

Australian union-busters ambushed by ITF

News round-up

- New Americas Region set for launch in 1999
- Support for jailed Nigerian union leaders

3-4

Maritime

- Australian union-busters ambushed in Dubai
- Blitz on flags of convenience in Asia-Pacific Rim
- Russian crew benefit from joint union action in France
- ITF targets mutiny ship managers
- Estonia: the damning verdicts
- Record year for ITF Seafarers' Trust

5-9

Inland transport

- Paying for pollution and congestion
- Japanese railway workers: a strategy for organising women

10-11

Civil aviation

- Report of Section Conference: Alliances to be targeted/Cabin baggage campaign launched
- Advice on dealing with refugees
- First East European Seminar hears of Russia backpay crisis

12-13

People and obituaries

14-15

■ ITF News is published by the ITF six times a year in English, French, German, Japanese, Russian, Spanish and Swedish.

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Towards more international

1997 was a remarkable year for international solidarity. In a range of industrial disputes spread over different transport sectors and different continents, solidarity action provided by ITF affiliates proved a major, sometimes decisive factor. For more and more of our unions, international solidarity is becoming a key element in their day to day work.

Some of the disputes were a result of careful planning and preparation within the framework of an overall ITF directed policy, such as the remarkable successes achieved during the flag of convenience campaign weeks of action in Europe in May and in the Asia-Pacific Rim in November. In others, as with the British Airways and UPS strikes which were provoked by "macho management", months of careful preparation paid big dividends.

But some disputes were so bizarre they seemed to come from a fantasy novel rather than real life. It would have taken a remarkable fortune teller to predict that December would see a democratically elected government in a country with an excellent record for respecting labour rights actively encouraging a bunch of serving soldiers to set up a strike breakers' training camp in a country where unions are outlawed. Yet this is exactly what

'With every dispute, we are getting better at delivering the solidarity which is, in the end, what ITF affiliates pay us for.'

the government of Australia tried to do on the territory of the United Arab Emirates. This came hard on the heels of another victory in the same battle in September when ITF affiliates in Singapore and the United States put a stop to another plot by the same ultra-right wing government to crush Australia's maritime unions.

The fact that the ludicrous "Dubai Conspiracy" was first uncovered and then stopped by a combination of potential international industrial action and diplomatic pressure provided a first class demonstration of international solidarity in action. It also turned on its head the accusation often made in the past that the trade union movement is too ready to mix politics with business. In the end, neither the UAE government nor the international shipping community wanted to see normal business relations disrupted in order to enable the Australian government to score a political point.

Of course not every global dispute will end in such a clear cut victory. We have to be ready to sustain defeats too. But every dispute, win or lose, teaches us lessons for the future. The days (if they ever existed) when international solidarity could be turned on and off like a tap are long since gone. Today it takes hard work, careful preparation, maximum use of new com-



ITF General Secretary David Cockcroft writes

munications methods and a speedy and totally dedicated response when things start to heat up. With every dispute, we are getting better at delivering the solidarity which is, in the end, what ITF affiliates pay us for.

And the process of delivering practical solidarity doesn't stop at the frontiers of the transport industry. One of the most impressive aspects of the Dubai saga was the effective cooperation between the ITF, the Australian Council of Trade Unions, and the ICFTU in Brussels, all working to defend the Maritime Union of Australia and, ultimately, the survival of free trade unions in Australia. Over the past few months we have also assisted the International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions (ICEM) in targeting ships carrying Nigerian oil for industrial action in support of jailed oil workers' leaders in Nigeria. Transport unions have a right to demand support from workers in other industries and a responsibility to support them too when they need it.

■ ■

So there is every reason to suppose that 1998 is going to be another interesting and tough year. We cannot predict what it will bring, but the staff in the ITF London office as well as the regional offices in Tokyo, New Delhi, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Washington, Nairobi, Ouagadougou and Moscow will continue to do their very best to deliver support and help to affiliates when and where they most need it. And we have some interesting activities in the pipeline.

Most important of all will be the ITF 39th Congress in New Delhi at the end of October. Truly a remarkable milestone in our history, this will be the first Congress in Asia and the first in a developing country. It will give the 1.5 million members of transport unions in India affiliated to the ITF the opportunity to show the 1,000 plus participants the many different facets (good and bad) of Indian society. The Congress will review the programme of internal change within the ITF which we set in train at the Geneva Congress. But it will also

solidarity

begin a new and ambitious programme "Mobilising Solidarity" aimed at raising the understanding of and participation in international solidarity action within the ITF's affiliates.

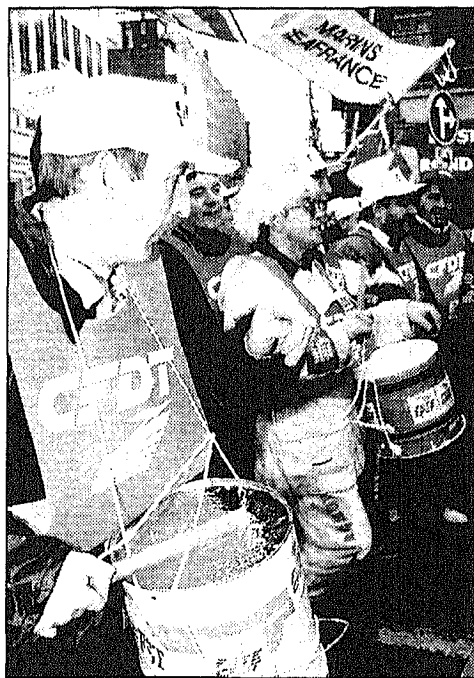
Next year will also see major regional conferences in Nairobi, marking a further step in strengthening ITF activities for African unions and in Miami where the founding conference is planned of a new unified ITF Interamerican region. And in Europe we shall be re-evaluating our relationship with the Federation of Transport Workers' Unions in the European Union (FST) in order to deliver a better and more coherent service to unions in the whole of Europe.

Industrially in addition to the continuation of campaigns to support unions in the road, rail, aviation and fishing sectors, 1998 will also see the 50th anniversary of the ITF flag of convenience campaign, the first and most successful attempt to organise workers globally in the world's first global industry, a campaign which now runs in parallel with the campaign against non-union ports. A series of activities are planned to mark the anniversary, the most striking of which will be the launch (literally) of an ITF Campaign Ship.

This ship, flying a national flag, and incorporating a floating exhibition about the lives of ordinary seafarers will make a round the world tour beginning in the spring of 1998 and lasting up to 18 months, raising the profile of

'A series of activities are planned to mark the 50th anniversary, the most striking of which will be the launch (literally) of an ITF Campaign Ship.'

the ITF FOC campaign nationally and enabling ITF affiliates to focus their own campaigns around it. The ship will only visit those ports where local ITF unions have taken the initiative to organise their own activities around it, but in deciding to support the ship project, the ITF Executive Board made it clear that it wants every ITF section to participate in and benefit from what is intended to be a practical symbol of the global labour movement. So whether it be in Delhi, in Nairobi, in Miami, in one of the many places visited by the ITF ship or just in a local or regional seminar, I hope this year many of you will be direct participants in our efforts to mobilise solidarity. ■



■ **European transport workers protested outside European Commission headquarters in Brussels 1 December against plan to end duty free sales on journeys between European Union states. Unions say that the measure would destroy hundreds of jobs in shipping and civil aviation.**

ITF/FST relations under review

Affiliates of the Federation of Transport Workers' Unions in the European Union (FST), which is closely linked to the ITF, unanimously supported a key proposal to create a joint working group to examine the future relationship between the two organisations during the FST's General Assembly on 10 and 11 October in Luxembourg.

Recognising the need for both the ITF and the FST to develop their work both practically and efficiently in the European arena, the resolution called for the group to examine options to improve co-ordination and avoid duplication or confusion of tasks.

The 200 plus delegates at the FST Assembly strongly opposed the abolition of duty- and tax-free goods within the EU and passed two resolutions on the issue which pointed to the employment consequences for transport workers. Participants agreed to promote women and young people in the transport industry and underlined the need for European

policy-makers to take into account social and environmental factors as well as creating an efficient transport system.

