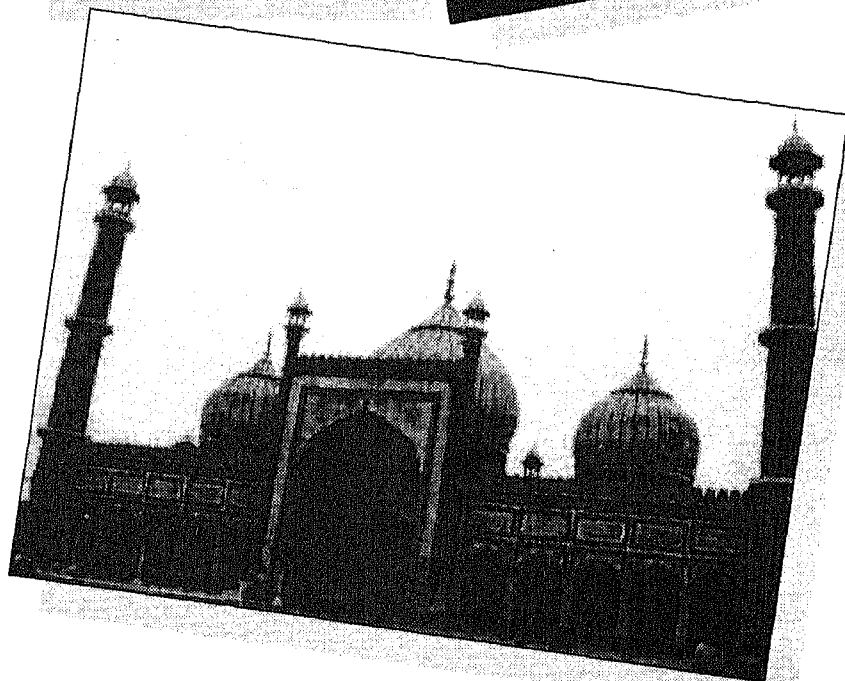
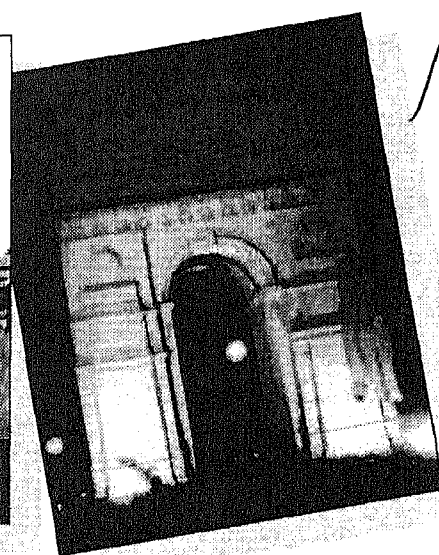
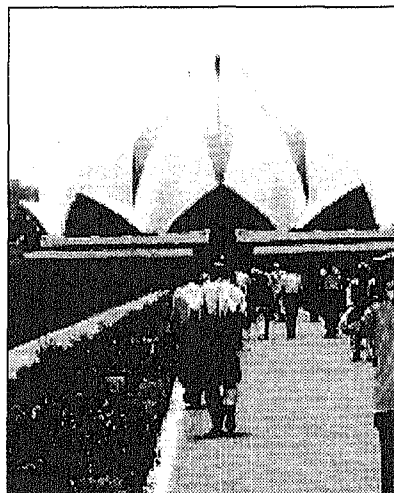
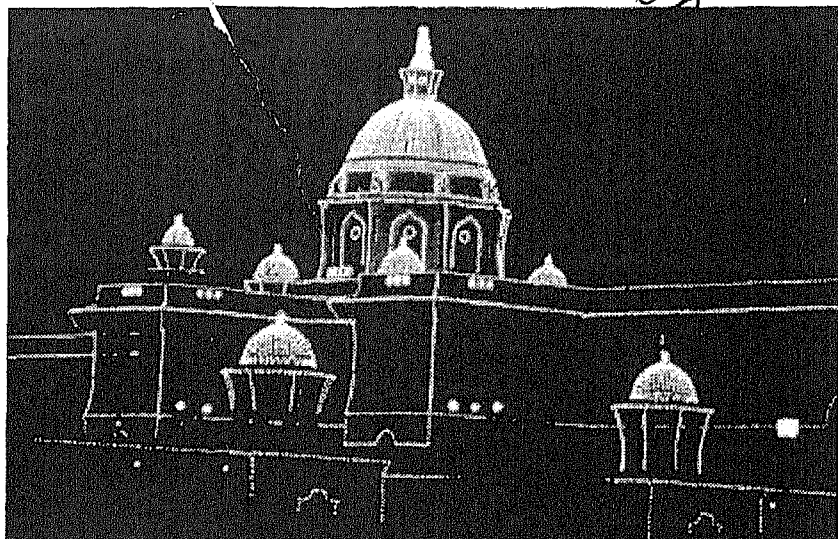
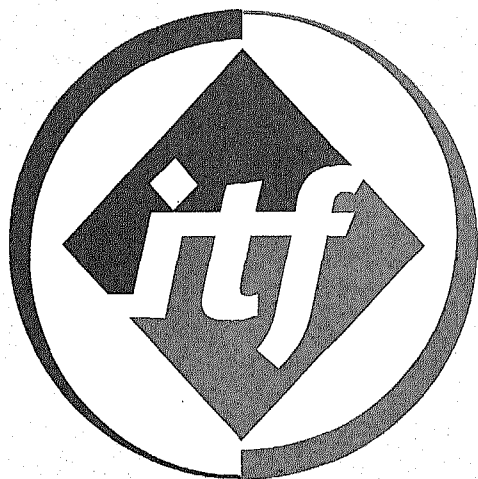


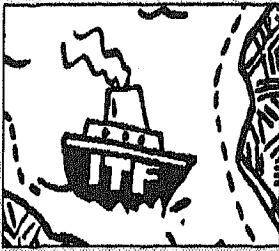
Inside: Route plans for the ITF Campaign Ship



Countdown to the New Delhi Congress



Countdown begins to the ITF's New



■ Planning the route of the ITF Campaign Ship

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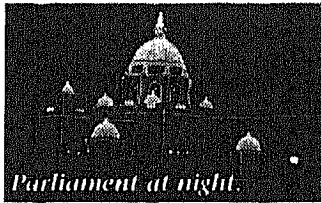
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■ ITF News is published by the ITF six times a year in English, French, German, Japanese, Russian, Spanish and Swedish.

■ This issue was published on 4 March 1998.

■ Cover photos by Rakesh Agrawal.

■ The 1998 ITF Congress will be held in the Vigyan Bhawan Conference Centre, New Delhi, India, from Thursday 29 October to Thursday 5 November. There are four days of plenary sessions attended by all delegates. In addition, three days have been set aside for conferences of all the various ITF Sections: Road Transport, Civil Aviation, Seafarers', Railway Workers', Fisheries, Dockers', Inland Navigation and Tourism Services. An urban transport meeting has been convened and a joint seafarers' and dockers' conference will also be held.



Parliament at night.

