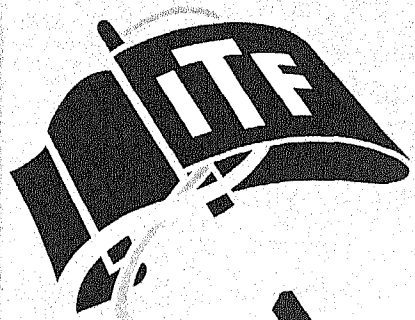


# ITF

# NEWS

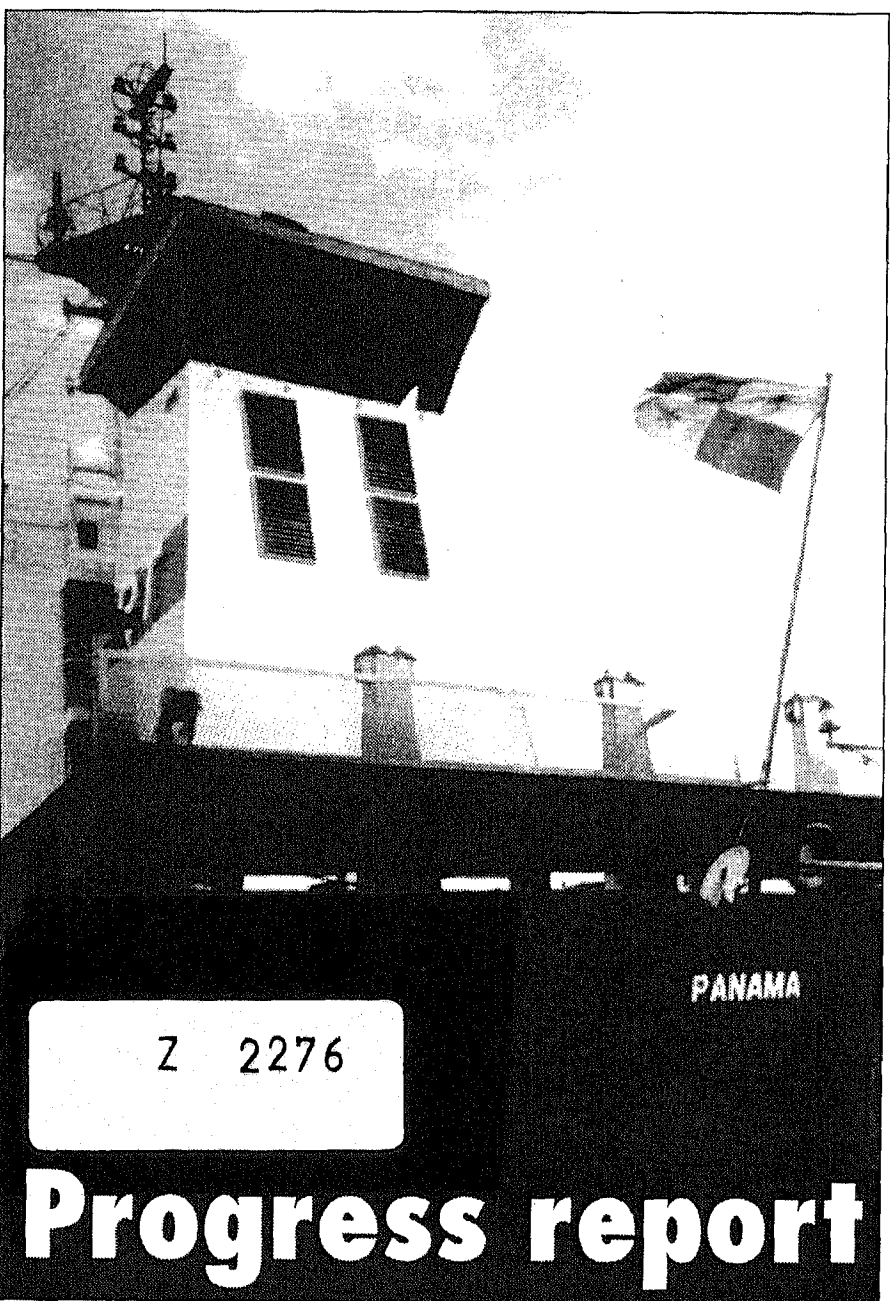


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**INTERNATIONAL  
TRANSPORT  
WORKERS  
FEDERATION**

**INFORMATIONS  
NOTICIAS  
NYHETER  
情報  
NACHRICHTEN  
HOBOCTH**

## The campaign against flags of convenience:



Z 2276

### Progress report

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

# Suspended jail sentence means I am not free

I AM writing to thank you a lot for your solidarity during my days in prison, and I want to inform you about my court case.

On 15 December I was sentenced to a suspended 10 months imprisonment and a TL85 million (US\$1,600) fine.

The decision shows that changes to Article 8 of the Anti-Terrorism Act have not removed the reality of repression of freedom of speech and trade union activity in our country.

The suspension to my 10-

month sentence is a threat to my freedom outside prison. If I become involved in another case concerning my beliefs the sentence will be added to any new punishment.

With this worry I cannot take a decision about returning to my duties in Hava-Is because I do not believe that I am free.

Yours in solidarity,  
**ATILAY AYÇIN**  
Hava-Is  
Istanbul  
Turkey



## Our deepest gratitude

THE 10 stranded former crew members of the Honduras-flag *Orion II* personally and professionally want to express their deepest thanks to the Latvian Seafarers' Union of the Merchant Fleet and to the ITF in London, its officials and staff.

The dramatic case of our legal, social and moral situation on the *Orion II* shows once again the importance of the Latvian union and the ITF.

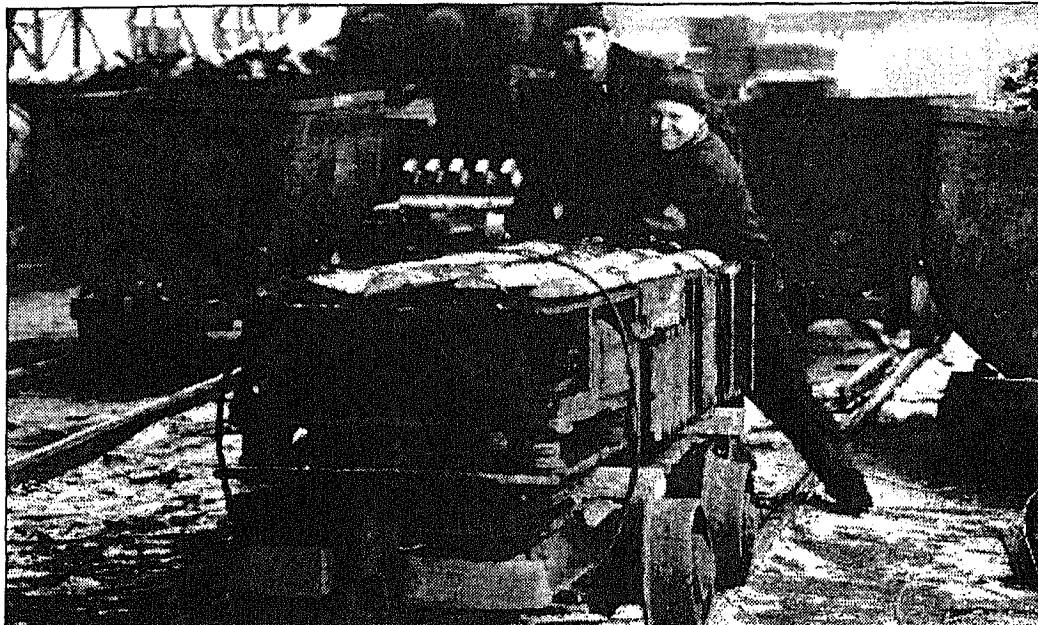
We thank you for your hu-

manitarian help, for your legal assistance and for your fairness, skill and efforts.

**FERNANDO YUPANO, GILBERTO TOLEDO, MARIO TRINIDAD, EDUARDO GONZALEZ, RONALDO FRANCIA, GINA DE LA CRUZ, ELEANOR HERNANDEZ, VIOLETTA SABADO MANIA, LEONARDA TRINIDAD, GILDA RUIZ VOLKER VON SENGBUSCH**  
Consul General of the Philippines  
Riga

■ Crew members of the *Orion II* in Riga. The ITF ensured they received back pay owed to them plus repatriation to the Philippines. The Finnish-owned passenger ferry was arrested through the courts by the ITF-affiliated Latvian Seafarers' Union of the Merchant Fleet – the first case of action in Latvia in the ITF's flag of convenience campaign.

