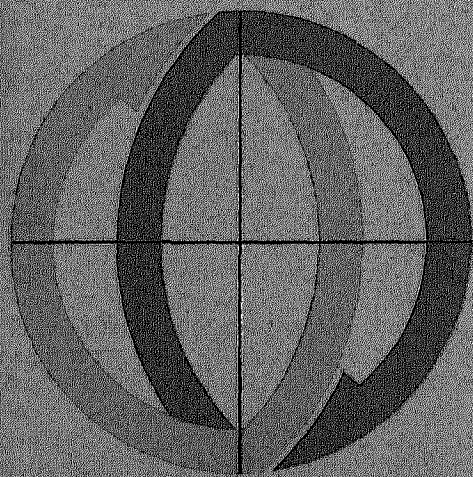


# ITF



**INTERNATIONAL  
TRANSPORT  
WORKERS  
FEDERATION**

**INFORMATIONS  
NOTICIAS  
NYHETER  
情報  
NACHRICHTEN**

# NEWS

November 1995

No. 8

# Countdown to the centenary celebrations



# Contents

## Global round-up:

*Crackdown in Belarus; Indonesians aim to re-establish their Independent unions; Swedes merge to form new union; N-test protests mount*

3-5

## ITF centenary:

*Countdown to the celebrations; Photo competition; Struggles of the 1930s; What you can do...*

6-9

## Seafarers:

*Adriatic Tankers: year two of the fight for justice; Filipinos stranded in Japanese port; Ferry safety call; Record \$12.4m spent on welfare*

10-14

## Inland transport:

*Unions meet to discuss upheaval in rail systems*

15

## Fisheries:

*Unions win conservation role in new UN code*

16

## Dockers:

*Non-union work on the increase; Consequences of privatisation discussed in India*

17-18

## Obituary:

*Sam McCluskie*

19

## From the labour press:

*Rugmark Initiative; Airline anxiety*

back page

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](mailto:comms@itf.org.uk)

# The global dimension

## OPINION

**ITF General Secretary David Cockroft writes**



OVERWORKED union officials, trying frantically to cope with the latest round of proposed job or wage cuts, don't always have time to spare a thought for the high-flown intricacies of transport policy. This is a pity, because transport policy decisions can affect every aspect of ITF affiliates' daily work, and because those decisions, increasingly, are being made internationally.

It is much harder to make an international transport policy than a national one. The easy option, faced with an increasingly globalised world economy, is for governments just to give up, abandon planning altogether, and let market forces take over.

Unions in the shipping industry know very well the devastating effects that such a laissez faire approach to transport policy can have on jobs, working conditions and safety standards. The flag of convenience system is now appearing in the fishing, river transport and civil aviation sectors - all of them industries which, like merchant shipping, can easily draw labour from anywhere in the world. Without properly enforced minimum international labour standards, this means social dumping, a free-for-all in which workers in one country are pitted against others to see who will work for the lowest wages and worst conditions.

In road transport, similar trends are occurring. In the big trading blocks, like the EU (European Union) and Nafta (North American Free Trade Agreement), economic barriers are being dismantled without any accompanying social

measures. Decent employers find themselves facing unfair competition from those prepared to take advantage of their new-found freedoms, often non-unionised companies which take little notice of rules on vehicle loads or driving time.

The railways, which in most industrialised countries are under pressure to cut state subsidies to help finance the growing social security payments bill, are being subjected to experiments in fragmentation and privatisation.

We are even seeing the growth of the multinational railroad enterprise, such as Wisconsin Central, with stakes in New Zealand and Argentina and now looking hungrily at bits of the about to be privatised British Rail. In developing countries the same philosophy is being imposed by the World Bank and other multilateral lending institutions, which have shown a built-in anti-railway bias.

ITF officials spend a lot of time (and a lot of affiliates' money) lobbying governments and international organisations on transport policy questions. Much of the time our views fall on deaf ears. Sometimes the seeds we plant eventually bear fruit.

Whenever an employer or a government official tells a union official that, although he would personally be happy to accept the union's demands, unfortunately his hands are tied by international competition or international rules, it is worth remembering that we have the chance to shape these forces too. Transport policy really does matter. ■

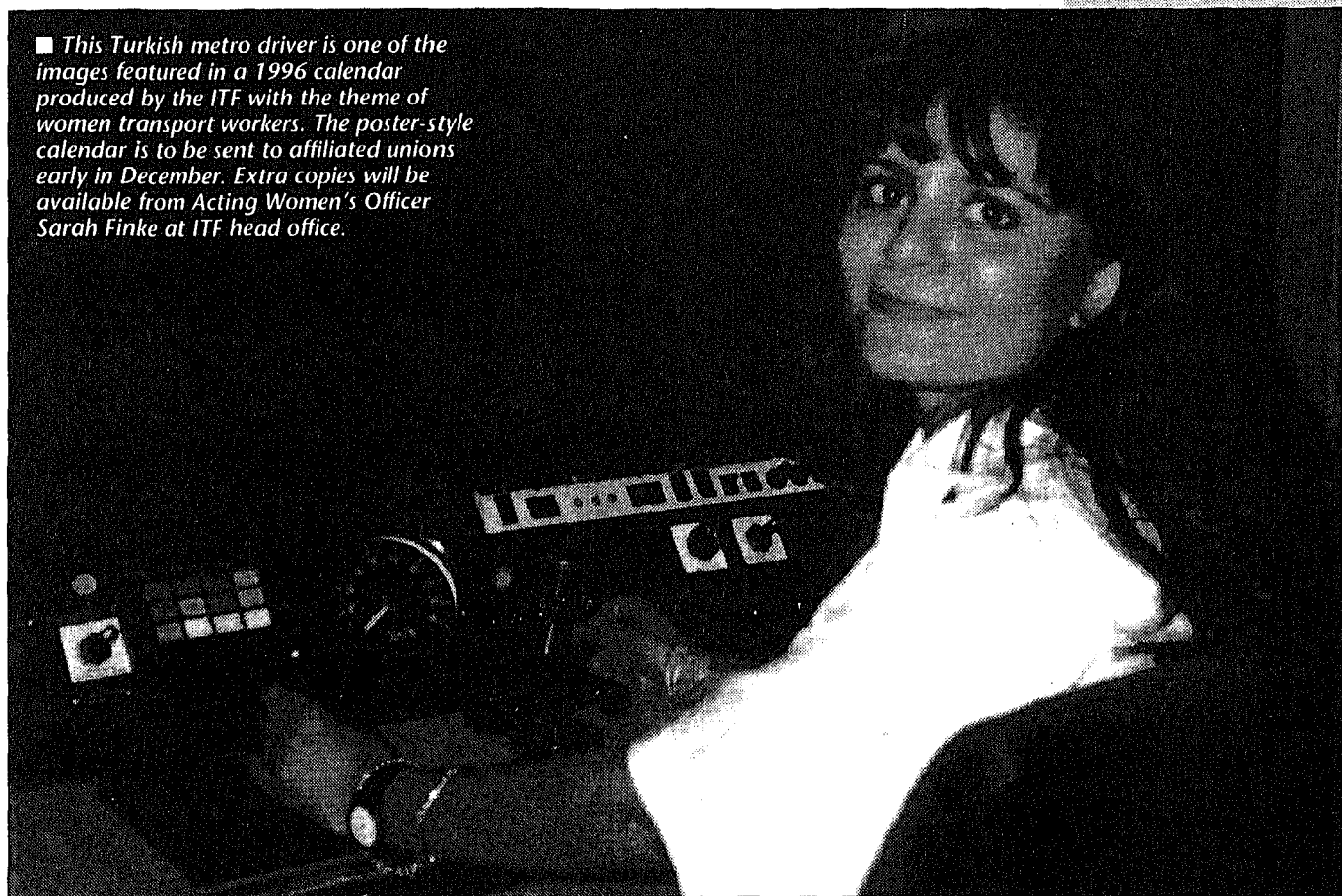
*"Transport policy decisions can affect every aspect of ITF affiliates' daily work, and those decisions, increasingly, are being made internationally."*

■ The ITF's new London headquarters (right) were officially opened on 17 October by ITF President Eike Eulen during the Executive Board meeting in the refurbished building.

Our new address is: 49/60 Borough Road, London SE1 1DS. Telephone, fax, telex and e-mail numbers remain unchanged.



■ This Turkish metro driver is one of the images featured in a 1996 calendar produced by the ITF with the theme of women transport workers. The poster-style calendar is to be sent to affiliated unions early in December. Extra copies will be available from Acting Women's Officer Sarah Finke at ITF head office.



## Success of ITF trip to Vietnam

Dialogue with transport unions brings prospect of closer links

VIETNAMESE transport unions are keen to develop good relations with the ITF in anticipation of affiliation. For its part, the ITF says it will support the development of transport trade unionism in the country through union education and by extending invitations to Vietnamese unions to attend ITF Asia/Pacific meetings as observers.

This was the understanding reached in recent talks between Vietnam's four transport unions and the first ITF delegation to unified Vietnam.

The ITF delegation included Asia/Pacific Regional Secretary Shigi Wada, Executive Board member Thomas Tay (Singapore Maritime Officers' Union) and Asia/Pacific Regional Committee Chair Shoshiro Nakanishi (All-Japan Seamen's Union). They visited Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City in late August and early September and held a series of meetings with the country's transport unions.