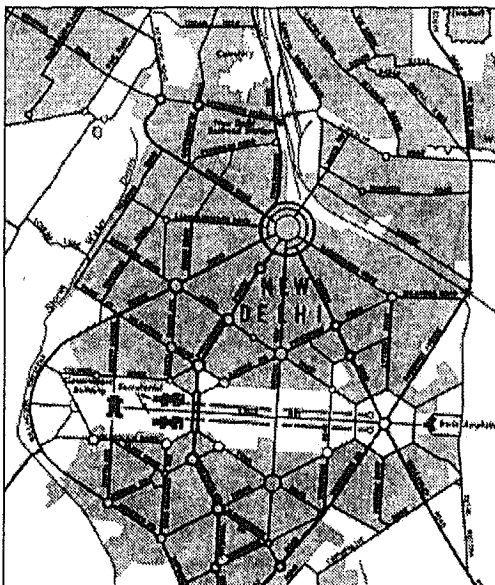
New Delhi is the capital of India, the world's second most populous country and the seventh biggest in size. Delhi - Old and New - has a population of 9.5 million. The principal language spoken in the city is Hindi, but English is widely used too. The British made Delhi the capital city in 1911, and in the area south of the Shahjahanabad district, created "New Delhi" as a complex of purpose-built government buildings.

■ This year's Congress will be the ITF's 39th. The first was held in London in June 1898, and the most recent was the Centenary Congress, also in London, in June 1996, exactly 100 years after a group of seafarers' and dockers' unions met in London to set up the International Federation of Ship, Dock and River Workers - the forerunner of the ITF.

■ The deadline for motions to be submitted for consideration by Congress is Monday 29 June. Motions should confine themselves to one subject and must be written in one of the ITF's official languages.

■ Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in all six official ITF languages: English, French, German, Japanese, Spanish and Swedish.

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The venue for the 33rd ITF Congress in July 1980 was Miami, USA - the first and, until New Delhi, only time that a Congress has been held outside Europe.

Bah'i Lotus Flower Temple.



■ The last full-length ITF Congress was held in Geneva in August 1994. It was attended by 581 delegates and 281 advisers from 278 unions from 85 countries.

■ Affiliated unions can send at least one delegate to the Congress and up to a maximum of 23 according to a sliding scale of paid up members. The ITF Executive Board has discretionary powers to give financial assistance to unions unable to meet the total costs of representation, but the funds available are strictly limited. Applications for financial assistance must be received in writing at ITF Head Office by 31 March.

India Gate.



■ The ITF has 28 affiliates in India, together representing almost 2 million trade union

members in every branch of transport. The largest affiliate, the All India Railwaymen's Federation (AIRF), has over 1 million members and its President, Umraomal Purohit, is a member of the ITF Executive Board and Vice Chair of the Railway Workers' Section. At a special meeting of the ITF India Co-ordinating Committee held in Delhi on 5 February, attended by ITF General Secretary David Cockroft, all Indian affiliates pledged their to make the 39th Congress the most successful and enjoyable in ITF history.

■ There are 12 national union centres in India, representing various political and religious groupings. The three largest are: the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), which has 5 million members and is linked to the Congress

Jama Masjid Mosque, Old Delhi.



party; the Hindu-nationalist Bharatiya Mazdoor Samgh (BMS), with 4 million members; and the socialist-inclined Hind Mazdoor Sabha

(HMS), with 2.8 million members. The INTUC and HMS are affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

■ October and November is one of the most pleasant seasons in India, with minimum temperatures of about 18°C and a maximum temperature of around 28°C. The monsoon season runs between June and October.

Delhi Congress from 29 October to 5 November

Women transport workers will have the opportunity to share ideas and experiences at a Women's Conference held on 26 and 27 October, just before the ITF's Congress in New Delhi.

The conference opens with discussions on working time, violence in the workplace and issues for women in male-dominated jobs. Delegates will also consider representation and permanent structures to work for equality within the ITF.

In 1994 200 delegates met before the Congress in Geneva, resolving to create a women's committee, a network

Women to discuss new structures for equality

and to appoint an ITF women's officer.

In New Delhi, women will decide whether changes to the ITF's Constitution need to be proposed to accommodate the new structures.

"The ITF was quite late in forming these structures," said Women's Officer Sarah Finke. "There are other In-

ternational Trade Secretariats who had women's committees as long as 20 years ago. But the strength of the ITF's industrial section work means we have a solid basis on which to work for equality."

Although the Conference will not exclude men, the Secretariat is strongly recommending to unions both to send women to the event and to include women in their Congress delegations. ■

"Mobilising Solidarity" debate to top the Congress agenda

How can the ITF maximise international solidarity for transport unions faced with the challenges and threats posed by global deregulation and associated attacks on trade union organisation and representation?

This will be the key issue to be considered at the ITF's forthcoming Congress in New Delhi. A special agenda item, "Mobilising Solidarity", will be the focus of the debate. Unions are expected to draw lessons from recent high profile disputes, such as those with United Parcel Service (UPS) and British Airways (BA), in which cross-border co-operation between unions played a significant role.

In addition, new internal structures and procedures to ensure that the ITF can act speedily when affiliates require assistance will come under scrutiny in another of the main topics on the agenda, "Transport Workers: Beyond 2000".

In the UPS and BA disputes it was recognised that picket lines had to be made global, and both unions concerned, the IBT Teamsters in the US and the TGWU in the UK, worked closely with the ITF to do just that.

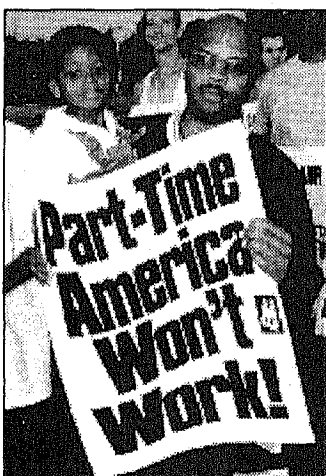
During the UPS strike the Teamsters' Union located campaign staff at the ITF headquarters in London to help co-ordinate international action. In the BA dispute, the TGWU picket line stretched all the way to JFK airport with some help from the ITF and US unions.

According to ITF General Secretary David Cockcroft, these developments reflect a significant shift, both in tactics and in thinking.

"Unions are recognising that when disputes occur in companies which have adopted a global strategy, unions will only win if they too think globally. International action can no longer be an optional extra but has to play a central element in unions' planning," he told ITF News.

Picking up a theme he has used in recent speeches, he said he hoped that unions repre-

Building stronger union links in global economy



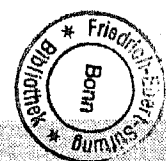
sented in New Delhi would do more than complain about the effects of globalisation and instead also make sure that they are effectively organised internationally to secure the best deal for their members.

For this to happen, there had to be a greater commitment to international work by many national unions. And there would have to be changes in the way the ITF and other international trade secretariats (ITs) operated and in their relationships with union members, shop stewards and officials.

"The international trade union movement is under-resourced and most organisations are too inflexible and bureaucratic, reflecting the way their major affiliates work," the General Secretary declared. Our structures looked like an enormous pyramid, with the ITs at the top and every communication feeding up or down through several layers of hierarchy. Probably the pyramid would never disappear, but at least we should accept that we need to flatten it.

He added: "At our forthcoming Congress we must uninhibitedly examine and discuss these shortcomings. And we should also aim to look at ways to harness the enthusiasm which exists among rank and file members for international contacts and solidarity, combining modern communication methods like the Internet with existing international networks." ■

■ *Lessons of recent disputes, such as those with British Airways and United Parcel Service, will be considered in New Delhi.*



The Multilateral Agreement on Investment...

Liverpool dockers' dispute ends

The 27-month dispute between Liverpool dockers sacked by Mersey Docks and Harbour Company (MDHC) ended on 26 January when they accepted payments of £28,000 (US\$47,000).

The company's offer was made following an approach from their union, the TGWU, and was unanimously agreed at a mass meeting.

The dispute was sparked when the 327 dockers refused to cross a picket line mounted in September 1995 by 80 sacked employees of another stevedoring company.

The MDHC recruited a replacement workforce. The plight of the sacked dockers generated solidarity protests in many ports around the world.

Under UK labour law, the dispute was unlawful and could not therefore be officially supported by the TGWU.

