

Z 2276

ITF

NEWS

January/February 1996 No. 1



**INTERNATIONAL
TRANSPORT
WORKERS
FEDERATION**

**INFORMATIONS
NOTICIAS
NYHETER
情報
NACHRICHTEN
СООБЩЕНИЯ**

Seafarers are told:



FES/2 X

**Don't
handle
cargo**

Z 2276

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ITF centenary year

THIS issue of ITF News marks the beginning of a very special year for the ITF, its 100th year of existence. We were founded in 1896 by a group of European union leaders who understood the need to unite across political, language and cultural borders in defence of the common rights of seafarers and dockers to employment, to a living wage and to dignity at work.

Despite the massive changes which the 20th century has produced, not least in transport – the internal combustion engine and aviation – the ITF still finds itself engaged in a worldwide battle for the same basic rights.

In many industrialised countries, achievements which seemed beyond question a few years ago – decent social security systems, public transport systems dedicated to serving need not profit, even the basic right to join a trade union and bargain collectively for wages and conditions of work – are being called into question.

In too much of the developing world, technological progress has merely contributed to the enrichment of a small elite while the majority of the population still live at or close to subsistence and those workers, chiefly in public sector enterprises, whose unions have secured decent conditions now face an all pervasive free market fundamentalism.

So, whilst we shall be celebrating a remarkable history during the next 12 months, and especially at the end of June when we meet in London for the first ever Extraordinary ITF Congress, our 460 plus affiliated unions will still be preoccupied with the same kind of prob-

OPINION

ITF General Secretary David Cockroft writes



lems which gave birth to the organisation 100 years ago. The Centenary Congress, to be held in the city which also hosted the ITF's founding Congress, will be a very special occasion in which we hope to see representatives from every corner of the globe, reflecting the remarkable fact that the ITF today represents more unions from more countries than at any time in its history. The Congress will be accompanied by a special exhibition on the ITF's history, portable versions of which will be available on loan to affiliates for use at their own meetings.

"So, whilst we shall be celebrating a remarkable history during the next 12 months, and especially at the end of June when we meet in London for the first ever Extraordinary ITF Congress, our 460 plus affiliated unions will still be preoccupied with the same kind of problems which gave birth to the organisation 100 years ago."

It will also mark the publication of a series of books and brochures on different aspects of ITF history, and of a special video presentation. We hope that our affiliates, many of whom have already formed national co-ordinating committees, will also look for ways of celebrating in their countries and in their own ways the 100th birthday of what is, if no longer the biggest, still certainly the strongest and most effective international trade union organisation.

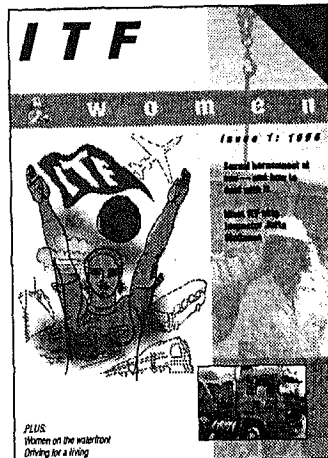
In April 1993 when I took over the responsibility for running the ITF Secretariat on the retirement of Harold Lewis, he handed me a card on which he had written: "Even on a bad

day, it's still the best job in the world." I have had some bad days and some good days since, but I still see no reason to disagree with his analysis. To have the opportunity to lead the Secretariat of the ITF at any time is a great privilege. To do so as it enters its second century, surrounded and supported by the worldwide network of friends and colleagues in the ITF

family, is a truly historic and rewarding experience. See you in London. ■

New donations

TWO more history fund donations have been received: CFA25,000 from Cameroon aviation workers' union SNESAC and CFA20,000 from the Togolese aviation workers' union STAMAS. In all, 27 unions have contributed to the fund set up to help pay for the activities during the ITF centenary. ■



■ This January sees the publication of the ITF's first ever bulletin for women. The 28-page booklet, titled "Women", features articles on sexual harassment at sea, women lorry drivers and dockers, plus an interview with the ITF's Flag of Convenience Inspector in Finland – who is a woman. Copies will be sent to affiliated unions in January. Additional copies can be obtained from Acting Women's Officer Sarah Finke.

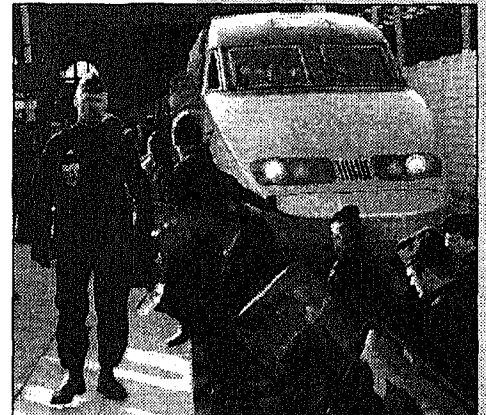
French rail workers strike



■ French railways were at a standstill in December (except for Eurostar services with Belgian or British crews) as this issue of ITF News went to press. Along with tens of thousands of other public sector workers, SNCF employees were protesting at government plans to axe spending on pensions and health, as well as a five-year programme of cutbacks to the rail network.

Pictured above: Demonstrators at a station in Nice; left and right: images from the tracks at the Gare du Nord, Paris.

Photos: Eric Gaillard/Reuters (above) and Philippe Wojazer/Reuters.



Chemical workers and ITF agree to co-operate

THE ITF and ICEF, the international federation representing chemical and energy workers, have agreed a joint solidarity strategy to build international relations between workers dealing with dangerous goods and those involved in trade union disputes.

The two federations also agreed at their meeting in November to work together to target areas of joint co-operation in cases of trade union rights violations, and to examine the safety risks of chemicals being carried on flag

of convenience vessels. Dockside chemical and refinery workers who carry out loading and unloading operations and who are members of ICEF-affiliated unions will be encouraged to alert the ITF to standard ships.

For its part, the ITF has provided ICEF with details of vessels covered by ITF-approved agreements.

The meeting was between senior officers of the ITF and ICEF, which a fortnight later was reconstituted as ICEM (International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions) at a conference in the USA of union delegates from more than 90 countries. The new industrial union international represents more than 20 million workers worldwide and has been formed out of a merger between the ICEF and the MIF mine-workers' international.

The ICEF agreed to the November meeting in response to an ITF approach to all international trade secretariats to build and diversify international solidarity. The discussions included a recognition that the burden of action in worldwide campaigns against companies abusing trade union rights and safety often falls heavily on transport workers.

Similar meetings with other secretariats are planned for the future. ✪

Solidarity with Australian miners

■ Australian dock workers walked off their jobs in mid November in a remarkable show of solidarity for unionised bauxite miners threatened by the introduction of performance-based individual contracts by the Australian-based multinational CRA. The strike lasted four days and affected the country's five main container ports, leaving 35 ships stranded and 15 waiting to access berths.

The Australian Council of Trade Unions regards the issue of individual contracts as a part of continued efforts to de-unionise the company, and has threatened "the biggest strikes in Australian history" in defence of the fundamental trade union right of collective bargaining.

ITF General Secretary David Cockroft, visiting Australia at the time for the conference of the MUA maritime union, pledged the ITF's full support for the dispute.

GLOBAL ROUND-UP

Letter from
Atilay Ayçin,
the President
of the
ITF-affiliated
Turkish civil
aviation union
Hava-Is

My thanks to the ITF

I WAS prosecuted under the notorious Article 8 of the Anti-Terrorism Act because of a speech I made at a meeting organised by the Istanbul branch of the Turkish Human Rights Organisation in September 1991. I was arrested and sentenced to 20 months in prison by the State Security Court.

Now I am at Saray Prison. I want to send my love and thanks to those who are my friends and who never abandoned me. Now, because of your support I am stronger and I believe that I am right. I am certainly not daunted and hopeless. I believe that a human being doesn't exist without human

"Now, because of your support I am stronger and I believe that I am right. I am certainly not daunted and hopeless. I believe that a human being doesn't exist without human rights."

