

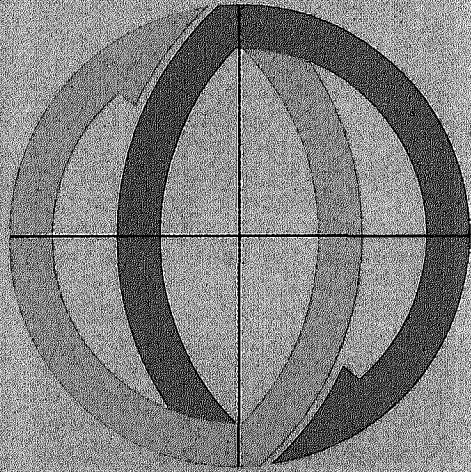
ITF

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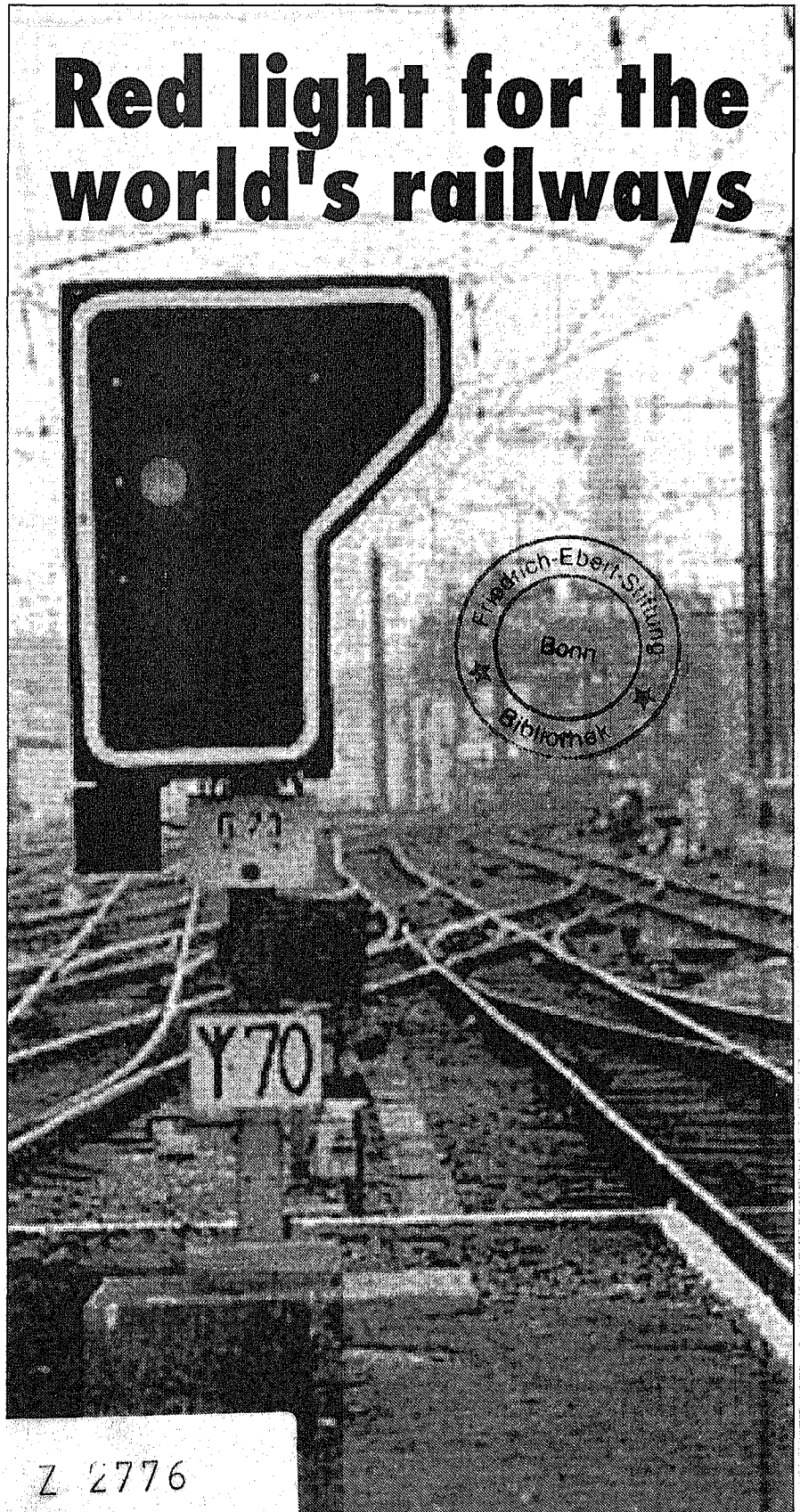


INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS FEDERATION

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INFORMATIONS
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NACHRICHTEN

Red light for the world's railways



Z 2776

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The China dilemma

OPINION

**ITF
General
Secretary
David
Cockroft
writes**



THE difficulties experienced by delegates to the recent UN Women's Conference in Beijing demonstrated the dilemma facing China's ageing political leadership today: how to play a major role on the world stage while keeping tight political control at home.

For international business and the majority of industrialised country governments, relations with China – the world's fastest growing large economy – are becoming vitally important. Whatever they may think about the political situation following the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, no government today seriously believes that isolating China is a serious option.

For the trade union movement, the situation is more complicated. China is liberalising fast, taking large scale investment from many different countries, and particularly from its near neighbours. Free movement of goods, free trade in services, and even free flows of capital are more and more a feature of what is now surely a communist state in name only.

The one area where liberalisation has yet to take root, however, is in the field of human and trade union rights. Although labour disputes, including strikes, do happen, information about them is very difficult to obtain and rigorous controls over workers' rights to organise continue to be exerted by the Chinese authorities.

China is becoming, in many ways, a paradise for transnational corporations. The government's determination to keep it that way can be seen in, amongst other things, its effective campaign to persuade other Asian nations to oppose the inclusion of a social clause in international trade agreements within the framework of the World Trade Organization.

In shipping, already the world's most deregulated industry, the number of Chinese seafarers serving on flag of convenience ships continues to rise dramatically. In shipping too, the ITF is alone in having direct experience of government supported attacks on workers' rights, and direct information from Chinese seafarers, something which led us, together with the ICFTU (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions), to submit a formal complaint earlier this year to the International Labour Organisation's Committee on Freedom of Association. This

also imposes a special responsibility on the ITF not to damage the reputation which it has established as a defender of Chinese seafarers' rights in foreign ports.

The ITF and the international trade union movement as a whole therefore faces its own dilemma about how to deal with China; not with the government (we will always

talk to any government or employer which wishes to talk to us), but how to deal with the Chinese trade unions.

Many ITF affiliates have already established close contacts with the transport branches of the All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) and are urging the ITF itself to do the same, stressing that contact with foreign unions will bring about a democratic transformation of the existing official structures. Others believe that the ACFTU is rapidly losing credibility with Chinese workers and that obtaining international recognition of its trade union status is part of its strategy for survival.

The ITF Executive Board has discussed these issues in great depth during its last two meetings without reaching a definitive conclusion. For the time being, ITF affiliates are being encouraged to develop their own contacts with all Chinese unions, official and unofficial, and to report back their experience. A contact group of ITF affiliates which have experience of the use of Chinese seafarers on FOC vessels is being established. The ITF itself will continue contacts with ACFTU unions in the framework of international organisations such as the ILO and the International Committee on Seafarers' Welfare and will keep its general policy under constant review.