In the face of the rapid introduction of the market economy and the opening up of the country to international trade, including sending workers such as seafarers to work abroad, the transport unions are trying hard to reform themselves to meet new challenges.

How to protect Vietnamese seafarers serving on board foreign ships has become an important issue for the 20,000-strong National Union of Maritime Workers. The union's leaders expressed their appreciation for ITF efforts to protect Vietnamese seafarers.

The other unions involved in the dialogue with the ITF are the Vietnam National Union of Communication and Transport Workers (road transport and inland navigation workers: 68,000 members), the National Union of Railway Workers (40,000), and the National Union of Civil Aviation Workers (10,000). ■

### Mission to Turkey

■ ITF General Secretary David Cockroft flew to Turkey last month as part of a fact-finding mission from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions to investigate at first hand a growing number of instances of trade union rights being abused. One of the worst examples has been the treatment of strikers at the Indcape Retrans distribution centre in Gebze who throughout September suffered repeated mass arrests and detention by the police. Eyewitnesses report that many of the leaders and activists of the ITF-affiliated transport union TUMTIS involved in a dispute, which is over union recognition rights, were severely beaten while being arrested.

# Crackdown in Belarus

WITH blatant disregard for civil and human rights, the government of Belarus has launched a fierce crackdown on trade unions following a strike by metro workers in Minsk, the country's capital city.

The workers began their strike on 17 August in protest at their wages not being paid on time. They also accused the authorities of violating their current collective agreement by unilaterally changing pay and benefits.

Twenty three of them were detained during a peaceful march to the headquarters of the SPB independent trade union. Masked members of the special interior ministry security forces fired shots into the air and forced the workers to lie on the ground before taking them to a military base.

Although the detainees were released, criminal investigations continued against the strike leaders, Vladimir Makarchuk, chair of SPB's

trade union committee of metro workers, Gennady Bykov, chair of the SPB, and Nikolai Konakh, chair of the metro workers' section of the FPB official trade union federation. Requests for a lawyer to be present during interrogations were denied.

Bykov and Konakh were charged with a violation of regulations regarding the conduct of demonstrations and sentenced to 10 days detention. Makarchuk was similarly charged, and his case was heard in secret and without defence witnesses being called. He was sentenced to 15 days detention.

The SPB and FPB have also been threatened with financial penalties amounting to approximately US\$174,000. The offices of the SPB were searched and telephone lines cut.

A decree banning the SPB and the union of Minsk metro workers was published on 1 September, despite protests

that it was a clear violation of the constitution of Belarus and international labour standards.

ITF General Secretary David Cockroft, in a letter of protest to the President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, said: "The ITF supports the legitimate trade union rights of the Minsk metro workers together with those of all working people of Belarus and is shocked by the developments."

He added: "I urge you therefore to intervene personally, to promote negotiations in order to reach an agreement which is acceptable to both sides, and ensure that the trade unions in Belarus are permitted to work freely and unhindered. The ITF supports the ICFTU (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions) in its intention to draw the attention of the International Labour Organisation to these violations of human and trade union rights." ■

*Letters of protest can be sent to: The Honourable Aleksandr G Lukashenko, President of the Republic of Belarus, Karl Marx Street 38, 220016 Minsk, Belarus; fax +375 (172) 260 610.*

## In brief

### Strike in Argentina

■ Transport workers joined thousands of other Argentinian workers who went on strike on 6 September to demand a government response to high unemployment and other economic problems. The one-day strike, the first since President Carlos Menem's re-election last May, had the support of the General Labour Confederation and the opposition Argentinian Workers' Movement and Argentinian Workers' Congress. The jobless rate among Argentina's working population is estimated at 18.6 per cent or 2.2 million workers, with 1.4 million more underemployed.

### Australians protest

■ Australian transport workers have decided to enforce a 24-hour blockade of one of the country's federal states in protest at plans to introduce new anti-union laws. The ITF-affiliated Transport Workers' Union (TWU) will join 12 other unions in the boycott of goods and services destined for Western Australia when the legislative reforms are put before the state's parliament. The blockade is expected to disrupt road, rail, sea and air transport links. The reforms are intended to curb the rights of unions by allowing employers to choose which unions represent workers, ensuring union officials go unpaid during industrial action and outlawing union contributions to political organisations such as the Australian Labour Party.

## Indonesians aim to re-establish their independent unions

INDONESIAN transport workers are striving to re-establish their independent industrial trade unions, which were dissolved in 1985 in order to create a unitary trade union organisation, the SPSI, the All Indonesian Workers' Union. This was reported to the ITF Indonesian National Transport Workers' Seminar, held in Jakarta in August, which brought together over 30 transport union leaders and activists.

The creation of the SPSI in 1985 was highly controversial because the process was strongly guided by the government and stifled the free and democratic development of trade unionism.

All unions were forced to disband – except for the ITF-affiliated KPI seafarers' union. SPSI union dues have been collected through the check-off system by the Ministry of Manpower which distributes them to the various levels of the SPSI organisation.

Workplace level union structures have become almost unsustainable under the SPSI and dockers and civil aviation workers, which had relatively strong workplace organisation, have suffered greatly.

The transport workers who are organised by the SPSI held their own conference at the end of September as part of moves to form an independent transport union. The average transport worker in Indonesia earns only US\$50 a month. ■

# Swedes merge to form new union

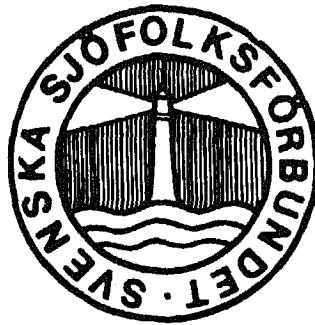
A NEW 200,000 strong union, bringing together Swedish postal staff, seafarers, railway workers and other service and communications workers, will come into being next January.

The union is being formed out of a merger of two ITF affiliates — the service and communications union, SEKO, and the seafarers' union.

SEKO itself came into existence earlier this year when the SF public sector workers' union was reconstituted.

The seafarers, who voted overwhelmingly for the merger at an extraordinary congress in August, will retain their independence as a

**SEKO**



separate division within the new union, keeping their old branch structure and continuing to publish their own magazine.

The union views the merger as a positive move that will help ensure that Swedish seafarers get the many benefits that a large trade union organisation can bring.

A joint conference being held in mid-November will put the final touches to the merger.

ITF Seafarers' Section Chair Anders Lindström, who is the seafarers' union President, will be responsible for international affairs within the new merged union. ■

**Inquiry demanded into 'cruel' arrest of trade union leaders in Tahiti following demonstrations against French nuclear blasts**

PROTESTS among ITF affiliates have intensified following France's decision to proceed with a new series of underground nuclear bomb tests in the South Pacific.

Meeting in September a few days after the first bomb test on the French Polynesian atoll of Mururoa, ITF dockers' unions in the Asia/Pacific region condemned both France and China, which in August exploded the latest in its programme of nuclear bomb tests.

Delegates at the Tokyo meeting deplored the fact that the tests were taking place during the 50th anniversary of the dropping of atomic bombs on Japan and in the middle of negotiations on a worldwide test ban treaty. The resolution carried by delegates went on to support boycott and industrial action taken by ITF affiliates against France and China.

A week earlier ITF seafaring unions in Latin America, meeting in Cartagena, Colombia, also condemned the actions of China and France.

On 2 October, the day after the second of the French tests, Norwegian unions held a five-minute general strike to protest against the French tests.

In September the ITF-affiliated Transport Workers' Union (TWU) imposed a 24-hour ban on servicing Air France flights to Australia in protest at France's nuclear test blast.

Unions in the country's most populous state, New South Wales, were also considering further action against French interests, including diplomatic missions, in Australia.

TWU federal president Steve Hutchins said the union had imposed the national 24-hour ban on servicing flights from the French government-owned Air France. "We will consider more action as they keep exploding these bombs," he added.

"If a plane lands, the toilets won't be unloaded, the food won't be unloaded, we won't allow cleaners on board, the luggage won't be