■ Atilay Ayçin was freed soon after this letter was written pending a court hearing on his case.

rights. My best wish is for life without wars and bombs and for life with peace and brotherhood for all the world's people. To realise this I tried to act fearlessly. I agree that

having democracy, human rights and freedoms is risky. But we don't gain anything without paying the price for these difficulties. I want to live in a democratic Turkey and a world in peace. And I want to give this inheritance to the next generation.



■ Atilay Ayçin (left) greets ITF General Secretary David Cockroft at the prison from which he wrote this letter of thanks.

Dear friends, your cards and letters are like a light for my hard days. I am strengthened by your support. Now I am stronger than yesterday. I don't lose my hope and I won't lose it.

We will win one day. We will secure universal human rights and freedoms. The price that we are paying is the price for reaching to these universal goals. In these hard and difficult days, knowing this spreads light and hope.

Thanks a lot to you all, and to David Cockroft (ITF General Secretary) who came to visit me. With my warmest regards,
ATILAY AYÇIN

■ **Alastair Couper** has been appointed as the first Director of the International Centre for Seafarers' Safety and Health at Cardiff University. The centre was set up as a result of collaboration between the ITF and the Department of Maritime Studies and International Transport at the University of Wales and UK£1.5 million has been allocated by the ITF Seafarers' Trust for the research-based project. Alastair Couper has been Professor of Maritime Studies at Cardiff University since 1970.

■ **Tomas Abrahamsson**, ITF Flag of Convenience Campaign Co-ordinator in Sweden for the past 18 months, is the new head of the seafarers' division of SEKO. Tomas, who is 43, has 18 years of seagoing experience, most recently as a bartender with the Stena Line. He has been employed as a full-time union official for the past seven years, at first with Stena and later at SSU headquarters in Gothenburg. **Lars-Göran Holmgren** took over in late November as President of the Swedish Seafarers' Union. With this month's merger of the seafarers' union and the service and communi-

cations union SEKO Lars-Göran has moved to Stockholm as SEKO's First Union Secretary.

■ **Thomas B Mane** has been appointed as the new General Secretary of the National Airline Employees' Association of Papua New Guinea in succession to **Kapai Aria**. Mane is a lawyer and a former Acting General Secretary of the Papua New Guinea Harbours Board National Employees' Union.

■ **Ottiwell Simmons**, President for the past 21 years of the Bermuda Industrial Union (BIU), has announced that he will be retiring at the BIU Biennial Delegates Conference in March 1996.

■ **Enver Toçoğlu** was re-elected as President of the Railway Workers' Union of Turkey (DEMİRYOL-IS) at the union's 5th Congress. Also re-elected were General Secretary **Nurettin Girginer**, Financial Secretary **Cemal Gözükuçük**, Legislation Secretary **Salih Bozdoğan** and Education and Organisation Secretary **Nurettin Öndes**.

PEOPLE

...from the UK,
Sweden, Papua
New Guinea,
Bermuda and
Turkey

Promoting the case for women

Africans press for new structures and education – for men as well



■ Pictured right, the ITF Co-ordinators (from left): Wairimu Mwangi (ITF staff), Batterle Ramphul, representing the Indian Ocean Islands, Anna Karume, East Africa, Juliet Ashibuogwu, anglophone West Africa and Ettinor Kolovikko, Southern Africa.

ITF WOMEN in Africa are working hard to set up trade union structures to represent the needs of women transport workers – a fact which became clear at a meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, of the four ITF African Women Sub-Regional Co-ordinators.

Special seminars, and meetings of women had been held following the ITF African Women's Regional Conference in June 1994 the Co-ordinators all reported. And in some countries progress was being made in setting-up women's committees within unions.

Without exception, the Co-ordinators had encountered problems – in some cases moral and financial support from the affiliated union was lacking.

The women felt that as ITF activities became stronger, their unions would be more willing to let them use office facilities. They asked the ITF for support, stressing the need for training materials, publications and posters.

The women recommended a series of structural measures, including new structures for

women at subregional and regional level.

Principally, and as a first step, though, they felt that all ITF-affiliated unions should have women's committees. These could come together to form national committees and a contact person would be elected from each country.

The participants agreed that education remained a key aim – whilst women needed basic trade union education, men had their own educational needs. "Husbands should be made to understand that it is through trade union education that women can improve their working and social conditions," they concluded. ■

AFTER an absence of nearly 10 years, the ITF conducted its first two trade union training programmes for affiliates in the Latin America and Caribbean region in Montevideo, Uruguay, and Limeira, Brazil, in November.

These seminars marked the launch of the ITF's education programme in Latin America, with the aim of developing a team of trained educators to assist the Regional Education Co-ordinator to conduct union education programmes.

The participants included those who will one day be "instructors" as well as elected officers who support labour education within their own organisations. This allowed union leaders to witness first-hand the importance of labour education and its new concept of "participatory learning".

The ITF's ultimate aim is to assist its affiliates by run-

Training resumes in Latin America

ning trade union training programmes dealing with the problems of transport workers.

The workshops included topics such as labour education for social change and development; human rights; human relations for change and development; communication skills; instructor training and formation; quality control; and the international labour movement. Interspersed with these subjects were integration workshops and practice sessions.

The Montevideo seminar – sponsored by the German FES educational foundation – included 16 participants from Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. The Limeira seminar, held at the training centre of the road workers' union, attracted 21 participants – eight of them women – from various parts of Brazil.

A similar programme sponsored by the FES was held from 27 November to 1 December in Costa Rica and included transport union officers from Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Venezuela.

A two-week intensive follow-up training programme for those who took part in the Montevideo, Brazil and Costa Rica programmes and who are willing to dedicate their time to trade union training is scheduled for early this year. ■

Russian pay delays

■ Russian unions are becoming increasingly concerned – and angry – at the non-payment of wages to public sector workers. Many such workers are now living below the poverty line and are experiencing ever longer delays in receiving wages, according to Mikhail Shmakov, President of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia in a statement released in November.

The crisis is reflected in the growing labour unrest in the country. In 1995 Russian workers went on strike 5,847 times – a big increase on 1994.

The federation is demanding that the government should repeal a decree freeing it of the responsibility for allocating money for wages to the accounts of enterprises and should pay all debts of the state.

AVIATION safety experts from 37 countries gathered in Atlantic City, USA, in November to discuss international co-operation in improving in-flight safety and crash survivability.

"The challenge is now to work together for a safe, efficient and effective air transport system," said Lionel Vir of the JAA (Joint Aviation Authorities) Cabin Safety Study Group.

Participants at the meeting, which was organised by the US Federal Aviation Administration, the JAA and Transport Canada, which are all in the process of harmonising many safety regulations, included safety researchers, regulatory bodies, aircraft manufacturers and flight and cabin crew.

Cabin crew interests were represented by delegates of ITF unions from Sweden

ITF calls for improved crash protection

(HTF), France (SNPNC), United States (AFA), and Australia (FAAA).

The conference heard 30 speakers deal with a range of issues, including evacuation and in-flight emergencies. Ulla Bolter (HTF, Sweden) representing the ITF welcomed such international collaboration on future planning for improved safety, and noted the particular im-

portance of training standards for cabin crew.

The ITF unions jointly presented to the conference a set of recommendations for improved crash protection measures for cabin crew to be incorporated into future aircraft cabin design.

■ Ulla Bolter, the ITF representative on the JAA Study Group for Flight Crew and Cabin Crew, is warning the JAA against attempts to dilute the requirements to comply with the minimum cabin crew training standards. She notes that a strong enforcement system will be necessary if the standards are to have any meaning, and warns against pressure from operators to increase the number of aircraft types that crew can be trained to work on at any one time.

"The US is also looking to extend free trade in civil aviation southwards to Mexico and beyond. North America and the giant North American airlines are part of an increasingly globalised industry. I believe the setting up of this North America Regional Committee is extremely important and extremely timely."

Correct date

■ The round table meeting on cabin crew safety will take place in Brussels on February 13 and 14, not March 13 and 14 as reported in the December issue of ITF News. The meeting is being organised by the Committee of Transport Workers' Unions in the European Community.

First North America meeting

"THE globalisation of the civil aviation industry has made trade union co-ordination more important than ever," noted Jim Sprang (IAM, United States) opening the first ITF Civil Aviation Section North America Regional Committee meeting in November.