In no way does any of this mean that the ITF is hostile to China. But there has to be at least some hope for the development of real trade unions in that vast and vitally important country. As I made clear in response to an invitation received earlier this year, an important first step in this direction would be for the ACFTU-affiliated Chinese Seafarers' Union to express an independent position about the ITF's ILO complaint.

That, and some indication that they are prepared to help FOC seafarers victimised for trying to improve their conditions would make it far easier for me and my colleagues to book our tickets to Beijing. ■

"In no way does any of this mean that the ITF is hostile to China. But there has to be at least some hope for the development of real trade unions in that vast and vitally important country."



Enter Ethiopia, Eritrea, Palestine and Tanzania

Unions from four more countries accepted into ITF

FOUR new countries came into ITF membership in October with the acceptance of affiliation applications from unions in Ethiopia, Eritrea, Palestine and Tanzania.

The bi-annual meeting of the ITF Executive Board, held in the new ITF headquarters building on 17 and 18 October, also heard about a recent ITF visit to Vietnam which has resulted in an understanding to develop close relations with Vietnamese transport unions with a view to their eventual affiliation.

A vigorous debate on the question of ITF relations with the official unions from the People's Republic of China (and particularly the Chinese Seafarers' Union) led to the adoption of a resolution affirming existing policy (no direct ITF contact, but affiliates are free to establish their own relations and keep the ITF informed of them) and calling for seafarers' unions with ITF agreements covering Chinese crews to meet and co-ordi-

nate their activities. The board also expressed its solidarity with the striking crew of the *Crest Shine* flag of convenience ship in Japan.

Following consultation within the Japanese ITF affiliates group, the board agreed to a proposal to re-establish the Asia/Pacific regional office in Tokyo. The office is presently located in London, and re-location within the region has long been an ITF goal.

The board agreed that Kees Marges, previously both ITF Education and Projects Officer and Dockers' Section Secretary will now be responsible full time for dockers - the ITF Education and Projects Officer position will be advertised and an appointment made at the March 1996 board meeting.

The meeting also approved a job description for the Women and General Policy Officer job, which will also lead to an appointment at the next meeting.

The next meeting, which

will be hosted by ITF President Eike Eulen in Stuttgart, Germany, is already being extended by one day to allow for a discussion on progress on the "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000" project.

It will also be appointing a replacement for ITF Assistant General Secretary (AGS) Åke Selander who is responsible for the Seafarers' and Fishermen's Sections.

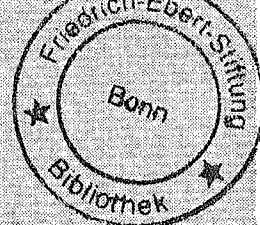
Åke informed the meeting that he intends to resign from the ITF next March when he will be taking up the position of full-time Co-ordinator of the International Committee on Seafarers' Welfare (ICSW), a body established by the ITF together with the shipowners' federation ISF and other international organisations active in the field of seafarers' welfare.

This was the first ITF Executive Board meeting held in the new ITF headquarters (which was officially named ITF House by the board), and it coincided with a formal reception held in the evening on 17 October, which was attended by over 250 people. ■

■ The October ITF Executive Board in session inside the main meeting room at the ITF's new headquarters in London.



■ ITF President Eike Eulen (right) and General Secretary David Cockroft with the plaque marking the official opening of the ITF's new headquarters, known as ITF House.



More donations

■ Donations of Can\$7,500 from the National Automobile, Aerospace, Transportation and General Workers' Union of Canada (CAW) and £1,100 from the Danish transport union SLD have been received for the ITF History Fund. A total of 25 ITF-affiliated unions have now contributed to the fund, which will help finance activities to mark the ITF's centenary in 1996.

GLOBAL ROUND-UP



■ **ITF African Regional Secretary Ben Roxy Udogwu** (pictured right) visited Tunis, from 27 September to 2 October where he represented the ITF at the African executive board meeting of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. Pictured with him are (from left) ITF Francophone Co-ordinator **Nazi Kabore**, **Moktar Hili**, General Secretary of the Transport Workers' Federation of Tunisia and **Quarfa Brahim**, General Secretary of the Railway Workers' Union of Morocco.



■ **New union educators from Eastern and Southern Africa** take time out for a photo at an ITF training workshop held in Nairobi in September. The 24 transport trade unionists – six of them women, who are increasingly taking a major role in the region's educational activities – came from Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The week-long programme of teaching sessions had been organised by ITF African Regional Secretary **Ben Roxy Udogwu**, with assistance from Asia/Pacific Assistant Regional Secretary **Mahendra Sharma**.

■ **John Sweeney**, President of the US Service Employees' International Union, has been elected leader of the AFL-CIO trade union federation, defeating Acting President **Tom Donahue** by over one and a half million votes in the first contested election in the organisation's 40-year history. Mineworkers' President **Richard Trumka** was elected to the influential post of AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer. A new position of Executive Vice President is filled by **Linda Chavez-Thompson** of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). **Randy Babbit** of the Air Line pilots, **Ron Carey** and **Carroll Haynes** of the Teamsters, **George Kourpias** of the Machinists, **Michael Sacco** of the Seafarers, **Robert Scardelletti** of the Transportation-Communications Workers, **Pat Friend** of the Flight Attendants, **Sonny Hall** of the Transport Workers and **Ed Hanley** of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees were among those elected to serve as AFL-CIO Vice Presidents.

Anders moves on

WARM congratulations go to ITF Executive Board member and Seafarers' Section Chair **Anders Lindström**, who has been appointed head of the Swedish Maritime Authority. Anders has been President of the SSU Swedish Seafarers' Union since 1982.

He leaves the Swedish union movement having just overseen the successful merger of the seafarers with SEKO. A vigorous defender of high standards in world shipping, Anders saw his close involvement with the work of the ITF culminate at the 1994 Geneva Congress in his election as Chair of the Seafarers' Section and Co-Chair of the Fair Practices Committee.

Last year also saw his election for the first time to the ITF's highest governing body, the Executive Board.

ITF General Secretary **David Cockroft** adds this appreciation: "The political side of the ITF's flag of convenience campaign will be enormously strengthened by having an ITF man like Anders at the centre of Swedish maritime policy making.

"Throughout his period as SSU President, Anders has been one of the most effective forces defending national flag shipping and attacking the FOC system.

"It is of course a sad loss for the ITF, but all of us in the ITF Secretariat owe a great deal to his sense of vision and political commitment to the defence of seafarers' rights.