# LETTERS



■ *Ukrainian miners push a cart with spare parts as part of maintenance work at a coal mine near Donetsk early in February. A major strike of Ukrainian coal miners continued last month with workers demanding unpaid wages – a growing problem for many workers in the former Soviet Union. In January Russian miners took strike action to force their government to release more money for their wages to be paid.*  
Photo: Reuters

# Union outrage over Indonesia arrest

A SHOCKING case of human rights violation in Indonesia has prompted protests, led by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, by the ITF and other trade secretariats.

The protests centre on the arrest on 30 December of Roliat Harefa, Vice-Chair of the SBSI independent union, following her dismissal from her job at a factory in Binjai, North Sumatra, which, according to the ICFTU's information, was a consequence of her trade union activities.

Harefa was reportedly also beaten up twice by management, and subsequently arrested when she went to the local police station to complain about her treatment. The arrest was

*"Harefa was reportedly also beaten up twice by management, and subsequently arrested when she went to the local police station to complain about her treatment."*

made by five soldiers who had already been sent to detain her. She was then sent to the women's section of the Tanjung Gusta Prison in Medan.

ICFTU General Secretary Bill Jordan has warned the Indonesian Labour Minister, Abdul Latief, that the case will be referred to the International Labour Organisation. "This renewed attack on trade union rights sheds a deplorable im-

age of Indonesia in international public opinion," he added.

■ Letters of protest should be sent to: Dr Abdul Latief, Minister of Labour, Jl. Gen. Gatot Subroto, Jakarta Pusat, Jakarta, Indonesia (fax: +62 (21) 840 2746).

ALL but one of the oil workers' leaders held without trial in Nigeria since mid-1994 have now been released. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions cautiously welcomed news of the release of four leaders of the NUPENG and PENGASSAN oil and gas workers' unions, while continuing to press for the freeing of the fifth detainee, Chief Frank Kokori, General Secretary of NUPENG.

Assurances are also being

## Nigerians released

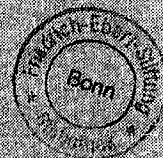
sought that the freed union leaders are in good health and that there are no restrictions on their activities.

The Nigerian energy unions have suffered severe repression ever since the oil strike of summer 1994.

Many trade unionists were

arrested and held without trial. Workers were dismissed by decree and union premises were occupied by armed police and troops. Union bank accounts were frozen and the check-off of union dues was banned.

Elected union officers were barred from their offices, and in many cases either detained or driven into hiding. Government-appointed "sole administrators" were sent in to run the unions instead.



## In brief

### Japan donation

■ The ITF's Japanese affiliates have donated US\$20,000 to the ITF History Fund. A total of 28 unions from 21 countries have now contributed to the fund, which will help finance activities to mark the ITF's 1996 centenary year.

### Sri Lanka meeting

■ There were 19 participants at a seminar in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on the role of women in transport trade unions jointly organised by the ITF and the FES German educational foundation. They concluded that factors discouraging women from becoming active in unions included the attitude of management and the lack of time because of economic difficulties. The meeting proposed awareness development programmes and special bulletins for women.



# Åke moves on



■ *Selander: Appointed Co-ordinator of the International Committee for Seafarers' Welfare.*

**News from Germany, China, Scandinavia, India, Malaysia, Chile and Bangladesh**

■ Hans-Joachim Kreitlow, long time ITF Inspector and Co-ordinator in the German port of Bremen, retires at the end of March. Hans went to sea in 1954 at the age of 15, coming ashore 11 years later. He joined the German Public Service and Transport Workers' Union (ÖTV) in 1971 when he started work as a crane driver for the port authority of Brake in lower Saxony and was soon busy organising his fellow workers. Appointed an ITF Inspector in December 1982, Hans has been involved in many ITF actions and there are many flag of convenience seafarers who have good reason to be grateful to him and his team's sterling efforts on their behalf. His excellent idiomatic grasp of English, which he speaks with a pronounced Liverpool accent acquired from his time ashore in the port and from his Liverpool born wife Eileen, has also been put to good use when helping seafarers. We send our very best wishes to Hans, a very vigorous 57 year old, for a long and happy retirement.

■ Chinese dissident union leader Han Dong-Fang has received the Bremen Solidarity Award, which honours the work of individuals or groups to overcome injustice or the consequences of colonialism or racism. One of the founders of the Beijing Workers' Autonomous Federation, Han was part of the democracy movement brutally crushed in Tiananmen Square in June 1989. Based in Hong Kong, he

SWEDISH-BORN Assistant General Secretary Åke Selander, who has headed up the ITF's maritime activities for the past quarter of a century, will be leaving us at the end of March to move on to a new job, appropriately in the field of seafarers' welfare.

Born in Gothenburg, and raised close to Lake Mälaren west of Stockholm, Åke worked for a short time on the buses, as a postal worker and a seafarer before coming to work for the ITF in the summer of 1959 as Swedish Translator-Interpreter.

In November 1968, the Executive Board appointed Åke as Secretary of the Research and Information Department, a post he took over from fellow Swede Urs Hauser. He had been in charge of the ITF's research and information activities for only a couple of years

when he was asked, on the retirement of Bob Santley, to take over as Secretary to the Seafarers' and Fishermen's Sections.

During the 1977 Dublin Congress, Åke was made an Assistant General Secretary, in recognition of the importance attached to his role as the ITF officer responsible for the world's seafarers and fishermen.

Åke, who will turn 59 in November, will not be retiring from active life. After nearly 37 years of ITF service, most of it devoted to its seafaring membership, he is to become the full-time Co-ordinator of the International Committee for Seafarers' Welfare, a body established by the ITF together with the shipowners' federation ISF and other international organisations active in the field of seafarers' welfare. ■

is now trying to build up a network of independent trade unionists in China.

■ The new President of the Nordic Transport Workers' Federation (NTF) is Hans Wahlström, President of the Swedish Transport Workers' Union (STF). He takes over from former Swedish seafarers' leader Anders Lindström, the new Director General of the Swedish National Maritime Administration. Per-Erik Nelin, President of the Finnish Seafarers' Union was elected as NTF Vice President.

■ Warmest congratulations go to Manohar Kotwal, General Secretary of the Transport and Dock Workers' Union, Bombay, who celebrated his 80th birthday on 4 December.

■ Abdul Gaffoor Bin Ibrahim has retired as President of the Railwaymen's Union of Malaya (RUM) and is succeeded by Yahaya Bin Yusuf, previously RUM Deputy President.

■ Jorge Tapia Carcamo has been elected President of the Chilean Seafarers' Federation FETRICH and Dionisio Gonzalez Bernal General Secretary.

■ Mohammed Ismail was elected President and Roy Ramesh Chandra General Secretary at the Bangladesh Truck Chalok Sramik Federation (BTCSEF) conference.



# Tachographs: How well are they working?

**Spanish rail workers rally to defend publicly owned network**

■ ITF railway affiliates worldwide continue to fight to protect the integrity of the publicly-owned railways. On 2 December it was the turn of the Spanish members of the transport workers' federations FETT-UGT and FETCOMAR-CC.OO.

Under the banner "Yes to Modernisation, No to Fragmentation", 10,000 railway workers from the two unions marched through Madrid from Chamartin station to the ministry of transport.

The railway workers demonstrated their determination to defend the state-owned railway Renfe as a public undertaking and its social role and to oppose the proposals of the Renfe president, Merca Sala, to split the company up and create separate subsidiaries for rolling-stock and infrastructure maintenance.

Underlining their intention to defend the unified structure of Renfe as a vertically-integrated company, the demonstrators recalled the fact that neither European Union legislation nor the contract between Renfe and the Spanish government required the company to be split up. They called on Merca Sala to open a dialogue with the unions so that the modernisation of the railways could proceed in an atmosphere of consensus to the benefit of the Spanish people.

At the end of the rally Antonio Moral, Federal Secretary of the UGT Railway Workers' Union, presented a message of solidarity from the ITF Railwaymen's Section pledging support to the Spanish railway workers in their struggle to defend and promote Renfe as a publicly-owned railway.