He added: "The United States pioneered deregulation in the civil aviation industry at enormous cost to our employees. The US government is currently heading the push for global 'open skies'. The United States and Canada are now tied together in an 'open skies' agreement. The US is also looking to extend free trade in civil aviation southwards to Mexico and beyond. North America and the giant North American airlines are part of an increasingly globalised industry. I believe the setting up of this North America Regional Committee is extremely important and extremely timely."

Sixteen representatives from seven aviation unions in the US and Canada attended the meeting, held in Washington. A representative from ASPA, the Mexican pilots' union, also attended as an observer.

Civil Aviation Section Secretary Stuart Howard noted that affiliates in North America already co-operated with each other in a number of ways. He told the meeting that the ITF did not seek to duplicate this, but it did want to create a forum for discussion of very specific regional aviation issues, and to obtain a co-ordinated input from such a very important region into the global strategies of the ITF Civil Aviation Section.

The committee was set up in response to developments such as the "open skies" agreement between Canada and the United States during 1995 as well as moves towards a wider avia-

tion "open skies" area reflecting the NAFTA North American free trade area.

In discussing the implications of NAFTA and the parallel "open skies" arrangements for air transport, the meeting welcomed the ITF initiative for a conference on the economic consequences of economic integration in the Americas to be held in Mexico City from 23 to 26 April 1996. The conference would include a section specifically for aviation unions on the impact on aviation employees.

The meeting also discussed the growing importance of FAA-JAA (Federal Aviation Administration-Joint Aviation Authorities) harmonisation of safety regulations, and agreed to a proposal that the ITF should initiate a process in which there would be co-ordination of the positions being taken by ITF union representatives in the FAA, Transport Canada and the JAA. In particular unions wish to avoid any process of downward harmonisation.

There was some discussion of particular problems being faced by individual unions. Unions noted that almost every US airline will be declaring profits for 1995. Yet all airlines were still seeking concessions from their employees.

It was noted that North American airlines and foreign airlines employing personnel in North America were all increasingly seeking to contract out work.

The Mexican pilots' union ASPA reported how devaluation had enormously affected the aviation industry in Mexico.

The meeting elected Ray Benning of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters as the first chair of the committee.

AS European workers prepared for their end of year holidays the seasonal gift of Delta Air Lines to the employees in its European reservations offices was the spectre of New Year job losses.

The ITF has responded with a protest campaign pointing out that the airline, which is the official carrier for the 1996 Olympic Games, is out of step with the Olympic spirit when it comes to the treatment of its own employees.

Trade unions from around the world have been flooding the company's Atlanta headquarters with faxes and a trade union "greetings card" labelling Delta as the unsporting Olympics carrier.

The campaign was triggered after Delta announced the closure of its local reservations offices in 13 countries in Europe and its plan to concentrate the handling of all European reservations from one bureau in London. The airline is also keeping its Frankfurt reservations office open. It is estimated that the restructuring will save Delta around US\$37 million over five years.

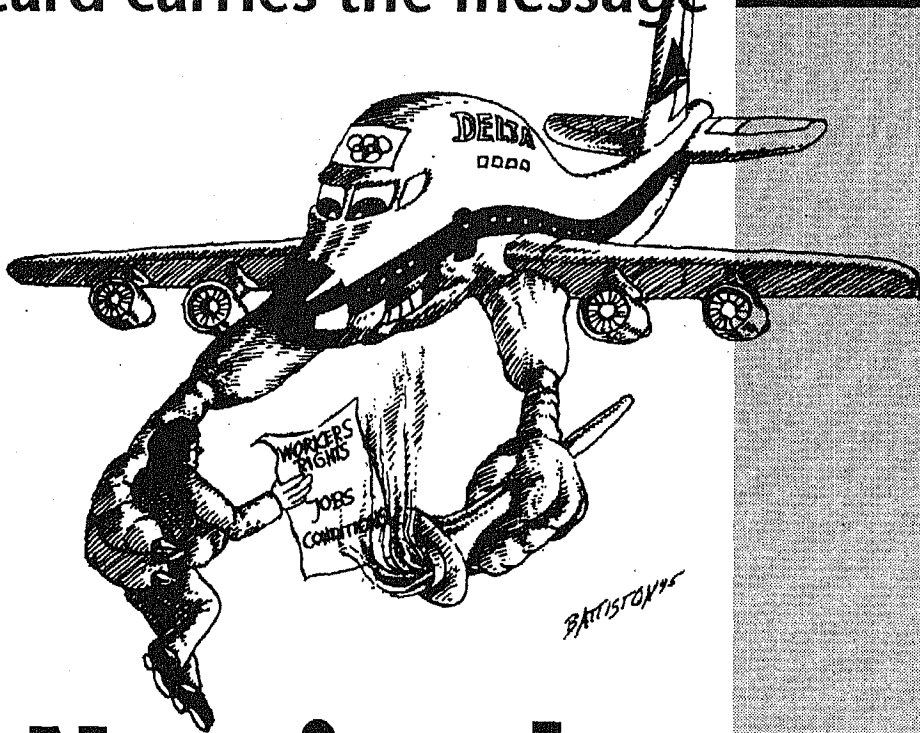
A request by European unions for a collective dialogue on the closures was turned down by the company.

ITF Civil Aviation Secretary Stuart Howard says that the company is being completely unreasonable: "Genuine dialogue appears to be alien to the culture of this company. Delta has avoided unions wherever possible. Very few of its staff have trade union protection. Indeed Delta can claim to be the world's largest anti-union airline."

The closures in Europe are part of a worldwide cost-cutting programme called Leadership 7.5. This has involved 10,500 job losses worldwide.

It seems that the company is trying to use its capacity to brush employees aside to get its restructuring in place before the run up to the Olympic Games in Atlanta, which the company sees as a major source of profits.

Stuart Howard notes, however, that being the Olympic carrier should mean that the company carries an obligation



Not in the Olympic spirit

to abide by certain ethical standards which are in line with the Olympic spirit.

"The Olympic charter demands 'respect for universal fundamental ethical principles', including 'the preservation of human dignity'", he explains.

Point 6 of the Charter declares that the Olympic spirit "requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play".

Howard comments: "We believe that the company's employees deserve consideration of their human dignity; we believe that the company is not dealing with its employees in a spirit of mutual understanding or fair play when it has refused this basic dialogue.

"When his company signed the agreement giving Delta

the status as the official airline of the 1996 centennial Olympic Games, the Delta Chairman Ron Allen declared it to be 'the most important marketing opportunity of the decade. It allows us to reach world audiences with our message of quality service and worldwide reach'."

Howard points out that the ITF is an international organisation and a part of the international community: "We aim to demonstrate to the company our own capacity to reach world audiences and draw their attention to other features of Delta's operations such as the lack of fair play being demonstrated by this unsporting Olympic carrier to its own employees. As we enter the Olympic year of 1996, we intend to step up this campaign." ■

FACT: Delta is currently the largest and most profitable carrier of transatlantic air traffic. Delta reported a US\$77 million profit on transatlantic operations in the 12 months to September 1995, a \$50 million improvement on the previous year and a company record.

FACT: Delta Air Lines is to receive £900,000 from the UK government to restructure its reservations operations into a single site in London. The restructuring involves the closure of existing reservations offices in 13 European countries.

The message going out to seafarers

"DOCK work for dock workers" is the cry now being heard in ports the world over, as dock workers engage in a struggle to maintain not only their jobs but their work as cargo handlers.