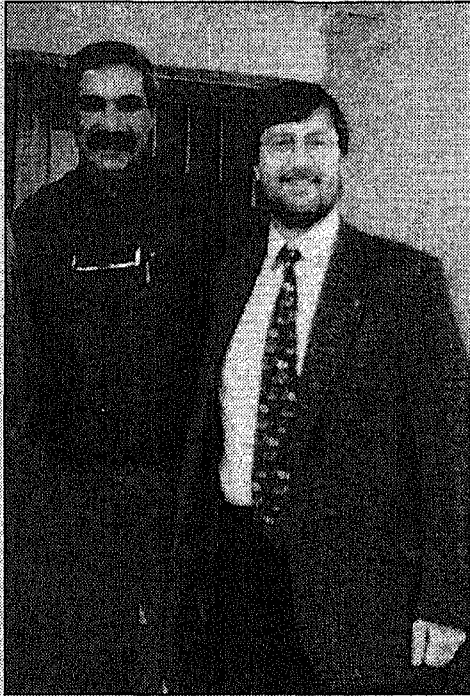
"I have no doubt that he will continue to give us advice and help whenever we need it because even though he has left the trade union movement for government, I know that he has not and will not alter one bit his determination to rid the shipping industry of the FOC scourge." ■

PEOPLE



■ **Anders Lindström** is the new head of the Swedish Maritime Authority. He has been replaced as ITF Seafarers' Section Chair by **John Fay** of the Seafarers' International Union, USA.

Ayçin released, but not free yet



■ David Cockroft (right) visits Atilay Ayçin in prison.

INTERNATIONAL protests from ITF affiliates and a high level trade union delegation which visited Turkey in early October brought swift results in securing the release from prison of Atilay Ayçin, President of the ITF-affiliated civil aviation union Hava-Is.

Ayçin was released on 3 November, almost one month after he received a visit in prison from ITF General Secretary David Cockroft, who was in Turkey as part of an ICFTU-led mission, organised at the request of the ITF, to probe trade union rights violations.

Ayçin was imprisoned in May this year and sentenced to 20 months' imprisonment for "separatist propaganda" under the notorious Article 8 of Turkey's anti-terrorism law.

The repeal of this law has now become the focal point of the debate about whether the draft customs union between Turkey and the European Union should be approved. The decision to prosecute him for a speech made two years previously was taken in the middle of his union's industrial dispute with the newly privatised ground handling company Havas and was clearly designed to frighten the union's lead-

ership into abandoning strike action.

Ayçin's release, although very welcome, is not the end of the matter. According to Hava-Is General President Mustafa Yagci a court hearing due to take place on 24 November could still impose restrictions on his right to participate freely in trade union activities. Pressure from ITF affiliates remains as important as ever therefore.

Although Turkey is in the process of dismantling the mass of repressive legislation passed during the time it was governed by a military dictatorship, the mission concluded that it still has a long way to go in bringing union rights laws into line with those of the member states of the European Union.

■ **Strikes and mass protests by 350,000 Turkish public sector workers ended in October after five weeks with the national centre, Türk-Is, and government reaching agreement on a 90 per cent increase in salaries. The strikes, which were provoked by the government's pay offer of 5.4 per cent, brought ports and railways to a standstill. The ITF-affiliated Romanian dockers' union boycotted diverted ships.** ■

Belarus decree unconstitutional

■ The presidential decree clauses temporarily suspending and seeking a permanent ban on the Free Trade Union of Belarus (SPB) and the metro workers' section of the FPB official trade union federation following the Minsk metro strike in August were declared unconstitutional in a judgement handed down on 8 November. But SPB Chair Gerunady Bykov warns that the President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, could still decide to ignore the Constitutional Court — its hearings were twice delayed at his request — and has urged the international trade union movement to keep a close watch on the situation. "This is Belarus. Anything is possible," says Bykov.

COMPREHENSIVE economic sanctions should be brought in by all governments against Burma's military dictatorship, and all foreign investment, loans and official development assistance should be withdrawn until "legitimate democratic government is restored, forced labour is abolished, all political prisoners are freed and independent trade unions are recognised".

These were among the main recommendations of an international trade union conference on Burma held in Manila, Philippines, in October. The event was organised by the International Trade Secretariats, including the ITF, and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and its Asia/Pacific regional organisation.

The conference recommended that the Federation of Trade Unions, Burma,

Burma sanctions call

should be recognised as "the sole free voice of Burmese labour". Similarly, the democratic, but exiled, National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma should be recognised by the international community as "the legitimate government of the country".

Cataloguing the Burmese government's anti-worker repression, systematic use of forced labour and other rights abuses, the conference said foreign investors' hard currency was helping the regime to repress the Burmese people. The biggest foreign investments are in oil, gas, hotels

and tourism, and the conference noted "persistent reports" that "forced labour has been used in the initial stages of the regime's joint ventures with multinational companies in these sectors".

Unions worldwide should inform their members of these facts, and expose the abuse of tourism as a means of seeking spurious legitimacy. When Burmese workers were paid at all, a common wage rate was the equivalent, at the effective exchange rate, of US\$6 a month.

■ The ITF is supporting an international postcard campaign, organised by the ICFTU, which involves trade union members sending protest cards to the ambassador or official representative of Burma, officially known as the Union of Myanmar. Copies of the card are available from ITF headquarters. ■

Spotlight on the 31st ICAO General

ITF calls for Fair Skies, not Open Skies

A DELEGATION from the ITF, including Section Secretary Stuart Howard, the ITF representative to ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) Stu Johns, and several representatives from ITF affiliates, attended the 31st ICAO General Assembly held in Montréal from 19 September to 4 October.

The ITF's opening statement to the assembly called for "Fair Skies not Open Skies", demanding that governments retain national sovereignty over civil aviation, including the right to designate carriers, regulate code-sharing, control prices and capacity and other measures to preserve the public service role of air transport.

The statement called for an ICAO code of conduct providing minimum safety and social standards in the civil aviation industry, enforced by government regulatory bodies. It warned against attacks on airline ownership rules which could allow the emergence of flags of convenience in the aviation industry. During a later debate on economic regulation African states called for preferential measures to assist African aviation, and Latin American states called for the setting-up of an International Aviation Monetary Fund to provide assistance for the capital needs of aviation in developing countries.

Licensing campaign

The ITF took up once more the issue of cabin crew licensing and training standards. Disappointingly, despite intensive lobbying of a number of governments both before and during the conference, no ICAO member state was prepared to put forward a proposal that

ICAO should set up a study group on cabin crew licensing.

AMEL Study Group

The ITF delegation did gain reassurances that the ICAO Study Group on Aircraft Maintenance Engineers' Licensing would be reconvened during 1996. This study group has been effectively frozen since 1991.

New training manual

At the 1992 ICAO General Assembly the ITF called for a revision of the ICAO Cabin Attendants' Training Manual, which was last published in 1976. These standards are not mandatory but do provide a useful guideline for the training standards governments should be requiring from all airlines and are a useful tool for any cabin crew union which believes its airline does not provide adequate cabin crew safety training.

An ITF team met with the ICAO secretariat in Montréal in March 1995 and worked in depth on the ICAO draft until May.

The ICAO secretariat, which has acknowledged the ITF's contribution as "instrumental" in helping ICAO develop international guidelines for cabin crew training to the highest standards, reported to

the 1995 ICAO assembly that the English language version is completed.

Smoking ban

The 1992 ICAO General Assembly agreed that a complete smoking ban on all international routes should be targeted for July 1996.

At the 1995 assembly the tobacco lobby fought back. The tobacco lobby took out adverts in the Montréal newspapers. A number of member states tried to insist that passenger health was outside the remit of ICAO; others defended the individual rights of smokers.

The ITF pointed out that while passengers might choose to sit in non smoking compartments cabin crew would have no choice about a working environment containing tobacco smoke. After some further debate it was agreed that the ICAO July 1996 smoking ban deadline remains.