The opening session of the conference was addressed by FST President Rudi Schäfer of the German Railmen's Union as well as European Commissioners Neil Kinnock (Transport) and Pádraig Flynn (Social Affairs) both of them drawing attention to the development of the European social dialogue in the transport sector co-ordinated by the FST.

ITF General Secretary David Cockroft remarked that the FST deserved credit for raising the profile of transport workers at EU level and that this change had been marked since the last Assembly in 1993.

"It is equally clear that the process of change is continuous and that Europe develops, so too must trade union structures," he said, emphasising that the continuing process of enlargement of the European Union provided a good opportunity for rethinking trade union structures.

Cockroft congratulated French transport unions on the strength of their recent industrial action and vowed to oppose any efforts by European institutions to limit the right to strike in the name of the freedom of the internal market.

Hugues de Villèle, General Secretary of the FST, was unanimously elected to lead the organisation over the next four years. ■





Sarey steps down

Tom Carey (above) stepped down as President of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) at the end of last year following a court decision that he be disqualified from standing in new elections for the presidency of the union. The court decision was based on a ruling that union funds were wrongfully used to help fund the Carey presidential election campaign against Jimmy Hoffa Jr in 1996. IBT secretary-treasurer Tom Sarey takes over responsibility for the union pending the new elections which will be held sometime in the spring of 1998 once similar allegations against the Hoffa campaign have been ruled on by the court.

Greeks on strike

Greek transport workers staged a 24-hour strike on 8 December along with other trade unions in a protest against the government's tight incomes and tax policies. The stoppage, called by the General Confederation of Greek Workers, halted buses, trolleys and trains. However, the disappearance of a Ukrainian airliner which vanished from radar screens as it descended to land in Salonika on the previous evening prompted civil aviation workers to cancel their planned walkout. ■

A new ITF regional organisation linking transport unions in Canada, the United States, Latin America and the Caribbean will be launched at the first ever ITF interamerican conference to take place in Miami, Florida, in July 1998. This was the main conclusion of a special preparatory meeting of national co-ordinators held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on 24 and 25 November.

The meeting, attended by 23 delegates from 20 unions from 15 countries and chaired by Latin American Vice President Marcos Castro, approved a proposal to establish a new Interamerican Regional Committee with three sub-regions: North America; Latin America; and the Caribbean. If these proposals are endorsed by the Conference and the ITF Executive Board, the ITF sectional work will also be carried out on an interamerican basis from next year, reflecting the increasing economic integration in the Americas resulting from trade agreements such as Nafta and Mercosur.

The decision was warmly welcomed by ITF General Secretary David Cockroft as a major step in the process of strengthening the ITF's re-

New Americas Region set for launch in 1999

'Interamerican structure will reflect the increasing economic integration in the Americas resulting from trade agreements such as Nafta and Mercosur.'

gional work in the Americas. "Since the last Latin American regional conference in 1994, we have made remarkable progress," he told the meeting. Underlining the success of the regional office in Rio under the leadership of Mauricio Sant'Anna in restoring the ITF's reputation in Latin America, he stressed that the Rio office would continue to act as the main co-ordination centre for the new structure which would also, for the first time, create a place for US and Canadian unions in ITF regional work.

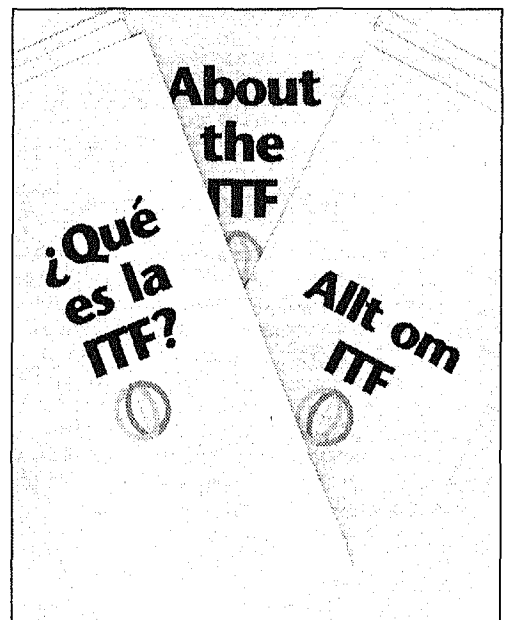
"The recent success of the US labour movement in preventing the passage of the Clinton administration's "fast track" legislation has provided a breathing space for the trade union movement," Cockroft added. "But no-one should be complacent, as the pressure for further trade liberalisation in the American continent is still strong and transport workers are amongst the first to be affected by it. Only by building effective international union solidarity will we be able to guarantee an effective social dimension to the process." ■

Support for jailed Nigerian union leaders

The ITF is supporting ICEM (International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions) in its campaign for the release of two trade unionists, jailed in Nigeria.

Milton Dabibi and Frank Kokori, General Secretaries of two oil and gas workers' unions affiliated to ICEM, have been detained since 1994 and 1996 respectively without charge or trial by the Nigerian military regime. Both are in poor health and are being denied medical attention which they need. They are also being denied access to their lawyers and their trade unions. Visits by their families are severely restricted.

The ITF has given support to ICEM's worldwide campaign against tankers carrying oil from Nigeria. ITF-affiliated dock workers' unions have been asked to co-operate with ICEM affiliates in organising delays and boycotts of the tankers. ITF Inspectors have been asked to play an active role in this solidarity action. ■



■ A general brochure explaining what the ITF is, how it works and its main aims has been published in English, French, German, Spanish and Swedish. Copies are available from the Communications Department at the London Head Office.



Cover story

"While serving soldiers can be secretly trained by a foreign government to take the jobs of existing Australian workers, all Australian workers are entitled to fear for their future."

How ITF helped block secret training for mercenaries

An ITF delegation met senior representatives of the United Arab Emirates embassy in London to warn of the consequences of the UAE allowing its territory to be used as a base for the training of Australian union-buster personnel.

In particular, ITF General Secretary David Cockroft and Dockers' Secretary Kees Marges said that container calling at Dubai faced the prospect of industrial action by port unions worldwide.

Meanwhile, the ITF began alerting affiliates to the possibility of action against shipments to the UAE.

The ITF also wrote a strongly worded letter to Australian Prime Minister John Howard. It said: "Please be assured the ITF will not tolerate attempts to weaken or undermine the Maritime Union of Australia's position by government or employer policies."

General Secretary David Cockroft added: "We would like to receive a statement from the Australian government condemning the possible employment of mercenaries replacing current waterfront workers."

Australian union-busters ambushed in Dubai

International protests led by the ITF and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions scored a major victory in December when Australian mercenaries who had been recruited to break trade union organisation in Australian ports were refused work permits for Dubai, where Fynvest, the recruitment company, had sent them for training.

The mercenaries, who were officially being trained as waterfront workers in the United Arab Emirates, returned immediately to Australia. However, Fynvest, a private company which it is believed has links with the Australian government, is thought to be seeking another location to carry out the controversial training.

Altogether 70 soldiers, including 29 on leave from Australia's defence forces were recruited in what was seen as an exercise to break the power of the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA).

About 30 had already arrived in Dubai in order to start the specialist training, and more recruits were to follow. They were all to be returned to begin work in Australia in March.

The official version by the Australian Defence Department was that it had granted leave to 29 troops and commandoes to join the training exercise under its policy of training soldiers for civilian careers.

Following the threat of boycotts of ports in Dubai by the MUA and the ITF if the UAE allowed the programme to continue, the UAE withdrew the training visas.

Using the internet, the MUA had been able to get the international schedule of the movement of shipping round the globe, and so was able to confirm to the UAE that the ITF would instruct its members to boycott all ships trav-

elling through Dubai. It was this threat, the possible political row between the UAE and Australia which forced the UAE to cancel visas.