## N-test protests mount

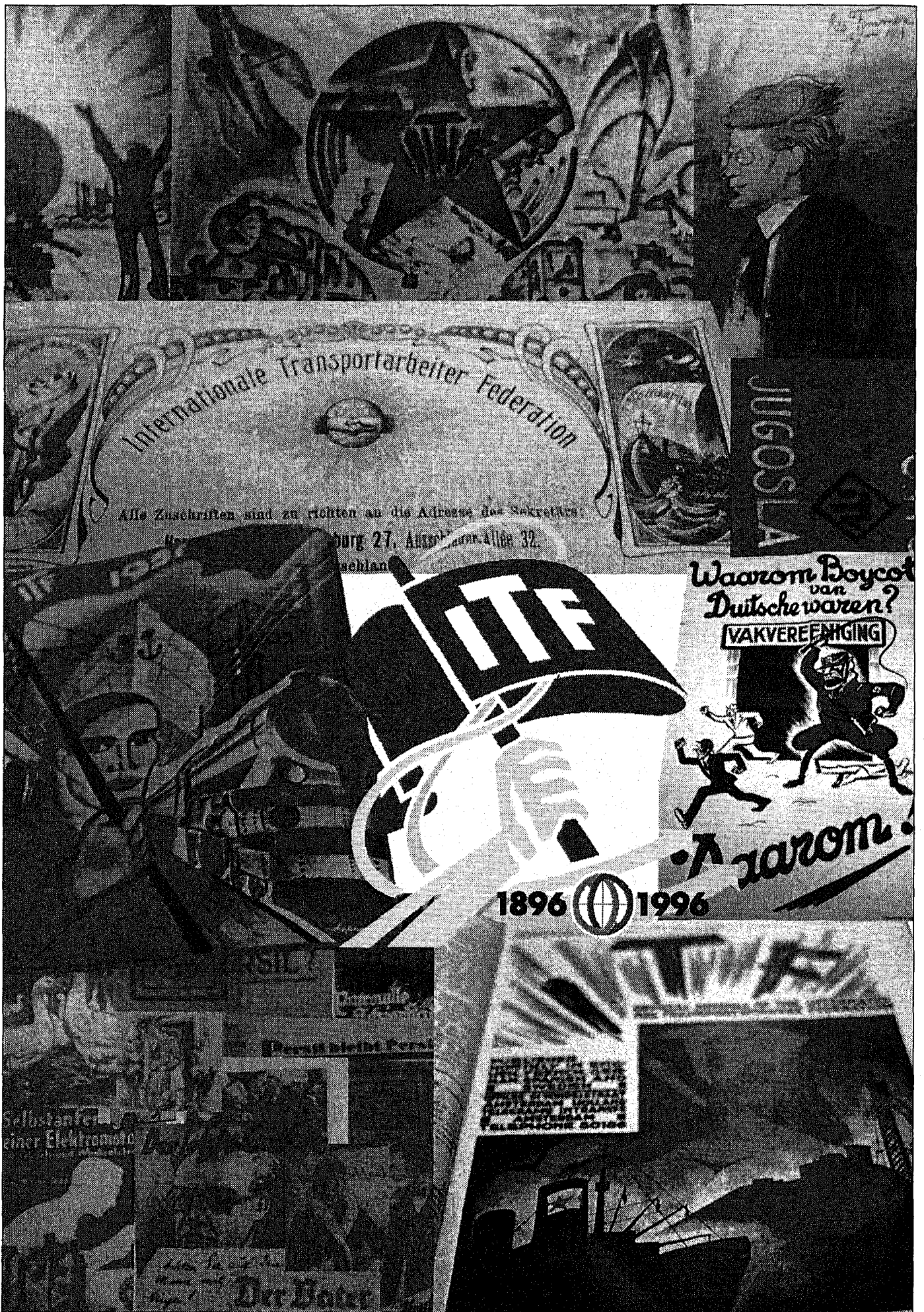
unloaded and the plane won't be tugged," Hutchins said.

Meanwhile, the London-based human rights campaign group Amnesty International is demanding an inquiry into reports of "cruel, inhuman or degrading" treatment of 16 trade unionists detained in September in Papeete, the Tahitian capital of French Polynesia, following protest demonstrations against the bomb tests.

The arrests were made by a large group of police in combat dress who burst into the headquarters of the A Tia I Mua union, which is affiliated to the French CFDT trade union centre, shortly before a press conference was due to begin.

Witnesses say the union's General Secretary, Hiro Tefaarere, was kicked and punched while in his office. Henri Temaitiahio, of the post and telecommunications union, lost consciousness after being hit with a truncheon.

The detainees were all handcuffed behind their backs, stacked face down in a military lorry and taken to the police barracks, where, on arrival, they were forced to kneel with their faces to the ground for 45 minutes. ■



# Countdown to the centenary celebrations

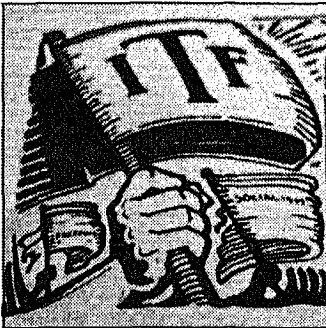
## 100 years

NEXT year, the ITF will celebrate its 100th birthday.

The ITF will be providing a number of publications and an exhibition for unions to utilise. Additionally, from 30 June to 2 July next year, we will be having an extraordinary Congress in London to celebrate the anniversary and discuss progress so far on the Transport Workers: Beyond 2000 project. ITF unions are asked to support the centenary project in a number of ways that obvi-

A colour brochure describing how the ITF centenary is to be commemorated, and containing highlights from the ITF's history will be circulated to all affiliates in November.

ously depend on your resources and level of interest. Many ITF affiliates and national co-ordinating committees have decided the ITF centenary is an ideal event to utilise as a catalyst for numerous events that both seek to commemorate the ITF's history and to raise awareness amongst union members and the general public about trade unionism, the principles of the ITF and the future. The ITF is after all nothing more than the collective, democratic and international manifestation of affiliated transport workers' unions. As such, any celebration of the ITF must be a celebration of



trade union principles and goals. Affiliates and national co-ordinating committees are positively encouraged to discuss the anniversary and plan events during next year. The ITF Secretariat certainly wishes to be informed of what you are planning and will offer whatever assistance is practical.

## Special Congress

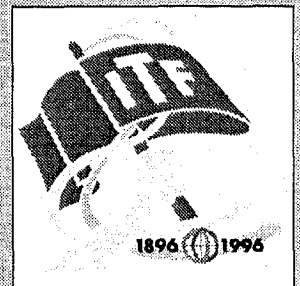
THE principal activity will be the special centenary Congress which will be held in the Queen Elizabeth Conference Centre in London from 30 June to 2 July 1996. Affiliates have already been asked to indicate whether they intend to attend and those that have not informed us are encouraged to do so. The Congress will feature a series of presentations on the history of the ITF and delegates will have the opportunity to view a specially produced video on the ITF's history and a special exhibition. The Congress will also discuss progress so far on the Transport Workers: Beyond 2000 project.

## Exhibition

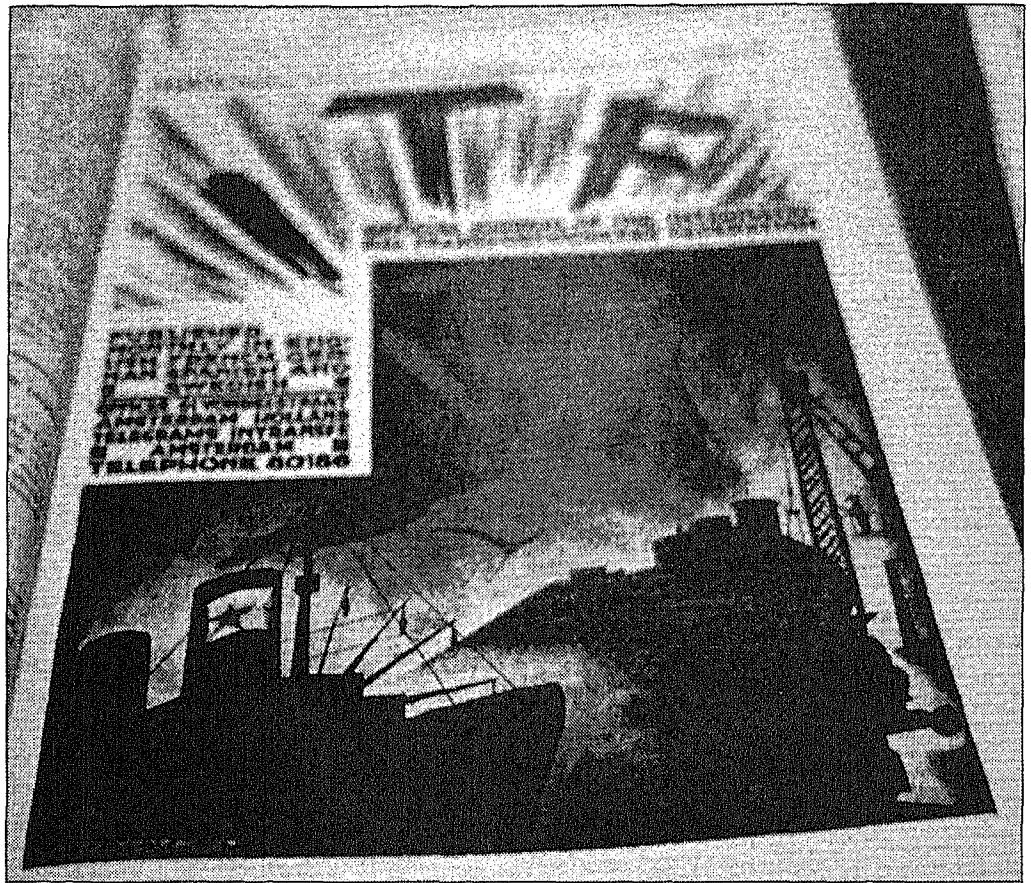
THE Gothenburg Maritime Museum (in Sweden) has been commissioned by the ITF to produce an exhibition commemorating the ITF's centenary. This exhibition will be unveiled at the centenary Congress, but special portable versions are being planned that unions will be able to show in their own countries. Arrangements-

■ Turn to next page

## Cover story



■ This is the new ITF logo, specially commissioned to mark our centenary. The logo which it replaces, the blue and green globe, was introduced at the time of the ITF's 70th anniversary.



## Countdown to the celebrations

■ From previous page

can be made for the translation of the textual material in the exhibition into appropriate national languages. Affiliates are strongly encouraged to inform the ITF Secretariat if they wish to display this exhibition so that we can book times and make appropriate practical arrangements.

### Video

A 20-minute video presentation on the history of the ITF is being produced and, like the exhibition, it will be premiered at the centenary Congress. Affiliates wishing to obtain copies of this video should contact the ITF.