Cabin air quality

The states challenging the smoking ban did succeed in getting agreement that ICAO should set up a study group to investigate the possibilities of equipping aircraft with two separate air systems. This (as the ITF pointed out) seems a quite remarkable set of priori-

In brief

Air France dispute

In a document circulated to all Air France cabin crew, the airline's chair, Christian Blanc, claims that cabin crew are uncompetitive and need to radically change their working practices. The document includes a highly dubious comparison between cabin crew costs at Air France and Lufthansa, and proposes that cabin crew in future be recruited from amongst ground staff for 10 or so years flying before returning to ground jobs. The response of French cabin crew trade unions has been vigorous: a series of one day strikes.

ATC talks

The European joint body bringing together air traffic control workers affiliated to the ITF, the Committee of Transport Workers' Unions in the European Community, the Public Services International and the European public sector workers committee, EPSC, met in October. Amongst the decisions taken was one to seek to influence the process of harmonisation of air traffic controllers' licensing.

Campaign day

All ITF civil aviation affiliates will be sending the ITF's "Fair Skies statement" to all national governments for the ITF International Trade Union Campaign Day for Civil Aviation on Friday 1 December. The theme of the campaign day will be "Fair Skies, not Open Skies". Unions are urged to attach their own statement or a joint statement of ITF aviation unions in each country to complement the ITF statement. The ITF has also produced "Fair Skies, not Open Skies" stickers which are being distributed to all affiliates. George Ryde, chair of the ITF Civil Aviation Section, says: "This is the day in the year when every government minister responsible for civil aviation must receive on his desk the same message that there is an international aviation system in which safety, public service and workers rights are guaranteed."



A three-day seminar in Nepal on "open skies" policies and the consequences for civil aviation workers attracted 23 representatives from 11 ITF-affiliated unions in the Indian sub-continent. Experts on aviation policy and the health and safety of airline workers addressed the meeting, held in Kathmandu at the end of August, which was jointly organised with the German FES educational foundation. The meeting looked at how, particularly in India and Pakistan, liberalisation had opened fragile markets to private airlines and damaged the viability of existing national airlines.

ties when ICAO has refused a study group on cabin air quality requested by its own medical department. The ITF is to mount a campaign to pressure ICAO to set up an ICAO study group on cabin air quality.

Substance abuse

ICAO has produced a Manual on the Prevention of Problematic Use of Substances in the Aviation Workplace. The ITF has welcomed the non-judgmental approach of the manual and its focus on workplace education and rehabilitation.

An ITF submission to the Assembly condemned random drug testing.

The submission called for an approach which educated not only employees but employers, in particular concerning the link between increased demands on employees in a high stress industry and frequently unsocial work hours, and substance abuse.

Air traffic management

One of the major areas of activity under the auspices of the ICAO is systematic global planning for air traffic management to shift from terrestrial systems to an ICAO communications, navigation and surveillance/air traffic management (CNS/ATM) systems concept, using satellite technology.

ICAO aims at technical harmonisation and forms of regional integration of national air traffic management wherever possible.

The system would provide a harmonised technical framework and international standards within which there would be space for private commercial providers of air traffic services to operate.

No assessment has been made of the very serious employment consequences that the introduction of new technology, the possible regional integration of air traffic control and any moves to a system of contracting out various air traffic services are liable to have for air traffic service employees. ■

Delta blues

DELTA Air Lines is involved in a major worldwide cost-cutting programme called Leadership 7.5. In the United States the airline has shed 10,000 jobs. The airline has franchised out many US domestic routes to smaller airlines. The airline is closing its Asia/Pacific regional office in Hong Kong, and in Europe reservations offices have been closed in 13 countries. All European reservations will be dealt with by a new office based in London (for the present, the Frank-

furt office will remain open).

Delta is the biggest anti-union airline in the world, and is notorious in the USA for its anti-labour policies. It has consistently fought attempts at unionisation, and currently the only recognised union in the USA is the pilots' organisation, the ITF-affiliated ALPA.

Unions affected by the reservations office closures in Europe met at the ITF offices in London in October. The meeting agreed that if the company refuses to enter a dialogue with the unions then an international campaign will be launched against the carrier. ■



■ Cabin crew are falsely portrayed as aerial bar staff.

Safety professionals

THE ITF has produced a new booklet, called "Cabin Crew: Safety Professionals". The full colour booklet, which highlights the vital safety role of cabin crew, was launched during the ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) General Assembly in Montréal and was presented to all government civil aviation representatives.

"The airline industry could not fly its aircraft without the safety skills of cabin crew on board," says ITF Civil Aviation Secretary Stuart Howard. "Yet the same industry, on the basis of cost, opposes measures which would give recognition to these skills and ensure that these are maintained through professional licensing. The same industry also spends millions of dollars in advertising which continues to distort the image of cabin crew as aerial bar staff."

The ITF booklet also points out that cabin safety duties run from checking safety equipment, dealing with passenger behaviour, to taking charge of evacuating a crowded aircraft within seconds. It also looks at how cabin crew are being affected by increased fatigue as airlines schedule to the legal limits of flight and duty times.

The booklet aims at assisting cabin crew gain recognition of their safety professional role.

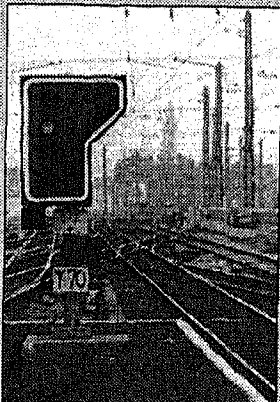
As Betty Lecouturier, of the French cabin crew union SNPNC, says: "I am proud of the dedication with which cabin crew around the world strive to meet their safety responsibilities. It is about time the attitudes in airline management and government changed to recognise fully our role." ■

Round-table talks

■ In an attempt to influence the attitude of members of the European Commission on the issue of cabin crew, the Committee of Transport Workers' Unions in the European Community is organising a round table discussion on their safety role with a number of invited expert speakers. The meeting, which it is hoped will be funded by the European Commission, will take place in Brussels on 13 and 14 March 1996.

Cover story

Red light for the world's railways



■ *The deserted railway track at the Zuid/Midi station was typical of the scene throughout the Belgian rail network on 27 October when train traffic was severely disrupted by a one-day strike. Workers for Belgian railways are protesting against job losses and against the investment policies of the administration. They say the railways are concentrating on big expensive projects like the TGV link to Paris to the detriment of smaller, local lines.*

At the same time as the strike the ITF held a special conference in Budapest to consider trade union responses to the upheavals in rail systems throughout the world.

Photo: Reuters

■ *Right: Delegates at the ITF conference in Budapest.*

Rail unions meet to consider response to upheaval

Runaway restructuring

Railway workers to step up international campaigning...

...to prevent the fragmentation and privatisation of railway undertakings, with a focal point on the organic split between infrastructure and operations.

...against pressure for privatisation and unsocial conditions linked to loans from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in relation to restructuring programmes in developing countries and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

THESE were two of the main conclusions of the special ITF conference on "The Railways - Structure and Ownership", reports *Asbjørn Wahl*, Assistant Secretary of the ITF's Inland Transport Sections.

The conference was held in Budapest in October in co-operation with the Free Trade Union of Railway Workers of Hungary. More than 80 delegates and speakers took part, including six railway management representatives.