In addition, the MUA pointed out to the UAE that the trainees would be using US\$16 million of training equipment, which would be protected by two companies with a value of just \$500.

John Coombs, General Secretary of the MUA and ITF Executive Board member, said: "We are calling on the Australian Prime Minister to instigate an urgent enquiry into how far there was Australian Ministerial involvement in the exercise, and as to whether government funds were involved in the training."

Trade unions suspect that the Australian government, which is fiercely anti-union, was directly concerned in the exercise, and they believe that it was contact at a high level between the Australian and UAE governments which does not allow unions, which facilitate the use of Dubai as the training ground for union breakers.

Opposition Transport spokesman, Lincoln Tanner, who was against the training summit, summed up trade union feelings when he said: "While serving soldiers can be secretly trained by a foreign government to take the jobs of existing Australian workers, all Australian workers are entitled to fear for their future."

The ITF's first ever Asia/Pacific Rim flag of convenience campaign "week of action", held from 20 to 26 November, as judged an unqualified success by all involved, which augurs well for this year's planned worldwide week of action to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the FOC campaign. Provisional statistics for the action campaign indicate that 350 ship inspections were carried out, US\$750,000 in backpay was collected - with Australia responsible for an impressive US\$500,000 of this total - and ITF acceptable agreements were concluded covering an additional 45 ships. MARK DAVIS, of the ITF's Tokyo office, describes how these successes were achieved.



'Boycott action took place in major ports along both Indian coastlines and achieved particular success in Bombay and Calcutta, where action directly led to 10 ITF-approved agreements being signed up.'



■ Demonstrators picket the Burmese-crewed, GIS (German second register) flag *Mare Caspium* in Oakland, California, during the ITF Asia-Pacific Rim week of action. The week saw ship detentions, strikes and other protests from India to the USA. Over US\$750,000 was recovered in back pay owed to FOC seafarers.

Successful first ever FOC week of action outside Europe

Blitz on flags of convenience in Asia-Pacific Rim

Twenty-four countries participated in the action, which covered areas from the Indian sub-continent through South-East Asia, North-East Asia, Far East Russia, the South Pacific and the western seaboard of Canada, the USA and Latin America.

The action was controlled from three centres in an area which spanned 13 time zones. Tokyo, San Francisco and New Delhi were the locations for the co-ordination bases which were staffed with a mixture of personnel from ITF London head office and regional officials. The All-Japan Seamen's Union and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union kindly offered their headquarters for the Tokyo and San Francisco operations bases whilst South Asia was overseen from the ITF New Delhi office.

Fourteen out of the 24 participating countries are home to ITF Co-ordinators or Inspectors, and expectations for a well-organised response were justifiably high. Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and the USA were the scenes of intensive FOC ship inspection activity.

The willingness of Indian docker affiliates to take industrial action in support of the week of action has raised considerably the profile of the FOC campaign in India and established the country as a no-go zone for irresponsible ship operators. Boycott action took place in major ports along both coastlines and achieved particular success in Bombay and Calcutta, where action directly led to 10 ITF-approved agreements being signed up.

Inspectorates in Korea and Far East Russia also put themselves firmly on the map with first time boycotts, in Pusan and Nakhodka respectively, resulting in ITF acceptable agreements

being concluded with Japanese shipowners. The new Inspectors in Taiwan and Mexico made promising debuts, with judicious inspections and professional publicity campaigns.

The other 10 participating countries involved themselves in the week of action on the basis of "do what you can with what you've got". Two countries without a history of industrial involvement in the FOC campaign stood out. Fiji and Indonesia threw their resources into the action week and achieved very satisfying results, with a high level of inspections and publicity and an effective protest demonstration in Fiji.

Japanese dockers staged a 24-hour strike on 21 November in protest against the FOC system and the deregulation of port practices, bringing 24 major ports in the country to a standstill and leaving over 230 ships stranded.

In conjunction with the week of action a Seafarers' Union of Burma official gave testimony at the International Tribunal on Workers' Human Rights in Vancouver, Canada, to draw attention to the plight of Burmese seafarers at the hands of the military regime.

Burmese seafarers were again to the fore when a visit by the ITF Inspector and Free Burma Coalition representatives to the Burmese-crewed German ship *Mare Caspium* in the port of Oakland, California, revealed sub-standard wage conditions and sparked a spontaneous protest which disrupted the ship's operation for 25 hours. ■



The Russian crew of the St Vincent-registered *Kathrin* contacted the ITF's Flag of Convenience Actions Unit by phone from St Nazaire, France, on 12 November. They were concerned about the condition and safety of their ship, which they were being asked to take across the Atlantic to South America. The main engine was in desperate need of repair and the vessel could only make four knots in open sea.

With ITF French Co-ordinator James Smith on holiday, Marseille-based ITF Inspector Yves Reynaud made contact, via the local seafarers' club, with the unions in St Nazaire. The CGT and CFDT representatives put inter-union rivalry aside and worked together to bring immediate assistance to the crew. They tipped off the maritime authorities, who insisted that the main engine had to be repaired before the vessel would be allowed to set sail.

Encouraged by the results they had seen thus far, the crew informed the unions that they wished to strike for an ITF agreement. They had been on board for four months of an eight-month contract and an AB was making only US\$500 a month. It transpired that the vessel was covered by a non-approved Water Transport Workers' Union of Russia (WTWR) agreement and the contracts were signed by a non-affiliated organisation in Sakhalin, Russia. The crew were advised to wait until the repairs were almost complete before declaring the strike, by which time James Smith would be back from holiday.

Inquiries pointed to the vessel being benefi-

Russian crew benefit from joint union action in France

How two French maritime unions put aside their differences and helped a Russian crew (pictured above) win back pay, a proper collective agreement and a guarantee of no victimisation.

cially owned by Project Shipping in Piraeus, Greece. On behalf of the crew, contact was made with the company who were requested to sign an ITF-approved agreement. Initially the response from Project Shipping was that they did not employ the crew and that the vessel was already covered by an agreement.

On 1 December, Smith received word that tugboats had been requested to come alongside and stand ready as the vessel was not in a position to depart. The tugboat union representative told him that they would come alongside but they would take no active measures to facilitate the departure. Smith also noted there was a degree of tacit sympathy from port and maritime authorities – and it seemed to be the case when the vessel was expectedly further delayed over a technical issue.

Eventually, on 2 December, the company agreed to sign an ITF agreement backdated one month which would give the crew US\$500 in back pay.

Meanwhile, the crew reported to the ITF that family members had contacted them from Sakhalin to say that the company was preparing to send out a replacement crew. They complained that the superintendent from Project Shipping had told them that the money they gained would be taken back from them or their families in Sakhalin, whether in cash or property.

The company denied the allegations of intimidation. Unconvinced, the ITF demanded and received written assurances from the owners Vienna-based Jurimex and Sasco Sakhalin, undertaking that no action would be taken against the crew or their families. An agreement was eventually signed on 5 December.

James Smith commented: "This was a good example of local trade unionists putting aside any political differences in order to provide assistance and display solidarity with a group of fellow workers. The case received a good amount of local media coverage and the fact that it concluded successfully bodes well for the future of the ITF flag of convenience campaign in France." ■

The ITF will target Sherimar Management for action following developments regarding the Greek-owned, Panamanian-flag *Blue Breeze*, which was rescued in December from Nigeria by Marine Risk Management acting on behalf of the Royal Bank of Scotland following default on the mortgage. Following alleged death threats against the Syrian crew by the vessel's manager, the crew mutinied and the

ITF targets mutiny ship managers

master was forced ashore in Cyprus before the crew took the vessel to Syria.

Sherimar Management has had long-running battles with the ITF, including detentions because of unpaid wages, poor quality food, physical violence, short-hand manning, cargo damage, deficient lifesaving, fire fighting and navigation

equipment and other sub-standard practices.

The December meeting of the ITF Fair Practice Committee Collective Agreements Sub-Committee recommended that Sherimar be placed on the ITF Blacklist.