**Asbjørn Wahl, ITF Assistant Secretary, reports from Sweden on meetings of ITF road transport unions where discussions centred on the tachograph, now compulsory in Europe, which counts working hours...**

REGULATION of working and driving hours and the enforcement of regulations were once again in focus when the ITF's Road Transport Workers' Section Committee and its European Committee met in Stockholm in December. As Kåge Gustavsson, Sweden, is going to retire from his union later this year, Peter Baranowski, Germany, was elected new Chair of the European Committee, with Jeannine Hermans, Belgium, and Danny Bryan, Great Britain, as Vice-Chairs.

Since 1 April 1995 the tachograph has been compulsory on all vehicles operating international transport services under the AETR (European Agreement Concerning the Work of Crews of Vehicles Engaged in International Road Transport) agreement - including the Eastern European countries. The enforcement of its use, however, is far from satisfactory as the records of only about one per cent of drivers are required to be inspected annually in the European Union. It was agreed that the ITF should propose to the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) that this should be increased to 5 per cent.

The situation regarding the supplementing of the conven-

tional tachograph required by the EU by an electronic recorder or, alternatively, its replacement by a fully-electronic device was also discussed.

The Section Committee agreed to establish a small working group to examine manufacturers' technical proposals for the improvement of the tachograph, including the prevention of fraudulent manipulation and provision of reliable information to drivers.

The implications of introducing a regulatory framework regarding transport telematics were also discussed. The potential for accident reduction was noted. It was agreed that the tachograph working group should be responsible for developing ITF policy and that a seminar on telematics should be held in conjunction with the next Section Conference.

The internalisation of external costs, principally accident and environmental costs, was discussed. A number of projects are under way within the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT), the ECE and the European Union with the aim of identifying these costs and finding politically feasible means of internalising them in the different modes of transport. The necessity of such a policy was endorsed by the European Committee.

It was agreed that a discussion should be sought with the International Road Transport Union (the employers' organisation) to examine the feasibility of a joint policy aimed at raising training standards and qualifications. ■

## **Employers refuse to talk on hours of work**

■ The refusal of road transport employers to discuss laws to limit working hours in the European Union has infuriated unions representing truck, bus and coach drivers and crew.

The unions representing the 6 million workers who would be affected by legislation on hours of work presented proposals to the employers in January. This followed earlier commitments for such legislation given by the EU's Transport and Social Affairs Commissioners.

Commenting on the employers' refusal to discuss the matter, the Committee of Transport Workers' Unions in the European Community expressed profound disappointment at their inability to overcome internal divisions in order to attack the scandal of excessive working hours and the resulting safety risks to workers and the public.

# Lock-out in Liverpool

**STOP PRESS:** In February the sacked Liverpool dockers rejected an offer from the Merseyside harbour board which would have enabled 40 of them to be re-employed, while the rest received severance payments of between £20,000 and £25,000 (US\$30,000 and \$37,500). The offer was put to a secret ballot, with the dockers' union, the TGWU, saying it was "the best deal possible" though "not the best deal desirable".

## Talks on future of Brazil's ports

■ The threat of continuing disruption to Brazil's ports has ended with the unions winning the right to be included in talks on the future of the sector. As a result, an indefinite nationwide strike from the beginning of December was averted.

Earlier in the year, strikes called by CONTMAF, Brazil's national port, maritime and airline workers' federation, had disrupted shipments from ports around the country. And in November port workers in the north east of the country held a two-day strike in protest at their exclusion from talks on the planned privatisation of the port sector.

Meanwhile, the ITF co-hosted, along with CONTMAF and the International Labour Organisation, a seminar in Rio de Janeiro in December to discuss the government's plans to privatise the ports.

ITF Dockers' Section Secretary Kees Merges told the 50 participants about comparable developments in other countries and the strategies adopted by trade unions to minimise the threat to union organisation and employment.

He went on to urge the Brazilian unions to streamline their own organisation into a single structure representing all port workers. A divided labour movement was very much in the interests of port employers and against the interests of the workers, he said.

A BITTER dispute in the British port of Liverpool, which began last October when over 300 dockers were sacked, has turned into a landmark industrial conflict on the issues of casualisation and non-union labour for port workers around the world.

The dockers were dismissed by the Merseyside Docks and Harbour Board because they refused to cross a picket line mounted by 40 fellow port workers in a separate dispute.

The board then advertised their jobs and appointed non-union casual labour in their place.

For legal reasons the dispute cannot be supported by the ITF affiliate concerned, the Transport and General Workers' Union. The strike was organised spontaneously by the workers themselves and not by the TGWU.

British legislation, introduced by the Thatcher government in the 1980s, forbids a trade union from supporting industrial action if a postal ballot did not take place beforehand. For the same reason, the TGWU is not in a position to inform or advise other unions about the dispute.

However, the TGWU is very much involved in the as yet unsuccessful attempts to find a solution in line with the aims of the workers. The union has also set up a hardship fund to alleviate the distress of the Liverpool dockers' families during this very difficult time.

THE ITF-affiliated dock workers' union on the West Coast of the USA and Canada, the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, ILWU, is currently threatened by a non-union employer, who refuses to use the labour of ILWU dock workers at a new US\$155 million export coal facility that is now being built in Los Angeles.

The ILWU was informed that there will be two separate contracts awarded for this export facility; one ship-side, and one for dock-side handling. The contract for the ship-side work was awarded to a stevedoring company that will use ILWU dockers. The dock-side work contract, on the other hand, is going to a non-union company, Pacific Carbon Services Corporation, a subsidiary of Savage Industries.

For months ILWU officials have been trying to dissuade LAXT (Los Angeles Export Terminal) from hiring the non-union services of the Savage Industries operator. The ILWU, along with other

## ILWU opposes non-union port in Los Angeles

■ An industrial inquiry commission in Canada has recommended that the Labour Minister should be granted new powers to prevent labour disputes shutting down the country's ports. The commission proposes that the minister be given powers to end strikes or lockouts or remove the threat of such actions and to appoint a mediator/arbitrator to settle a dispute within 90 days. It is also recommended that employers and unions be required to give 72 hours' notice of a lockout or strike. The commission was appointed after an ILWU longshoremen's strike last year closed nearly every port in British Columbia for 13 days.

The striking dockers are demanding reinstatement and have rejected an offer of £10,000 (US\$15,000) severance pay.

The ITF Executive Board at its meeting in October 1995 expressed sympathy for the aims of the strikers, namely resisting the introduction of non-union casual labour, one of the main attacks on employment in the port industry being faced by dock workers all over the world.

A donation of £5,000 (US\$7,500) has been made by the ITF to help alleviate hardship among the dockers and their families.

A number of affiliated unions outside Britain have also acted to avoid strike-breaking activities in the port of Liverpool. Ships of companies using strike-breaking labour have been delayed or threatened with action by ITF affiliates in countries such as Italy, USA, Spain, Israel and Australia.

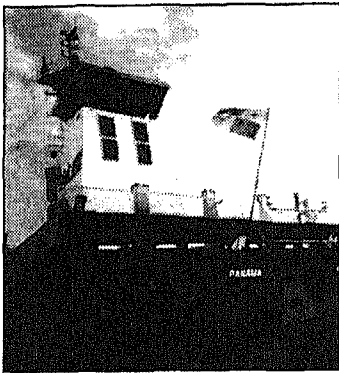
A representative of the Liverpool strike committee addressed the meeting of ITF Inspectors in London in January.

■ Up-to-date information concerning developments in Liverpool is available from the Merseyside Dockers' Shop Stewards' Committee on: + 44 (151) 207 3388 (fax: + 44 (151) 298 1044).

maritime unions and building trades, took to the streets in the Los Angeles harbour area to protest at the contracting of non-union labour. Over 3,000 union members demonstrated for three days in January to show the union's disapproval and frustration at this turn of events which show, once again, how big business is undermining the job security of union dock workers.

As this is another case in which an employer tries to replace experienced, unionised dock workers with cheaper, inexperienced non-union labour, the ITF is asking affiliated dock workers' unions to voice their concern. Messages should be sent to: Ezunial Burtz, Executive Director, World Port LA, Los Angeles, USA (fax: +1 (310) 831 6936), with copies to the ITF Dockers' Section and to the ILWU Local 13, Ramon Ponce de Leon Jr, President, Los Angeles, USA, (fax: +1 (310) 830 5587).





