Kindly convey our thanks and appreciation to all the affiliated unions which responded by sending letters of support to the Port Authority in Trinidad and Tobago." ■

DOCKERS

Combating New Zealand casualisation

THE ITF-affiliated New Zealand Waterfront Workers' Union is facing attacks in the form of casualisation and non-union labour.

Union fights hiring of hourly paid workers

Quay Stevedoring set the trend at the port of Nelson in late February, when it employed ex-waterfront workers who had been laid off in 1989 when port reforms were first introduced.

The company pays employees by the hour. They do not receive the benefits permanent union members are entitled to, such as: superannuation, medical benefits and guaranteed payments.

Another non-union employer, International Stevedoring Operations (ISO), based at the port of Tauranga, has also employed ex-waterfront workers in exactly the same way as Quay Stevedoring.

A media campaign waged by the union against casual labour resulted in the company agreeing to hire permanent labour - but on conditions not as good as those of other union members.

ISO has also placed pressure on union members in the port of Gisborne to work vessels for 12-hour shifts with only

two 30-minute breaks. The union opposed these conditions on the grounds of safety. Man-

agement then replaced the union members with non-unionised workers. This led the union into direct confrontation, with members walking off the job in Tauranga after police removed a picket. The company continued to operate with police protection and after a 24-hour stoppage workers returned to work under threat of legal action.

ITF Dockers' Secretary Kees Marges commented: "What is happening in New Zealand is yet another example of deregulation - backed up by anti-union laws - going too far." ■

West coast walk-out

DOCKERS on the Pacific coast of the United States staged a 24-hour strike over a long list of outstanding grievances against employers. The action on 7 August by 7,500 docker members of the International Longshoremen's and Warehouse-

ITF

Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda (UK), Burma, Canary Islands (SPAIN), Cayman Islands (UK), Cook Islands, Cyprus, Germany second register, Gibraltar (UK), Honduras, Lebanon, Liberia, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Netherlands Antilles, Panama, Sri Lanka, St. Vincent & The Grenadines, Tuvalu, Vanuatu.

ITF

FLAGS OF CONVENIENCE

Reproduced on this poster are the maritime flags of the registers that the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) has designated FLAG OF CONVENIENCE

SHIP BY SHIP BASIS Foreign owned vessels flying these flags are considered Flags of convenience.

Hong Kong (UK), Philippines, Singapore.

■ A full-colour poster showing the ITF-designated flags of convenience has been published in order to help dock workers identify FOCs which enter their port. Copies of the poster can be obtained through the ITF Communications Department.

From the old order to the new nobility

"No one values honest work or the workers any more. People are now a commodity, with a market value, and the quality of life can only be measured by per capita consumption. The old order has been superseded by a new specially selected nobility, the very same people who once pursued every thinking person with pathological vigilance so that we could not even sneeze in an anti-Soviet way, have suddenly become as pathologically anti-communist."

I AM 53 years old, an Estonian, and work as a representative of the Tallinn Tram and Bus Transport Union, which is a sub-division of the ITF-affiliated Transport and Roadworkers' Union Federation of Estonia. I am also a member of the union's executive committee.

There are 843 members where I work, 60 per cent of the total workforce. They include the manual workers, drivers, electricians and fitters. More than a third of our members are women: 148 out of 168 tram drivers are women and so are 140 out of 274 bus drivers. Most of them have worked as drivers for 10 to 20 years. They enjoy driving. I myself worked as a tram driver for almost 14 years until 1984 when I was first elected to the committee.

Before, when traffic was not so congested and streets were not so dangerous at night, you could say the work was hard, but exciting. Now it has become too hard. The stress has increased. We were well paid before, not so now.

The price of tickets is rising and the public complains, for the most part with good reason. Ten years ago an average monthly wage would buy 8,334 tickets, now it only buys 667. The unions are finding themselves in a difficult situation. We can so easily be made into scapegoats.

The European workers' movement, whose existence has been completely silenced by the well-paid and well-organised right-wing press, still has long-standing traditions and useful experience of conflict.

Our employer's attitude to trade unions has been quite bearable. We have a collective agreement (we have always had one). Retired workers have a social fund and a club whose costs are covered for the most part by the employer. So far, thank God, the new liberal cannibals have not interfered with us.