### Publications

A number of books are being produced by the ITF or sponsored by us. The principal volume will be an overall history of the ITF, and affiliates wishing to order it should contact the Secretariat.

Additionally, Dutch academic Bob Reinolda is producing a more "scientific" volume on the activities of the ITF between the two wars (the Fimmen years). Lennart Johnsson from the Swedish Seafarers' Union is producing a history of the flag of convenience campaign. An additional work on the ITF's anti-colonial activities is also being produced. ■

### Photo competition

■ The ITF has organised a photography competition as part of its centenary celebrations. The competition is open to all amateur photographers who are members of affiliated unions.

There are three categories for entries, which can be in colour or black and white, in any manageable size:

- transport workers at work
- women transport workers
- transport workers in struggle.

The prize in each category will be a free trip to London to attend next year's Centenary Congress from 30 June to 2 July next year, plus free accommodation during the Congress.

A selection of entries will be exhibited during the Congress, and some may be used in an ITF calendar for 1997.

Entries should be sent to: ITF Centenary Photography Competition, 49/60 Borough Road, London SE1 1DS. The closing date is 29 February 1996.





# What you can do...

## History fund

AFFILIATES are strongly encouraged to contribute any amount they can to the ITF History Fund, which is being used to support the exhibition and publications work.

The ITF itself has donated £60,000 to the fund and as of 1 October a total of 23 affiliates had made donations:

- *Austria:* Gewerkschaft HTV
- *Benin:* SYTAAB
- *Bermuda:* Bermuda Industrial Union
- *Burkina Faso:* SUMAC
- *Cyprus:* Federation of Transport, Petroleum and Agricultural Workers
- *Denmark:* Dansk Metalarbejderforbund
- *France:* SNPNC
- *Germany:* ÖTV
- *Great Britain:* ASLEF; NUMAST
- *Mauritius:* TCEU
- *Netherlands:* Vervoersbond FNV
- *Norway:* Det Norske Maskinistforbund; Handel og Kontor i Norge; Norske Sjømannsforbund
- *Portugal:* SNPVAC
- *Sweden:* Municipal Workers' Union; Swedish Seafarers' Union; Swedish Officers' Union
- *Thailand:* SRTSEA
- *Togo:* STRANAVITTO
- *USA:* American Radio Association
- *Zaire:* STPM.

## Books and badges

WHETHER or not your union can afford to or wishes to donate money to the fund, there is a specific request that all ITF unions should be able to assist with.

The first is for ITF affiliates to send in to the ITF a copy of their current union membership card, any union membership badge that they produce and copies of any promotional material that you use (posters, leaflets, stickers etc.).

There are over 420 unions affiliated to the ITF and if we receive material from most of you, this would in itself constitute a major source for a display or exhibition. ■

# F A S C I S M

PUBLISHED BY THE INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORTWORKERS' FEDERATION  
SPECIALLY IN ENGLISH, FRENCH, GERMAN, SPANISH, ITALIAN AND DUTCH, AND IN AMERICAN  
AND BRITISH ENGLISH. THE SUBSCRIPTION PRICE IS 2 POUNDS PER ANNUM IN ADVANCE.

## The struggles of the 1930s

THE ITF was deeply involved in the struggle against fascism and Nazism. Following Hitler's seizure of power in Germany, the ITF produced a multilingual journal about life under fascism and workers' resistance. Disguised anti-Nazi leaflets with innocuous covers were smuggled into Germany.

Authoritarianism in all its forms was resisted. The ITF boycotted transport to Hungary when dictator Admiral Horthy imprisoned transport trade unionists. There was strong opposition too to the proliferation of fascism and Nazism in Italy, Austria, Finland, Romania and Spain.

The ITF produced anti-Mussolini leaflets that were dropped from the skies over Milan in an illegal airplane flight, and following the Nazi seizure of power in Germany, the ITF coordinated a practical resistance campaign of sabotage and propaganda against Hitler.

The ITF further played a prominent role in supporting the anti-fascist republican government in Spain which fought against Franco. Relations with the republican government were conducted through an agreed system of secret codes. ■



# Adriatic Tankers: year two of the fight for justice

*"The crews have been given excuse after excuse for not being paid. All their patience has been exhausted and ships are being arrested whenever we can."*

THEY are in ports on every continent. More than half the 95-strong fleet of Adriatic Tankers are either arrested, at anchor or waiting for repair. Their crews all have familiar stories of poor conditions, no pay and of being left thousands of miles from home, sometimes with neither food nor water.

The scale of the decline and mismanagement of Adriatic Tankers, Greek-based and largely flying the Panamanian flag, has been challenging the ITF for more than a year. Ships have been arrested in harbours from Melbourne to Marseilles and from Madras to St Petersburg.

Crew protests were received one at a time at first, but the summer months saw a growing pattern of unpaid seafarers and no repatriation. The minimum amount of back wages for about 2,500 seafarers is estimated at US\$5m and could be as much as \$10m.

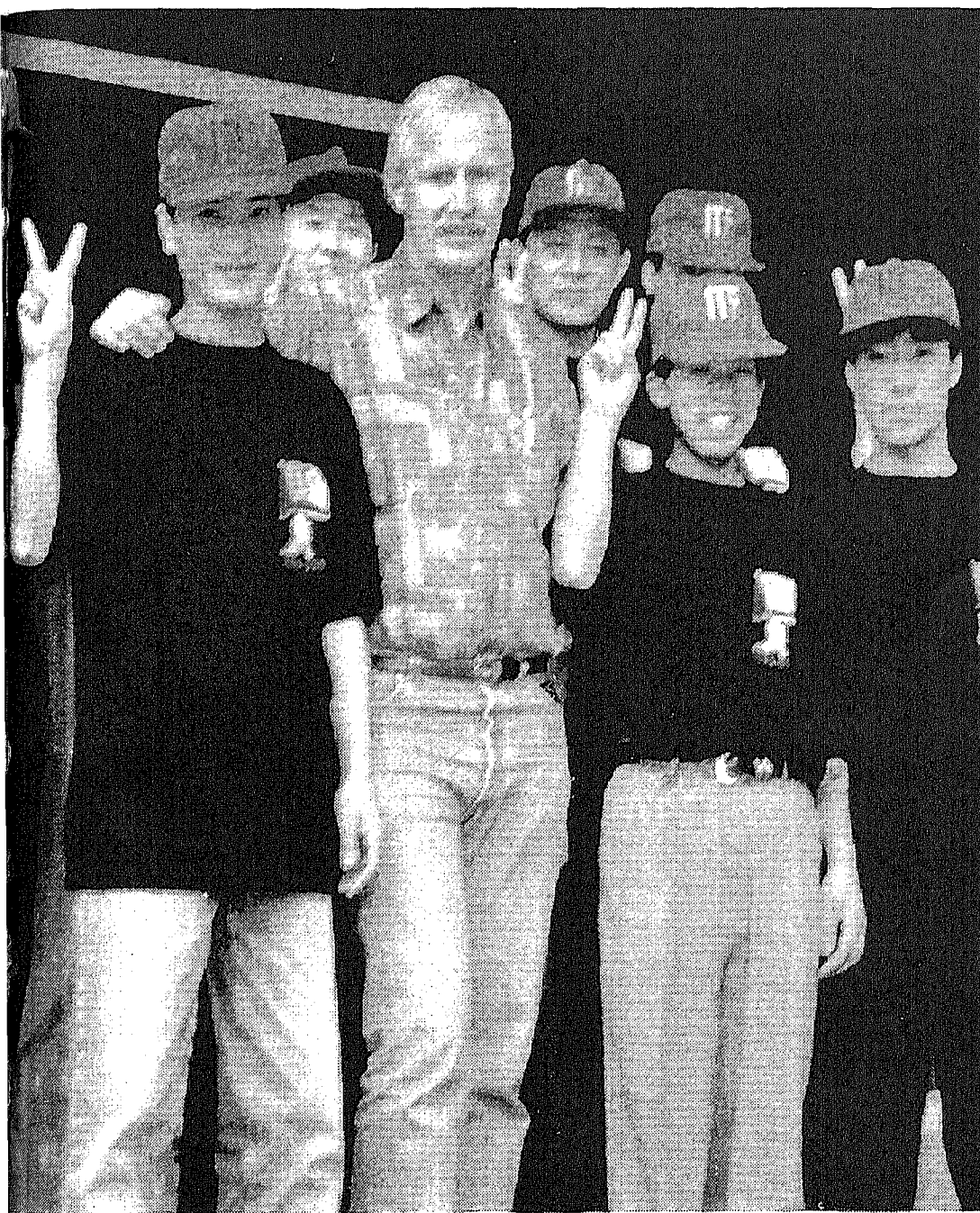
The story of Mikhail, a 55-year-old Russian ships' engineer, is typical. One of more than 100 Adriatic seafarers waiting to be



paid in the Netherlands, he said in an interview that he was owed \$80,000 in back pay. Away from home for 10 months, his wife is disabled and he has a young son.

"I spoke to my wife because I've been able to save a little bit to keep a telephone card. She said things are very difficult at home," he told Lloyd's List. "I called again, but it seems the telephone has been cut off because I haven't been there to pay the bill. I want to get home to help her, but I can't."