**How successful is the ITF's flag of convenience campaign? Is it achieving its two key objectives: to drive FOC ships back to their national flags, and to protect those seafarers who work on FOC vessels?**

**These were among the questions discussed when the FOC Campaign Steering Group met in London in January to review progress in the campaign.**

**And campaign tactics came in for scrutiny during the ITF Worldwide**

**Inspectors' Seminar at ITF headquarters later in the month.**

**Here, MARK DICKINSON, ITF Special Seafarers' Department Deputy Secretary, who led the discussion at the meeting in January, assesses the effectiveness of the ITF's stand.**

*The growth of FOC shipping*

Flag of convenience shipping has grown steadily since 1948 when the ITF launched its campaign at its Oslo Congress. Since then the percentage of the world fleet registered in countries designated as FOCs has increased as follows:

1950:	5.6%
1960:	26.1%
1970:	29.7%
1980:	31.6%
1990:	32.4%
1994:	42%.

*The world fleet*

The world fleet continues to get bigger, with the cargo-carrying fleet expanding by 3.6 per cent in the past year to a record 457.4 million gross tons. This is the 10th year of steady growth, and experts are predicting that the fleet will rise by a further 6 per cent in each year between now and the year 2005.

The top 10 ship registries are Panama, Liberia, Cyprus, Bahamas, NIS (Norwegian International), Malta, Singapore, Hong Kong, St Vincent and DIS (Danish International). All of them are either FOCs, so-called second registers (such as the NIS and DIS) or registers frequently used by non-national shipowners (such as Singapore and Hong Kong). So the growth in the world fleet is directly related to the growth in FOCs, which between them account for about 14,000 ships in the world fleet.

We are no longer just witnessing the phenomenon of flagging-out to the same extent as in the 1970s and 1980s. Increasingly, new ships are not being registered in the country of beneficial ownership at all and the FOC register is the registry of first choice for many shipowners.

But the apparent failure to dissuade shipowners from using FOCs cannot be taken as a sign that this part of the ITF campaign has failed.

The only reason there is any stigma at all attached to the FOC system is almost entirely due to the efforts of the ITF and its affiliates worldwide. It is also true that without the ITF imposing minimum acceptable working conditions the degree of anarchy and injustice which exists in the international maritime labour market would be considerably greater than it is.

Some observers of the ITF campaign had forecast that the break-up of the Soviet Union and the consequent flood of cheap labour from Russia and Eastern Europe, taken with the huge potential supplies from the People's Republic of China, would undermine our attempts to maintain a floor in wages and conditions.

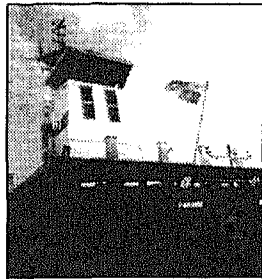
In fact this has not happened and the ITF continues to make major inroads into FOC shipping, according to the number of collective agreements which are being signed. Even

*'The only reason there is any stigma at all attached to the FOC system is almost entirely due to the efforts of the ITF and its affiliates worldwide. It is also true that without the ITF imposing minimum acceptable working conditions the degree of anarchy and injustice which exists in the international maritime labour market would be considerably greater than it is.'*

# Flags of convenience: Nearly half a century of campaigning

*Continued on next page*

# The campaign against flags of convenience



*From previous page*

the increase in the ITF benchmark TCC (total crew cost) pay rate for an AB from US\$1,000 to \$1,100 in 1994 appears to have had little or no effect.

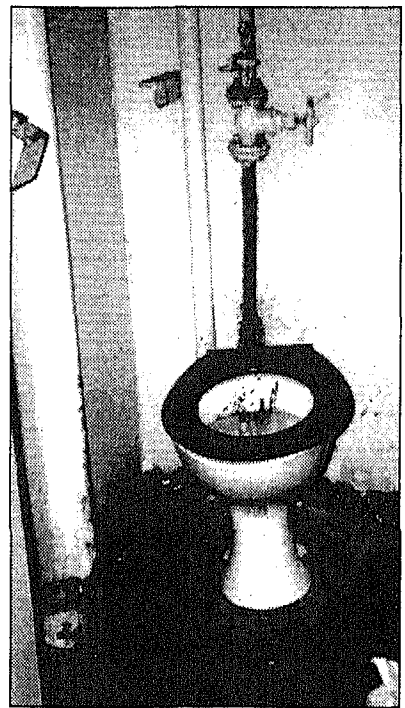
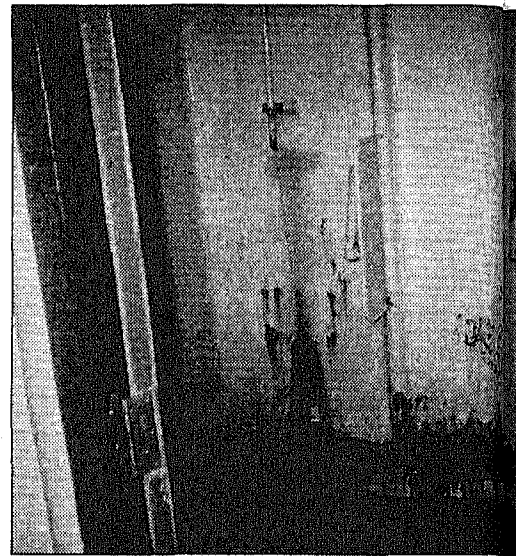
The number of special agreements for FOC vessels submitted by affiliates to the ITF has increased from 2,358 in 1993 to 2,545 in 1994 and 4,099 in 1995. These are unprecedented levels of coverage.

### *How many seafarers are protected?*

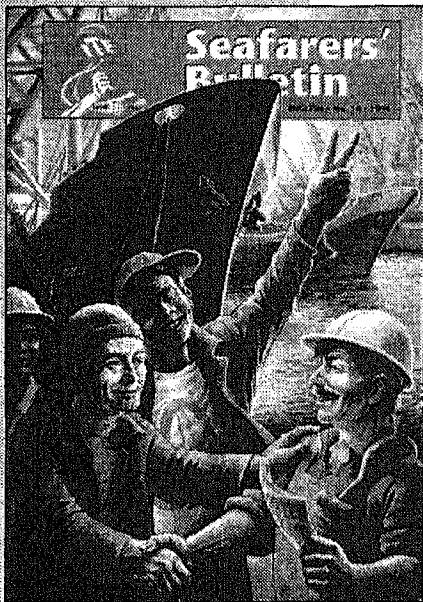
A joint study published in December 1995 by two shipowner organisations, the International Shipping Federation and the Baltic and International Maritime Council, estimates that the total world supply of seafarers is 1.234 million (409,000 officers and 825,000 ratings).

There are about 81,000 vessels (over 100 gross tons) in the world fleet, which, on the basis of 1.234 million seafarers, means that there are on average 15.23 seafarers per ship. Using this figure in conjunction with the total of 14,000 FOC vessels indicates that 213,284 seafarers or 17 per cent of the world's seafarers are employed under FOCs.

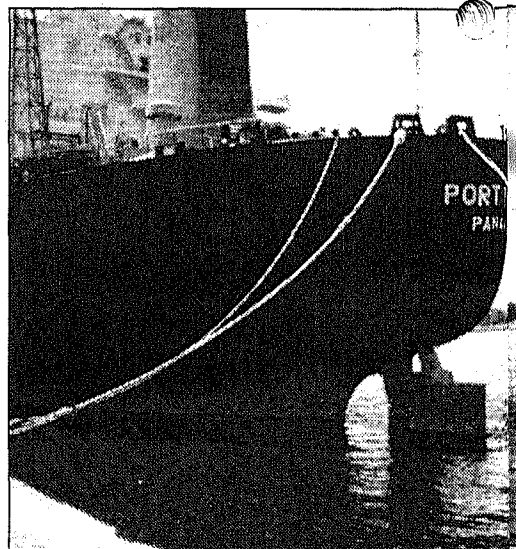
With about 4,100 FOC ships covered by ITF acceptable agreements, this means that approximately 62,000 seafarers, or some 29 per cent of the FOC labour force has access to the benefits and protection that ITF acceptable agreements provide. Clearly we still have a lot of work to do, but we can claim a great deal of success in achiev-



■ These... which... Jaskiew... Solidari... inspecte... P... alin... The crew... US\$40,0... the ITF... having... conditio... crew are... public, be... familiar... around lo...

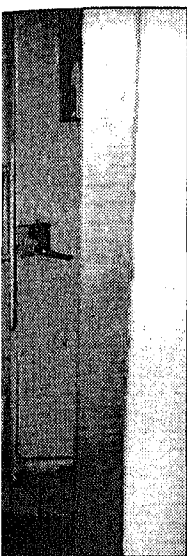


■ The latest edition of the ITF Seafarers' Bulletin has been published in English (other languages to follow). The 48-page magazine contains news and features on the ITF's campaign against flags of convenience. Nine pages are also devoted to articles, poems and letters penned by seafarers from around the world. Copies of the bulletin are being distributed to affiliates and seafarers' missions. Additional copies are available from the Communications department at ITF head office.