The conference was arranged against the background of a railway restructuring process which is going on all over the world at a speed unknown till now in the history of the railways. The process represents a huge challenge to the trade union movement, as railway workers are facing massive and almost continuous organisational

changes, pressure on wages and working conditions, considerable reductions in the workforce, reduced job security, redundancies and even dismissals in some countries.

A critical moment

ITF General Secretary David Cockroft described the conference as one of the most important that the ITF had ever organised. He, as well as Section Chair, Jimmy Knapp, stressed that the documents prepared for the conference showed that this was a critical moment for the future of publicly-owned, integrated railway systems.

Cockroft also underlined that the conference was the beginning of a process, not the end, and that affiliates would have to co-operate more closely in order to make things happen.

The conference examined the continuing restructuring process of the national railway systems, exchanged experiences and discussed measures to develop a more comprehensive and unified trade union response.

A declaration and action programme was adopted unanimously. This will now form the platform for increased international campaigning and activities among railway workers' unions.

Serious threat

The conference proved beyond doubt that railway workers view the organic separation of railway operations from the management of the infrastructure as the institutional change which



in networks worldwide

presents the most serious threat to the future prosperity and effectiveness of the railway industry. This organisational split would greatly impede the railways' ability to compete with other transport modes.

Railway management representatives present at the conference fully supported this view and spoke unambiguously in favour of maintaining railway networks as integrated systems in order to obtain the maximum advantage from the benefits of unified networks.

Stig Larsson, Director General of the Swedish State Railways, which was the first one to make the organic split, was quite clear in concluding that experience had proved that the split had had adverse effect on railway operations. Representatives of the Queensland Railway System (Australia) and the East Japanese Railway Company shared the same conclusion.

IMF and SAPs

The decision to set up a campaign against the policies of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank was based on experiences of conditions set by these international agencies for loans to developing countries and countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

The strict terms of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs), which were narrowly focused and failed to recognise the social and employment contexts of the countries to which they were applied, were matters of great concern among railway workers' unions.

The two campaigns should also include the long-standing demand for harmonisation of the conditions of competition between rail and road transport, rewarding railways for their outstanding performance in the fields of safety and the environment.

Finally the conference endorsed the initiation of ITF activities to deal with terms and conditions for train crews in cross-border traffic. This is expected to increase considerably in the years to come, so co-ordinated activities will be crucial in order to harmonise wages and working conditions and thereby prevent social dumping

Modernisation

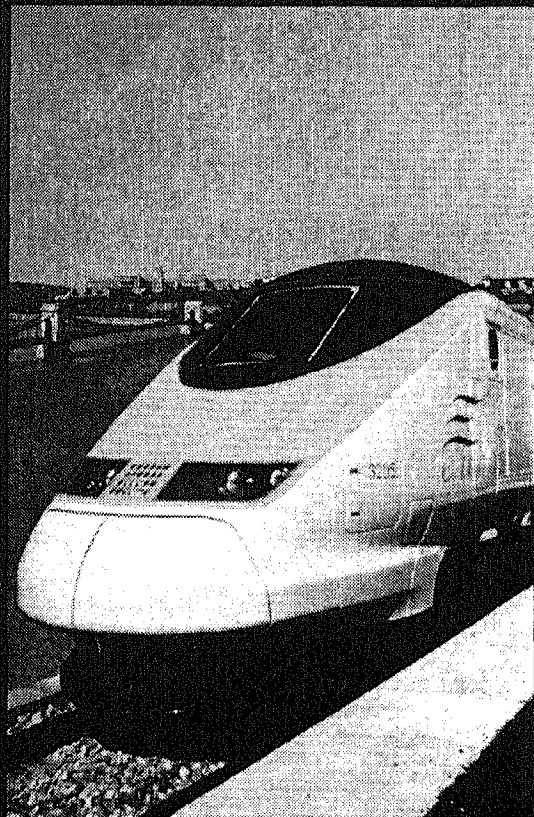
The conference stated that improving and modernising the railway sector was an imperative, but one which also created pressure for restructuring. The assessment of restructuring requirements and options must take into consideration the role of the railways in national economic and social development and the contexts in which their problems had emerged.

In recent decades the railways of many countries had suffered from a shortage of investment, particularly in infrastructure, since priority had been given to road and air transport in allocating public funds. Lack of investment had hindered the railways from taking advantage of developments in technology and transport organisation.

This situation had created real and serious problems for the railways in adapting their services to the changing demands of transport users, in improving their productivity in comparison with other transport modes and in retaining both the confidence of governments and public opinion. ■

■ *Right: The poster for the ITF conference depicted a Eurostar train superimposed on the Budapest skyline.*

The ITF Conference on "The Railways - Structure and Ownership" decided to develop an action programme concentrated on regions and developments where transnational policies can be clearly identified. Campaign activities should focus on the four areas below...



Action programme

■ **The prevention of fragmentation and privatisation, in particular the organic split between infrastructure and operations: Where fragmentation and/or privatisation has already occurred, the restoration of the natural "marriage" between railway operations and infrastructure should be the aim.**

■ **Financing programmes for the railways: These are necessary in order to recoup the investment deficit relative to road and air transport.**

■ **Harmonisation of the conditions of competition between rail and road transport - rewarding the railways for their outstanding performance in the fields of safety and the environment - and of the terms and conditions of train crews in cross-border traffic: In addition, the conditions set by international agencies such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank as conditions for loans to developing countries and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe are matters of deep concern. The same applies to the consequences generated for public sector railway undertakings by the strict terms of structural adjustment programmes which are narrowly focused and fail to recognise the social and employment contexts of the countries to which they are applied.**

■ **Recognition of the need for a proper framework of coherent long-term policies for the transport sector: This is essential if the less-developed countries are to avoid suffering catastrophic social effects from the imposition of narrow, fiscally-orientated programmes demanded by the international agencies. The ITF and its railway workers' affiliates, in conjunction with other international trade union organisations, should organise an international campaign against pressure for privatisation and unsocial conditions linked to loans from the IMF and the World Bank in relation to restructuring programmes in developing countries and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.**

Dispute flares in Miami over sacked activist

THE new president of the US trade union confederation, the AFL-CIO, John Sweeney and President Ron Carey of the ITF-affiliated International Brotherhood of Teamsters have come out against the firing of a union official by Overnite Transportation in Miami. Joint protests will be staged by the two organisations, if necessary, to restore the job of trade union activist Hugo Hernández.

Workers at the Miami Overnite site recently organised to form a Teamsters' unit, where Hernández is a leader in the struggle to gain a union contract.

Hernández was fired while researching – with the company's permission – personnel files in an attempt to find falsified disciplinary reports inserted into the files of pro-union workers.

Overnite is a repeat labour law offender, cited

for hundreds of illegal acts committed against its workers during organising campaigns. It is the largest non-union trucking company in the freight industry.

Ron Carey affirmed the union's support for Hernández and the workers at the Miami facility: "We're going to act quickly and forcefully to shine the national spotlight on this corporate outlaw."

The AFL-CIO is lending its full support to the Teamsters. "The new AFL-CIO is going to give a new voice to workers who stand up for basic human rights," Sweeney said. "If this firing is not reversed quickly, we will work with the Teamsters to organise whatever protests are needed to stop this injustice."