In a letter to the ITF, TGWU General Secretary Bill Morris wrote: "I would like to thank the ITF and all affiliates for the support extended to our union and dockworkers' membership during this difficult period." ■

Greeks protest

Greek seafarers staged a 24-hour strike on 15 January to oppose the moves by the European Commission to dismantle the country's system of cabotage barring foreign-flag ships from Greek coastal and island trades. The protest coincided with a meeting in Athens between leaders of the Pan-Hellenic Seamen's Federation and European Transport Commissioner Neil Kinnock. The federation calculates that half its active membership is employed in passenger cabotage trades and up to 18,000 jobs would be put at risk. ■

Is globalisation going too far with the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI)? This is what many trade unionists are asking about the new international treaty designed to make it easier for individual and corporate investors to move assets – whether money or production facilities – across international borders.

Opponents of the measure, including many unions, environmental groups and some developing countries, fear that the MAI will hand even more power to transnational corporations and limit the ability of governments to place conditions on foreign inward investment, for example by specifying labour and environmental standards.

The MAI treaty is being negotiated by the Paris-based Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which represents the world's main industrialised countries, along with observers from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Hong Kong and Slovakia. Originally scheduled for completion by May 1997, the negotiations are not expected to end until May this year at the earliest.

ITF officers are watching developments closely and are liaising with the OECD's Trade

'Opponents of the MAI argue that the proposed agreement will accelerate an economic and environmental downward spiral as countries feel new pressure to compete for increasingly mobile investment capital by lowering wages and environmental safeguards. Corporate investors will get new rights, but there are as yet no mechanisms to hold them accountable to the social and environmental concerns of the countries they came from, or the countries they invest in.'

Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) in its consultations with the OECD's MAI negotiators.

The key TUAC demand is for a binding clause in the MAI stating that governments shall not seek to attract investment by the suppression or non-enforcement of domestic labour standards or by the violation of internationally recognised core workers' rights.

ITF General Secretary David Cockroft hopes that affiliated unions will press their own governments to support the binding clause on labour standards.

"Such a clause would offer some protection to workers in industrialised countries fearful that their jobs will be exported to countries

without genuine labour safeguards," he told ITF News. "And it would protect workers in developing countries against the worst excesses of exploitation by transnational companies."

Countries that sign the MAI will be required to:

- Open all economic sectors to foreign ownership;
- Treat foreign investors no less favourably than domestic firms;
- Remove performance requirements, which

Why safeguards on labour standards are needed

are laws that require investors to behave in a certain way in exchange for market access;

- Remove restrictions on the movement of capital;

● Compensate investors in full when their assets are expropriated, either through seizure or "unreasonable" regulation;

- Accept a dispute-resolution process allowing investors to sue governments for damages before international panels when they believe

a country's laws are in violation of MAI rules.

Opponents of the MAI argue that the proposed agreement will accelerate an economic and environmental downward spiral as countries feel new pressure to compete for increasingly mobile investment capital by lowering wages and environmental safeguards.



■ Cockroft: Urging affiliated unions to lobby governments.

Corporate investors will get new rights, but there are as yet no mechanisms to hold them accountable to the social and environmental concerns of the countries they came from, or the countries they invest in.

Unions fear that the treaty will guarantee unrestricted capital mobility – the right of big companies and financial institutions to go where they want, leave on their own terms, and play one country off against another for the most favourable investment terms. ■

Edo Fimmen:



■ Edo Fimmen (right) and the statue in his honour in Rotterdam.

Photo: Freek van Arkel/Hollandse Hoogte

Inter-war ITF leader is honoured in home port

Legendary ITF General Secretary Edo Fimmen has been honoured in his native country with the unveiling of a statue of him in Rotterdam.

In the presence of his daughter Alida and many other guests, Wouter Waleson – the President of the ITF-affiliated Vervoersbond FNV – presented the statue to the City.

The location chosen for the memorial is a park in the heart of the old part of Rotterdam port, where dockworkers used to live. On behalf of the city, the council's Cultural Alderman, Hans Kombrink, expressed his appreciation for the gift by the Dutch transport workers' union.

A speech was also given by ITF President Eike Eulen in which he pointed out the relation between the trade union ideals of the past and present, and outlined the future aims of modern trade unionism.

Fimmen's daughter, Alida

de Jager, in the final speech reminded the 200 representatives – from trade unions, the city council, neighbourhood organisations – of the need for strong trade unions all over the world. She then paid a final tribute to her father by calling for international solidarity between workers in the industrialised and developing world.

Edo Fimmen was the Secretary of the Netherlands trade union confederation before being elected ITF Secretary from 1919 and General Secretary from 1924 until his death in 1942.

He was largely responsible for rebuilding the organisation after its virtual collapse during the First World War and later emerged as one of the international labour movement's leading anti-fascists of the inter-war years. ■

A new super-union in the Netherlands, FNV Bondgenoten, has been founded by the merger of four unions organising across a wide range of sectors, including transport.

The historic decision – which paves the way to achieve Dutch labour's old ideal of full unity – was taken at a special congress in Amsterdam on 29 January.

With around half a million members, the Bondgenoten is by far the biggest union in the Netherlands.

It will also be an important union internationally. Its first act was to hand a cheque for two million guilders (US\$1 million) to Dutch trade union confederation FNV for international solidarity work. In future, half a percent of all members' dues will go into FNV Bondgenoten's own global solidarity fund.

At the Amsterdam congress – which was attended by ITF General Secretary David Cockroft – Bondgenoten President Henk Krul also announced a Bondgenoten project to monitor developments in Dutch-based multinationals and to help stimulate international trade union networking within them.

Dutch and Germans hasten trend towards mega unions

Meanwhile, six unions in Germany, including the ITF-affiliated transport and public service workers' union, ÖTV, the white collar union DAG and the banking and insurance union HBV, are in merger talks with the aim of creating a 3,500,000-strong super-union representing workers in the rapidly expanding service sector.

A draft merger plan is to be tabled by the end of the year, with the hope that it will be ratified in 1999.

The trend towards larger, merged unions has also been evident in the US and Great Britain during the 1980s and 1990s. ■

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China to shed over 1m railway workers

The Chinese government announced in January that it plans to lay-off more than 1 million state railway workers by the year 2000. This represents one third of the total workforce.

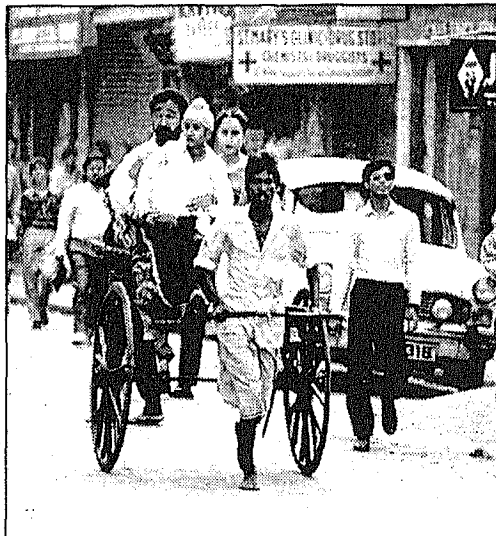
The cuts are part of plans to sell off sections of the rail network and lease out management while maintaining control of trunk lines. A joint-stock system will be introduced to non-trunk routes where shares would be sold mainly to workers, raising fears that the shares would find their way onto the open market – leading to back-door privatisation. ■