The company's vessels have also been placed on the ITF "target list" circulated to all ITF Inspectors requesting

priority inspections.

Mark Dickinson, Assistant General Secretary said: "The ITF is also concerned about the poor response of the Panamanian authorities which highlights again how flag of convenience states are powerless to act against their ship operators."

Dock unions warned
Waterfront unions can no longer rely on their influence and lobbying power with governments and politicians. Instead they have to build strong independent unions – which in some cases they have not done precisely because of their friendly relations with governments – if they are to survive the effects of port privatisation and deregulation. This was the message that ITF Dockers' secretary Kees Marges took to two major conferences on the effects of the globalisation and privatisation of the ports industry, one in Rio de Janeiro in November, organised by the Brazilian Ministry of Labour, followed by Latin Ports '97 in Miami in December. Marges said that port restructuring was being felt as a "culture shock" by those unions, particularly in Latin America and Asia, which now had to defend working conditions without the support of the politicians and without tripartite systems of regulation. ■

Colombo port protest
Sri Lanka's major trade union, the ITF-affiliated MU, launched a five-day protest action in December against government plans to lease part of the Colombo port to an overseas consortium headed by British-owned P&O. Hundreds of workers joined in a combined picketing campaign against the government's privatisation plans. Nearly 200 workers from Colombo and more than 500 others from various unions paraded placards outside their respective workplaces in support of the union action. The unions demanded a halt to "secret negotiations with P&O officials". The protest action culminated in a general stoppage. ■



Estonia:

The delay in producing the 228-page final report (a partial report covering the technical issues was issued in April 1995) and the changes in the composition of the Joint Accident Investigation Committee (JAIC) following a number of resignations, has led to the generation of a number of conspiracy theories. One of these involves a suggestion that the visor door was opened by the crew to jettison plutonium as they had been tipped off that the vessel would be subjected to a detailed search on arrival. It has also been suggested that the capsizing was caused by an explosion.

The long delay has meant that in the interval the International Maritime Organization was able to establish a Committee of Experts on ro-ro ferry safety, which had many of its conclusions and recommendations incorporated into the Solas (safety of life at sea) in November 1995. Other recommendations had already been incorporated into the revised STCW (training, watchkeeping and certification) Convention in July of the same year. The new requirements entered into force before the Estonia report was issued.

Although, the ferry flew the Estonian flag, it was registered in Cyprus to satisfy the requirements of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development for financing the vessel on a mortgage basis and parallel registered in Estonia. Estline Marine Company, which is listed as owning the vessel, was a Cyprus-registered company which was 50 per cent owned by the Estonian Shipping Company and 50 per cent owned by Nordthulin Luxembourg, which was in turn wholly owned by Nordström and Thulin, a Swedish company. The vessel was bareboat chartered to the Estonian company E-Line which was also owned equally by the Estonian Shipping Company and Nordthulin Luxembourg. E-Line had signed a ship management agreement with the Estonian Shipping Company which had in turn signed a technical management agreement with

The report into the ro-ro ferry Estonia, which sank on 28 September 1994 in the Baltic Sea with the loss of 852 lives, has finally been issued by the Estonian, Finnish and Swedish Joint Accident Investigation Committee. JON WHITLOW, ITF Assistant Secretary in the Seafarers' Section, analyses the findings and explains the background to the report.

Nordström and Thulin. The commercial side of the operations were handled by Estline, a Swedish company, under an agency agreement with E-Line and Estline was equally owned by the Estonian Shipping Company and Nordström and Thulin. Despite this complex corporate arrangement, and the fact that the JAIC was critical of the organisational structure of the Estonian Shipping Company and the lack of operational documentation, the commission appears to have been satisfied with these arrangements.

The JAIC report sets out the following timings for the capsizing:

- the visor begins to fail at 00:55;
- the locking devices and hinges of the bow door visor failed fully around 01:00;
- as the visor worked its way forward it forced the car ramp partially open, thereby allowing an ingress of water onto the car deck;
- the visor fell into the sea at about 01:15, pulling the ramp fully open;
- within a few minutes a 15° list developed;
- the main engine stopped at 01:20 due to lubricating oil pressure loss caused by a list of 30°;
- at 01:25 the list was more than 40°;
- at about 01:35 the list was 80°; and
- the vessel disappeared from the surface at 01:50.

Although the report generally fails to assign blame it is nevertheless a savage indictment of the shipping industry of today. It made several damning observations...

– The vessel had generally been protected from heavy sea conditions during its previous service.

the damning verdicts

- The heavy vehicles were incorrectly loaded, to the point that the vessel had a 1° list, despite the fact that the port side heeling tank was almost full and the starboard one empty. Indeed, the JAIC remarks that the vessel should have been loaded differently.

- One of the locking bolts for the forward ramp was probably not fully extended and the related indicator lamp on the bridge not lit.

- The visor attachments lacked sufficient strength to withstand the wave load.

- The report discusses the roles of the shipyard and the classification society and states, "after having studied the design, manufacture and procedures for approval, the commission finds that none of the parties involved considered the visor attachments as critical components for the safety of the ship".

- The visor locking devices were not examined for approval by either the Finnish Maritime Administration or by Bureau Veritas.

- The Solas requirements of an upper extension of the collision bulkhead were not met.

- The rules of the classification societies did not at the time reflect the Solas requirements.

- It had become common amongst the Finnish and Swedish Maritime Administrations to accept the forward located bow ramp arrangement, even though this did not meet the requirements of the Solas Convention.

- Once the classification society design requirements for bow doors became more clearly defined and the load levels increased, the new rules were not applied to existing vessels.

- Numerous bow visor incidents did not lead to a systematic inspection nor require the reinforcement of the visor attachments on existing vessels.

- Water was seen entering the car deck at 01:00 to 01:15 by the third engineer on a TV monitor, which was apparently not reported to the bridge, and the commission was unable to ascertain if the bridge personnel also saw this on their monitor.

■ **'The visor attachments lacked sufficient strength to withstand the wave load.'**

■ **'There were failings of the shore-based SAR authorities, especially Helsinki'**

■ **'By the time the general lifeboat alarm was given the ship's list was around 35° and it was only at this point that the first mayday call was made, and by this time the list made escape from inside the vessel very difficult.'**

- The first alarm was an unofficial one in Estonian at 01:20, which was followed by a coded alert to the crew and some two minutes later by a general international lifeboat alarm.

- The JAIC found that the use of the alarm to the crew was inappropriate and indicative of confusion and a lack of understanding of the situation on the bridge.

- By the time the general lifeboat alarm was given the ship's list was around 35° and only at this point that the first mayday call was made, and by this time the list made escape from inside the vessel very difficult.

- At no point were clear instructions given to the passengers and crew to use the public address system.

- Despite alarming noises associated with the failure of the bow visor the ship maintained its speed and course.

- There were failings of the shore-based authorities, especially Helsinki Radio.

- There were considerable problems with lifejackets, some of which had been tied together, and they were not fitted with self-igniting lights which would have been vital during the rescue operation.

- Once again traditional lifeboats proved less.

- The liferafts were very difficult to use, the problems with the lifesaving equipment together with the late alarms, contributed to the tragic outcome.

The ITF will endeavour to ensure that the necessary lessons are learned from this disaster and will therefore have both reports subjected to a critical analysis by a suitably qualified independent consultant. The results should be available well before the "international conference" scheduled for April 1998, which the ITF has been reported to be convening.



Record year for ITF Seafarers' Trust

■ Staff at the Duckdalben Seafarers' Club in Hamburg take possession of a van donated by the ITF Seafarers' Trust, one of many examples of recent awards from the charity which is financed by the ITF's welfare fund with money raised from the campaign against flags of convenience.

The ITF Seafarers' Trust had a record-breaking year in the 12 months up to April 1997, with welfare grants totalling nearly US\$20 million for the first time.

According to the trust's newly

published annual report, the record level of grants demonstrates the success of its pro-active approach searching for new welfare projects and spreading assistance throughout the world.