■ The Teamsters are involved in another major dispute in the Miami area, involving Spanish-speaking warehouse workers and drivers who work for Stair Cargo, a subsidiary of one of the largest freight forwarding companies in the world, Fritz Companies. Stair Cargo is proposing a system whereby workers will be paid not according to how well they do their job, but how well they speak English. In addition, the company wants to make reductions in pay to drivers who initiated a union organising campaign. The Teamsters are calling on unions worldwide to lend support, either by visiting one of the Fritz Companies offices, or sending letters to local Fritz offices (addresses are available from the ITF Secretariat). ■

ITF hails successful outcome after years of campaigning

EUROPEAN governments from countries on the Rhine and Danube and from countries connected to these waterway systems have signed the text of an Administrative Arrangement for the Application of the European Agreement Concerning the Social Security of Boatmen Engaged in Inland Navigation.

The agreement itself was adopted in March 1993 by an inter-governmental conference held in Strasbourg with the purpose of guaranteeing continuity of social security benefits, such as medical care and occupational injury and illness payments, to inland navigation workers who sail to different countries or who work on board ships of different flags.

The practical arrangements for the agreement's implementation were concluded at the conference of Rhine and Danube waterway governments, held in Bucharest at the end of September. They are to be supervised by an administrative centre which will be estab-

Rhine and Danube workers win cross-border social security protection

lished in Strasbourg by the secretariats of the Central Commission for Rhine Navigation and the Danube Commission, if the latter considers it appropriate.

The agreement will come into effect when it has been ratified by three Rhine and three Danube countries. The signing of the administrative arrangement was the culmination of years of campaigning by the ITF and its affiliates, commencing with an initiative taken during the ILO's Inland Trans-

port Committee session in 1980. The work of drawing up first the agreement and subsequently the administrative arrangement was supported by the social security department of the ILO.

Assistant General Secretary Graham Brothers attended the Bucharest conference on behalf of the ITF and representatives from ITF affiliates in Belgium, Germany and Switzerland were included in national delegations. ■

INLAND TRANSPORT

In brief

ITF donation

■ The ITF has donated £2,000 from its newly established International Solidarity Fund to the Transport and General Workers' Union of Zimbabwe for the relief of cases of extreme hardship among the employees of road haulage company Cargo Carriers, who were dismissed in September. Graham Brothers, ITF Assistant General Secretary, in a letter to Forai Makanda, General Secretary of the TGWU, said: "Please inform your members of our solidarity and our good wishes for a successful outcome."

Australians protest

■ An industrial campaign by the Australian ITF affiliate, Public Transport Union (PTU), against driver only trains has begun with a 24 hour strike. The PTU is in dispute with several Australian rail systems after a management proposal for introducing driver only freight trains was rejected by the PTU's locomotive driver members in National Rail.

■ Right: ITF Fishermen's Section representatives outside the OECD's headquarters in Paris, including (third from left) ITF Assistant Secretary Jon Whitlow, (right) Section Chair Oli Jacobsen and (third from right) European Fishermen's Regional Committee Chair Peter Sand Mortensen.



ITF policies are explained to OECD

Positive response to case for social dimension to fishery management programmes

THE ITF case for a holistic approach to the management of the world's fish stocks met with a positive response from the Bureau of the Fisheries Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) at the first-ever consultation between the two organisations at the OECD's Paris headquarters in October.

The ITF delegation, headed by Seafarers' and Fishermen's Sections Assistant Secretary Jon Whitlow and Fishermen's Section Chair Oli Jacobsen, was given a one and a half hour hearing. Other members of the delegation, whose composition broadly reflected the bureau's structure, were drawn from unions in Canada, Japan, Spain and France, together with European Fishermen's Regional Committee Chair Peter Sand Mortensen. Fluid discussions ensued in which all participated.

The consultation, held under the auspices of the OECD's Trade Union Advisory Committee, focused on issues raised in an ITF discussion document.

The ITF paper argued that fishing industry workers should be allowed to participate in international, regional or sub-regional organisations established for the efficient management of fisheries resources and the promotion of sustainable fish stocks.

It expressed strong support for efforts to create an international regime that ensured free, fair and equitable trade in the fisheries sector,

while stressing that such a regime must include a comprehensive social clause to provide for adequate treatment for those workers displaced by restructuring and ensure decent terms and conditions for those remaining in the industry and prevent social dumping.

The ITF expressed its concern at the spread of flags of convenience to fishing and that ITQs (individual transferable quotas) were increasingly being concentrated in the hands of large companies with processing interests.

In the ensuing discussions it became clear that most bureau members were sympathetic to the views contained in the ITF paper. The Fisheries Committee Chair urged the ITF to seek a further consultation, promising that more time would be allocated to the discussions at the next meeting. ■

Canadians and Spaniards meet

PLANS were laid for closer co-operation between fishers' affiliates from Canada and Spain when Earle McCurdy, Reg Anstey and Ches Cribb of the CAW met with Manuel Souto of FETT-UGT and Ricardo Feijóo of FETCOMAR-CC.OO. in Paris.

In an amicable exchange of views, the Canadian and Spanish union officials discussed the problems that have arisen in the dispute over Spanish vessels fishing off the coast of Canada.

Both sides said they hoped to follow up these first contacts with further meetings, and they thanked the ITF for arranging the meeting. ■

'The ITF expressed its concern at the spread of flags of convenience to fishing and that ITQs (individual transferable quotas) were increasingly being concentrated in the hands of large companies with processing interests.'

ITF European ferry agreement to be drafted

THE ITF Ferry Conference, held in Athens in October, where maritime unions agreed on a common European ferry policy, was welcomed by participants as a big step forward in the campaign against social dumping in the shipping industry.

At this first ever pan-European ferry conference, the strategy taken varied from the usual ITF position of concentrating on flags and beneficial ownership. Instead, members looked more at onboard conditions on European ferries.

A comprehensive policy was drafted by the meeting, and acceptance is pending. This policy would mean that shipowners who conduct traffic between two countries within Europe would adhere to national conditions in either one of the two countries. At the same time, onboard conditions should never be beneath eventual standards agreed upon by the ITF European Ferry Committee.

The intent of the policy is that a European ferry agreement should be superior to the ITF benchmark for crew agreements, and members involved in drafting policy hope to have a proposal ready within the first half of 1996. ■

Some European countries set to go it alone and introduce higher stability standards

THE inconclusive outcome of the October meeting of the International Maritime Organisation's intersessional working group on ro-ro ferry safety, set up following the 1994 *Estonia* passenger ferry disaster, means that the November 1995 SOLAS (Safety of Life at Sea) Conference will have no clear guidelines on formal agreement when it comes to consider changes to the SOLAS Convention on international minimum standards for protecting life at sea.

The ITF was deeply disappointed that in a number of key areas - ship stability, fire extinguishing arrangements in machinery spaces and escape routes, the meeting either failed to reach a decision, deleted proposals or watered down stringent requirements in a manner that would adversely affect survivability in an accident at sea. In one case it at least potentially endangering transport workers - such as truck drivers - making ferry crossings on ships carrying few passengers.

In the subgroup dealing with the stability of ro-ro passenger ships, which considered detailed recommendations from the IMO Panel of Experts set up after the *Estonia* sinking, it soon became clear that no final agreement would be reached at the intersessional meeting.

The Nordic Group, together with the United Kingdom, Germany and Ireland were seeking stringent requirements on damage stability, preferably a single worldwide standard based on the experts' recommendations.