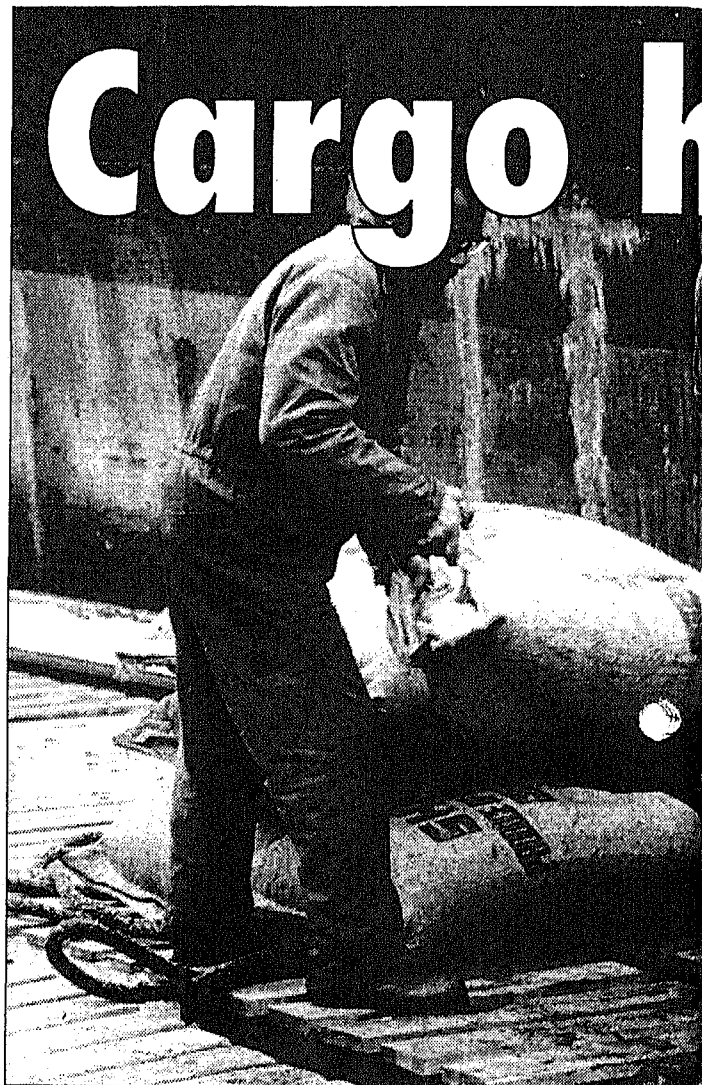
Port workers find themselves increasingly threatened by the consequences of privatisation, deregulation and even the loss of jobs to non-union labour.

A further threat is the use of seafarers for the unloading of ships once they arrive at a port.

As a result, the ITF and its affiliated unions have set in action a campaign in which seafarers are asked to come to the aid of dock workers by refusing to handle cargo when called upon to do so.

"The ITF affiliated seafarers' and dockers' unions agree that cargo handling and work traditionally or historically done by dock workers should remain dock workers' work," writes ITF Dockers' Section Secretary, Kees Marges, in a new leaflet entitled "Important message to seafarers".

Marges further explains that the dangers involved in seafar-



Cargo h is our

"It is well known that dock workers have never been slow in lending support, a case in point being the great successes of the ITF flag of convenience campaign, where solidarity actions taken by dockers throughout the world have secured basic human and trade union rights for seafarers on runaway ships. Now is the time for seafarers to show solidarity with the dockers."

ers taking over dockers' work are manifold, for not only do dockers lose jobs, but seafarers are made to do work for which they are neither paid, nor trained. This practice threatens the safety of a vessel as the risk is that cargo is not properly secured by trained professionals.

A first step was taken in support of dock workers on this issue in 1994 when a "cargo handling clause" was added to all ITF-approved agreements covering seafarers on flag of convenience vessels. This clause aims at keeping seafarers from performing tasks traditionally carried out by dock workers, except when sanctioned by an ITF-affiliated dockers' union, where seafarers willingly agree to per-

andling



work

form such work, and are duly compensated for it.

Seafarers' unions covering seafarers on national-flag ships are also working on establishing the no-cargo-handling clause in their national agreements.

The ITF is calling on rank and file members of all affiliated unions to call attention to violations of these agreements so that steps can be taken to defend dockers' work, as well as the safety and status of seafarers.

Commenting on the campaign Kees Marges said: "Dock workers as a group have generally held a strong, collectively organised position in the world of transport, and the nature of their work has in addition given

them strategic importance in global transport industries.

"For this reason, they, perhaps more than any other group of transport workers, are called upon to perform acts of solidarity, not only for trade union rights, but also for environmental and political causes. It is well known that dock workers have never been slow in lending support, a case in point being the great successes of the ITF flag of convenience campaign, where solidarity actions taken by dockers throughout the world have secured basic human and trade union rights for seafarers on runaway ships.

"Now is the time for seafarers to show solidarity with the dockers." ■

The campaign in action...

■ The crew of the Dutch-owned *Marie Kristine* were made to discharge a portion of its cargo while on call in the port of Hamina, Finland in October.

In a letter to the owner/operator of the vessel, the local ITF Inspector noted that the work done while the port workers took their lunch break was "a grave offence in a Finnish port, and not to be tolerated by the ITF or local port workers".

A boycott was threatened if the owner did not duly compensate the port workers for their lost wages. The employer settled the matter by paying the compensation, as well as providing assurances for the future.

■ In the port of Bremen, a number of flag of convenience ships operated by the Klöckner company have been cited for using their crews for the unloading of cargo. In addition, it was noted that a number of dockers were brought to Bremen from abroad to assist in the discharge of the Klöckner-operated ships, and that these "dockers" were made to work 12-hour shifts each.

At present, the ITF, and its affiliated union the ÖTV, are engaged in discussions with the company and charterers regarding this unacceptable practice.

■ In a similar case in Hamburg in July last year, 50 seafarers were involved in the discharge of the Latvian owned vessel *Rytos*. No dockers at all were used to unload the ship. The Hamburg Port Authority later informed the owner of the ship that this work was reserved for dock workers, and while the owner claimed that he was not aware of this fact, he promised to abide by the pertinent regulations in future.

The docks section of the ÖTV has meanwhile stated that: "We will exhaust all possibilities, including trade union action to prevent the handling of cargo by ships' crews." ■

Solidarity by Italian crew

A SMALL but highly significant gesture of solidarity for US dockers campaigning for trade union rights has been made by Italian seafarers.

When the *Dole Honduras* arrived at a non-union facility in Fort Lauderdale, Florida on 16 November, the Italian-flag vessel was met by two union officials from FIT-CISL and FILT-CGIL, Giuliano Maggi and Claudio Zari. Also awaiting the vessel was a picket line mounted by the ILA dockworkers' union.

Giuliano, Claudio, along with ILA officials Tony Sasso and John Sansone went on board to talk to the captain. At first he was unco-operative, but after some convincing arguments agreed to leave the final decision on whether to take solidarity action to the crew.

After a lengthy discussion the seafarers agreed a two-hour strike in solidarity with the ILA. When word of the strike reached the ILA picket lines, there was a loud cheer and applause for the solidarity action taken. The members on the picket line congratulated Giuliano and Claudio for a job well done and thanked them for their assistance. Another blow for international solidarity has been struck. ■

Indian seminar

INDIAN west coast port and dock workers gathered in Goa in October for an ITF seminar, jointly sponsored by the German FES educational foundation, on structural adjustment and its consequences for port and dock workers.

The seminar, part of an ongoing ITF educational programme, condemned the privatisation fever gripping the Indian government and called for greater autonomy to be given to the Port Trust and Dock Labour Board. ■

In brief

Crest Shine victory

■ The four-month dispute between the 18 Filipino seafarers on the Panamanian-flag *Crest Shine* and Tokyo-based owner Hokoku Shipping ended late in November when the Chiba district court in Japan accepted that the crew had been underpaid and ordered the employer to reimburse them. The dispute began when the vessel arrived in Chiba and the crew went on strike, saying that they had not been paid for a month. The company refused to send food on board, so local ITF Inspector Ryutaro Marisaki, as well as the All-Japan Seamen's Union, stepped in to help.

Shipowner jailed

■ In another first for the ITF campaign against flags of convenience, a German shipowner Horst Mussehl has been forced to spend a night in prison as a direct result of his failure to appear in court and answer charges that he owed crew outstanding wages of DM55,000. ITF Hamburg Inspector Ulf Christianson declared the outcome of the legal case to be a "moral victory for the ITF".