East Timor drivers protest

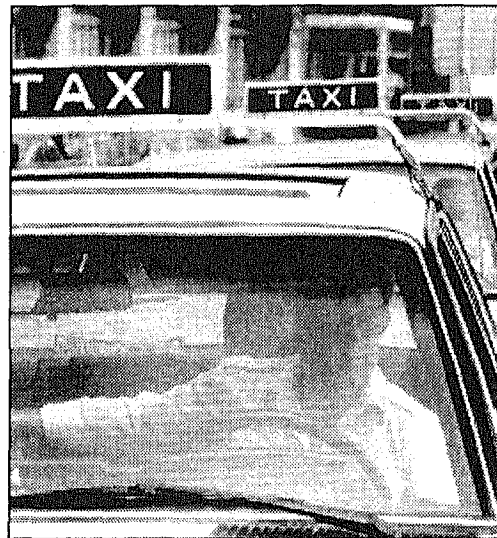
Hundreds of bus drivers in East Timor, Indonesia, staged a peaceful demonstration in mid February to protest against the skyrocketing prices of basic commodities, including auto parts and lubricant oil. Protesters converged on the provincial legislative office, jamming the vast compound with their buses. Five representatives met government representatives and demanded action to stabilise soaring rates. Within the past few months, the price of tyres and brake shoes has doubled and the price of oil has risen by more than 40 per cent. ■

Helsinki halted

A public transport strike early in February paralysed Helsinki for three days as 3,300 bus, tram and underground drivers in the capital region protested against the loss of job security through private bidding for public transport contracts. ■



Panos Pictures



■ Despite different modes around the world, there are many common matters of concern.

Taxis are also public transport

The first ever meeting of the ITF Taxi Working Group will take place in London in March in conjunction with the annual ITF Road Transport Workers' Conference. One of the main items on the agenda is the campaign for recognition of the taxi industry as part of the public transport system in every country and to encourage the unionisation of taxi workers. Here, MAC URATA of the ITF Inland Transport Section explains the background.

The character of the taxi industry differs significantly from one country to another. The vehicle is called a yellow cab in New York, a hackney carriage in London, a tuk-tuk in Bangkok and an auto-rickshaw in Bombay. The jeepney in Manila and the mini-bus in Johannesburg that run on fixed routes can also be considered as taxis. When we look at the drivers, there are company employees, owner-drivers and lease drivers to name just a few. Some work with a certain basic salary, others may depend entirely on commission or receipts. Even within one country or a city, taxi operation may vary.

Although the styles of operation and status of the drivers differ significantly, the ITF firmly believes that the taxi industry is a part of the public transport system. Taxi workers, just like their col-

leagues in the railway, underground, tramway, bus or trucking sectors play a vital role in the community.

The fact that many governments grant a licence or badge for operating is enough to show that the industry is recognised as part of the public transport system. In some cases, taxi operators receive public subsidies to run certain services. In almost every part of the world, taxis are the only means of transport during unsocial hours.

'If rules on items such as operating licence, market entry, fleet number and fare system are deregulated, cut-throat competition is inevitable.'

Taxi workers, however, are beset by many problems. Besides outstanding issues such as low wages, long and irregular working hours, very poor and sometimes dangerous working conditions and a low rate of unionisation, many taxi workers are hard hit by the current global trend of deregulation. Even those who have not suffered the effects of this trend envisage the virus spreading into their backyards.

Even where the industry is organised, it has a tendency to be very fragmented as only a small amount of capital is necessary to enter the market. The operators seek to increase their fleets as it is the easiest way to make larger profits. Even company-employed drivers often work on commission. So if rules on items such as operating licence, market entry, fleet number and fare system are deregulated, cut-throat competition is inevitable.

The taxi industry is in need of stronger regulation than any other transport sector so it can provide service with quality and safety "to anyone, at any time, anywhere". Without such a basis, it will not be recognised as part of the public transport system.

Such recognition is particularly important to the ITF and its affiliates organising taxi workers as the ITF Taxi Working Group commences its activities. ■

Usually when we think of health and safety at work in the transport industry we think of obvious complaints such as sore backs.

However there is much more to the subject as an ITF established group on health and safety in urban transport is finding out, writes ITF Assistant Secretary JANE BARRETT.

Plight of bus drivers examined by ITF health group

Lack of job satisfaction can make you sick

The Joint Working Group on Health and Safety in Urban Transport was established with representatives from the academic world and ITF affiliates in 1996. The working group has since met twice and has a full programme of research and distribution of information. It is presently focusing largely on conditions of bus drivers, but it is the intention to expand to other groups of urban transport workers.

The group has found that there appears to be a direct link between the degree of control bus drivers have over their work and working environment and stress, absenteeism and even cardiovascular problems.

So for example, when drivers are under pressure from passengers and route schedules, the stresses are exaggerated if they also have no say over their own working times and arrangements.

The evidence suggests that an absence of democracy and poor job satisfaction in the workplace can literally make you sick!

Studies have also found that bus companies

operating in a deregulated environment produce the greatest pressures on their employees and therefore have high absenteeism rates and high illness records. One route to better health for bus drivers recommended by the working group is therefore a much greater say by bus drivers in their working arrangements.

The group is also interested in the physical environment of urban transport workers. The starting point is the place where the driver spends most of his or her time – the cab. We are currently working on developing a “best practice” or prototype cab to be recommended directly to the manufacturers.

Improved cab design can include fully adjustable pedals, seat and steering wheel, clear instruments, proper ventilation and appropriate heating and/or cooling systems.

The biggest objection to such improvements is always cost. Therefore the working group has recommended that once such a prototype has been designed affiliates should urge their respective governments to adopt minimum national standards. Mass production would in turn effectively bring the costs down through economies of scale. The group has also recommended that the introduction of newly designed cabs in some countries should not result in the dumping of old buses in others.

Further concerns of the working group are violence against urban transport workers and the impact of pollution and congestion on respiration. ❁

‘There appears to be a direct link between the degree of control bus drivers have over their work and working environment and stress, absenteeism and even cardiovascular problems.’

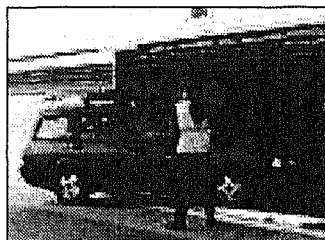
Nine railway workers’ unions from Belgium, France and UK and representatives of Eurotunnel met in ITF House, London, on 30 January under the auspices of the ITF to set up a Eurotunnel Consultative Committee to deal with safety issues.

Management and unions have been discussing the creation of the committee since the major tunnel fire in November 1996 following which safety procedures came under heavy criticism. “Eurotunnel as a young company still has a long way to develop its safety culture,” said one management representative at the meeting.

The initial terms of reference of the committee will primarily be concerned with matters relating to health and safety, including prevention of accidents, communications, training and the physical conditions under which trains are operated through the Channel Tunnel. A minimum of three meetings will be held each year with special meetings to be convened in case of emergency.

Jim Knapp, ITF Railway Workers’ Section Chair (RMT, UK), who chaired the meeting,

Eurotunnel and unions set up safety consultative committee



■ A car boarding one of the trains taking vehicles through the Channel Tunnel.

welcomed the success of the decade-long efforts by the unions to set up a formal consultative body with the management. He also welcomed the invitation from Eurotunnel for the unions to inspect its facilities this summer.

● The construction of a high-speed rail link between London and the Channel Tunnel is in doubt. London & Continental Railways (LCR), the consortium awarded the contract to build and operate the link, has asked the UK government for an extra £1.2 billion to fund the project. Late in January Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott rejected the request. It is reported that LCR is seeking more financial aid from the European Investment Bank. Railtrack, which owns the tracks and stations of all Britain’s railways, and Eurorail are showing interest in taking over the project from the LCR. ❁

Planning the route of the ITF Campaign Ship

Ports of call will be determined by invitations from affiliates

This is the projected itinerary which the ITF Campaign Ship will take to publicise what the ITF is doing to combat flags of convenience and defend the rights of seafarers employed on FOC ships. The vessel is expected to set sail from London this summer for the epic 45,000 nautical mile voyage around the world.