A total of \$9.9 million went to projects and institutions in the Pacific region as a result of the trustees' efforts to ensure a more even distribution of funds between the different regions of the world, particularly towards seafarer-supplying countries.

ITF Assistant General Secretary GRAHAM BROTHERS explains why the ITF supports moves to make sure that different transport modes pass on their full costs to users, including the cost of environmental damage, congestion and traffic accidents.

This approach, known as the internalisation of external costs, was supported by the ITF Executive Board at its meeting in October when it adopted a policy statement on transport and the environment.

Are we paying the true costs of transport?

When a shopper in Frankfurt buys strawberries from California, is the atmospheric pollution caused by the aeroplane journey which flew the fruit to Europe counted in the price? Is the cost of the pollution and congestion created by the truck delivering the strawberries to the supermarket counted in the price paid at the check-out?

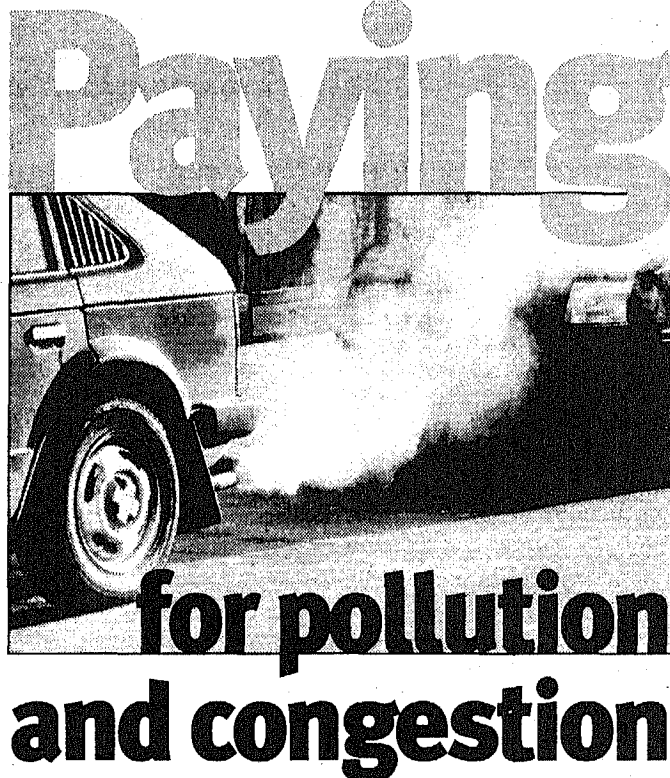
Do city centre office workers who drive to work by car pay for the congestion, pollution and environmental damage they cause every day?

The answer to these questions is no – at least for the time being. Governments, policy makers, academics and others are increasingly concerned about the need to calculate – and pass on – the full costs of using different modes of transport, or, according to the jargon, “internalise external transport costs”.

In many countries transport policies in the past involved a considerable degree of direct regulation. More recently the emphasis has shifted towards competition in the market. This implies that decisions regarding choice of mode or modes of transport are based on price.

It is widely accepted that at present there is severe distortion in the transport market, due in particular to the fact that the external effects of transport activities are to a great extent borne by the community as a whole and not by the transport operator.

The failure to include these externalities in the price of



transport not only operates to the detriment of the more environmentally-friendly modes of transport, such as the railways, but encourages use of the modes which are causing long-term and possibly irreversible environmental and ecological damage.

In 1994 the Institut für Wirtschaftspolitik und Wirtschaftsforschung (IWW), Karlsruhe, and INFRAS AG, Zürich, consultants for environmental economics and policies, published a detailed study of externalities and their costs attributable to transport in the 15 countries of the European Union (EU) plus Norway and Switzerland.

The absolute external cost of transport in these 17 countries attributable to accidents, noise, air pollution and climatic change due to the four modes of transport was assessed at a total of ECU 272.3 billion (US\$250.7 billion) per year (1991). Of this total cost road transport accounted for 92.1 per cent, air transport for 6 per cent, rail transport for 1.7 per cent and inland water-

ITF road committee for Latin America

Latin American road transport unions met in Rio de Janeiro on 27 November for the founding meeting of the ITF Latin American Road Transport Committee. Hugo Loyano, Secretary General of the truck drivers' union of Argentina, was unanimously elected to chair the new committee, together with Vice Chairs Ronaldo Cabral Magalhães, of the Brazilian Road Transport Workers' Confederation, and Enrique Pulroz Sanchez, General Secretary of the ATM Bus Workers' Union and one of the founding leaders of the new UNT trade union centre in Mexico.

It was agreed that the chair and Vice Chairs would constitute a three-person steering group which will meet regularly to direct the committee's work programme and provide a greater Latin American input into ITF global road transport activities. ■

Luxembourg protest

The ITF has protested strongly to the Luxembourg government about its decision to cut the pensions of employees of the country's rail company, CFL, and other public transport companies. The pensionable age will also be raised. This has been done without negotiations with the ITF-affiliated FNCTFEL railway and transport workers' federation. ■

FREIGHT TRAFFIC: EXTERNAL COSTS BY TYPE OF EFFECT IN ECU PER 1000 TKM; EXCLUDING CONGESTION

Effect	Road	Rail	Air	Waterway
Accidents	22.2	0.9	*	*
Noise	12.7	4.7	16.5	*
Air pollution	13.0	0.7	26.3	4.2
Climate	10.6	1.1	50.5	1.9
Total	58.5	7.4	92.3	6.1

*Statistics not available, but costs considered to be very low.

PASSENGER TRAFFIC: EXTERNAL COSTS BY TYPE OF EFFECT IN ECU PER 1000 PKM; EXCLUDING CONGESTION

Effect	Road		Rail	Air
	Cars	Buses		
Accidents	32.3	9.4	1.9	*
Noise	4.5	4.2	3.1	3.0
Air pollution	6.6	4.1	2.0	5.0
Climate	6.6	2.7	3.0	9.8
Total	48.0	20.4	10.0	17.8

*Statistics not available, but costs considered to be very low.

● Principle 16 adopted by the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (the "Earth Summit") held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992 states:

"National authorities should endeavour to promote the internalisation of environmental costs and the use of economic instruments, taking into account the approach that the polluter should in principle bear the cost of pollution."

● The Maastricht Treaty of the European Union incorporated the polluter-pays principle by stating: "Community policy on the environment shall aim at a high level of protection taking into account the diversity of situations in the various regions of the Community. It shall be based on the precautionary principle and on the principles that preventive action should be taken, that environmental damage should as a priority be rectified at source and that the polluter should pay. Environmental protection requirements must be integrated into the definition and implementation of other Community policies."

ways for 0.2 per cent.

A comparison of the costs attributed to the individual transport modes can be made from the cost of externalities in relation to traffic units: passenger-kilometres (pkm) and tonne-kilometres (tkm). This is shown in the tables opposite.

Similar findings were published in the European Commission's (EC) Green Paper, "Towards Fair and Efficient Pricing in Transport", published in December 1995. The EC assessed costs due to road congestion in the 15 EU countries at ECU 118 billion per year. The Green Paper suggests that congestion costs per year attributable to the other transport modes are:

- Air: 2.4 billion ECUs (passenger time losses excluded)
- Rail: 0.85 billion ECUs
- Waterways: negligible.

All transport modes other than the railways are entirely dependent on the burning of fossil fuels as their source of energy. Fossil fuels are a finite resource as well as being the principal cause of atmospheric pollution. In western Europe the transport sector was the only sector in which fossil fuel consumption rose substantially between 1980 and 1990 – an increase of 30 per cent. Transport is now calculated to

account for approximately 35 per cent of total energy consumption, compared with 25 per cent in 1980. Statistics from other regions would no doubt reveal a similar pattern. The shares of transport energy consumption by mode in the EU are stated to be as follows:
Road: 84.4 per cent
Air: 11.1 per cent
Rail: 2.5 per cent
Waterways: 2.0 per cent.

The Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit set targets for the stabilisation of pollutant emissions, to be followed by targets for emission reductions. The targets are modest, given the magnitude of the problem. Current evidence indicates that the targets are unlikely to be met, but the aim of sustainable mobility for the future does not permit other options. The ITF will surely be in the forefront of action to ensure that the appropriate political decisions are implemented. ■

The East Japan Railway Workers' Union (JREU), part of the Japan Confederation of Railway Workers' Unions, is setting other ITF affiliates a good example of strategies for recruiting and organising women.

Some 1,350 of JREU's members are women. This is 2.3 per cent of the total membership. Most of these women are new employees, having been employed in new railway activities such as tourism promotion. Previously the workforce was almost entirely men. Being new recruits the female membership is almost exclusively under 25 years of age. Their youth has had a significant bearing on the organising strategies adopted by the union.

As Sumino Kazuko, in her speech to the ITF Railway Workers' Section Conference in Berlin in November pointed out, when the young women first started joining the union it was very difficult for male trade unionists to organise meetings with them. She added: "The male union officers were of these young women's fathers' generation. And in Japan fathers do not usually talk much with their daughters. So they dealt with them as if handling fragile objects. They arranged everything and women were just guests for the meetings. As a result, the young women regarded the union as a place to make complaints and did not understand it as an organisation which could change situations."

Luckily, as Kazuko puts it,

"The male union officers were of these young women's fathers' generation. And in Japan fathers do not usually talk much with their daughters."

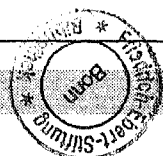
Japanese railway workers: a strategy for organising women

there were several young women who were determined to lead the new membership to a proper organisational understanding. With the support of the union's Organising and Youth Sections, they set up a series of discussions on issues including labour laws, economic and social issues, and peace.

They saw too that they needed to involve the membership in practical projects. The first project was a campaign to establish a station-based day-care centre open to employees and the public and operated by the company. As part of the campaign the women members surveyed commuters and thereby generated interest and discussion.

The project proposal has now been taken up by the union as a whole. It will be discussed at the union's forthcoming annual Policy Forum which will determine which issues to pursue in negotiations with management.

The young women of the JREU were formally recognised by the union when a Women's Council within the union was established in October 1997. "The Council is in its infancy, but it will find its way. JREU will continue to encourage them as they are the workers who will show the way Beyond 2000," says Kazuko. ■



Report of the Section Conference

'We are stronger'
 The 1997 Civil Aviation Section Conference carried the significant note of confidence and strength after a year in which key disputes such as British Airways and UPS had been met with unprecedented levels of international trade union action.
 "We have come together at the end of 1997 significantly stronger than when we met last year at the end of 1996," Stuart Howard Secretary of the Civil Aviation Section told 40 delegates at the Section conference held at ITF House in London on 11 December.
 "Last year we discussed the possibility of a strike at British Airways where unions were faced with the threat of union busting. We all knew that if BA were to break union organisation it would be a serious blow to the whole strength of unionism in civil aviation. We all knew we would need to co-ordinate a major international action in support of BA unions. We agreed that this action would be an International Strategic Priority."
 The ITF plans to set out some of the lessons learned in a handbook of practical guidelines for ITF unions to assist in mobilising for future solidarity campaigns.

Major global airline alliances

● Star Alliance

United Airlines, SAS, Lufthansa, Air Canada, Thai Airways

Singapore Airlines is expected to join this alliance soon, to be followed by Air New Zealand and Ansett Australia. This is the most highly integrated alliance. The ITF launched the trade union Star Solidarity Alliance in June 1997, although union co-ordination was already well established.

● Delta Alliance

Delta Air Lines, Sabena, Swissair, Austrian Airlines

Air Portugal has just joined, and is expected to be integrated into the alliance during the first half of 1998. Air France and Aer Lingus have looser links. Trade unions in these carriers meet through the ITF, though the largest carrier in the

group, Delta Air Lines is largely unorganised and hostile to unions.

● British Airways-American Airlines

This alliance has been held up as a result of concerns by competition authorities. It is expected to get the go-ahead in the first half of 1998, creating the world's largest alliance. Iberia and Aerolíneas Argentinas are likely to play some role in the alliance through their links with American Airlines. Qantas, a British Airways partner, may become an Asia/Pacific member of the alliance. British Airways itself has links and share holdings in some 20 regional and feeder carriers. The ITF co-ordinates union co-operation within the BA-Qantas-USAir alliance. A first meeting to discuss the BA-AA alliance took place in 1996. The next meeting of unions which will include Spanish and Argentinian unions will probably take place in Miami next July.

Alliances to be targeted

Co-ordination and co-operation between trade unions within major airline alliances is to be stepped up following alliance meetings held at the ITF Civil Aviation Section Conference. The formation of these alliances has become the dominant feature of the industry in the late 1990s as carriers try to position themselves in an increasingly global and deregulated market.

The ITF is not opposed to airline alliances. However, experience has shown that when such alliances are formed there is usually little or no consultation with trade unions. When they do so management frequently present misinformation about the work practices and employment conditions of their alliance partners to support their own cost-cutting or productivity objectives. "Bench marking" is used to bring conditions down to the lowest common denominator.

Unions intend to use this strategy in reverse with "counter-bench marking" - promoting best practice - following the decision of the Civil Aviation Section to prioritise trade union co-operation within the mega-alliances.

The Section Conference put airline chiefs on notice that



■ The ITF Civil Aviation Section Conference heard Civil Aviation Secretary Stuart Howard warn that airline alliances must win the loyalty of employees.

management bargaining strategies based on seeking the lowest common working and employment standards will be vigorously resisted. "If these alliances are going to work, they will need the commitment of their employees. But if airlines intend to create seamless global enterprises through alliances based on social dumping, they will not win the loyalty and co-operation of their employees," said Stuart Howard, Civil Aviation Secretary.

He added: "Efforts by alliances to play workers off

against each other are only likely to increase employee identification with their own carriers as they try to retain and defend existing job conditions and work practices."

Howard said: "Encouraging national rivalries amongst your employees is a pretty short-sighted way to try to build a global brand."

Cabin baggage campaign launched

Affiliates attending the Civil Aviation Section Conference agreed to launch a major campaign on cabin baggage following the drafting of key policy proposals by an ITF workshop in Washington DC in November 1997.

Far from being a minor irritant to cabin crew, excess and overweight cabin baggage represents a serious threat to the safety and health of passengers and workers alike. According to calculations by the ITF, an estimated 20,000 injuries to passengers and crew worldwide every year are caused by cabin baggage items falling from overhead bins. Excess and overweight items are also a major source of injury to gate agents who are expected to manually carry refused items down steep steps in jetways and across the ramp. Contradictory airline marketing advice and lack of uniform enforcement of

cabin baggage policies is also a source of serious aggression from passengers, including violent assaults, when staff try to keep to safety limits.

'Airlines increasingly compete with each other to offer more and more liberal policies on cabin baggage.'

A number of factors, including the growth of airside shopping opportunities, have contributed to the growth of cabin baggage problems, but the key is the lack of a uniform worldwide enforced limit on cabin baggage.

In the absence of such a limit, airlines increasingly compete with each other to offer more and more liberal policies on cabin baggage, especially to their premium-paying business passengers.

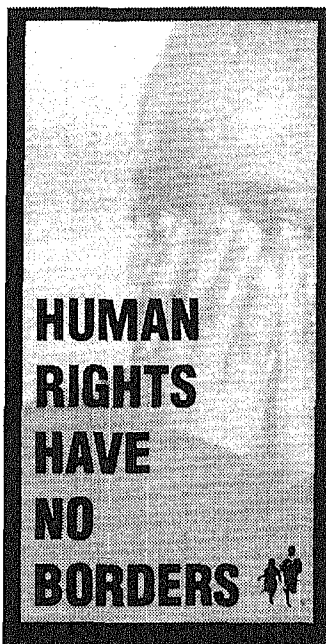
The resulting free-for-all undermines those airlines that do take their safety responsibilities seriously.