# A typical

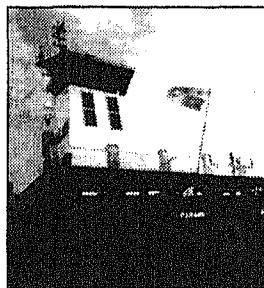




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world.



ship



ing our objective of protecting FOC seafarers.

An analysis of agreements signed by flag indicates that even higher proportions of some groups of seafarers are covered by ITF-approved conditions. For example, crews on ap-

proximately 66 per cent of ships registered in Liberia, 51 per cent of those registered in Antigua and 50 per cent of those registered in the Bahamas have ITF agreements.

*Are ships being driven back to the national flag?*

Ships change flag all the time. Vessels flag out from traditional registries to FOCs and second registers and they change from one FOC to another.

Despite the continuing growth in FOC shipping, there is a significant proportion of FOC registered ships returning to the flag of the nationality of the owner. Between 1992 and 1994, 543 FOC ships returned to their national flags. This represents 5 per cent of the total registered under FOCs in 1994.

There are of course many reasons why a shipowner might choose to return to the national flag but it is without doubt legitimate for the ITF to claim some of the credit.

*The ITF's political strategy*

The ITF campaign against FOCs is not restricted to industrial issues alone. The Seafarers' Section has been stepping up the political campaign against FOC shipping and has sought to maximise the opportunities afforded by a number of significant developments.

Chief among these is the setting-up by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) of a Flag State Implementation Sub-Committee, which has begun to discuss what action should be taken against those flag states which lack the will to enforce IMO Instruments.

The ITF has also been involved in a number of discussions with some sympathetic administrations on ways of increasing pressure on sub-standard FOC shipping and is aware that there are three main options to be undertaken within the IMO:

- the revision of the United Nations Ship Registration Convention
- a new Convention on Flag States
- a revision of chapter I of the SOLAS (Safety of Life at Sea) Convention

The ITF also understands that the Maritime Transport Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development will in the near future submit a paper to the IMO on the substantial cost advantages which accrue to shipowners through non-compliance with international minimum safety requirements.

The ITF is keeping track of these developments in order to exert some influence over any positive outcome. Victory will not come overnight. We have been opposing the FOC system for nearly half a century, and have achieved many successes in the course of the campaign. The fight may continue for many years to come, but we will not give up until justice is secured. ■



■ Storer



■ Leys



■ Rethrekar



■ Marquez



■ Costilla

# Our new Inspectors:

**The following ITF Inspectors have been appointed over the past three months, making a total of 85 full-time and part-time ITF Inspectors in the front line of the campaign against flags of convenience...**

■ Ross Storer of the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) has been appointed part-time Inspector in Fremantle.

■ Frank Leys of the Belgian Transport Workers' Union (BTB) is the new ITF Inspector in Antwerp.

■ Branko Berlan of the Seafarers' and Dockers' Union of Croatia (SDUC) is the part-time ITF Inspector in Split.

■ Maruti Rethrekar, National Union of Seafarers of India (NUSI), ITF Inspector in Bombay.

■ Young Dae Choi of the Korean Federation of Port and Transport Workers' Unions (KFPTWU) is now the second ITF Inspector in Pusan.

■ Peter Gouw of the Dutch Transport Workers' Union (FNV) has begun work as ITF Inspector in Rotterdam, based in a new office close to the docks.

■ There are three new Inspectors in Latin America: Roy Marquez of the Panamanian Federation of Inland Transport, Civil Aviation, Shipping and Port Workers (FITTTAMPS), based in Colón; Elias Costilla of the Peruvian National Federation of Seafarers, Port and Inland Navigation Workers (FEMAPOR), based in Callao, and Miguel Sanchez of the Colombian Merchant Seafarers' Union (UNIMAR), who is the Inspector in Cartagena.

■ Andrzej Jaskiewicz of the National Maritime Section NSZZ "Solidarnosc" has been appointed ITF Inspector in Szczecin, Poland.

■ Adrian Mihalciou, President of the Romanian Seafarers' Union, is the new ITF Inspector in Constanta.

■ Two new Russian Inspectors have begun work for the ITF: Petr Osichansky of the Water Transport Workers' Union of Russia (WTWUR), based in Vladivostok, and Victor Solovlov of the Dockers' Union of Russia (DUR), in St Petersburg.

ITF Inspector Cassiem Augustus of the Transport and General Workers' Union (T&GWU) of South Africa, based in Cape Town, takes over from Harald Harvey, who has returned to full-time union duties.

■ Sven Save, Seafarers' Division of the Swedish Service and Communications Union (SEKO) has taken up duties as ITF Inspector in Helsingborg.

■ Trevor Charles of the MUA is the new ITF Co-ordinator in Sydney. He replaces Roger Chapman, who has taken early retirement.

■ The newly appointed ITF Co-ordinator in Rio de Janeiro is Antonio Cruz Santos of the Brazilian Confederation of Maritime, Civil Aviation and Inland Navigation Workers (CONTMAF).



■ Jaskiewicz



■ Solovlov



■ Augustus



■ Save



■ Santos

## The FOC campaign in action

### Crew became shipowners to win back wages

■ The crew of the *Stainless Commander* reluctantly became shipowners — with the help of the ITF — and thus were able to recoup the US\$357,000 which was owed to them in unpaid wages.

The Panamanian-vessel arrived in the port of Delfzijl in the Netherlands in June 1995 for repairs. But the Greek owners, Adriatic Tankers, did not have the money to repair the vessel, so she was laid-up for a couple of months. Nor were the seafarers paid, and in October the ITF Inspector in Rotterdam, Ruud Touwen, was called in to help. Within a week a local law firm was instructed by the ITF to arrest the vessel on behalf of the crew.

In December the ship was put up for public auction in Rotterdam.

The *Stainless Commander* was mortgaged through a US trust bond holder, which had a representative at the auction. ITF representatives and some of the crew were also present to see if the total backpay claim of the crew for \$357,000 would be covered in full.

But during the bidding nobody raised their hand. The ITF Inspector became so worried that he hurriedly tried to contact some potential buyers by mobile phone.

The bailiff started the sale at \$7 million and went down to \$150,000. At that moment one of the lawyers acting on behalf of the crew was instructed to say "mine".

The bond holder's lawyer looked shocked and angry, since his client had lost the vessel. This had never happened before and he was surprised to see who had bought the ship.

Immediately after the auction the ITF Inspector went back to his office and explored the market. With the help of ITF lawyers and a local shipping company the *Stainless Commander* was sold to a third party. An amount of \$400,000 is expected to be obtained before the end of the month. Ten per cent of this sum has already been paid already into the ITF account in Rotterdam. This means the crew will receive their backpay claim in full plus repatriation — thanks to keeping their nerve at the auction.



■ Awaiting news of the legal efforts to recover their backpay, the Ukrainian seafarers meet on board the *Aza* (inset), one of the three ships detained in Turkey by ITF action.

### Aza, Evelin and Rita

THE ITF made an important breakthrough in December when backpay was won for the Ukrainian crews of three Greek-owned ships in Turkey. This was the first time that the ITF had successfully taken action in Turkey to recover money owed to foreign crews.

A total of US\$453,000 was won for the 18 seafarers on the *Aza*, *Evelin* and *Rita*, who refused to sail the bulk carriers from the Istanbul port of Tuzla until employers Intercean Liners agreed to settle their wages.

The three Malta-registered vessels remained at anchor off Tuzla, where they had undergone repairs, while the ITF, with the help of Engin Yazici of the TDS Turkish seafarers' union, hired a lawyer in Istanbul to pursue the claim through the courts. A "right of security" was granted for all three ships, which meant that they were arrested until the debt was discharged. ■

### Emden

THE car transporter *Emden*, trapped for 10 days by strike action in the Australian port of Fremantle, finally set sail on Christmas Day after Japanese owners Escobal Shipping converted US\$203,222 into yen and deposited it in an ITF bank account in Japan.

The money was then paid out to the Filipino crew according to rank and length of service.

Escobal president Akira Kato flew to Fremantle to sign the agreement with ITF Inspector Norm Pickles. The agreement

safeguards the future of the crew against blacklisting.