Some crews have resorted to hunger strikes to make their case and others have only been dissuaded from similar protests by the ITF on the grounds that it would do them more harm than the company. Adriatic has



■ The crew of the *Ocean Breeze 1*, pictured here with Dutch ITF Inspector Ruud Touwen, are one of the lucky ones. With ITF help they secured the US\$21,000 in back pay owed to them by Adriatic Tankers, plus free repatriation to China in May this year.

The battle between Adriatic Tankers and the ITF has been going on for over a year, with an estimated 2,500 seafarers still waiting to be paid in full.

detta against his company and promised to pay all debts. However, the rising number of arrests, many ordered by marine supply companies, has vindicated the ITF's position.

Agreement for the payment of all outstanding claims was reached in May following negotiations with the company. Two deadlines passed without any settlement and the defection of an ITF official to Adriatic was a turning point in the campaign. The tactic of using ship arrests has been the last resort. Although subject to lengthy legal processes, it has proved the ITF to be effective in protecting the interests of its members. Crews' wages attract the first priority in any debt settlement in the majority of jurisdictions.

"We have looked for a negotiated settlement with Adriatic, as we do with all shipowners," said Dickinson. "But this has not been a normal case. Seafarers employed by Adriatic have been unpaid for months and all they have received is a trail of broken promises." ■

adopted legal delaying tactics when claims against it have produced a threat of a ship being sold but at least three vessels have been prepared for auction.

Mark Dickinson, Deputy Secretary of the ITF Special Seafarers' Department, has met many of the stranded crew members. "The crews have been given excuse after excuse for not being paid," he said. "All their patience has been exhausted and ships are being arrested whenever we can." There are up to 2,500 seafarers employed by Adriatic, with Russian, Sri Lankan, Greek, Vietnamese, Polish, British, Korean, Burmese, Chinese, Yugoslav and Filipino crew members.

The financial problems of the

group, which mainly operates small chemical tankers, but also owns VLCCs and large bulk carriers, have led to reports that the company's bankers had begun to start proceedings for repossession of a number of vessels. The company has grown rapidly in the past 10 years with rumours of Russian, Japanese and South African investors.

With so many ships arrested and not able to trade, there is little likelihood of the company, one of the largest shipping groups in Greece, being able to generate enough revenue to pay its bills.

James Marine, a ship's supplier in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England, publicly accused Adriatic of trying to pay a \$200,000

bill with three cheques which were dishonoured. More than 30 creditors have contacted the ITF following a public appeal and Adriatic's total debt, excluding ship mortgages, is likely to be near \$50m.

Earlier this year, Intertanko, the association of tanker shipowners, expelled Adriatic from membership after it failed to provide classification society and protection and indemnity insurance details for its vessels. At least four Adriatic ships have been removed from the lists of the classification societies, Lloyd's Register and Det Norske Veritas.

Panagis Zissimatos, president of Adriatic, claimed initially that the ITF was waging a ven-

# Filipinos stranded in Japanese port

THE 18-strong Filipino crew of the Panamanian-registered *Crest Shine* are on strike in Japan, off Chiba. They have been there since 19 July, when they requested help from the ITF to recover their unpaid wages and home allotments.

The ship's Tokyo-based owner, Hokoku Shipping, has refused not only to pay the back wages but also to supply any food to the crew. The seafarers have survived since July by eating leftover food – and the emergency rations on the lifeboats.

The *Crest Shine* arrived at Chiba on 17 July to unload lumber from Papua New Guinea, and was scheduled to return there two days later. However, on leaving port, the crew instead decided to go on strike.

They insisted that they had not been paid since June, and as 80 per cent of their basic wages are allotted to their families, their wives and children were going hungry.

Hokoku Shipping has refused to send food on board, despite the fact that the Japanese authorities have urged the company to do so.

On 29 August the employer

even sent a false message to threaten the crew that they might be arrested. In fact the authorities in Japan are bound to stay neutral in labour disputes.

The local ITF Inspector, Ryutaro Morisaki, as well as the ITF-affiliated All-Japan Seamen's Union, have been dealing with the case and supporting the crew. They have negotiated with the owner and instigated legal action to have the ship supplied with food. Japanese dock workers are also lending support.

The company began court action early in September to try to have the crew dismissed and forced to leave the vessel.

Although the Philippine authorities recognise that seafarers have the right to strike, they authorised a change of crew in August and told the strikers that they were violating the terms of their contract.

The crew angrily replied that their employer had hurt their pride as human beings. They would never give up until their wages were paid. ■

# Indians protest over delays and ageing fleet

INDIAN seafarers staged a demonstration outside the government shipping office in Bombay in September to highlight their charges of negligence and maladministration on the part of the Directorate General of Shipping.

The ITF-affiliated National Union of Seafarers of India (NUSI) organised the protest against delays in processing benefit claims and the failure to transfer money levied from shipowners to the Seafarers' Welfare Fund Society.

In addition, the NUSI condemned the increase in the minimum legal age of Indian vessels from 20 to 30 years.

"After 15 years the vessels become rustbuckets and are nothing short of floating coffins," the union warned. ■

# Deaths at sea rose last year

LIVES lost at sea recorded by Lloyd's Register in 1994 reached their highest level for six years as a result of two ferry disasters: the *Estonia* and *Cebu City*. The total of 1,552 lives lost in 1994 includes 852 on the *Estonia* and 145 on the Philippines inter-island ferry *Cebu City*.

In 1993 the total was 504, compared with 246 in 1992 and 1,204 in 1991.

Lloyd's Register reports deaths only on vessels declared a total loss. The overall total of deaths at sea, including those in all marine casualties and in shipboard accidents, is reckoned to be five or more times higher.

Among the 555 lives lost on other ship types, 70 were on the "oil" category, 148 on "dry bulk", 149 on "general cargo" and 51 on "ro-ro cargo".

The number of ships lost last year was 184 of 1.6 million gross tonnes, compared with 247 ships of 0.9 million tonnes in 1993. ■

# Warning on crew shortages

ASIAN countries need to map out a comprehensive manpower plan for seafarers, a professor from the National University of Singapore said in September.

Speaking at the Asia-Pacific Sea-Transport Conference 1995, Associate Professor Chia Lin Sien, of the NUS geography department, said Asian countries were short of trained seafarers because of the rapid expansion of their national fleets. Planning on a regional basis would make it easier to anticipate future demand and supply and would make better use of training facilities.

The combined Asia-Pacific fleet has increased from 23,861 ships in 1985 to 27,860 vessels last year, up 16.8 per cent. By comparison, the world fleet grew 5.6 per cent in the same period. Asian shipowners would take delivery of 867 new vessels in the next two to three years, the professor added.

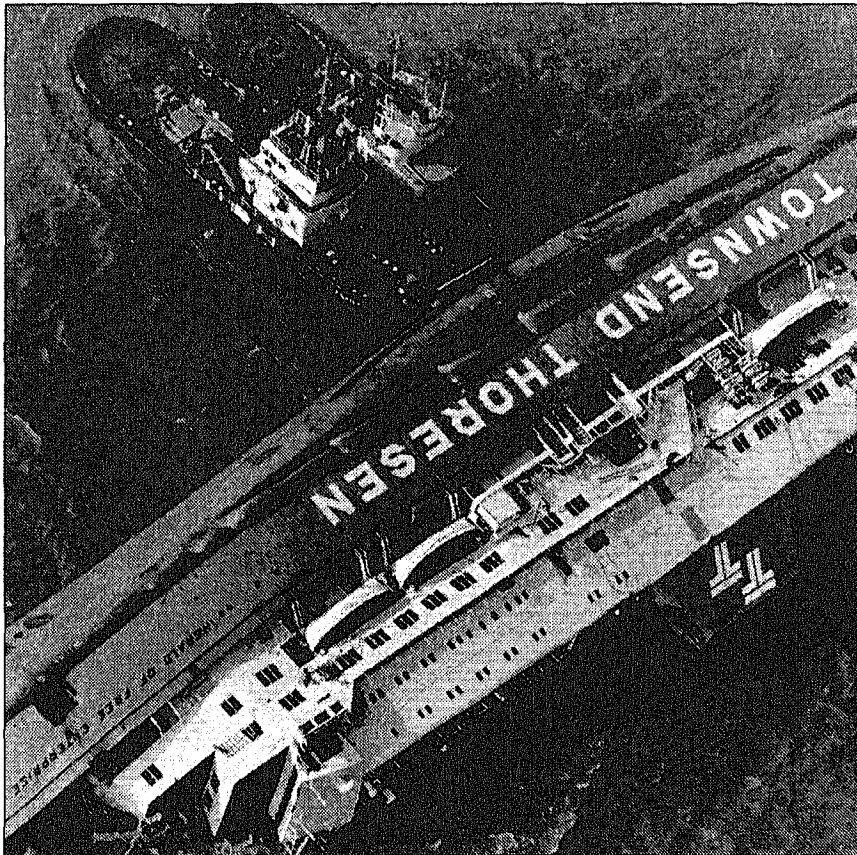
That meant another 28,600 seafarers would be required. But while demand for trained personnel was rising, supply from the Western countries, Japan, and increasingly, Asia's newly industrialising countries, was falling, he said. Trained seafarers were spending less time at sea, preferring to take better-paid shore jobs. ■

## Bombay boycott

■ The Indian seafarers' union, the NUSI, called a successful boycott of a flag of convenience ship in Bombay in August in order to secure compensation for the widow of the chief officer, whose body was found floating in the sea. The boycott was called off when representatives of the owners of the St Vincent-registered *Sea Empress* agreed to pay US\$40,000.