The ITF Cabin Baggage Workshop, which was sponsored by the Association of Flight Attendants (USA), proposed a universal limit of carry-on cabin baggage or planeside checked baggage of one item or items whose total dimensions should not exceed 115 cm or 45 inches (height+width+length) and whose weight should not exceed 6kg or 20lbs.

This mirrors the policy of IATA, the international club of airlines, without IATA's allowance for extra items, such as handbags or reading materials.

The ITF will be pressing the international regulatory bodies, including ICAO, the JAA and FAA, to enforce this limit. ■

Advice on dealing with refugees



■ The ITF and Amnesty International have produced a leaflet to give advice to cabin crew who find themselves in the position of being asked by their airline to make decisions on the rights of refugees.

The leaflet explains who refugees are, reasons why they may need to flee their own country and why this frequently means they will be without the right travel documents. It explains how governments, through new carriers' liability laws, impose fines on airlines with the result that cabin crew have ended up being asked to take decisions which could mean life or death, prison or freedom, to an asylum seeker.

The leaflet calls on unions to refuse their role. Cabin crew should inform their managements that it is not appropriate for them to perform such duties, or inform their union or Amnesty International of the situation.

A second more detailed ITF-Amnesty International advice booklet, "Flight Safety", has been circulated to national union offices. Both the leaflet and booklet are available directly from the ITF Secretariat.

First East European seminar hears of Russia backpay crisis

Around 30 per cent of airlines in Russia owe their employees large amounts of back pay, according to Boris Kremnev, President of the All Russia Civil Aviation Workers Union. The union presented a report on the situation facing Russian aviation workers to the First ITF Civil Aviation Section Seminar for Eastern and Central European Unions held in London on 12 December. Delays in paying wages can be up to six to 12 months and have led to a number of local strikes and protests.

Restructuring in the existing Russian airlines, most of which came out of the break up of what was the world's largest airline, Aeroflot, is leading to devastating job losses, especially among engineers and technicians.

Russian aviation unions face hostility, however, from new entrant private airlines. Since liberalisation in Russia around 400 new carriers have emerged. Many disappear very quickly. Private airline employers are opposing the creation of trade union committees, and trade union membership is falling. Employers are ignoring labour laws, frequently refusing to provide facilities for trade union activities, and ignoring collective bargaining structures.

A report from Hungary by Agnes

Jacob of the Air Technicians Union reported how aircraft maintenance workers were being used as a cheap workforce of licensed mechanics by international airlines. Her union represents maintenance workers at Lockheed-Malev maintenance station ACE near Budapest.

Mapketa Kanouska and Andri Nuttal of the ATWU of the Czech Republic described how unions only existed in the flag carrier CSA and that unions were making a fresh beginning of independent organisation since 1989. About 35 per cent of cabin crew are currently unionised. Pay and flight and duty times are the most urgent concerns. Czech Airlines is already partially privatised.

Zija Haranoj of FSPPTSH in Albania reported that in his country there is no national airline and only one international airport. Despite the recent difficult economic times in Albania unions had managed to keep air workers' wages stable. ■

PEOPLE



Richard Flint: leaving the ITF.

ITF MEETINGS

- London, week commencing 1 February
- European Seafarers' Regional Committee Sub-Committee, London, 4 February
- Fisheries Section Flag of Convenience Ad Hoc Campaign Group, St John's (Canada), 4-6 February
- North Africa Seminar, Cairo, 8-12 February
- Worldwide Inspectors' Seminar, London, 13 February
- Offshore Task Force, London, 23-27 February
- Ad Hoc Working Group on London-Domiciled Seafarers, London, 23-27 February
- Latin American and Caribbean Regional Civil Aviation Meeting, Rio de Janeiro, 3-4 March
- Seafarers' Section Steering Committee, London, 4-5 March
- Special Seafarers' Department Cyprus Working Group, Nicosia, 13 March
- EU Road Transport Section Meetings, London, 16-20 March
- African Maritime Safety Seminar, Ghana, 19-20 March
- Asia/Pacific Seafarers' Regional Committee, Indonesia, 30 March-3 April

■ **Richard Flint**, who has headed the ITF Communications Department since October 1993, retired from the ITF at the end of December.

Richard, who has joint British and Canadian nationality, first came to the ITF in April 1986 to work as an editorial assistant in the Research and Publications Department then headed by David Cockroft. A committed trade unionist with a background in labour research, Richard immediately put his skills to use, writing stories for ITF News and soon taking over responsibility for its production.

The ITF had only recently introduced desktop publishing and it was Richard with his in-depth knowledge of information technology, who together with Department head David Cockroft, built up computer expertise within the Secretariat.

The journalistic venture of which he is most proud is the ITF Seafarers' Bulletin, the first edition of which he helped produce just after he arrived in 1986 and which has grown today into an eagerly awaited annual publication which comes out in 14 languages and 300,000 copies and is read by seafarers around the world.

Richard first took over the running of the department – now renamed the Communications Department – as Acting Secretary and – from October 1993 – as its Secretary. He expanded contacts with the international press and used his IT skills to develop the ITF's Website.

A labour and social history graduate, with a first class degree, Richard used his research talents to good effect, studying the ITF's own history – he is an expert on the ITF's first General Secretary Edo Fimmen – and co-ordinating the work of the international group of labour historians who produced "Solidarity: the First Hundred Years of the International Transport Workers' Federation" for the ITF's centenary celebrations in 1996.

Richard is taking early retirement for medical reasons – he has an inherited motor-neurone disability – but the ITF is fortunate in that it will be able to call on him in the future for assistance with major projects.

General Secretary David Cockroft adds: "In only a relatively short time, Richard has made an enormous contribution towards transforming the communications work not only of the ITF but of the entire international trade union movement. When I joined the ITF in 1985, I knew that things needed to change, but Richard, with his background in newspapers knew just how to change them. I was proud to see him take over my position as head of the ITF's Communications Department and I am very sad indeed that he was finally forced to step down from what is, inevitably, a very demanding job."

■ **Makoto Urata**, of the ITF Tokyo office, moved to the London head office at the beginning of January to assist in the Inland Transport Sections and to undertake special projects in the field of transport policy co-ordination.

■ **José Iglesias**, formerly from Venezuelan civil aviation affiliate SUEPPTAV, took up the position

of ITF Education Co-ordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean based in the Rio de Janeiro ITF office from the beginning of January.

■ **Mirjam Korhonen**, currently working for SASK, the Finnish trade union movement's development co-operation agency, will take over responsibility for ITF education activities in the London office in February from Joanne Abayasekara who will be on maternity leave for about nine months.

■ We send good wishes for the future to long-time ITF Co-ordinator and Finnish Seafarers' Union International Secretary **Lauri Heinonen** who retired on 1 October.

Lauri went to sea at the age of 15 on a Finnish ship but was soon sailing on Norwegian and Swedish vessels visiting the Middle East, India and Latin America. He returned to Finland in 1963 where he settled down working for the welfare society in Kotka looking after merchant seafarers.

When, four years later, the seafarers' union was looking for a union official in Kotka Lauri was the obvious choice.

In 1976, he became union vice president



■ **Lauri Heinonen on his bike with Miren del Olmo of the ITF.**

moving to Helsinki and taking care of the union's international activities, including contacts with the ITF.

By 1984, Lauri had become the union's International Secretary as well as secretary of the seafarers' section of the Nordic Transport Workers' Federation.

During his time as ITF Inspector and later as Co-ordinator in Finland Lauri was one of the mainstays of the campaign in Scandinavia.

Miren del Olmo, head of the ITF Actions Unit, conveyed greetings from the ITF at his retirement party when the union presented him with a bike on which as Lauri says: "I hope to pedal my way towards a better future."

ITF Assistant General Secretary Mark Dickinson writes: "Lauri was one of our longest serving inspectors. A man of principle, he will be missed but deserves his rest."