The ship will call at ports at the invitation of national maritime unions. So this provisional route will be altered once unions have indicated to the ITF that they wish to receive the ship and assist in making the visit a success.

The voyage is being arranged to mark the 50th anniversary of the ITF's campaign against flags of convenience. The ship will feature an exhibition on the campaign, including videos and other promotional material, and will be open to the public at its various ports of call.

ITF Assistant General Secretary Mark Dickinson says he hopes the ship will call at as many ports and countries as possible. "The aim is to give a high profile to the work of the ITF and national unions to secure proper treatment and conditions for the world's seafarers."

The ship – which has yet to be named – will be registered in London, seat of the ITF's Head Office, and will be managed by Geneva-based shipmanagers Acomarit. Talks are currently under way with UK seafaring unions on crewing arrangements.

The project as a whole is being co-ordinated by Ulrich Jürgens, a former ITF Inspector and international campaign co-ordinator for Greenpeace International who now runs the PROjekt consultancy in Bremen, Germany.

As part of the 50th anniversary commemoration, the ITF is also hosting, in conjunction with Lloyd's of London Press, a conference in Oslo, Norway, on 23 and 24 June with the theme: "Is there a better way to regulate the shipping industry?"

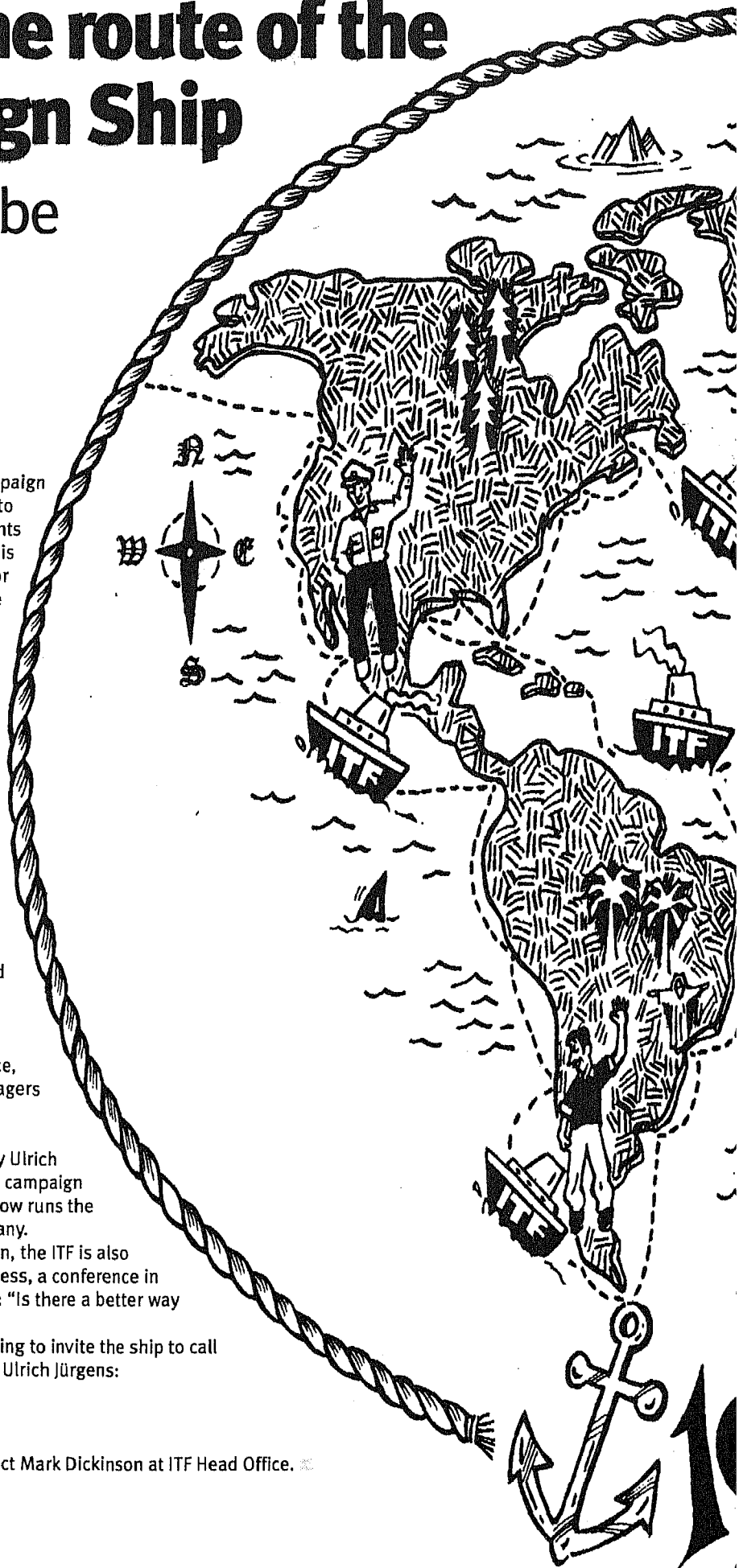
● Affiliated unions wanting more details or wishing to invite the ship to call at a port or ports in their country should contact Ulrich Jürgens:

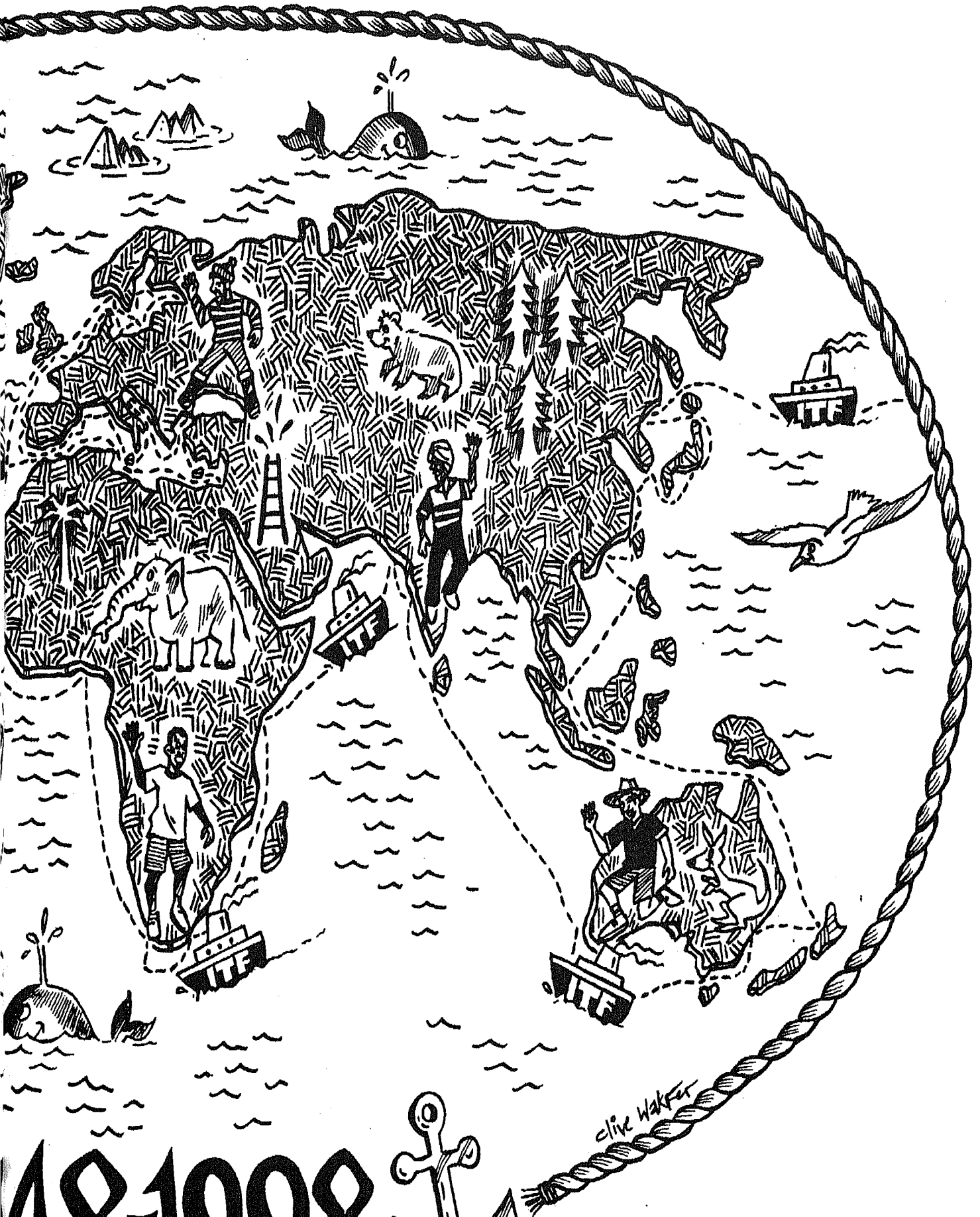
Telephone: +49 4231-931 979

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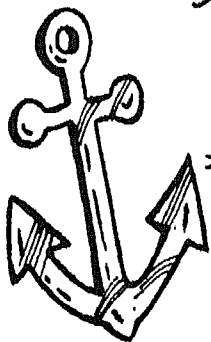
E-mail: projektcc@compuserve.com

● For more details of the Oslo conference, contact Mark Dickinson at ITF Head Office. ☒





48-1998



'Last November a significant first step in the internationalisation of safety oversight was made when ICAO member states granted it new legal powers for safety inspection and assessments.'

'Regular, mandatory, systematic and harmonised safety audits' can be carried out

The globalisation of civil aviation is leading to a restructuring of safety oversight. For some time ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) has been saying that a globalised aviation industry needs new international legal instruments for global safety oversight. Last November a significant first step in the internationalisation of safety oversight was made when ICAO member states granted it new legal powers for safety inspection and assessments.

At the same time there is an increasing process of regionalisation of safety rule making with South America, Central America and South Asia following the path of the European JAA (Joint Aviation Authorities) by setting up

Moving towards a global safety oversight

bodies to agree common regional aviation safety standards. While Europe is trying to go beyond the JAA model by trying to match the US FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) with the creation of a European Aviation Safety Authority.

● ICAO is also recommending that safety clauses should be put into bilateral agreements. ECAC adopted a model safety clause for bilaterals at its Assembly in July 1997. Indeed this was a proposal put forward by the ITF to ICAO at its General Assembly in 1995 in the ITF document *Fair Skies*. The ITF also proposed that social clauses should be adopted into bilateral agreements. ☐

ICAO is given new powers of inspection

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has taken a significant step towards becoming a more effective international safety body with a new international mandate and authority to inspect and assess the implementation of safety standards in any member state.

At a special conference of member states held in Montreal in November 1997, ICAO was granted new powers for carrying out "regular, mandatory, systematic and harmonised safety audits". Until now ICAO has had standard setting responsibilities, but limited powers of implementation.

ICAO is the United Nations body responsible for the international regulation of civil aviation. Previously ICAO member states have been left to comply with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices without any real checks that they do so.

Member states are meant to voluntarily report any "differences" (non compliance) with these standards. Very few bother to do such reporting (see box). This has made it impossible for ICAO to provide any effective assessment of safety standards in member states.

The lack of information on safety prompted the US to set up its own International Aviation Safety Assessment (IASA) programme in 1992. The US programme, however, has been vulnerable to accusations that it is used for commercial advantage. For example the US safety programme has placed a ban on any Venezuelan carrier flying to the US at the same

time that US airlines are stepping up their flights and capacity between the US and Venezuela.

One effect of rough handling by the IASA programme, however, has been to shift many ICAO member states away from their previous resistance to giving ICAO the powers of safety inspection which it has long called for, and has now largely gained.

The European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) set up a safety oversight programme similar to IASA in 1997. Both the United States and ECAC, however, have supported the new powers given to the ICAO Safety Oversight Programme.

The ICAO programme will still not have the kind of direct enforcement sanctions that the IASA programme has (although a country consistently failing ICAO inspections is likely to be banned from flying to many countries). Nor will its new powers mean that ICAO will rely any less on the need for co-operation by member states for much of its routine information.

Moreover, the effectiveness of these new international legal instruments for safety assessment, will still largely depend on the resources provided to ICAO for its safety oversight programme. Nevertheless an important first step has been made. ☐

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) sets basic worldwide safety standards for the industry. But how does it check that member states are complying with these standards? The answer is that it writes to them and asks. The system's level of effectiveness can be seen by a look at the response of member states to a recent ICAO circular concerning their compliance with rules covering cabin crew.

For cabin crew members Chapter 12 of Annex 6 part I is the basic ICAO text which sets out requirements for member states covering such things as the need for a minimum number of cabin crew, training standards, and flight and duty time limitations. ICAO published the results of its most recent request for information about compliance with Annex 6 part I at the end of 1997.

Of ICAO's 185 member states, 17 reported that their rules contained no differences with ICAO standards. 17 member states notified ICAO that their rules differ from (in other words do not comply with) various paragraphs of ICAO Annex 6 part I (of these seven developing countries said they did not



Governments fail to report on cabin crew rules

strengthened, and a time of worldwide concern for aviation safety, this kind of response can only be disappointing."

The ITF intends to conduct its own survey of compliance with ICAO rules for cabin crew and present this information at the ICAO General Assembly in September. ❏

implement cabin crew training standards, and Australia notified that it had no flight and duty times applying to cabin crew). The vast majority of ICAO member states (150 out of 185) failed to provide any reply at all, leaving ICAO with very little information about compliance on cabin crew safety standards.

According to ITF Civil Aviation Secretary Stuart Howard, "Governments are not acting responsibly. Any international safety regulation system relies on active co-operation from governments. At a time when it is recognised that ICAO's effectiveness needs to be

Asia crisis: the way forward

Thai unionist sacked

Over 100 members of the Thai Airways State Enterprise Employees' Association protested outside the airline's head office on Thursday 26 February after the company sacked Surasit Sriprapa, a member of the union's executive committee, for "corruption". This corruption consisted of attending a union meeting during the afternoon. Sriprapa was a leading figure in union resistance to the company selling off its cargo operations last December. The union believes this may be the start of a major attack on the union. ❏

The economic crisis in Asian countries has plunged the airline industry into turmoil as a result of the drop in value of many Asian currencies held by the airlines and the dramatic fall in demand for air travel.

South Korean and Japanese banks, which provide a quarter of all credit for aircraft finance, have dropped out of all such deals. Aircraft orders are being cancelled, aircraft are being sold, routes are being dropped and frequencies lowered. Non-Asian carriers are abandoning Asian markets and intensifying competition elsewhere such as on transatlantic routes.

It is believed that the crisis will accelerate the process of liberalisation in the region, particularly as airlines seek to use code sharing as a lower cost way of maintaining routes.

More alarmingly, 650 deaths in a cluster of recent serious air crashes in the region have increased the sense of an industry descending into anarchy. At worst it has fuelled highly damaging public speculation that the airlines may have been cutting costs in ways that affect aviation safety.

Inevitably one way that some airlines will seek to save costs is by cutting jobs and lowering conditions.