"It really is a miracle that we still have unions in Estonia!"

It is forbidden by work policy to discriminate against women. But there are always ways to discriminate. Most of the press has helped this discrimination. Over the past five years it has re-written public opinion through its tendency to publish disparaging material.

No one values honest work or the workers any more. People are now a commodity, with a market value, and the quality of life can only be measured by per capita consumption. The old order has been superseded by a new specially selected nobility, the very same people who once pursued every thinking person with pathological vigilance so that we could not even sneeze in an anti-Soviet way, have suddenly become as pathologically anti-communist. That makes the honest worker wary. Before, when every social consideration was guaranteed by the state, they hid from excessive ideological nonsense and over-curious KGB informers. Now they have hidden again and believe in nothing and nobody. It really is a miracle that we still have unions in Estonia! The situation is probably true for the whole post-communist world.

I was a member of the communist party for 11 years. I am ashamed to have belonged to this treacherous gang of thieves. But I will never be ashamed of believing in the idea of socialism and social justice. I am, and will remain, red. Unfortunately there is no real "red" party in Estonia, so I don't belong anywhere.

We know next to nothing about the European labour movement, its theories and practices, its past and present. We in the post-communist world must know more, or we cannot go on.

HELVE SINIORG
Tallinn
Estonia

■ **Bev Minter**, chair since 1989 of the Council of the British National Union of Marine, Aviation and Shipping Transport Officers (NUMAST) and a NUMAST delegate to the ITF's Geneva Congress, died in July.

■ **Polycarp Jele** of the Swaziland Transport and Allied Workers' Union (STAWU) died in a car accident on 4 August. Jele, who was a member of STAWU's National Executive Committee and Vice Branch Secretary, Railways, contributed to the success of

the ITF's Border Crossing Conference for southern African transport trade unions in Manzini last October, delivering the welcome address and playing an active part in the proceedings.

■ **Charles WBO Kitoto**, Secretary-General of the Kenya Railway Workers' Union (RAWU), died on 28 July, aged 53, in hospital in Nairobi. A deeply committed trade unionist, Kitoto was an activist from the start and rose steadily through the ranks, serving as Director of Education and

Deputy General Secretary. He took over as RAWU Secretary-General on the untimely death of ITF Vice President Raphael Okang'a in December 1993.

■ **Chief Emmanuel O A Odeyemi**, former General Secretary of the Nigeria Motor Drivers' Union and former Treasurer of the Organisation of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU), died in Lagos at the end of June.

OBITUARIES

Forthcoming ITF meetings

- **Education Working Party, London, 16 October**
- **Management Committee, London, 17 October**
- **Executive Board, London, 17-18 October**
- **ITF Seafarers' Trust, London, 19 October**
- **Seafarers' Section Steering Committee, London, 19 October**
- **Dockers' Section Steering Committee, London, 19 October**
- **Joint Seafarers' and Dockers' Sections Steering Committee, London, 20 October**
- **ITF Conference on Railway Privatisation and Restructuring, Budapest, 24-25 October**
- **Fair Practices Committee Collective Agreements Sub-Committee, London, 30-31 October**
- **Latin American Trainers' Seminar, Costa Rica, 30 October-3 November**
- **Latin American Trainers' Seminar, Uruguay, 6-10 November**
- **Asia/Pacific Railway Workers' Seminar, Kuala Lumpur, 7-8 November**
- **Asia/Pacific Inland Navigation Seminar, Calcutta, 7-8 November**
- **Latin American Trainers' Seminar, Brazil, 13-17 November**
- **Offshore Standing Committee Steering Group, Aberdeen, 15 November**
- **Offshore Standing Committee, Aberdeen, 16-17 November**
- **North American Civil Aviation Regional Committee, Washington, 29-30 November**

Unions approve industrial action on hijacking

25 YEARS AGO

THE dominant theme at the conference of the ITF Civil Aviation Section which took place in Miami, Florida, from 28 September to 1 October was without any doubt the question of how the world's aviation workers could ensure that they and their passengers are protected to the maximum extent against the threat to airline safety created by air piracy and sabotage.

In his opening speech, ITF General Secretary Charles Blyth said that aviation workers were not prepared to accept that their colleagues should be blown up, shot at, killed, maimed or kidnapped while carrying out their normal duties.