## Section chair adds ITF voice to demands for compulsory bulkheads on car decks

SEAFARERS



The Herald of Free Enterprise disaster in 1987 prompted calls to improve the stability of ro-ro ferries. Demands for international action, supported by the ITF, were redoubled following the loss of the Estonia last year.

# Ferry safety call

FERRY operators should be required by law to fit bulkheads on the vehicle decks of ro-ro vessels, ITF Seafarers' Section Chair Anders Lindström told a ferry safety conference in Gothenburg, Sweden, in September.

The bulkheads would contain any ingress of water on the vehicle decks, which was the cause of the *Estonia* and *Herald of Free Enterprise* ferry disasters, he said at a meeting organised by the Nordic Transport Workers' Federation (NTF). Yet he was alarmed by reports that a number of countries were currently resisting moves by the International Maritime Organization to insist that the vehicle decks of ferries should be subdivided into smaller watertight compartments.

Both vessels sank quickly after taking in water through their bow doors. The *Estonia's* door was ripped open during heavy seas while crossing the Baltic in September 1994. The death toll was 852. The *Herald of Free Enterprise* capsized in 1987, with the loss of 193 lives, after leaving the Belgian port of Zeebrugge with its bow door still open.

"It is time that the safety of life at sea received the priority it deserves and is not compromised by the short-term economic interests of some shipowners and operators," Lindström declared.

The NTF and ITF welcomed the work carried out by the IMO's panel of experts, which was undertaken since the *Estonia* disaster, designed to improve the stability of ro-ro ferries.

He went on: "However, the maritime trade unions are concerned by the fact that the recommendations produced by the IMO panel have not been universally well received.

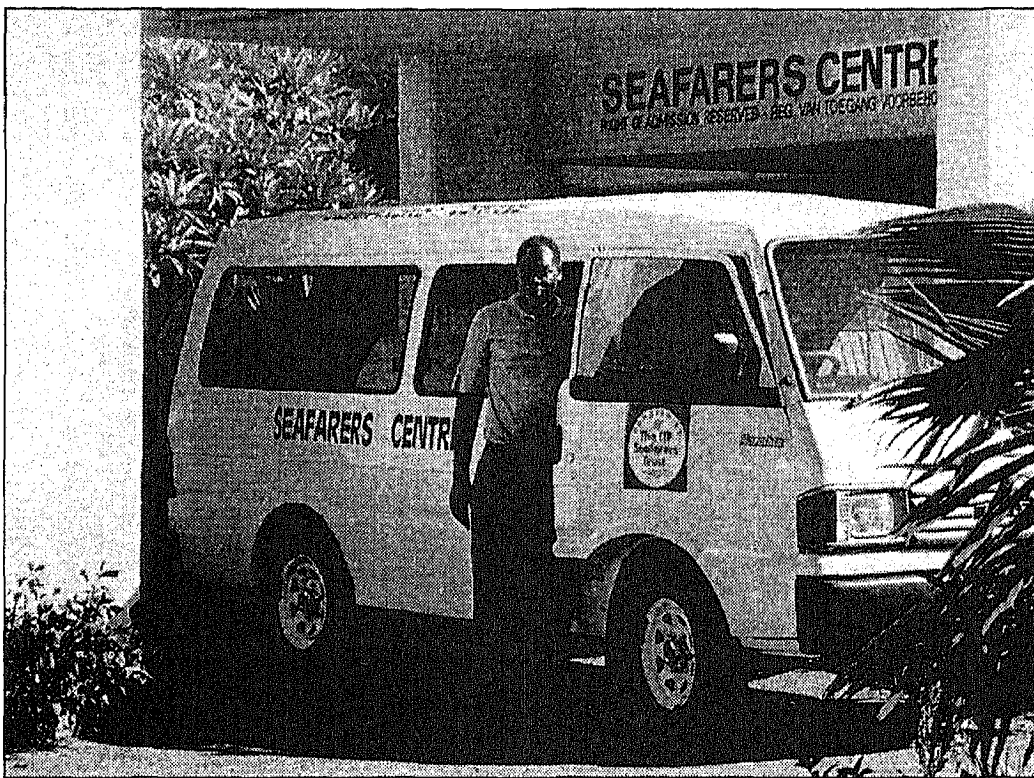
"It appears that some governments and ferry operators have already forgotten the tragedy which occurred a year ago."

Unions were also alarmed by suggestions being made in some quarters that regional standards might be adopted, said Lindström.

The IMO's maritime safety committee is scheduled to meet in November to consider the findings of the panel of experts, who are also recommending the installation of buoyancy sponsons to keep vessels afloat for longer.

Norway has already introduced legislation requiring ferry companies to fit bulkheads on vehicle decks. Other Scandinavian countries have indicated that they might impose stricter safety rules too.

In September the UK government warned that it would go it alone and lay down stricter structural stability standards for ferries using UK ports unless a satisfactory international agreement was reached. ■



■ Donations towards the purchase and upkeep of vehicles by seafarers' centres and missions accounted for 12 per cent of the money handed out last year by the ITF Seafarers' Trust.

# Record \$12.4m spent on welfare

A RECORD amount of money was donated by the ITF last year to improve the welfare of the world's seafarers. The total came to nearly UK£8 million (US\$12.4 million), according to the 1994/5 annual report of the ITF Seafarers' Trust.

And for the first time ever, the part of the world which received the largest share of grants was the Asia/Pacific region, much to the satisfaction of the administrators of the fund.

"We have been keen to ensure that the countries which supply most of the world's seafarers are also the destination for most of our awards," Mark Dickinson, the trust's Administrative Officer, told ITF News.

A total of 104 grants amounting to £7,968,863 was made in the 12 months up to April this year, the newly published annual report reveals. This compares with 146 grants totalling £7,523,421 in the previous year. The total for 1992/3 stood at £3,850,865, and for 1991/2 it was £3,089,039.

Broken down by region, the donations made in the most recent 12-month period – apart from £1,605,588 given to wholly international bodies – totalled:

- Asia/Pacific: £2,288,538
- Western Europe/Scandinavia: £2,218,544
- North America: £784,874
- Africa: £387,939
- Central and Eastern Europe: £268,801
- Middle East: £249,275
- Latin America: £165,301.

The largest category of recipients of grants are welfare agencies, such as the Missions to Seamen and the Apostleship of the Sea, which, together with other maritime ministries, accounted for 43 per cent of the fund's awards in 1994/5. A further 13 per cent went to support the welfare work of ITF affiliates.

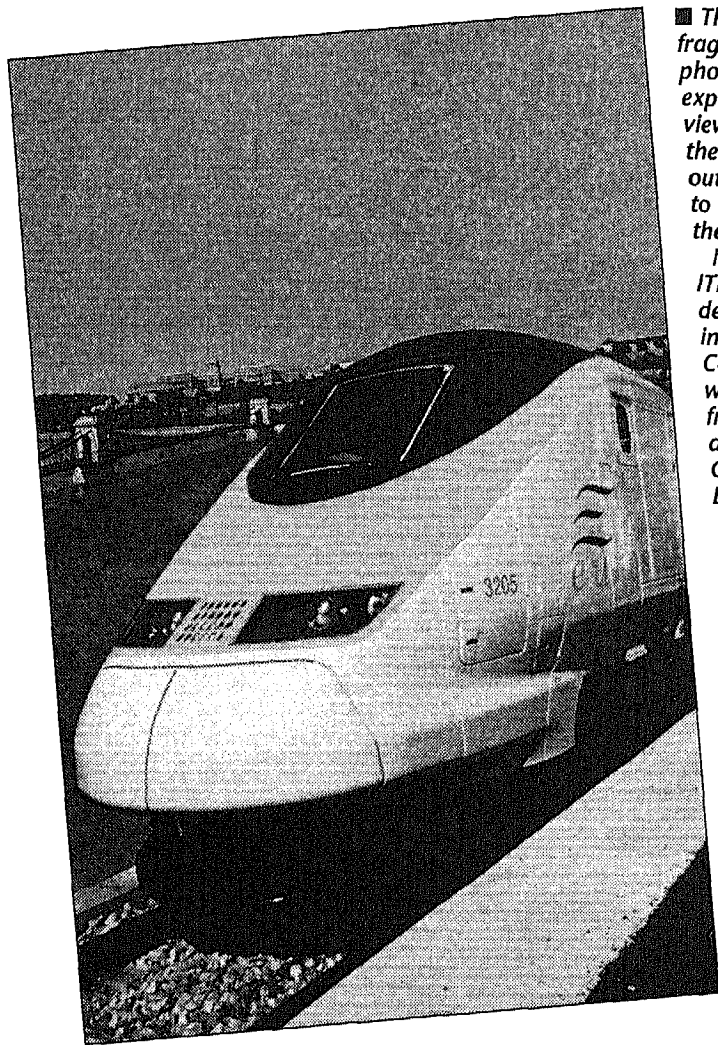
An analysis of the grants awarded in 1994/5 shows that 31.5 per cent went towards improving existing welfare centres, 22 per cent for establishing new facilities, 20 per cent on training and education, and 12 per cent for vehicles.

The ITF Seafarers' Trust was set up in 1981 by the ITF Executive Board as a charity dedicated to helping the welfare of all seafarers. Its money comes from the ITF Seafarers' International Assistance, Welfare and Protection Fund, which derives its income from the ITF's campaign against flag of convenience shipping.