PALEA, the ground staff union in Philippine Airlines, says that the company has called the unions in to talks about a major reduction in staff. Cathay Pacific has already laid off 760 staff and a hiring freeze has left a further 365

vacancies unfilled. More ground staff jobs will be shed through outsourcing.

Asiana Airlines (Korea) has laid off 62 staff while 6,500 staff have been put on leave without pay. At Korean Airlines employees have been buying company shares to protect the airline from foreign take-over, while the airline is rumoured to be planning lay offs. Similar rumours of a major cut in staff abound in Singapore Airlines.

At the same time as losing jobs and having to increase productivity airline workers have seen the real value of their wages which are paid (unlike jet fuel bills and aircraft orders) in local currencies, plunge dramatically.

An orgy of short term attacks on either employment or safety standards is not a solution, the ITF is warning. The issue of jobs should be placed within a comprehensive strategy for airline survival. For such plans to work co-operation will be needed from trade unions. Airline managements need to go beyond vague pronouncements to employees about "difficult times". They should provide trade unions with full and detailed information as a basis for constructive talks on a company survival plan.

ITF civil aviation unions will be meeting to discuss the crisis at an Asia/Pacific Regional meeting in Sydney in July 1998. ❏

ITF played part in defeat of proposal to change JAA rule

European operators fail to reduce minimum cabin crew standard

Unions back bid for new safety authority

The pressure continues to set up a new European Aviation Safety Authority (EASA) which would displace the Joint Aviation Authorities (JAA). The idea is supported by trade unions, employers and the European Commission.

The Aviation Group of the Council of the European Union held consultations in Brussels on 11 February which heard presentations from interested parties, including union organisations: the ITF, the FST (Federation of Transport Workers' Unions in the European Union) and the pilot organisations.

The unions pressed strongly on a number of key issues, and in particular that the new body should have:

- full legal competence for rule making, oversight and enforcement,
- direct applicability of rules (with EASA member states transferring their national rule making powers to the new authority),
- the largest number of countries in Europe to which a single authority could apply its legal competency.

Later this year the ITF and FST plan to hold a joint conference in London to discuss the structure required for an effective safety authority. ■

The ITF submission to the 11 February Aviation Group hearings is available on the ITF Web page.

As the JAA reaches the final stages of drawing up harmonised safety rules for European countries, the airline operators have been launching a number of last minute attempts to lower these standards.

The most recent of these was an attempt to pressure the JAA (Joint Aviation Authorities) to change the rules setting out the requirements for the minimum number of cabin crew on board an aircraft.

Cabin crew are, of course, required to ensure the safety of passengers during a flight and, in the event of an emergency, to take charge of evacuation.

Currently the JAA rule (JAR OPS 1.990) says

'Currently the JAA rule says there should be one cabin crew member for every 50 seats on board the aircraft. The operators wanted to change this to one crew member for every 50 passengers on board.'

there should be one cabin crew member for every 50 seats on board the aircraft. The AEA (Association of European Airlines) wanted to change this to one crew member for every 50 passengers on board.

The JAA rule follows standards recommended by safety experts and is harmonised with the rule which is already applied in the US by the Federal Aviation Administration. This recognises that the minimum number of crew should be based on the number of seats rather than just the number of passengers since this takes into account important factors such as the size of the aircraft, the practical difficulties of evacuation with greater distances between exits, the number of doors, and passengers

being distributed in different parts of the aircraft.

What were the AEA's arguments to justify lowering already agreed standards? Their first was that there was no evidence that using the crew complement rules based on passenger numbers had ever caused an air accident! This is like saying that no ship has sunk as a result of reducing the number of lifeboats on board!

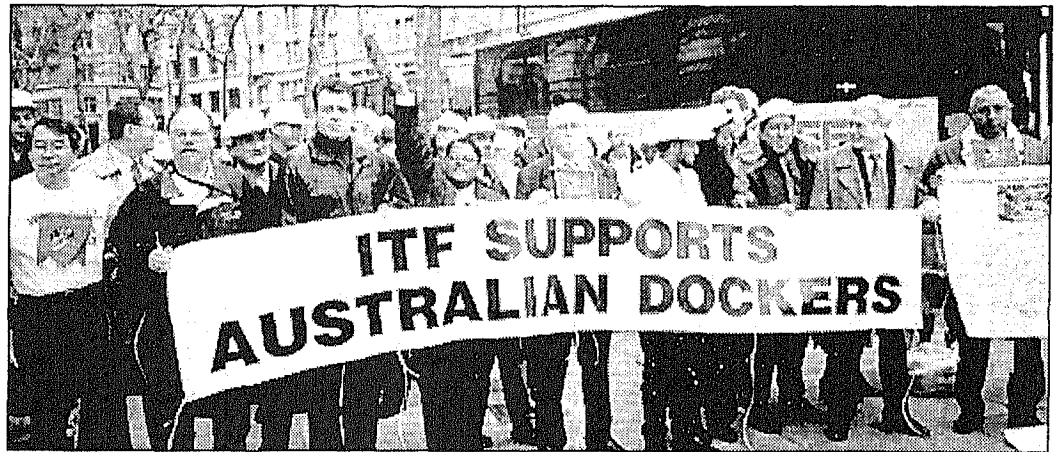
'The real arguments, of course, are about money.'

The next argument was that recently developed type III over wing emergency exits, which are easier to use, should mean that the number of crew could be reduced. But crew have never been required to be stationed at type III exits. Passengers have always been left to fend for themselves in getting out of these. Moreover, the JAA, under pressure from operators and manufacturers, and against recommendations from the ITF, has already allowed extra passenger seats on board because of these new exits.

The real arguments, of course, are about money. The AEA reckons that one of its operators will be faced with a \$4 million increase in its yearly cabin crew costs as a result of the JAA requirement. Since this is equivalent to around 200 full-time cabin crew or an extra 73,000 flying person days at an estimated European average weekly wage of \$20,000 per year, one can only wonder at this unidentified airline's current arrangements! In fact the overwhelming majority of JAA countries already apply a similar standard to the JAA rule. Moreover most established airlines operate with crew complements above the existing legal minimum standards.

The AEA formally presented its case for changing the JAA rule to a JAA Operations Committee meeting in January. The ITF presented its arguments opposing the AEA proposal. The AEA was unable to gain support for its proposal and the current JAA rule stands.

This was certainly an important decision. Not only at stake were aviation safety standards but the process of harmonisation both within Europe, and between Europe and the US. The current JAA rule matches exactly with US rules. If European operators had succeeded in this fairly crude attempt to gain competitive advantage over US carriers at the cost of safety it would certainly have been quickly followed by pressure from US operators to drop their own safety standards. ■



■ Over 100 ITF Inspectors and Co-ordinators, who were attending a seminar in London, protested outside the Australian High Commission and handed in a statement to the Deputy High Commissioner Ros McGovern (pictured right) condemning the union-busting practices of the Australian federal government and the National Farmers' Federation.



ITF asks affiliates to prepare for solidarity action

New threat to unionised Australian dockers

Santos strike

Port workers at Santos in Brazil have warned of further industrial action despite returning to work after a 48-hour strike that virtually paralysed the port. The stoppage, which involved 19 dockers' unions and 20,000 workers, cost the port authority Codesp some US\$1.45 million in lost revenue. Union leaders said grievances included no productivity payments; delays in daily payments; employment of workers not suitably registered; different payments for workers doing the same job; dockworkers being given two functions.

Office staff halt port

Malta's ports were severely disrupted for over two weeks in January when white collar members of the country's second biggest union, Union Hadiema Maghqudin, went on strike as part of a nationwide protest at the 1998 budget passed by the government in November. The phone and fax blockade by UHM members inside the Freeport area – through which 80 per cent of the country's trade transits – stopped some 800 import containers while also preventing export activities.