■ **Olav Boye** has taken over as International Secretary of the International Graphical Federation (IGF) following the death of IGF General Secretary Chris Pate. Boye, who was previously secretary of the Norwegian Union of Graphical Workers and the Nordic Graphical Union, will run the Secretariat until the IGF Congress in October.

■ **István Gaskó** was re-elected President and **György Balla** and **Robert Enzsöl** were re-elected Vice Presidents of the Hungarian Association of

Free Trade Unions of Railway Workers (VDSzSz) at its 2nd Congress in Budapest.

■ **John Hallas** has been re-elected for a second five year term as General Secretary of the Pan-Hellenic Seamen's Federation (PNO).

■ **Joseph Katende**, General Secretary of the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers' Union (ATGWU) of Uganda, who is studying in Britain for a higher diploma in Labour Studies at Ruskin College, Oxford has been elected by the Students' Union to the college's governing Executive Board.

■ The second recipient of the Mols Sørensen Research Scholarship, set up in memory of the former chair of the ITF Seafarers' Section, is **Parker Kamara**, General Secretary of the Sierra Leone National Seamen's Union. Kamara will be coming to the Seafarers' International Research Centre, at the University of Wales, in Cardiff, in March 1998.

■ **Ernst Leuenberger**, President of the Swiss Railway and Transport Workers' Union (SEV), has been elected President of the Swiss Nationalrat (National Council) for 1998.

■ **Eiki Nestor and Vahor Solkmets** were re-elected President and Vice President respectively of the Estonian Transport and Road Workers' Trade Union at the union's 2nd Congress in Tartu.

■ **Per Østvold** was elected President of the Norwegian Transport Workers' Union (NTF) at its recent Congress in Lillehammer. He succeeds **Walter Kolstad**, who retired early on health grounds in February 1996 after serving for twenty-three years as NTF President.

■ **Jens-Fage-Pedersen** has been elected as the next President of the Danish Navigators' Association. As President of the Deck Officers in the mid-80s, Fage-Pedersen was behind the first moves that led eventually to the merger of five navigating unions in the Navigators' Association in 1992. He is also a former Vice President of the Danish Railway Workers' Association.

■ **Juan Rodríguez Pérez** has been elected General Secretary of the Mexican Ratings' Union of Manzanillo.

OBITUARIES

■ **OH Jensen**, President from 1970 to 1974 of the Danish Railway Workers' Association, has died in a traffic accident.

■ **Bill Whatley**, General Secretary of the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers (USDAW) from 1979 to 1986, died on 5 September, aged 74.

■ **Mohammed Bailor Timbo**, Finance Officer of the Amalgamated Transport Workers' Union (ATWU) of Sierra Leone, died on 16 May, in a road accident, at the age of 56.

■ **Pat King** died on 29 October 1997 of heart failure just short of his 80th birthday. He had a long and illustrious career with the ITF-affiliated International Organisation of Masters, Mates and Pilots (IOMMP) in the United States which from the outset brought him into contact with the ITF. Pat was also an ITF Inspector for many years and one of the few people around today who took an active part in the 1958 "Panlibhonco" boycott in which ITF-affiliated unions took action against over 400 vessels worldwide.

Pat went to sea aboard merchant vessels at the age of 17 and received decorations for his actions during the 1944 invasion of Normandy where he landed at Omaha Beach. Pat was also active in Vietnam where he spent five years as a military adviser to the US Departments of State and Defense.

Pat always played an active part in his union and also the ITF regularly attending meetings of the Fair Practices Committee (FPC), Maritime Safety Committee and other Seafarers' Section meetings. He was also an invaluable addition on ITF delegations to numerous meetings of the various UN

specialised agencies dealing with maritime matters including the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Back home Pat was not only on call for the ITF to assist foreign seafarers calling at ports in the Boston area but also the MM&P's Atlantic & Gulf Maritime Region Membership Group representative in Boston, a post he retained until his death. Pat was previously President of the MM&P's former Local 11 (Boston) and went on to serve as the Union's International Vice President.

ITF Assistant General Secretary Mark Dickinson writes: "I will miss the conversations I had with Pat about the ITF, the old days, and about how hard it was and how nothing was gained without struggle. Today we often forget that what we have now was not easily won by men like Pat King."

Pat is survived by his wife, Mary, his sons Patrick and Paul.

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FLAG OF CONVENIENCE CAMPAIGN COMPETITION

The ITF's flag of convenience campaign achieves its 50th anniversary in 1998. One of the ways in which this will be marked is through an international essay competition. The first prize will be a cheque for UK£1,000 (US\$1,650) and a trip to Oslo for the winner (and partner) to attend the Flag of Convenience Conference being hosted by the ITF in May this year. The winner will also be invited to present their entry at the conference. Second and third prizes of £500 and £250 may also be awarded.

The ITF hopes the competition will attract entries from seafarers and informed individuals having experience or knowledge of the international shipping industry. The winners will be selected by an international panel of judges.

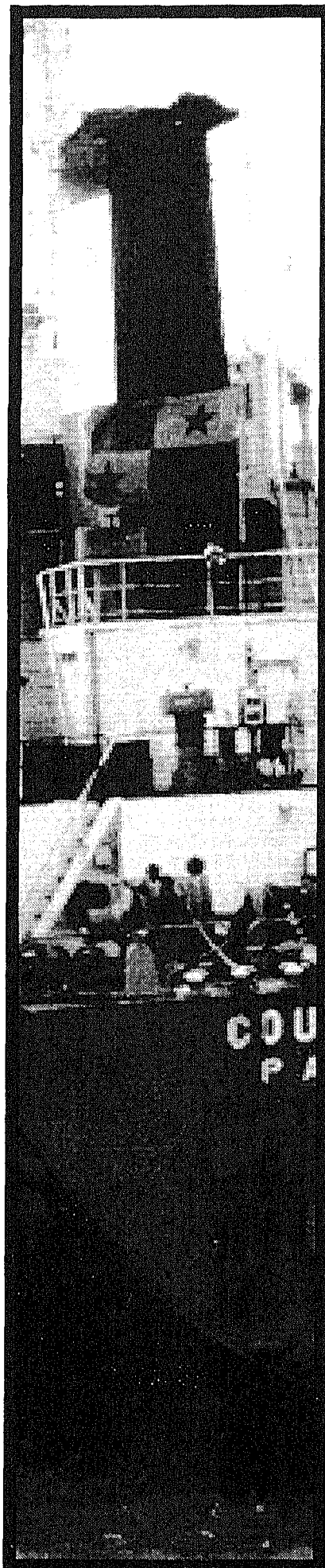
The theme of the essay is...

● ***Is there a better way to regulate the shipping industry?***

There is a crisis within the maritime industry. A shortage of quality seafarers, the growing age of the world fleet, the large numbers of lives lost at sea, spiralling increases in port state control detentions and a lack of flag state implementation are the more obvious manifestations. The ITF view is that the principal cause of the crisis is unfair competition and the competitive distortion caused by the existence of the flag of convenience system. Many shipowners have been forced to flag out in order to stay in business and many would recognise that the very nature of the FOC system forces standards ever lower.

Rules

- a) There are no restrictions on who may enter the competition.
- b) Entries must be in English, typewritten or word-processed and should not exceed 3,000 words in length. Graphical material such as diagrams or graphs may be included.
- c) Each entry must be clearly marked with the author's name, the essay title and a statement to indicate that the essay has not previously been accepted for publication and is the author's own work.
- d) The organisers will not engage in correspondence concerning the outcome of the competition.
- e) Entries will be judged by an independent panel of experts whose decision will be final, and who reserve the right not to award any prize if, in their view, the standard of entries received is too low.
- f) The closing date for entries is 31 March 1998.
- g) Entries should be sent to: Professor J King, Department of Maritime Studies and International Transport, University of Wales, PO Box 907, Cardiff CF1 3YP, United Kingdom.



From January 1998 the ITF has an updated logo (see below) which incorporates the letters ITF and uses colours and shapes to represent transport on land, sea and in the air. Digital or hard copies are available from the Communications Department at head office.