The men were sailing under a Philippines contract, but an unauthorised deduction was being made. So when the Philippines-flag vessel docked at Fremantle, the seafarers called in the ITF and decided to strike. As part of their action, the crew also unshackled cars to prevent the ship being moved, and closed ventilators to prevent boarding. ■

### Jaipur

THE National Union of Seafarers of India (NUSI) lifted a boycott of the Singapore-registered *Jaipur* in January after its owners, Tradeco Enterprises of Singapore, agreed to increase the wages of the crew in line with guidelines laid down by the ILO (International Labour Organisation).

Two NUSI members boarded the vessel while loading was in progress at Madras and prevented the ship from leaving the berth. The NUSI had received a letter from the crew alleging low monthly wages and sub-standard working conditions. ■

### Nicolas S

THREE Egyptian seafarers on the Maltese-flag *Nicolas S* shared US\$26,300 after stopping discharge operations at the Italian port of Bari. They were advised to do so by Taranto-based ITF Inspector Gianbattista Leoncini after the men had complained to him about their low pay. Agents for the Greek owners, Sea Honour Shipping, soon agreed to pay up, and repatriate the bosun and two ABs. Sailing was then

delayed a further two days in after Leoncini asked the port authorities to inspect the vessel for defects. ■

### Topaz

THREE Polish ex-crew members of the Antigua-flag *Topaz* finally received their backpay just before Christmas when Horst Mussehl, managing director of Sprante Schifffahrt, agreed to an out of court settlement hours before the case against him was due to be heard in the Kiel labour court.

The settlement, under which Mussehl undertook to pay the seafarers 70 per cent of the money they were owed (a total of 42,000 DM), plus 5,000 DM in legal costs and interest, marked the end of a year long battle by ITF Inspector Ulf Christiansen against the shipowner. Mussehl spent a night in jail in November after he twice failed to appear in court to sign a statutory declaration of his assets. ■

### Trident

THE ITF's Buenos Aires-based Inspector, Roberto Alarcón, was called to the Panamanian-flag *Trident* in the Concepción del Uruguay port, Argentina, in December, after receiving a complaint from the Filipino crew that the vessel was unseaworthy. Once on board, it became clear that the 20 crew members were also angry about low wages and living and working conditions. After lengthy negotiations the Greek owners agreed to pay back wages totalling US\$63,554 and repatriate the crew on arrival in the next Argentine port of call, Ibicuy. ■

### Vasily Filippov

INTERVENTION by the ITF Inspector in Hamburg, Ulf Christiansen, ensured that the crew of the Russian-flag trawler Vasily Filippov received their wages — and were supplied with proper food on board. The Russian crew of 72 had contacted the ITF to say that they had not been paid for over four months and there was a food shortage. Christiansen immediately contacted owners Murmanskyy Talfot and on the same day the agent delivered DM264,632 (US\$390,000) and provisions to the vessel. ■

Despite IMO failure to agree on stricter stability standards

# ITF hails progress on ferry safety

AN International Maritime Organization (IMO) conference on roll-on roll-off ferry safety has ended with member states failing to accept the key recommendation of its own panel of experts to set higher stability standards. But a damaging split was averted by the acceptance of the principle that regional groups of countries may impose their own stricter rules.

The row and subsequent compromise allowing countries to insist on stricter buoyancy standards – to be achieved, for example, by installing bulkheads to compartmentalise the vehicle decks – overshadowed the successful adoption of a longer list of safety measures.

Among them is a requirement for a single designated working language on each ship, a measure that has long been resisted by passenger ship operators. This will apply to all passenger ships, not just ferries.

The formula allowing for higher regional stability standards will enable north west European countries to require that ferries will have to be constructed so that they remain afloat even with 50 centimetres of water on their vehicle decks.

This had been the principal recommendation of the IMO panel of experts appointed to examine ferry safety following the *Estonia* disaster in 1994 in which 852 people died. Despite this, the conference, which concluded in London at the end of November, failed to endorse it, leaving a minority of countries – supported by the ITF – threatening to take unilateral action.

The final outcome of the conference, however, particularly the new language requirement, was warmly welcomed by the ITF, which was represented at the conference by Assistant General Secretary Åke Selander and Seafarers' Section Assistant Secretary Jon Whitlow.

"Despite the disappointment that the main panel of experts' recommendation was not accepted, it was heartening to see many of the proposals put forward by the ITF adopted by the conference," said Jon Whitlow afterwards.

The new safety requirements agreed in London include:

- public address systems for passenger ships,
- the carriage of at least one fast rescue boat on all ro-ro passenger ships,
- the recording and communication of information on passengers on all passenger ships,



■ Countries at the IMO conference on ferry safety could not agree on new international buoyancy standards, but they did approve other safety measures.

including those needing special assistance in an emergency,

- a decision support system for masters on all passenger ships,
- a requirement that all passenger ships be provided with

**"We have also heard that there is a need for further research and the collation of more statistics. During the various meetings which led up to the conference we have indicated that we believe that there has been adequate research and the results have been widely disseminated, to the point that the travelling public is aware that most existing ro-ro ferries become unsafe should water enter onto the car deck. The seafarer trade unions have met regularly to discuss the progress of the work within the IMO and you will not be surprised to learn that some of our colleagues have equated the suggestions that more statistics are required with a euphemism for the need for more loss of life."**

*Extract from the statement to the IMO conference on ferry safety given by ITF Assistant General Secretary Åke Selander.*

means for two-way on-scene radiocommunications for search and rescue purposes, using aeronautical frequencies,

- a requirement that all passenger ships have at least one qualified person assigned to perform radiocommunication duties only during distress incidents,
- a new regulation, applying to all vessels, protecting a master's discretion for safe navigation,
- a new requirement that all passenger ships, in order to ensure effective crew performance in safety matters, have a single designated working language which is recorded in the ship's log,
- a requirement that all passenger ships carry details of their operational limitations and any exemptions given by the flag state,
- a requirement that the stowage and securing of cargo units, including vehicles and containers, on ships with ro-ro cargo spaces be completed before the vessel leaves the berth.

The ITF also welcomed the adoption. The ITF representatives at the conference succeeded in securing an insertion in the text of a resolution on voyage data recorders which will require the IMO to take into account any potential human element implications in the development of operational and performance standards for voyage data recorders. ■



# Concern that international rules will be lowered to achieve harmonisation ITF co-ordinates union case to JAA and FAA

*'It is important that unions speak with a unified voice on behalf of the highest safety standards, and to counteract the pressures to use safety regulation for the competitive advantage of any country or regional bloc.'*

## EU seeks competition in traffic services

■ The European Commission has issued an extensive draft white paper on air traffic services in Europe.

As well as proposing major European Union investments to accelerate harmonisation and technical research, the paper recommends that the regulation of air traffic services, currently undertaken by national authorities and pan-European bodies, be separated from the operation of air traffic control and air navigation services.

The latter would, under the Commission's proposals, be subject to competition and commercialisation, probably through public procurement or competitive tendering. European air traffic trade unions affiliated to the ITF, the Committee of Transport Workers' Unions in the European Community, the PSI (Public Services International) and its EPSC European committee have objected strongly to the proposals in a joint submission to the European Commission.

FOLLOWING increased co-operation between the European aviation rulemaker, the Joint Aviation Authorities (JAA), and their US counterpart, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the ITF has begun to co-ordinate the work of trade union representatives on these standard-setting bodies.

As the global megacarriers, backed by governments in the developed nations, continue to press for open skies and global liberalisation, the pressure on aviation regulators to harmonise safety rules has been mounting. In the absence of effective regulatory or enforcement powers within the 183-nation strong International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), it is the regulatory bodies of the rich nations of Europe and North America that have set the pace and content of rewritten rules which air carriers from other nations need to comply with if they are to have access to the largest aviation markets in the northern hemisphere.

The concern for trade unionists is that the process of harmonisation of safety and opera-

tional rules becomes a backdoor to deregulation, with common standards set at a lower level than the best practice and standards that, up until now, have applied in some of the countries affected.

It is important that unions speak with a unified voice on behalf of the highest safety standards, and to counteract the pressures to use safety regulation for the competitive advantage of any country or regional bloc.

The ITF has encouraged dialogue between US trade union representatives and their counterparts nominated by the ITF on various JAA bodies. The process was begun at the Civil Aviation Section North America Regional Committee meeting in November 1995 in Washington, at which it was agreed to make a major intervention at the next JAA-FAA Harmonisation Conference, in San Diego, California, in June 1996.