However, at the end of the meeting, realising that it would be difficult to achieve consensus on this at the SOLAS conference, this group of countries proposed dual procedures for states prepared to apply the higher standards

Disappointment as IMO fails to agree new ferry safety rules

immediately and those willing to do so at a later date.

This would enable the conference to adopt specific requirements and a time scale for implementation by the states in the first group on the basis of proposals which they were invited to submit to the conference and to provide procedures for the second group in the SOLAS convention after consideration by the Maritime Safety Committee.

Unfortunately, these modified proposals encountered re-

amendment and suggested that if these ships were to be excluded passengers on these ships, mostly truck drivers, should have basic safety training comparable to that laid down for seafarers in the revised STCW (Safety, Training and Certification of Watchkeepers) Convention. This was reflected in the report.

Other decisions of the intersessional meeting that went against the ITF included the dropping of a proposal on fire extinguishing arrangements

in machinery spaces and a decision merely to note an ITF proposal that a crew working language be specified in ship's documents.

The ITF did have one success: the meeting agreed that at least two crews should be trained and drilled regularly for fast rescue boats.

The ITF delegation to the meeting was led by IMO Coordinator Sven-Erik Nylund and Frode Gross and H Saersten (Norway). G Hansson and P Ringhagen (Sweden) and B Haave (Norway) were also represented on their national delegations.

The ITF will carry on the fight at the SOLAS conference and is preparing proposals for presentation to the conference arguing the case for stability standards that overcome the inherent vulnerability of one compartment standard vessels. ■

'The meeting either failed to reach a decision, deleted proposals or watered down stringent requirements in a manner that would adversely affect survivability in an accident at sea. In one case it at least potentially endangering transport workers - such as truck drivers - making ferry crossings on ro-ro ships carrying very few passengers.'

sistance from a number of countries, with the result that eventually, with no agreement possible, it was decided to send the subgroup's report to the conference without any clear recommendation.

In a further setback, the meeting - with ITF support - agreed the text of a single regulation on escape routes on ro-ro passenger ships to apply to all new and existing ships but then went on to carry a Finnish amendment excluding ro-ro passenger ships with fewer than 36 passengers. The ITF opposed the Finnish



■ **Swedish Transport Workers' Union (STF) President Hans Wahlström hands over a cheque to Professor Bengt-Owe Jansson, head of the Stockholm Centre for Marine Research. "It is more than we ever dared dream of," said the professor, who is holding the union's Save the Baltic campaign poster, overprinted with the grand total of the money collected by the union for international research for a cleaner sea.**

The campaign began with a decision of the union's 1992 congress to seek the support of politicians, employers and unions for radical measures aimed at reversing the gross pollution by industry in the coastal states of the almost land-locked sea.

With union support, scientists from Russia, the three Baltic states and Poland will now receive priority funding to take part in joint research projects with western scientists on the future of the sea.

The STF appeal for funds has raised a grand total of 750,000 Sw kr (US\$ 108,000), of which 280,000 Sw kr (US\$40,230) has come from the union itself.

SEAFARERS

On the blacklist

Two companies targeted by ITF

GREEK-OWNED Adriatic Tankers, and the PT Beraya Bintang Samudera crewing agency, based in Jakarta, Indonesia, are the first companies to be included on the ITF blacklist of rogue shipowners, ship managers and crewing agencies.

Both were placed on the list for violation of seafarers' individual rights.

As a result of being on the ITF blacklist, the companies face the following sanctions:

- Vessels will be monitored and tracked by the ITF and specifically targeted for action by ITF Inspectors worldwide.
- ITF Blue Certificates, proof of a vessel holding an ITF-acceptable agreement, will be withdrawn or not issued.
- Applications for agreements directly or indirectly involving any blacklisted company will not be processed.
- Agreements which are below the ITF stand-

ard collective agreement will not be accepted.

- A performance bond may need to be posted, where necessary, to guarantee compliance with the terms of any collective agreement.

- No ITF affiliate will enter into any dealing with the company unless authorised by the ITF to do so.

Adriatic Tankers has been embroiled in a long running battle with the ITF over unpaid wages and abandoned crews, and PT Beraya Bintang Samudera was cited for the abuse and harassment, including imprisonment, of Indonesian seafarers who had been awarded backpay through an ITF action.

The ITF believes that, because a company's reputation can make the difference between profitability and bankruptcy, the ITF blacklist will be an effective weapon against those in the maritime industry who abuse seafarers.

"These two companies are typical examples of the kind of companies that the blacklist was developed to tackle," said Mark Dickinson, Deputy Secretary of the ITF's Special Seafarers' Department, "There must be sanctions against people who treat seafarers as expendable commodities." ■

Practical solidarity

■ New ideas for improving practical solidarity between dockers' and seafarers' unions were aired at the first ever joint meeting of the two sections' Steering Committees which took place in London on 20 October. Overcoming legal obstacles and modifying collective agreements to make mutual support easier were amongst the key objectives in a draft policy document which will eventually be submitted to the 1996 meeting of the ITF Fair Practices Committee.

AN ITF Inspectors' seminar in Antwerp in October ended with a pledge by affiliated unions in Belgium, France, Germany and the Netherlands to undertake a concerted and co-ordinated campaign against flag of convenience shipping.

In particular, the seminar made a number of recommendations regarding:

- co-ordinated action to en-

Inspectors draw up strategy

sure that all FOC vessels visiting north European ports are covered by ITF acceptable collective agreements;

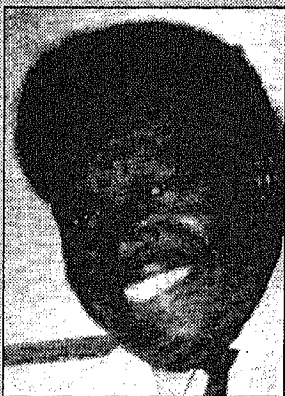
- the establishment of a contact group to plan a "week of action" during the

beginning of June 1996;

- the production of material designed to inform dockers and seafarers of the objectives of the FOC campaign and the importance of mutual solidarity.

The Antwerp seminar was the third and final in a series of meetings of ITF Inspectors held this year. The others were held in Hamburg and Rotterdam. ■

OBITUARIES



■ Joseph Mills.

■ **Mateusz Berezecki** of the Polish Seafarers' Union died on 11 September.

■ **Captain Eduardo Dandois**, who served three terms as President of the Argentinian Merchant Marine Deep Sea Officers' Union CAOMAR died on 23 September. Dandois was a member of CAOMAR's Executive Board at the time of his death. A deeply committed trade unionist with a strong social conscience, Dandois served on several national committees and represented the interests of retired maritime workers. ITF Vice President and CAOMAR's current President Marcos Castro pays this tribute: "His death deprives the maritime trade union movement of our country of an outstanding figure. Speaking personally his death is for me especially sad as it was he who introduced me to trade unionism, who was always at my side with his wise counsel and who inspired me with confidence at the most difficult moments. In a very short space of time we have lost the two men we most looked up to Ricardo Pérez (former ITF Vice President) and Eduardo Dandois."