Yacht protest

■ Everyone knows that Adriatic Tankers of Greece is legendary for not paying its crews wages, but company boss Panagis Zissimatos is now in danger of losing his personal yacht because seven Croatian carpenters who refurbished the *Camelia of Japan* have told the ITF that they have not received payment and asked for legal action against the vessel. The ITF has complied with the request and has begun proceedings against the yacht. The carpenters claim to be owed US\$67,700.

A US\$1,000 BONUS to the Romanian seafarers on a Maltese-flag bulk carrier which docked at Kushiro Port, Japan, in November was won after ITF Japanese Inspector Hideo Ikeda visited the Greek-owned ship and found that not only was there no ITF-approved agreement but the captain was making false deductions from wages.

Ikeda immediately started negotiations with the captain on behalf of the crew, who decided to go on strike.

Less than 24 hours later

Japan strike pays off

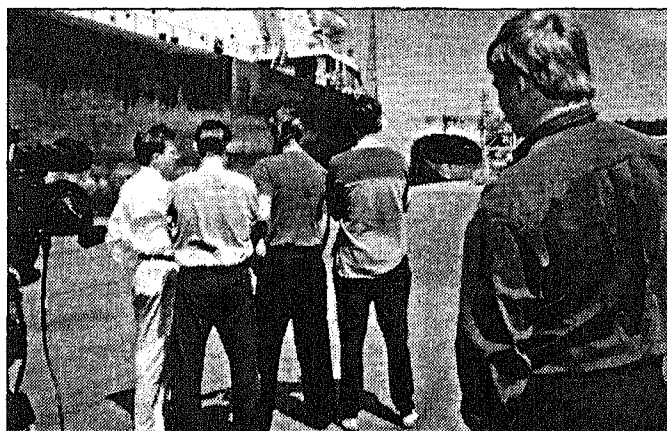


■ The Romanian crew of the *Mount Parnitha* with ITF Inspector Hideo Ikeda (third from left).

owner Kassos Maritime gave in. The company agreed to apply the ITF TCC (total crew cost) agreement, plus the \$1,000 bonus, and fresh provisions were taken on board before the ship set sail for the USA.

Ikeda was warmly thanked by the crew before their departure. "The significance of this victory for international solidarity is that the TCC agreement is to be applied not only to the *Mount Parnitha* but also to the company's three other ships," he commented. ■

■ Right: Three of the crew of the *Port Talbot* are interviewed by a Polish television news reporter while ITF Contact Andrew Jaskiewicz looks on in the foreground.



Successful actions in Poland

A SERIES of successful actions against flag of convenience ships calling at the Polish ports of Szczecin and Swinoujscie in the latter part of 1995 is reported by ITF Contact Andrew Jaskiewicz, of the maritime section of the NSZZ Solidarity union. Two of them involved the recovery of backpay owed to crews...

Port Talbot: The port authorities in Szczecin were tipped off about the unseaworthiness of this Panamanian-flag vessel by the ITF. On inspection, over 40 deficiencies were found. Meanwhile the 24-strong crew of Poles, Russians, Ukrainians and Bulgarians approached the NSZZ for help in recovering backpay from Greek-based Sterling Shipmanagement. They were advised to strike, which they did, thereby

preventing the discharge of cargo. The NSZZ also organised a noisy campaign in the local media, resulting in newspaper and television reports about the plight of the crew and the terrible state of the ship. After four days a total of US\$42,569 was paid to them, and the vessel was allowed to sail to Swinoujscie for repairs.

Alpha: The seven Russian crew won DM44,024 (US\$32,000) owed to them under the terms of the ITF agreement covering the Antigua and Barbuda-flag ship, which had not been observed by the German owner. The money was paid only after dockers in Szczecin boycotted the ship at the request of the ITF and the seafarers themselves went on strike. ■

Backpay in Barcelona

SEVENTEEN Pakistani crew members on the Panamanian-flag *Sea Raider* have won a month-long strike for back wages in line with the Greek collective agreement.

The crew went on strike in September in Barcelona where they contacted the ITF's Flag of Convenience Co-ordinator in Spain, Miguel Coronado. He assisted in both threatening the owner with legal action and in conducting negotia-

tions. An attempt to evict the striking crew members and bring eight new Greek seafarers on board was frustrated thanks to the intervention of the police, port authorities and pilots. It had been agreed by them that the crew's strike was legally protected.

An agreement was finally reached to pay a total of US\$278,500 and repatriation at the owner's expense to the striking crew. For safety reasons, the payment was made in the presence of Coronado in a local police station. ■

■ *Coronado* (third from left) with the striking crew of the *Sea Raider*, pictured strike-bound (right).



SEAFARERS

■ **Right: Paul Secretan, the Missions to Seamen chaplain at the English port of South Shields, shows his gratitude to the ITF Seafarers' Trust for the donation of a brand new minibus for ferrying seafarers to his seafarers' centre. The latest annual report of the trust showed that 12 per cent of the UK£8 million (US\$12.4m) handed out worldwide in 1994/5 went towards the purchase and upkeep of vehicles.**



Seafarers advised to beware at Bombay airport

Six Indian seafarers arriving in Bombay on a flight from Japan were forced to part with US\$2,700 to six "officials" from the Criminal Investigating Department.

Ismail Shaikh, an Indian seafarer, arrived in Bombay from Hong Kong. As he left the customs hall uniformed "customs officials" approached him, emptied his pockets and took US\$1,000 from his pay packet.

THESE are just two examples of similar cases reported last year to the National Union of Seafarers of India involving seafarers landing at Sahar International Airport, Bombay, and being stopped by groups of men posing as plainclothes police officers or customs staff.

They crowd round the seafarers demanding to know whether they have any foreign currency. If they have, they are made to hand the money over or convert it into rupees at very poor rates of exchange.

The seafarers are approached as they come out of the customs hall in a restricted area to which only passengers and airport employees have access.

NUSI officials say these incidents are not new – the first cases go back to 1991. Over the years the union has received hundreds of complaints from its members.

According to the NUSI, the airport authorities are dragging their feet and have failed to take effective steps to stamp out this crooked practice.

After the latest incidents, the NUSI sent a circular to members warning them of what was happening and advising them to exit the customs hall in a group.

Seafarers who are stopped should also make a note of the name and the identity card number of the person who accosts them and report the incident immediately to the police. ■

New quest for the Derbyshire

THE British government has decided to mount an expedition to survey the wreckage of the *Derbyshire*, which

sank in 1980 with the loss of 44 lives. The expedition will try to identify the cause of the sinking and will be jointly funded by the UK and the European Commission.

The decision is a vindication of the underwater search organised and paid for by the ITF which found evidence that the bulk carrier had broken up. This pointed to sudden and catastrophic structural failure as the cause of the disaster.

The official inquiry into the loss had decided that the *Derbyshire* was "probably overwhelmed by the forces of nature" during a Pacific typhoon and added that the evidence available did not support any firmer conclusion.

Following the discovery in June 1994 of the wreckage of the *Derbyshire* during the ITF-commissioned search the British government appointed a judge to undertake an assessment of what further work might be carried out to determine the cause of the loss, together with assessments of the costs involved and of the

UK government decision vindicates ITF search for wreck of missing bulker

likely benefits to ship safety.

The judge recommended that a final re-examination of the wreck

should be carried out, at a cost estimated at around UK£2 million. He said there was a compelling case for seeking to establish the cause of the loss, with resulting benefits to ship safety.

The expedition will take place in either spring 1996 or spring 1997.

The ITF warmly applauded the decision, and expressed its appreciation of the European Commission's agreement to financial assistance.

General Secretary David Cockroft commented: "We can now say that the ITF's position was fully justified as our stated goals in mounting this expedition have so far been met." He added: "All that remains is for there to be another government inquiry to consider the findings of the new expedition."

The *Derbyshire* disappeared without trace and without sending a distress signal while off Okinawa.