Writing in the introduction to the latest annual report, ITF General Secretary David Cockcroft says that the deterioration in standards in shipping has placed extra responsibilities on the trust, as other bodies seem unable or unwilling to support activities designed to cater for seafarers' physical, spiritual and moral well-being. "It is a responsibility which we are determined to shoulder."

Copies of the report are available from the Special Seafarers' Department at ITF head office.

*"We have been keen to ensure that the countries which supply most of the world's seafarers are also the destination for most of our awards."*



■ The report, "Modernisation, not fragmentation" features a cover photo montage of a Eurostar express train superimposed on a view of Budapest, the venue for the ITF's meeting. The report sets out the ITF's alternative approach to the changes currently affecting the world's rail networks.

Meanwhile, a new issue of the ITF's *Railway Bulletin*, dealing in depth with railway restructuring, has just been published. Copies of the bulletin, along with the "Modernisation, not fragmentation" document, are available from Assistant General Secretary Graham Brothers at ITF head office.

# Unions meet to discuss upheaval in rail systems

WITH railway networks around the world facing unprecedented threats of restructuring and privatisation, ITF-affiliated rail unions are meeting to share information on developments and to plan their strategies to resist the adverse impact of the changes on jobs and conditions.

An ITF briefing document to be presented to the meeting in Budapest at the end of October explains that the most extreme organisational upheaval being implemented is to split a railway's infrastructure and operations.

"The ideas have mainly been developed by market economy enthusiasts at the European Commission in Brussels and are based upon a rather simple copy of the road transport model," the ITF's "Modernisation, not fragmentation" document points out. "The aim is to develop competition at any price between trains on the same tracks in the same way as exists on the roads, regardless of the huge technical and structural differences between road and rail transport."

So far only two countries, Great Britain and Sweden, have fully separated infrastructure – tracks and stations – from actual train services. However, many more have established the legislative framework for the split.

Other forms of restructuring include dividing national railways into regional companies, which is what has happened in Japan, and privatisation, which was first carried out in New Zealand.

On a wider front, the ITF notes that railways, traditionally a very nationally-oriented form of transport, are being internationalised as a result of the free market liberalisation policies within the European Union as well as the influence of bodies such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. This is leading to a growth in cross-border traffic. ■

## INLAND TRANSPORT

### In brief

#### Cabbies' concern

■ Hong Kong taxi drivers are calling for more police roadblocks at night after an increasing number of attacks by passengers. Last year saw 213 drivers robbed by passengers. Up to mid-September this year, 207 robberies had been reported. The taxi drivers' branch of the Motor Transport Workers' General Union lobbied the crime prevention bureau at police headquarters in September demanding tougher measures to ensure their safety. The union also wants a special 24-hour telephone hotline set up for the drivers.

#### Sri Lanka rail strike

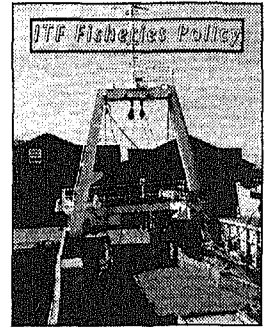
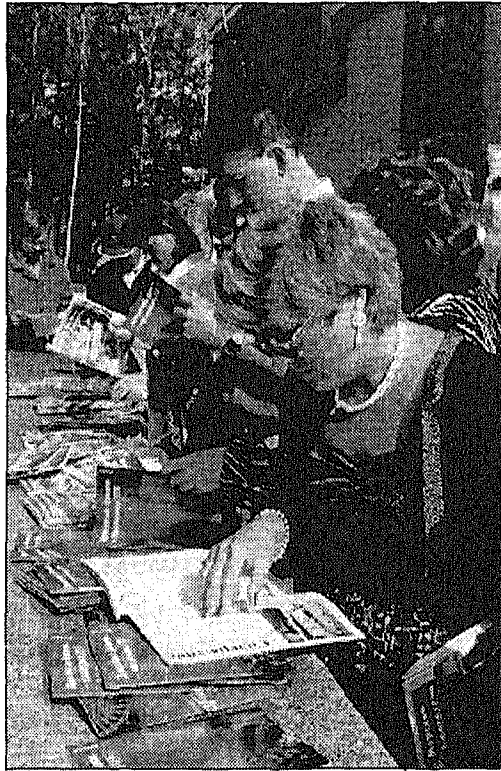
■ A five-day train strike, which crippled Sri Lanka's public transport, ended with drivers and workshop staff claiming success. Train services ground to a halt on 18 September when the 10,000-member Technical Services Trade Unions' Federation (TSTUF) walked off the job demanding better pay and a new constitution for the technical services. TSTUF members returned to work on the following day when the government agreed to meet their demands, but train services remained crippled. A railway spokesperson said at the end of the week that the government had appeared to have agreed to meet the strikers' demands, which included promotions and payment of arrears based on those promotions. The government deployed extra buses throughout the week to take tens of thousands of stranded commuters to work.

#### Zimbabwe dispute

■ Members of the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union of Zimbabwe (TGWU) are in dispute with road haulage company Cargo Carriers over plans to reduce its workforce. Negotiations on a redundancy package broke down in August. The company resorted to using non-unionised labour to operate about 40 trucks in South Africa, Zambia, Botswana and Malawi. Cargo Carriers also trades under different names, Sabat in Zambia and Botswana and Wheels of Africa in Malawi and South Africa. The TGWU is calling on affiliates to boycott Cargo Carriers in these countries by refusing to handle the trucks and prevent them from returning to Zimbabwe.

## FISHERIES

■ ITF publications proved to be a popular attraction (right) at the Sixth International Fishing Industry Exposition in St Petersburg late in August. Visitors soon snapped up the entire stock of Russian language booklets explaining ITF policies on fishing and other maritime issues.



■ The ITF Fisheries Policy (see inset) has now been published. The policy, which has been developed over a number of years, covers several areas of importance to fishers with a direct bearing on their working and living conditions.

It lays down principles relating to the management of fish stocks, commits the ITF to co-ordinate affiliates' efforts aimed at combating marine pollution and covers subjects such as a guaranteed minimum wage, rest periods between fishing trips, crew accommodation and recreational facilities on board fishing vessels, repatriation and training.

Fishers' affiliates are being asked to promote the policy and to lobby administrations, authorities and employers to ensure that its objectives are achieved.

The policy is currently available from head office in English and Spanish. Versions in French, German and Swedish will be available shortly.

*"The challenge now for trade unions is to make sure the voice of fishers and all fishing industry workers is heard when decisions are taken at regional level."*

A NEW accord aimed at securing international co-operation in preserving fish stocks on the high seas is being welcomed by the ITF as a major extension of the regulatory framework for the world's fishing industry.

A key feature of the agreement is its acknowledgement of the role of bodies such as the ITF and its affiliates, representing fishery workers, in ensuring that conservation measures agreed between nations are properly observed.

This "transparency" provision is contained in Article 12 of the agreement, which makes it clear that intergovernmental and non-governmental bodies must be allowed to participate in regional fish management structures. They will be able to attend meetings and have access to all relevant records and reports.

Jon Whitlow, ITF Seafarers' and Fishermen's Sections Assistant Secretary, who represented the ITF at the UN Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, held in New York in August, singled out Article 12 for special approval.

"The challenge now for trade unions is to make sure the voice of fishers and all fishing industry workers is heard when decisions are

# Unions win conservation role in new UN code

taken at regional level," he said.

The new agreement implements provisions of the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea dealing with the management of international fisheries. The conference itself was convened as a result of a recommendation by the 1992 UN Conference on the Environment and Development.

Meanwhile the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization is in the process of drawing up a Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing. A final text is expected to be agreed by the end of the year.

According to Whitlow, the new code plus the agreement on straddling and migratory fish stocks together lay the basis for a substantial and welcome regulation of high seas

fisheries. "A strengthened and wider regulatory framework for world fishing should benefit fishery workers, but we must also be vigilant in ensuring that the interests of fishing communities are always taken into account."

The general principles of the latest UN agreement, set out in Article 5, require fishing states to co-operate in adopting measures to ensure the long-term sustainability of fish stocks in international waters. Assessments must be made of the impact of fishing and other human activities on fish reserves.

States should also take measures to prevent or eliminate over-fishing, and they must "take into account the interests of artisanal and subsistence fishers". ■



■ *More and more dock work in the Asia/Pacific region is now being contracted out to workers without union contracts, according to delegates at the ITF meeting in Tokyo.*



# Non-union work on the increase

**Asia/Pacific delegates meet in Tokyo**

REPORTS of creeping de-unionisation as a consequence of deregulation and labour market reforms in Asia/Pacific ports figured prominently at the meeting in September of ITF dockers' unions in the region.

Privatisation, the weakening of labour protection laws, the flexibilisation of working conditions and the contracting-out of work traditionally done by dock workers were among the trends reported from nearly all countries.

More and more dock work was now being done by workers not covered by contracts between a union and an employer, the meeting heard. Their working conditions were much worse than the conditions of workers covered by a union-negotiated contract.

The delegates from Hong Kong, who attended the meeting for the first time, reported the contracting-out of all truck work on the terminals to small trucking companies, in most cases owner-drivers. The original truck drivers, employed by the stevedoring company and covered by a contract for dock workers, were forced to continue as a so called independent trucking company or be sacked.