■ **Joseph Nathaniel Mills**, former President of the

longshoremen's division of the Bermuda Industrial Union, died on 24 August, aged 81. It was largely through his efforts that the dockers became by 1947 the most powerful division within the BIU at that time. As President of the longshoremen he led them through two of the most difficult confrontations and showdowns in the social history of Bermuda, which culminated in the great demonstration march of 16 September 1959. It was as a result of his tenacity, courage and strength of purpose that many of the benefits which dock workers today take for granted became a reality. After 1959 Mills was denied work and, unable to support his young family, was forced to leave Bermuda for several years and seek employment in the United States. He died shortly before a book was published on his contribution to improving the working life of Bermudians.

■ **Hanefi Yesil**, Izmir Branch President of the National Port and Land Stevedores' Union of Turkey LIMAN-IS, died on 21 September, at the age of 59. An active trade unionist for 30 years, Yesil collapsed and died while holding a meeting with port workers in Izmir.

Brazilians plan strike

BRAZIL'S National Portworkers' Federation has warned the government that it intends to hold a national port strike on 16 November, as this issue of ITF News goes to press.

The 35 unions affiliated to the federation are protesting at the government's intention to dismiss 80 per cent of the current workforce. The unions also object to their exclusion from discussions earlier in October on the future of the sector.

Strike actions earlier this year in various ports throughout the country disrupted shipments of commodities such as sugar, soya products and wheat. ■

Norwegians can call for solidarity

THE ITF-affiliated Norwegian Transport Workers' Union won an important legal victory in October when the High Court unanimously overturned an earlier decision by a magistrate's court ruling that boycott action in Sola Port, near Stavanger, called by dockers as part of a campaign for a collective agreement would be unlawful.

The port employers, who now have to pay the union's legal costs, however, have lodged an appeal with the Supreme Court.

The union wanted to test the legality of boycott action at the port before issuing an appeal to seafarers and others for solidarity action.

Kees Marges, ITF Dockers' Secretary, in a letter to the Norwegian union after the latest court verdict, said: "We

Court upholds boycott action

congratulate you on this very important decision at a time of privatisation and deregulation in the world's ports.

"The Sola Port case is an excellent example which can be used when we pay attention to the need for solidarity action for dockers by seafarers but also in cases where employers wish to create non-unionised ports." ■

Forthcoming ITF meetings

- **Flag of Convenience Campaign Steering Group, London, 10-11 January**
- **Worldwide Inspectors' Seminar, London, 15-19 January**
- **Asia/Pacific Regional Committee, Cairns, 29/30 January**
- **Asia/Pacific Seafarers' Regional Committee, Cairns, 30/31 January**
- **Asia/Pacific Maritime Safety Seminar, Singapore, 31 January/1 February**

DOCKERS

ILO commission accuses Greece of violating international law

A THREE-MAN commission of the International Labour Organisation, which was appointed to investigate the labour situation in Greece after complaints against the military regime had been put to the November 1968 ILO Conference, published its report in the first week of November.

The report finds that the Greek government, in taking measures to consolidate its position, has violated international laws guaranteeing trade union rights. It accuses the Greek Colonels of systematically reorganising Greek unions in contravention of ILO conventions to secure themselves against political opponents.

Unions with a strong, left-wing bias have been dissolved to make way for a new union leadership. Potential opponents among union leaders have been deported. Officials who refused to help actively to further government

25 YEARS AGO

objectives have been removed.

The commission has proof that the government has even dissolved some 250 unions where there was no evidence of communist or political activity. It judges that the absence of strikes since the military coup three years ago attests to the reluctance of trade union leaders to act without government approval.

The commission notes the withdrawal of Greek co-operation from the inquiry in April of this year after the commission decided to hear a witness to whom the Greek government objected.

It concludes by recommending changes in Greek labour laws and makes the suggestion that ILO experts be invited to help in the re-drafting of such laws.

■ **ITF Newsletter, December 1970**

The ILO maritime conference meets in Copenhagen

THE International Seafarers' Charter launched in Liverpool on 3 October 1944 went

through its first real battle at the Preparatory Tripartite Technical Maritime Conference of the International Labour Organisation, held in Copenhagen from 15 to 30 November 1945.

In spite of the dogged resistance of the ship-owners, and the obdurate "neutrality" of the governments, from whom the seafarers had expected more understanding, the charter did not fare too badly.

No immediate results were, of course, expected of the conference, since it was only a preparatory one, paving the way for a full maritime session of the ILO in May 1946, but it was highly important, not perhaps so much for the further worldwide publicity it gave to the charter as for the fact that the whole of the discussions were based on that document as representing the views of seafarers them-

50 YEARS AGO

selves. It has never been expected that all the claims embodied in the charter could be achieved at once, nor that all could be suitably dealt with in an international instrument. But in this latter respect the conference has enabled a preliminary sorting-out to be made.

Of the many committees set up to deal with the various subjects before the conference - wages, hours and manning; holidays; accommodation; food and catering; entry, training and promotion; continuous employment; social insurance; and recognition of seafarers' organisations - the first one, on wages, hours and manning, commanded the greatest interest, especially as a new and fundamental question was involved: the fixing of an international minimum wage rate for seafarers.

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

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 this page for head office details.

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**FROM THE
LABOUR PRESS**

**The Workers'
Voice,
The Bermuda
Industrial Union**

All's not well on the Festival

IF you have had the pleasure of taking a cruise on one of the many lines that service the Caribbean, in particular, you may have noticed that the crew is as diversified, in terms of nationality, as any group of people you will see in New York City, Miami or San Francisco.

But have you ever wondered why the owners of these fine vessels have opted to hire workers from such far-flung places as Guatemala, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong or Bangladesh? They even hire West Indians in some cases.

Of course we're not speaking about officers, who primarily hail from one country – usually Italy or the United Kingdom – depending on what line you choose. From cabin stewards to catering staff, from engine wipers to deck stewards, they speak every language under the sun.

We decided to investigate this phenomenon by questioning some of the individuals who were not afraid to speak out on board Carnival Line's Festival.

This ship is the oldest in Carnival's fleet, and 35 years of plowing the Caribbean Sea, dodging hurricanes and taking the abuse of 1,147 rambunctuous passengers several times over has taken its toll.

We found out some interesting things that would make the National Labour Relations Board or the United Nations Committee on Human Rights shudder.

"With very few exceptions, crew members do not socially intermingle with workers from other countries," claimed one young man born in St Vincent.

We learned that a shift could be as much as 12 hours with about two hours in between to relax. So as not to embarrass the young man, we didn't ask him to reveal the pay scale.

Another crewman – from Mexico – told us that the company hired people from the poorest countries because they knew that even if the workers complained among themselves there would be no widespread solidarity between the different cultures. "Can you imagine what would happen if a group of six or seven complained to the company about conditions? They would be landed at the next port of call and flown home!"

The St Vincentian added: "I remember one crew member who walked on an elevator in front of the captain, who is Italian, and was fired on the spot. There was no recourse, and this helped to keep the others in line." ■

"Can you imagine what would happen if a group of six or seven complained to the company about conditions? They would be landed at the next port of call and flown home!"

FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE
DES OUVRIERS DU TRANSPORT

FEDERACIÓN INTERNACIONAL
DE LOS TRABAJADORES DEL TRANSPORTE

INTERNATIONELLA
TRANSPORTARBETAREFEDERATIONEN

國際運輸勞連

INTERNATIONALE
TRANSPORTARBEITER-FÖDERATION