In the 15 years since the disaster, concern has mounted regarding the structural safety of large bulk carriers. ■

Documentary makers win press award

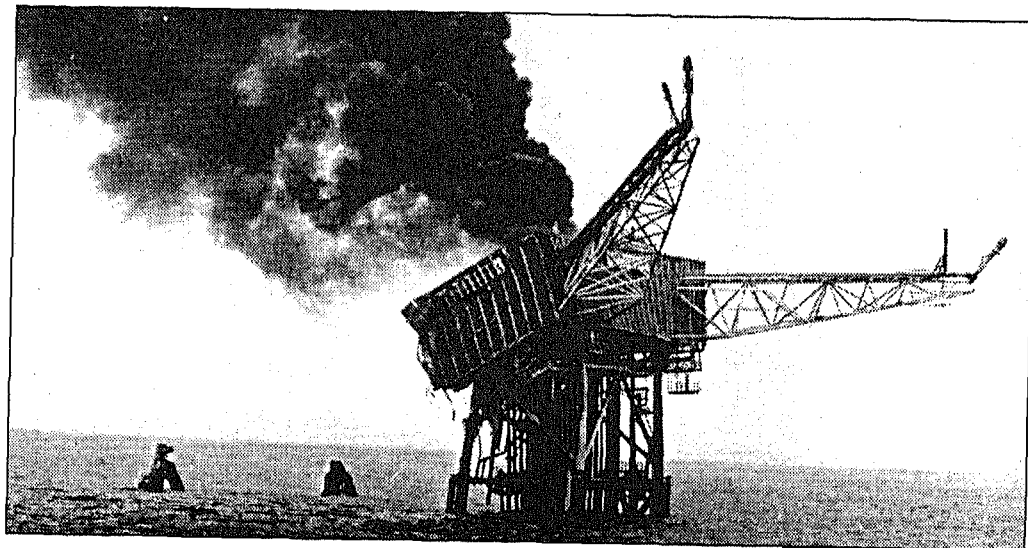
■ Rob White and Rory MacLellan, home affairs producer and home affairs correspondent of the British independent television company Channel 4's news programme, have jointly received the inaugural Desmond Welfern Maritime Media Award for their television documentary "Total Structural Failure".

The documentary – screened last March – dealt with the loss of the *Derbyshire*. It tracked the ITF-funded efforts to locate the precise position of the ship on the ocean bed and to bring back sufficient new evidence to justify the reopening of the formal inquiry.

The news team's coverage of the events leading up to the discovery of the *Derbyshire* wreck was described as "a milestone in drawing attention both nationally and internationally to sub-standard ships".

The Channel Four journalistic team, who had been nominated for the award by the ITF, were each presented with an engraved ship's decanter and a cheque for £500.

■ Unions are warning that the new cost-cutting regime offshore could result in more disasters such as the fire on the Piper Alpha which claimed the lives of 167 North Sea workers in 1988.



In brief

Piracy increases

■ Pirate attacks on merchant ships are on the increase according to a report published by the International Maritime Bureau's piracy information centre. A total of 100 attacks took place in the first nine months of 1995, compared with 87 for the whole of 1994. Twenty two involved robbery or theft in port, 12 were hijacks and 10 vessels were shot at. There were 37 cases where pirates successfully boarded vessels and 18 attempted boardings. The ITF donated £25,000 to the regional piracy centre in Kuala Lumpur in 1994, enough to cover operating costs for a six-month period.

Finnish anniversary

■ In a congratulatory message to the Finnish Ship's Officers' Union's nineteenth anniversary celebrations in November, ITF Assistant General Secretary Ake Selander thanked the union for its support of ITF policies over the years, especially for the dedicated work of its officials in connection with the ITF's maritime safety campaign.

Russia joins

■ Russia is the latest country to join the Paris Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) group of countries which co-ordinate their port state control programme of ship inspections. The committee of the Paris MOU decided at its meeting in Oslo in November to admit Russia from 1 January 1996, making it the 17th country in the group, which consists of all maritime European Union countries plus Canada, Norway and Poland.

New ITF offshore safety code agreed

A COMPLETE overhaul of the ITF's safety and training policy for the offshore oil and gas industry has been agreed by ITF-affiliated offshore unions, with the new policy emphasising the role of governments in ensuring proper health and safety standards.

The responsibilities of employers, for example in the provision of personal protective equipment, employee training and safe systems of work, is also spelt out in the policy, which was approved at a meeting of the ITF Offshore Standing Committee in Aberdeen, Scotland, on 16 and 17 November.

The ITF's previous offshore policy document was drafted in the immediate aftermath of the Piper Alpha disaster in the British sector of the North Sea. It concentrated more on technical and emergency systems rather than overall safety structures.

The latest committee meeting was attended by 17 delegates representing 12 unions from Australia, Canada, Denmark, Great Britain, Netherlands, Norway and the USA. They met against the background of a new cost-cutting exercise by offshore employers in the North Sea and other offshore oil and gas fields.

Using the management buzz-word of CRINE, "cost reduction in the new era", employers are introducing new work systems which in many cases reduce crewing levels, increase workloads and extend tours of duty. British unions are warning that more disasters are being risked as a result of CRINE.

According to Norrie McVicar, chair of the ITF Offshore Standing Committee and the offshore officer of the RMT rail and maritime union, CRINE was spreading fear among North Sea workers.

"Fear was one of the key components which led to the

Piper Alpha disaster," he added. "Fear of losing your job for complaining about safety issues was one of the main reasons for offshore workers remaining silent before the disaster, when they should have been speaking out."

The new ITF offshore safety policy makes it clear that national governments have final responsibility for offshore safety and should adopt and enforce appropriate laws and regulations to ensure the health and safety of offshore workers. These should include provision for the appointment of trade union safety representatives and protection against victimisation for carrying out their duties.

Governments should also lay down statutory guidance and regulations on hours of work, tours of duty and safe crewing levels.

Equally, employers should make every effort to improve their safety performance by applying safe working practices and employee training and certification programmes.

Employees should also share a common language, and there should be a permit-to-work system whereby safety procedures are specified in writing on a form issued to personnel involved in potentially hazardous work.

Other issues covered by the new ITF policy include the use of chemicals, fire prevention, emergency escape, personnel transfer by basket and boat and helicopter operations.

On the question of alcohol and drug abuse, the policy insists that it should be dealt with

as a medical rather than disciplinary problem. "Disciplinary sanctions should only be used in cases where employees deliberately report for work in an unsafe condition and even here they should be part of an overall agreed employer-union policy," the policy states. ■

Unions fear dangers of new wave of cost-cutting measures

ITF Assistant General Secretary Graham Brothers reports (right) from the congress of the All India Railwaymen's Federation in Indore from 1 to 3 November and (below, right) from the ITF Asia/Pacific Railway Workers' Meeting, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 7 and 8 November.

European safety concerns

■ Railway safety was one of the main items on the agenda at the meeting of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Principal Working Party on Rail Transport, which was held in Geneva in October.

Assistant Secretary Asbjørn Wahl, who represented the ITF at the meeting, stressed the need to maintain railway safety during restructuring.

This concern was taken seriously by the meeting, which, as a result, included a paragraph in its report stating:

"The Principal Working Party (...) felt that, due to the organisational changes a number of railways are currently undergoing, a certain weakening of safety standards in rail transport may be observed and that, therefore, a close supervision of rail safety was necessary."

An ITF proposal to include the number of accidents, broken down into railway employees and passengers, in the annual questionnaire to governments was endorsed by the meeting.

The annual questionnaire asks governments to provide information in respect of a number of questions. The answers could form an important basis for a detailed analysis and assessment of the safety status of the railways all over Europe.

Indian rail cuts condemned

THOUSANDS of delegates and visitors attended the opening session of the biennial congress of the All India Railwaymen's Federation (AIRF).

In his report to the congress, JP Chaubey, AIRF General Secretary, underlined the fact that Indian Railways was a net contributor to the Indian economy, producing a surplus of Rs.8,060 million (UK£160 million) in the financial year 1993/4, and this surplus was forecast to rise to Rs.20,100 million for the financial year 1995/6.

In the light of these figures, Umraomal Purohit, President of the AIRF, strongly criticised the government's policy of seeking massive loans from abroad and applications to the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

The consequences for the railways was insistence on closures or selling-off of workshops and services, contracting-out of work to private undertakings and exploitation of casual labour, leading to redundancies and bans on recruitment, even where posts were vacant, he said.