The same development was reported from many other countries, confirming that contracting-out was not only affecting working conditions, but was also a means of de-unionising the industry.

ITF Dockers' Section Secretary Kees Marges said the exchange of information on recent developments in various countries and ports provided, as always, an excellent opportunity to discuss further co-operation between the un-

**ITF unions urged to redouble mutual solidarity in face of increasing employer attacks**

ions during disputes. "We must redouble our efforts to provide mutual support for each other in the face of these anti-union trends," he added.

Unions representing New Zealand dock workers reported that the deregulation policies of successive left and right-wing governments had destroyed union organisation and reduced employer-employee relations to individual contracts – on the fallacious basis that workers and bosses are on an equal power footing.

Deregulation in New Zealand had also meant the removal of any influence which the trade union movement had on the country's economic and political course, particularly since the introduction of new labour legislation in 1991.

For many years New Zealand was known as a country which was one of the first to create a welfare state, the unions noted. Now it is known as one of the first to destroy that welfare state.

The meeting, which was attended by 41 representatives from 21 unions, went on to reiterate support for closer co-operation with seafarers' unions involved in the ITF's flag of convenience campaign.

Delegates pledged to increase their partici-

■ *Turn to next page*

# Asia/Pacific meeting

■ *From previous page*

pation in the FOC campaign, which should result in more arrests and boycotts of ships not covered by an ITF-approved agreement.

Among the representatives in Tokyo were two visitors from the US west coast's International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union. Also there as observers were officials of the National Council of Dock Workers' Unions of Japan (Zenkoku-Kowan). The council will soon take a decision on whether to affiliate to

the ITF. Delegates were welcomed by Shoshiro Nakanishi, Chair of the Asia/Pacific Regional Committee, and Yasumasa Yatomi, Chair of the ITF Japanese Co-ordinating Committee.

Another trend reported at the meeting was an increase in shortsea shipping in place of road transport. There were some adverse implications, delegates declared, such as the growing number of unmanned ships and the handling of those ships by non-dock workers. ■

## Forthcoming ITF meetings

- *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*
- *ITF/International Labour Organisation seminar, Kiev, 21-23 November*
- *North American Civil Aviation Regional Committee, Washington, 29-30 November*
- *Road Transport Section European Committee, Stockholm, 5-6 December*
- *Road Transport Section Committee, Stockholm, 7-8 December*

### Nicaragua protest

■ A strong letter of protest has been sent by the ITF to the President of Nicaragua following complaints by the SEPAPC dock workers' union about government interference in negotiations with employers in the Pacific port of Corinto. President Violeta Chamorro was urged to allow workers in the country's main port "to experience their full trade union rights". The ITF dispatched the protest in September in response to a report by SEPAPC that the government and employers had unilaterally broken off pay negotiations with the union and had ordered the police chief to seize the docks from any strikers.

## Consequences of privatisation

PARTICIPANTS at an ITF-sponsored seminar in India on privatisation concluded that neither nationalisation nor privatisation improves performance at the workplace. But any changes to boost efficiency must only be introduced if they have no adverse effect on employment, the environment and quality of life of workers, consumers and the public, the seminar in Vizag concluded.

Among other conclusions reached by the seminar, held in August, were:

- Trade unions should develop new strategies to meet the challenges of privatisation, modernisation, computerisation and containerisation. This will be achieved by developing suitable training programmes for their members
- Any changes in the industrial scene must be made with the consent of those concerned
- Local port authorities should have the freedom to take decisions for the development of the port sector to meet global competition, especially in matters of developing the infrastructure.

The seminar, which was jointly run by the ITF and the German educational foundation, FES, was attended by trade union representatives from the ports of Calcutta, Paradip, Vizag, Madras and Tuticorin. ■

## 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 facing page for head office details.

■ **Sam McCluskie** (centre), in characteristically pugnacious pose, leads officials and staff of the NUS back into their head office. They had been barred from the building during the time that it had been seized by the British high court during the 1988 ferry dispute with P&O.

Below, Jim Jump, editor of the NUS journal, *The Seaman*, during the 1980s pays tribute to a remarkable union leader.



# Sam McCluskie

ONE of the great figures of British maritime trade unionism, Sam McCluskie, died on 15 September, aged 63. The former General Secretary of the National Union of Seamen had waged a long battle against ill health, which had forced him to retire early some four years ago.

A burly but good-natured Scot and former ship's cook, McCluskie became an NUS full-time official in 1964 and by the early 1970s was a national officer of the union, serving from 1976 to 1986 as its Assistant General Secretary. In that year he took over as General Secretary from Jim Slater, a post he retained until 1990. It was then that the NUS merged with the National Union of Railwaymen to form the rail and maritime union RMT and McCluskie became the new union's Executive Secretary and deputy to General Secretary Jimmy Knapp.

He was a clever industrial tactician, whose skills were typified by the conduct of a dispute in 1981 when the NUS won time-and-a-half overtime

## OBITUARY

premium rates. The campaign of industrial action, which was masterminded by McCluskie, wore down British shipowners by lightning strikes of varying duration in ports throughout the world. Crews on over 600 vessels – who were kept in touch with NUS headquarters in London by telephone, telex and the assistance of local maritime union officials – were taking part in the stoppages by the time the month-long dispute ended.

McCluskie was a regular attendee at ITF Congresses and seafarers' meetings throughout the 1970s and 1980s, where his formidable rhetorical and bargaining skills were often deployed. At the time of his retirement he was a member of five ITF committees: Seafarers' Section, Manning, Maritime Policy, Fair Practices and the Fair Practices Committee Sub-Committee.

In Britain, his time of greatest prominence was the bitter dispute with P&O European Ferries in 1988, when the NUS

fought unsuccessfully to resist wage cuts and job losses among crews operating out of the port of Dover. Solidarity strike action by other groups of NUS members, now made unlawful under trade union legislation introduced by Margaret Thatcher's conservative government, led to the seizure by the courts of the union's funds and assets as well as the imposition of massive fines. The union never recovered financially and was forced to seek a merger.

McCluskie will be remembered as a union leader who never forgot his working class roots. Along with Jim Slater he fought hard – but against impossible odds – to reverse the decline of British shipping. His innate political skills found expression during his 18 years as a member of the British Labour Party's national executive until 1992. He was a true trade union internationalist who recognised the practical advantages for his members of forging links with unions around the world. ■

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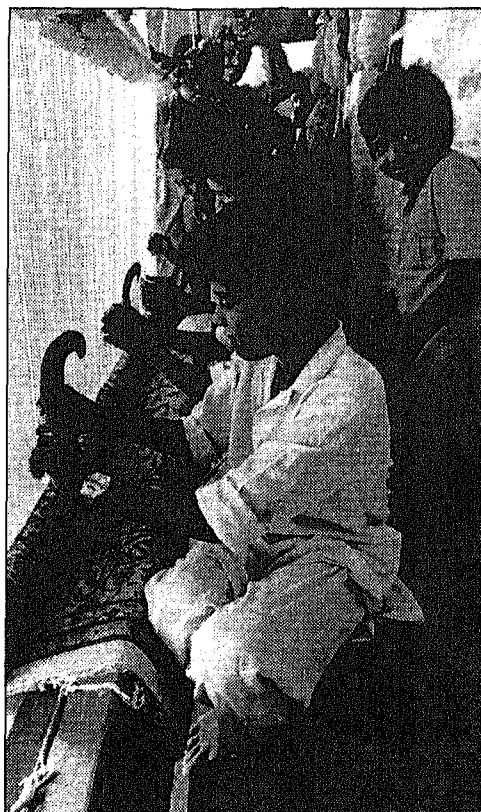
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■ *An international campaign has alerted public opinion to the plight of child workers in the Indian carpet industry (see report below). Anti-child labour activists are now also turning their attention to the fireworks industry. There are some 8,000 firework factories and workshops in the Calcutta region alone, many of them known to employ children. The South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude, representing over 200 campaign groups and other concerned bodies, is calling on the Indian people to boycott firecrackers during the current festive season. "You are not only setting alight a firecracker, you are setting fire to a child's future," says the coalition.*



## Rugmark initiative

THE first rugmark carpet – that is, certified as manufactured without child labour – was presented to the vice-president of the German parliament during a ceremony organised in Bonn.

This label is attributed by a foundation composed of carpet manufacturers, non-governmental organisations and an import promotion agency supported by the German and Indian governments.

It grants the label to manufacturers after verifying that they are not employing children.

Moreover, a private Swiss foundation has announced the launching of a label which will guarantee to buyers of textiles imported from developing countries that the product was manufactured under conditions respecting the minimal social standards.

## Airline anxiety

FLAGS of convenience – will they be making an appearance in civil aviation?

To streamline costs and reduce their personnel, airlines are leaning towards relocating some of their services (Swissair, British Airways), subcontracting foreign crews (Alitalia uses Australians) or flying the flag of a foreign partner on part of their fleet (Sabena's attempt to base a part of its fleet in Luxembourg). ■

### FROM THE LABOUR PRESS

**Working World**  
ILO  
(International Labour Organisation)

FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE  
DES OUVRIERS DU TRANSPORT

FEDERACIÓN INTERNACIONAL  
DE LOS TRABAJADORES DEL TRANSPORTE

INTERNATIONELLA  
TRANSPORTARBETAREFEDERATIONEN

国際運輸労連

INTERNATIONALE  
TRANSPORTARBEITER-FÖDERATION