The ITF's representatives on JAA bodies endorsed the approach at a meeting in London in January 1996. ■

THE process of adapting Joint Aviation Authorities (JAA) rules into EU legislation is proving so lengthy and fraught with legal complexities as to be virtually unworkable. The JAA in the meantime has no legal status of its own. The JAA is actually a loose club of national aviation authorities in 24 European countries.

The European Commission and the JAA are putting forward two different solutions.

## New regulatory body needed for Europe

The JAA wants a Convention to make it a legally recognised international body. This, however, would create a body with a great deal of power and little democratic accountability.

The Commission's proposal is to set up a new European aviation authority which would continue to cover all the EU member states plus nine countries outside the EU. The Commission, however, would control this body with a single Commission vote that would effectively disenfranchise the non EU countries and gear the new agency to the interests of the richer EU member states.

The ITF has consistently pointed out that JAA rules frequently have a major impact on jobs and employment conditions. The JAA rigidly considers these issues outside its remit, but there is no other body covering all the JAA member states where social dialogue can take place. At the latest Joint Committee for Civil Aviation plenary held in Brussels in January trade unions and employers jointly proposed a new EU aviation authority which would be an EU agency within the processes of social dialogue and political accountability provided by EU structures. ■



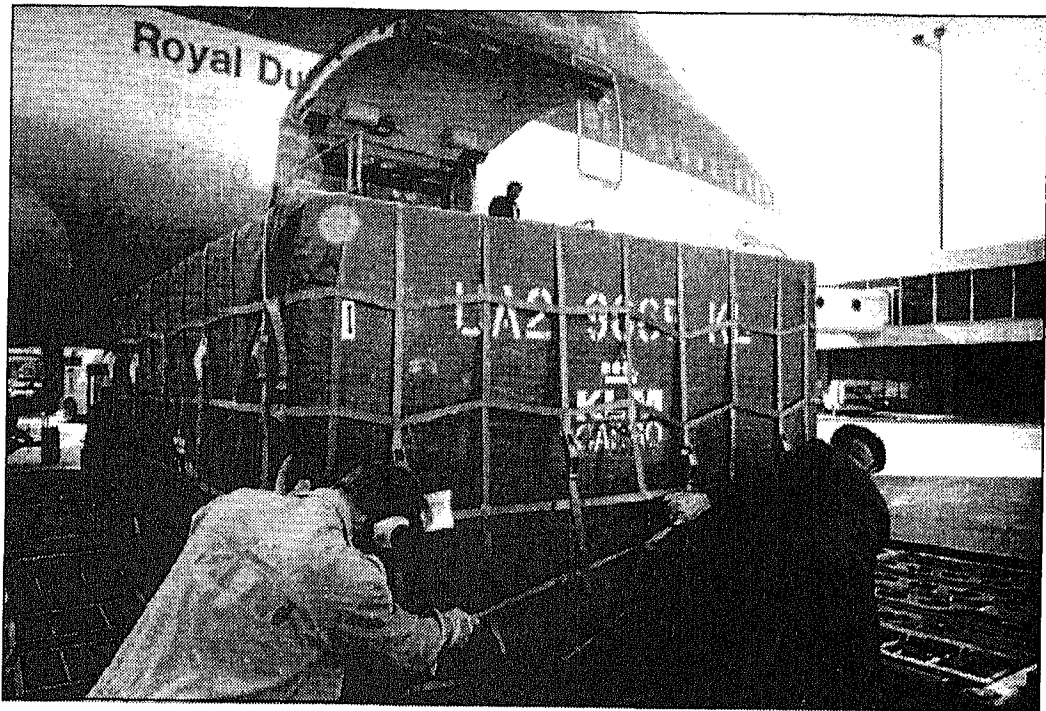
■ JK Katende, General Secretary of the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers' Union of Uganda (left), presents Kirunda Kivejinja, the Ugandan Minister of Transport, with the ITF Fair Skies statement on International Trade Union Campaign Day for Civil Aviation on 1 December.

# Spotlight on health and safety

**On 27/28 March the ITF will be holding its third civil aviation occupational health and safety meeting in Dublin.**

**The meeting will focus on two specialised topics: safety for ramp workers and cabin air quality in two separate workshops.**

**To assist the discussion the ITF has invited some impressive expert speakers to give presentations.**



## Ramp work: Dangerous work in a dangerous environment

CAN ramp work, regarded as dangerous work in a dangerous environment, be made safer? The Aerospace Psychology Research Group (APRG) based in Trinity College Dublin believes it can.

APRG is one of four research organisations based in universities in Ireland, the UK, Spain and Netherlands which have been working together since 1992 on a joint research project to develop training programmes promoting safety in aircraft ground handling operations. The project is called SCARF: safety courses for airport ramp functions.

The SCARF project has worked with four airlines: Aer Lingus, Ryanair, KLM and Iberia, with trade unions and with a number of airports.

Some of its training programmes are already in use.

The project notes: "Nowadays the ramp worker is expected to operate a diverse range of expensive, highly specialised ramp equipment. Different demands are made of him/her, having to work in limited space, congested with other workers and equipment, in a hostile environment of noise, jet blast and all types of weather; under time pressure; and at a sustained physical and mental level over long periods."

But there is no need for the ramp to be as dangerous as it all too often is.

"Some ramp managers believe that a consistently high level of accidents is an inevitable part of an industry like this. But in the same way the human factor in the flight phase of aviation has been tackled over the last 25 years, it is also possible to create an effective safety system on the ramp."

George White, a key member of the SCARF project, will be presenting to the ITF's Dublin meeting the lessons for ramp safety that have been learned from experience. ■



## Cabins: The air that we breathe

CABIN air quality and its effects on health has been a major concern among cabin crew members. In February 1995 an ICAO working paper noted: "Poor cabin air quality is a double safety risk, affecting both the performance of the crew and the health of everyone on board." No hygienic standard, no hygienic limits for contaminants and pollutants and no standard for disinfection have been established.

The ITF has urged both ICAO and the Joint Aviation Authorities to undertake research on this issue. Yet regulatory bodies refuse to even look into the problems despite frequent reports by cabin crew on health problems attributed to cabin air quality. The Dublin meeting will give a thorough examination of this health and safety issue.

Invited speakers will include Dr Claus Curdt-Christiansen who is head of Aviation Medicine at the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in Montreal, and Chris Witkowski of the Association of Flight Attendants who has played a key role in the US union campaign for legislation on standards for cabin air quality. ■



# Cross-border employment:

## Disputes round-up

■ Deutsche BA, the German airline 49 per cent owned by British Airways, is trying to keep out union organisation. The ÖTV in Germany is currently seeking recognition but the company refuses to enter negotiations on an agreement on terms and conditions. The management has told the union that British Airways in London has issued an instruction that there are to be no negotiations. The union has already staged warning strikes against the company.

■ Sabena has scrapped all its collective agreements with unions as part of a restructuring plan. The unions responded with a series of strikes at the end of 1995. Sabena has threatened to use strikebreakers. Recent talks with government mediators have also broken off.

■ Nine Turkish workers have been fired for being members of Hava-Is, the Turkish civil aviation union, while employed by a ground handling subcontractor STFA which is in partnership with Ogden International. Workers at STFA earn \$100 per month. The union began strike action against the company on 31 January.

■ Delta Air Lines has closed its Delhi office, losing 119 jobs. The All India Federation of Foreign Airlines Employees' Unions has been holding gate meetings to protest. Worldwide, the company is growing increasingly concerned at discontent amongst its workforce as a result of pay cuts and job insecurity.

■ Qantas faces continued industrial action in protest at the company's continuing breach of long standing industrial agreements and established working conditions. The Flight Attendants' Association of Australia is considering stepping up action in the coming weeks in the face of the failure of the company to negotiate a solution.

■ The International Brotherhood of Teamsters is taking legal action against America West Airlines for violating federal labour laws and wrongfully firing hundreds of employees involved in a union organising drive. The airline has now contracted out its heavy maintenance work and fired more than half its mechanics. The union has sponsored radio shots urging travellers not to fly America West.

■ A national aviation workers strike took place in Brazil on 22 December to demand a pay rise in the major Brazilian carriers Varig, Vasp and Transbrasil.

WHEN an airline sets up a crew base in a foreign country should the cabin crew employed there be protected by the laws of the country in which they live and fly from? Or are they a stateless workforce whose rights and conditions are determined by the company they fly for? And which union should represent these workers?