Finance for investment in modernisation of the railway network had also been reduced, leading to a deterioration in operating conditions and deferral of maintenance and renewal of equipment.

In response to a number of serious accidents in the recent past, the congress adopted a strongly-worded resolution drawing attention to the fact that increases in the speed and den-

sity of traffic had not been matched by adequate and essential investment in the necessary signalling and train-control systems. The government had not implemented the recommendations of various accident inquiry committees nor instructions issued by the safety commissioners, in spite of repeated representations made by the AIRF.

The resolution also deplored the fact that in the wake of accidents the authorities sought scapegoats among the lower-ranked railway employees rather than calling to account those who had ignored the need to install essential equipment for the protection of trains.

In recognition of the fact that 1996 is the ITF's centenary year, the congress gratefully recalled the support extended by ITF affiliates in the past during times of dispute, support which had greatly helped in the rehabilitation of railway workers who had been victimised because of their participation in the strikes. In addition, the congress resolved to organise special celebrations to mark the ITF centenary, in co-operation with other Indian affiliates of the ITF.

■ The ITF was represented at the congress by Graham Brothers, Asia/Pacific Regional Secretary Shigeru Wada and Assistant Secretary Mahendra Sharma. Delegates from ITF railway workers' affiliates from Japan, Norway and Sweden also attended the congress. ■

Asia/Pacific unions survey restructuring moves

PARTICIPANTS were welcomed to the opening session of the ITF's Asia/Pacific Railway Workers' Meeting by Abdul Gaffoor bin Ibrahim, President of the Railwaymen's Union of Malaysia, and were addressed by Ling Liong Sik, the Malaysian Minister of Transport, who spoke of the modernisation and expansion of the railway system, KTM, and the construction of light rapid rail transit systems for urban areas.

The main subjects discussed were:

Railway restructuring: Reports were given on:

- the consequences of the sale of New Zealand Railways to private owners and the government's subsequent demand for a safety audit;
- the Japanese parliament's

decision to undertake an evaluation of the operation of the JR Group after the splitting-up of Japanese National Railways;

- the successful campaign to prevent the closing-down of the Philippine National Railways and to initiate investment in their expansion;

- the likely impact of the Australian government's proposals for the establishment of a track authority with open access for private operators;

- the results of the corporatisation of Malaysian Railways and the government's plans for the future issuing of shares;

- the possibility that the government would seek some form of privatisation for the railways in Taiwan.

Railway financing: The meeting recognised the im-

portance of access to basic information concerning railway finances when engaging in discussions with public authorities and railway managements, and approved the ITF Railwaymen's Section's project to update the survey it had carried out for the 1993 section conference.

Train manning and international traffic: Experiences of single-manning of locomotives, particularly in Australia and New Zealand, were exchanged, and information was provided on plans for the development of international rail services and the extent to which train crews operate across frontiers.

The meeting was attended by 24 delegates and advisers representing 14 affiliates from 12 countries and was chaired by Umraomal Purohit, President of the All India Railwaymen's Federation and Vice-Chair of the ITF Railwaymen's Section. ■

TRADE unions representing Eurostar employees in Belgium, France and England met for the first time in November under the auspices of the ITF.

Twenty delegates representing seven trade unions in the three countries gathered in London to exchange experiences, discuss common problems and co-ordinate future activities in relation to their respective employers, the Belgian state railways (SNCB), the French state railways (SNCF) and the British European Passenger Services.

One of the factors which had initiated the meeting was the efforts made by the British employer during a strike by the French locomotive drivers last October to replace services affected by the strike with British-

Joint action agreed by Eurostar unions

crewed trains. It was agreed by the delegates that this practice required a co-ordinated response from the trade unions.

However, other common problems were discussed as well, among them a widespread dissatisfaction with lodging conditions for train staff who have to stay overnight in Brussels, Paris or

London. The unions decided to take joint and co-ordinated initiatives towards their respective employers in order to improve accommodation facilities.

In addition, the unions agreed to examine duty rosters and working hours and in particular turn-round times between journeys.

The British train drivers' union, ASLEF, offered to prepare a common newsletter for Eurostar staff in the three countries and it was decided to establish a network of contact persons between the unions involved. A proposal to develop a common platform and an agreement on mutual support between the unions was endorsed by the meeting and a next meeting is already scheduled for the end of January. ■

In brief

Court victory

■ The ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union of Zimbabwe won a high court ruling against the road haulage company Cargo Carriers in November. The court ordered the company to reinstate all employees dismissed with immediate effect. As this issue of ITF News goes to press Cargo Carriers has lodged an appeal with the supreme court.

Telematics

■ The Second World Congress on Transport Telematics (the use of telecommunications and computer technology in vehicles and traffic and transport management) in Yokohama, Japan, in November, brought together about 3,000 participants from the global transport industry - including ITF delegates - and others interested in the so-called third transport revolution. From the USA it was reported that ITS (intelligent transport systems) services will be deployed for consumers and freight operators by the year 2001. Japan will have a VICS (vehicle information and communication system) in action in and around Tokyo from April 1996. There are already more than 20 unmanned Japanese passenger transport systems and 159 traffic control centres. Most European Union countries will have a RDS-TMC (radio data system - traffic message channel) running by the end of 1996.

Japanese unions urge action following spate of accidents

Bus deaths prompt new safety fears

by Makato Urata, ITF Tokyo office

SEVEN fatal bus accidents on Japanese motorways over the last 18 months have raised serious concern among users and trade unions over the safety of "deluxe" buses and have exposed the structural defects of modern high-speed buses.

In August 1995 a small truck rammed into a tour bus and ripped off the roof completely. The following month saw an inter-city bus crashing into a side-wall on a rainy motorway, throwing the driver and passengers to the ground. And a collision in October totally destroyed the bus cab, killing bus and truck drivers instantly. In all accidents, union members of various ITF affiliates were involved.

Several unions have already reached agreement with certain manufacturers and employers on strengthening the bus body. But some crews drive other companies' vehicles on inter-city and long distance operations. The last accident was exactly such a case, proving that a comprehensive approach is vital to protect every union member.

Immediately after the October accident, the Japanese Transport Unions' Council, KOUN-ROKYO, strongly demanded that the Ministry of Transport should take urgent steps to prevent further accidents and set up a task force to re-examine the overall safety standard.

Less than a week later, the ministry publicly announced that it was to set up a committee of bus operators, manufacturers, transport unions, academics and the ministry to "amend the standard if necessary". Two ITF affiliates will be the union representatives.

In recent years buses have become more and more luxurious, with larger windows, wider passenger spaces and higher decks to satisfy the customers. Meanwhile, their structural strength has been compromised with thinner pillars, cramped survival-space for crew and cab floors positioned only 60cm above the ground on "super hi-deckers".

Regulations regarding bus safety standards, however, were never comprehensively updated to meet these changing trends. Nor were they discussed publicly. They still merely regulate the weight and length of the body. And there are no specific provisions for impact resistance.

In a recent Diet (parliament) session concerning bus safety, the Ministry of Transport said: "we will review low-floored cabs and study wider space behind the driver's seat." The ITF-affiliated JRU, whose members of parliament questioned the ministry, says this would dramatically reduce the driver's death rate if properly implemented.

KOUN-ROKYO has already selected seven categories with some 130 provisions for improvement of bus design. Initially the union representatives will demand the reinforcement of the front section of cabs and installation of shock absorbing steering wheels, three-point seat belts and an air-bag on all buses.

Stronger bodywork to improve front impact resistance has been identified by the ITF's Bus Construction Working Group as essential for driver safety. The Japanese initiative was therefore welcomed by the ITF Road Transport Workers' Section Committee in December. ■

Chile: International solidarity week

TRADE unionists worldwide staged a week of protest action from 27 January to 2 February

in response to a call from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions for the organisation of events in solidarity with the people and workers of Chile suffering under the repressive 12-year military dictatorship of General Pinochet.

ITF General Secretary Harold Lewis has asked all affiliates to give all the support they can to the various activities decided by their national centres during the week, with the aim of focusing public attention on the vicious stranglehold that the military junta exercises on

10 YEARS AGO

the rights and aspirations of the Chilean nation.