"We are no longer prepared," he went on, "to put up with the pretensions of political groups anywhere in the

world who all too often claim to be fighting for the rights of workers, but whose main contribution to their alleged struggle appears to consist in threatening the safety and lives of the workers employed in civil aviation and of airline passengers and innocent bystanders."

At the conclusion of the discussion, conference unanimously adopted a resolution on airline security which calls on all governments, airlines and airline administrations to implement urgent security measures, including the creation of airport security committees on which representatives of airline and airport employees should be included as of right.

■ **ITF Newsletter, October 1970**

Australian dockers take political action

50 YEARS AGO

by Stan Moran, Treasurer of the Sydney Branch of the Waterside Workers' Federation

WHEN we refused to load pig-iron and tin clippings for the Japanese, we wharf labourers made international history and were the subject of praise in all parts of the freedom-loving world. This was in 1938 when China, with her back to the wall, was fighting the battle for democracy against the fascist invaders.

We came to the aid of our CHINESE friends and aimed a blow not only at the Japanese but their appeasers in this country. We not only made history internationally, but the wharfies' campaign against the then Menzies government played a big part in bringing down that government and placing a Labour government in office.

In 1945 we are again in the forefront of the international labour movement - we have refused to load Dutch ships that may be used against the Indonesian people in their

struggle for the provisions of the Atlantic Charter: the right to set up their own form of government.

We were not the first wharfies, however, to take action against foreign interventionists. That honour belongs to our wharfies in London, who, in 1919, refused to load the *Jolly George* with munitions bound for Russia to smash the young socialist republic. That action played a big part in thwarting the plans of the imperialists.

There are 14 *Jolly Georges* held up in AUSTRALIA, a complete tie-up of Dutch shipping. This leaves them powerless as far as this country is concerned in getting any supplies to assist them in their attempts to overthrow the Indonesian Republic government, which has the full support of 72 million people, whose only demand is to live in their own way, without outside interference.

■ **The International Transport Workers' Journal, September/December 1945**

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■ Members of the ITF-affiliated JRU railway workers' union demonstrate outside the Chinese embassy in Tokyo against Beijing's programme of nuclear bomb tests. A similar protest was staged outside the French embassy on the same day – 9 August, the 50th anniversary of the atomic bomb attack on the Japanese city of Nagasaki at the end of the Second World War.

FROM THE LABOUR PRESS

Gaceta Sindical
(CC.OO.) Spain

'This weak French argument ignores the fact that nuclear bomb testing in the region creates social, ecological and psychological instability within the Polynesian population, who feel powerless as their islands and waters are poisoned by huge nuclear explosions.'

Worldwide protest against French nuclear tests

IMAGES of the *Rainbow Warrior* being boarded by French commandos, who seized the bridge and filled it with tear gas, have shocked the world. This time there were no deaths to mourn, like that of Fernando Pereira, the Portuguese photographer who was the victim of the French attack on *Rainbow Warrior I*. The arrogance, excessive force and colonialist-style tactics were, however, the same in July 1995, 10 years since the *Rainbow Warrior I* was sunk, also in Polynesian waters. Then, as now, the aim was to prevent Greenpeace from campaigning for a freer and cleaner world.

Greenpeace has at least succeeded in drawing attention to President Chirac's plans to resume nuclear testing in Polynesia.

Australia, Japan and New Zealand have denounced Chirac's decision. The French respond by saying that these are sovereign French territories and that in Mururoa, the atoll where the nuclear devices will be exploded, there is no risk to human life. But, as Polynesian organisations have made clear, this weak French argument ignores the fact that nuclear bomb testing in the region creates social, ecological and psychological instability within the Polynesian population, who feel powerless as their islands and waters are poisoned by huge nuclear explosions.

The Australian parliament is up in arms against Chirac, and has threatened to break off joint projects with France. Australia is a close neighbour to the catastrophe. But a nuclear catastrophe today affects all of us, the whole world being diminished and made weaker when faced by attacks such as those that France wishes to launch in Mururoa.

The general secretaries of the CC.OO. and UGT, Antonio Gutiérrez and Cándido Méndez, have expressed their opposition to these tests in letters to the French President and to the Spanish Prime Minister. ■

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DE LOS TRABAJADORES DEL TRANSPORTE

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