One pregnant British member of United's 850-strong cabin crew base in London is being told by the company that though she is British, lives in Britain and pays British social insurance her workplace is the UAL aircraft. This puts her outside the protections of British statutory maternity rights.

It was to look at the concrete difficulties presented by cross-border employment that unions affected by the United Airlines strategy of setting up crew bases outside the United States met together at the ITF offices in London in January.

The meeting considered in detail four cases of airlines using foreign domiciles, United Airlines, Tower Air, Lufthansa and British Airways.

It is clear that cross-border employment is a strategy being used by airlines mainly to reduce costs and sometimes to undermine union representation. But companies are setting up these bases in different ways and this has meant unions have had to look at flexible responses.

United Airlines puts most (but not all) of its foreign domicile employees under Association of Flight Attendants' (AFA) union contracts. Tower Air allows no representation for its cabin crew in India. In Lufthansa the conditions of employees in its new foreign bases in India and Thailand are negotiated by the German ÖTV union, but these employees are not ÖTV members.

## ITF unions meet to consider response to the growing trend

Most British Airways foreign based employees are not covered by any union negotiation.

Lufthansa and British Airways unions in Germany and the UK have enforced a limit on the number of employees domiciled at foreign bases. There is no such cap on United Airlines.

Stuart Howard ITF Civil Aviation Section Secretary commented: "What we are finding is that there are some significant variations in the way different airlines employ foreign domiciled cabin crew. Each of these cases requires a different form of union response."

The meeting focused mainly on working out priorities for ensuring the most effective and unified union organisation that would apply in different situations.

It also concluded that there was a need to fight against any legal precedents being set which would remove cabin crew from the protection of any national employment or social protection laws.

Pat Friend, President of the US cabin union AFA, believes that the meeting resulted in some hard thinking for unions:

"It is clear that new forms of international union link-up and a possible international division of representational roles may be necessary for the most effective form of organisation in companies which are internationalising their workforce. Unions are going to have to come up with some imaginative strategies."

The meeting has already led to union co-operation on a UAL maternity rights case in London, with the AFA gaining assistance with legal advice from the British TGWU. ■

## Forthcoming ITF meetings

- Caribbean flag of convenience seminar, Puerto Rico, 4-7 March
- Latin American and Caribbean Civil Aviation Committee meeting, Caracas, 5-7 March
- African road transport conference/seminar, Accra, 11-14 March
- Fair Practices Committee Campaign Sub-Committee, London, 12-13 March
- ITF Regional Representatives meeting, London, 13-14 March
- Seafarers' Section Steering Committee, London, 14 March
- Dockers' Section Steering Committee, London, 14 March
- Joint Seafarers' and Dockers' Sections Steering Committees, London, 15 March
- Education Working Party, London, 15 March
- Management Committee, Stuttgart, 18 March
- Executive Board, Stuttgart, 19-21 March
- Civil Aviation Section Occupational Health and Safety Working Group, Dublin, 27-28 March
- Latin American inland navigation meeting, Asunción, 27-29 March
- European Seafarers' Regional Committee, London, 17-18 April
- European Fishermen's Regional Conference, St Petersburg, 24-25 April



# Border crossing problems in road transport

KIEFERSFELDEN, on the border between West Germany and Austria, was the setting for an ITF meeting on frontier problems on 13 and 14 February. One of the main themes for discussion was the setting-up of trade union information and recruiting offices under the banner of the ITF at frontier crossing points.

A previous experiment at the Spanish border town of Irún had shown up the difficulties with this idea. One obvious problem was financing the project, but even harder to overcome was the fact that drivers wanted to get away from the frontier posts as fast as possible and were very unwilling to stop and talk about trade union issues. On ferries, for example between Sweden and west Germany, on the other hand, they had a certain amount of free time

## 10 YEARS AGO

and could be approached.

Other ideas were brought forward by the participants, including the use of CB radio, the distribution of a leaflet introducing the ITF at motorway service areas and the organisation of family events aimed at road haulage drivers.

The meeting went on to consider arrangements for a week of publicity action (20 to 26 April) protesting against the new European Economic Community regulations on drivers' hours. Research into health and safety among road transport workers, with co-operation from the Universities of California and Groningen, was also discussed. It will be taken up by the Section's Steering Committee when it meets in May.

ITF News, February/March 1986

# Scandinavian unions boycott all FOC ships

At a conference recently held in Copenhagen, the Scandinavian Transport Workers' Federation - which represents nearly a quarter of a million Swedish, Norwegian, Danish and Finnish workers employed in land, sea and air transport - set the date of 1 May for the beginning of its all-embracing boycott of flag of convenience vessels.

The boycott will be directed at all such vessels trading to and from Nordic ports which are not covered by agreements acceptable to the ITF.

The meeting which took the decision was presided over by Hans Ericson, Chairman of the Federation and a member of the ITF Executive Board. In addition to representatives of all member unions, the meeting was attended by Brian Loughton, the ITF's Administrative Secretary, together with ITF Ship Inspectors from the Nordic countries, including Svend Fønsvkov of the Danish Engineering Crew Union and Øystein Ringvold of the Norwegian Seamen's Union.

## 20 YEARS AGO

Of the 6,200 vessels currently sailing under runaway

flags, it is estimated that at least 15 per cent regularly traffic Nordic ports, while as many as 60 per cent of the total call at West European ports.

In this connection, the ITF's Administrative Secretary reported to the conference on discussions being conducted with maritime unions in other European countries concerning ways in which they can co-operate in the all-Scandinavian boycott.

It is calculated by the Scandinavian unions that something like 80 per cent of all oil transports to and from the Nordic countries could be affected by the boycott, which is the biggest single action against runaway flag ships since the ITF worldwide boycott of 1958/9.

ITF Newsletter, February 1976

## OBITUARIES

### Samson Moyo Mabheka and Esau Rankholo

■ Samson Moyo Mabheka, former President of the Zimbabwe Amalgamated Railwaymen's Union (ZARU), died on 12 January, aged 54. After joining the union on his first day at work, Mabheka made his way up steadily through the ranks, becoming Railways Associated Workers' Union (RAWU) President.

In 1989, after the Zimbabwe rail unions merged in ZARU, he was elected ZARU President and held the post until last year, when he took early retirement. In a tribute, ITF General Secretary David Cockroft described Mabheka as a dedicated militant trade union leader who worked hard in the

defence of the jobs and conditions of Zimbabwe trade unionists and who never failed to make an impression on those who worked with him internationally.

■ Esau Rankholo (below), former General Secretary of the Transport and Allied Workers' Union (TAWU) of South Africa, died tragically in a car accident on 2 January.



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**FROM THE  
LABOUR PRESS**

**Force Ouvrière  
Hebdo, CGT-FO**

**FORCE OUVRIÈRE**

## **After the strike: Talks on the new business plan for French railways**

ON 8 January the Minister of Transport and the Secretary of State met with the trade union organisations to discuss the future business plan of the SNCF (French national railways). These talks were not, however, meant as replacement talks between the unions and the railway management. The talks did not actually yield much, but they did assert the desire and intent to keep the railway within the public domain, without dismantling it. In addition, it was announced that government officials would hold hearings with concerned parties (trade unions, consumer groups, businesses, government officials, etc.) in efforts to open a debate on national rail policy.

At the 8 January meeting, the FO's Railway Workers' Federation re-asserted its position, demanding that the state take measures toward reducing the railway debt, the reason being that since this debt comes from the creation of new rail lines, it is taken out of the funds for regional development.

The FO restated its fears regarding regionalisation, noting that some regions are better off than others and that the less advantaged regions could be tempted to prioritise the road and highway infrastructure simply because they do not have to finance them, unlike rail infrastructure, which is a regional responsibility.

The FO is demanding that the state take action on the debt issue – and to a greater extent than the mere FF4 billion (US\$2.05 billion) they have transferred to the regions; they are asking for a national balance of costs to be established, i.e., that profitable lines should help defer the costs of less profitable ones at the national level.

Furthermore, the FO opposes any limitation set on wage developments. The original SNCF business plan that was rejected by the FO contained a particularly harmful salary restriction clause, which should by no means re-appear in the new contract text. As the head of the FO's Railway Workers' Federation, Jean-Jacques Carmentran put it: "We in the public sector have already been handed plenty of restrictions in the measures imposed by our prime minister, we hardly need any more." ■

*'The talks did not actually yield much, but they did assert the desire and intent to keep the railway within the public domain, without dismantling it.'*

**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**