Meanwhile, the ICFTU is keeping up its pressure for the release of trade unionists arrested in recent months when government attacks on the trade union movement have intensified.

One positive development is the release on bail of Manuel Bustos, the deputy leader of the national centre, CNT, with which the ICFTU has expressed its satisfaction, while assuring him of its firm support in defence of democratic trade unionism in Chile.

■ *ITF News*, January 1986

Affiliated unions recover over £1.3 million

ABOUT 3,000 seafarers serving on 120 flag of convenience or crew of convenience ships

have first-hand experience of the practical benefits of international solidarity. Thanks to the active intervention of ITF maritime affiliates and fraternal organisations, over UK£1.3 million back pay was recovered during 1975 and paid out directly to the seafarers concerned.

We are still receiving reports of other cases, but the total mentioned above was achieved through the efforts of maritime affiliates in Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Curaçao, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Israel, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines and Sweden. The 1974 figure was just over £800,000.

Good news travels fast, and more crews, mainly from the developing countries, are seeking the assistance of ITF affiliates to improve their miserable lot. Our affiliates' actions

20 YEARS AGO

reveal that there are still far too many worn-out unsafe ships in operation with appalling living and working conditions for their crews.

There are far too many "first-time" seamen being recruited from areas of mass unemployment who in their desperation to find some means of livelihood are willing to pay anything from between £100 and £200 to the crew suppliers in order to get a job. They will daily risk their own lives and those of other members of the seafaring community through their inexperience and lack of training and through the shipowners' callous disregard for national and international regulations and conventions designed to safeguard life at sea and to protect the community at large from the risk of pollution of the sea and coasts.

■ *ITF News*, January 1976

OBITUARY

Claude Cumberlidge

■ Claude Cumberlidge, for many years the Victoria Branch Secretary and Federal Councillor of the Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia (WWF), died in November. The son and grandson of wharfies, Claude started work on the docks in 1949 and went on to spend his entire life in the industry, seeing the waterfront scene change radically over the years.

Former WWF General Secretary Tas Bull, who delivered a funeral oration on behalf of the Maritime Union of Australia, spoke movingly of a man who had come up the hard way and who made many sacrifices to establish a better life for his family and his fellow dock workers. Tas also recalled how much he had relied on Claude's breadth of experience during the difficult period of waterfront reform.

Claude was a good friend of the ITF and its affiliates in the Pacific. When striking Vanuatu dock workers were sacked in 1988 he made two trips to the islands for the ITF and helped reach a settlement. He had already intervened successfully two years earlier in support of 83 Vanuatu stevedores who had been sacked by two new stevedoring companies.

With his breadth of knowledge of dock work and dockers' trade unionism, Claude was an excellent choice of lecturer at the first regional dockers' seminar held in Trinidad in April 1989 which launched the Caribbean dock workers' education programme.

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**FROM THE
LABOUR PRESS**

**SEKO Magazine,
Sweden**

Swedish flag soon on top?

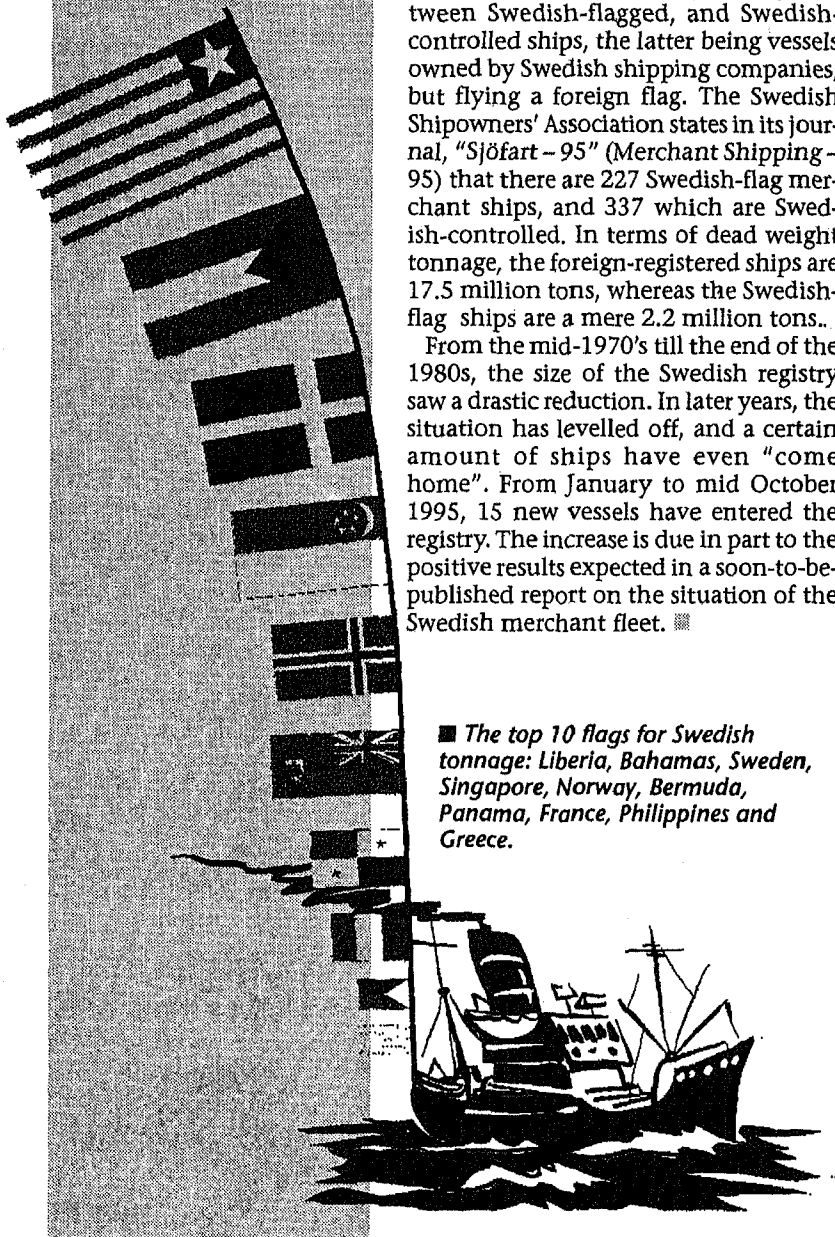
MOST Swedish-owned vessels sail under foreign flags. But that trend has turned: by November (1995), the Swedish-flagged merchant fleet had seen a 15 vessel increase.

Ninety-five per cent of Swedish foreign trade comes through Swedish ports, or via the Norwegian port of Narvik. Shipments through Narvik are mostly comprised of iron ore from LKAB. Still, only one quarter of ships that call at Swedish ports fly the Swedish flag.

A distinction is made generally, between Swedish-flagged, and Swedish-controlled ships, the latter being vessels owned by Swedish shipping companies, but flying a foreign flag. The Swedish Shipowners' Association states in its journal, "Sjöfart - 95" (Merchant Shipping - 95) that there are 227 Swedish-flag merchant ships, and 337 which are Swedish-controlled. In terms of dead weight tonnage, the foreign-registered ships are 17.5 million tons, whereas the Swedish-flag ships are a mere 2.2 million tons..

From the mid-1970's till the end of the 1980s, the size of the Swedish registry saw a drastic reduction. In later years, the situation has levelled off, and a certain amount of ships have even "come home". From January to mid October 1995, 15 new vessels have entered the registry. The increase is due in part to the positive results expected in a soon-to-be-published report on the situation of the Swedish merchant fleet. ■

■ *The top 10 flags for Swedish tonnage: Liberia, Bahamas, Sweden, Singapore, Norway, Bermuda, Panama, France, Philippines and Greece.*



**FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE
DES OUVRIERS DU TRANSPORT**

**FEDERACIÓN INTERNACIONAL
DE LOS TRABAJADORES DEL TRANSPORTE**

**INTERNATIONELLA
TRANSPORTARBETAREFEDERATIONEN**

国際運輸労連

**INTERNATIONALE
TRANSPORTARBEITER-FÖDERATION**

**МЕЖДУНАРОДНАЯ ФЕДЕРАЦИЯ
ТРАНСПОРТНИКОВ**