The creation of a non-union stevedoring company in Melbourne is the latest attempt by the coalition of anti-union interests in Australia to break the influence of the Maritime Union of Australia in the country's docks.

The presence of the small but provocative non-union operation led to protest stoppages by MUA members in Melbourne in January and February. However, they were ordered back to work by the country's Industrial Relations Commission.

As this issue of ITF News goes to press, there is an uneasy stand-off on the Australian waterfront, with the MUA braced for attempts to extend non-unionism to other ports. The ITF has offered to co-ordinate any international action to resist such moves.

The dispute erupted in late January when stevedoring firm Patrick leased a third of Melbourne's Webb Dock to a union-busting operator backed by Australia's main farming lobby, the National Farmers' Federation, which has the support of Australia's conservative government.

The setting-up of the non-union company is the most recent assault on waterfront trade union organisation faced by the MUA.

In December last year, some 60 Australian military and ex-military personnel were transported to Dubai for clandestine training in port operations. The secret non-union workforce was expected to serve as instructors for a larger force to be trained at a secret location.

The Dubai training project was only aborted

after an international outcry led by the ITF and International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, including a threat by the ITF of international union blacking of cargo going to the Middle East port.

In September last year an attempt to replace unionised dock workers with unorganised labour in the port of Cairns was stopped by the joint forces of the MUA, the ITF and unions in the US.

In response to the latest threat to the MUA, the ITF has asked unions to be on stand-by to offer practical solidarity.

ITF Dockers' Secretary Kees Marges accused the NFF of "macho posturing".

He added: "This is an attack on port work everywhere and the ITF's network of dock workers' and seafarers' unions won't stand idle. They will target any ships which are handled in Australian ports by non-union labour. Ship-owners or shipmanagers allowing their vessels to be loaded or unloaded in this way risk cargoes being delayed or stopped."

The MUA is meanwhile maintaining a protest against the use of non-union labour with a vigil outside the Webb Dock gates.

Union General Secretary John Coombs said that peaceful actions would continue "for a lot longer than the NFF anticipates".

Evidence sought to explain sinking which took 30 lives

ITF-funded underwater expedition videos wreck

ITF terms for all Swedish ships

The majority of Swedish-owned foreign-registered vessels will soon be covered by collective agreements at a level acceptable to the ITF.

This is the result of an understanding reached between the Swedish unions and the Swedish Shipowners' Association (SSA). The joint understanding was presented to the ITF by the SSA and the SEKO seafarers' union at a meeting in January in London.

Foreign seafarers will be allowed to serve on Swedish-flag vessels for the first time as a result of the agreement. But in return, owners will observe ITF rates on all Swedish-owned vessels, irrespective of flag.

Commenting on the agreement, ITF Assistant General Secretary Mark Dickinson said: "We are delighted that the Swedish Shipowners' Association has recognised that the ITF acceptable level is the appropriate benchmark." ■

Bulker safety call

The latest disaster involving a bulk carrier has prompted renewed ITF demands for tougher international rules for these ships. Twenty-one seafarers died after the bulk carrier *Flare* snapped in two in stormy weather in the Gulf of St Lawrence, off Newfoundland in January. There were four survivors. ITF General Secretary David Cockroft said the loss of the Cypriot-flag ship was likely to accelerate ITF moves to strengthen the rules on age criteria for ships. "The starting point has to be that bulk carriers should not snap in two in heavy seas," he said. ■

Maritime casualty experts are to be called in to examine video footage of the wreck of the general cargoship *Cordigliera* following a successful diving expedition financed by the ITF off the coast of South Africa.

The US\$200,000 survey was completed on 22 January and is expected to provide conclusive evidence of how the Panamanian-registered ship sank near Durban in November 1996 with the loss of 29 Indian seafarers and a South African technician.

Sonar scans and video and still photographs taken in a number of deep water dives show extensive structural damage to the ship in the region of the number 1 cargo hold.

The 10-day expedition was financed mainly by the ITF, which is acting for the dependants of 25 of the crew. Relatives of a South African technician, who was also aboard on the night of the sinking, are expected to join the ITF ac-

tion. A contribution to the costs has also been made by the South African Department of Transport, which is keen to find the cause of the loss.

Mark Dickinson, ITF Assistant General Secretary, was delighted at the success of the diving mission. "There are always risks involved in diving in 300 feet, but we have been lucky with good weather and sea conditions," he said. "We shall now pass all the evidence to our lawyers and other experts and are confident we will be able to say how the ship was lost."

No compensation has yet been paid to the crew's dependants by either the owners, Sinha Shipping, of India, or the Ocean P&I Club, the vessel's British insurers.

The *Cordigliera*, built in Sunderland, England, in 1979, sank shortly after leaving Durban with a cargo of general goods, including a consignment of granite blocks. The crew were unable to send out a distress message, indicating that the ship sank quickly.

"We expect that our determination to find out what happened to the *Cordigliera* will have been noticed by other shipowners," added Dickinson. "We hope the action will not only benefit the dependants of the crew, but will make owners aware of all their responsibilities to those who sail on their ships." ■



■ ITF African Regional Secretary Ben Udogwu (back row, ninth from right) with participants at an ITF training seminar for seafaring, fishing and dock unions in Liberia including (on Ben Udogwu's right) Deputy Minister of Labour Thomas Woewiyu and (on his left) the General Secretary of the Liberian

Federation of Labour Unions, Amos Gray. The three-day seminar, held in Monrovia in December, was part of ITF efforts to help unions in Liberia rebuild their organisation following the ending of the civil war. The Minister expressed appreciation of the ITF which, he said, was the first international trade union

body to resume contacts with unions in Liberia.

Meanwhile, a high-level ITF mission is planned this year to discuss the future of the Liberian shipping register with newly elected President Charles Taylor.

ITF MEETINGS

- Star Solidarity Alliance meeting, Frankfurt, 31 March-2 April
- Urban Transport Committee, London, 7-8 April
- Regional representatives meeting, London, 20 April
- Management Committee, Prague, 22 April
- Executive Board, Prague, 23-24 April
- Asia/Pacific Seafarers' Regional Committee, Indonesia, 30 April-1 May
- Latin American and Caribbean Fisheries Regional Committee, Rio de Janeiro, week commencing 4 May
- Latin American and Caribbean Seafarers' Regional Committee, Rio de Janeiro, week commencing 4 May
- Civil aviation ramp safety meeting, Copenhagen, 11-12 May
- UPS/integrators meeting, London, 2-3 June
- Tourism Services Section Conference, London, 9-10 June
- European Seafarers' Regional Committee, Dubrovnik, 18-19 June
- Flag of convenience conference, Oslo, 23-24 June
- ITF Seafarers' Trust, London, 26 June
- Seafarers' Section meeting, London, 29-30 June
- Dockers' Section meeting, London, 30 June
- Fair Practices Committee, London, 1-3 July

PEOPLE

- **Jean-Claude Cebelleu** has been elected President of the French cabin crew union (SNPNC) in succession to **Jean-Paul Meheust**.
- **Don Cunningham** has resigned as Vice Chair of the Road Transport Workers' Section on the disbanding of his former union, The Transport and General Workers' Union (1901) Inc. of New Zealand.
- **Poul Jørn Kolding**, union secretary with the Danish union *Metal Søfart*, is the new Chair of the Danish Merchant Fleet Welfare Board.
- **Leonidas Núñez Zelaya** is the new President of the Honduran National Port Company Workers' Union (SITRAENP) and **Roberto de Jesús Contreras** the new Vice President.

■ **Alexander Shepel** was elected President of the Dockers' Union of Russia (DUR) at the union's 4th Extraordinary Congress held in Moscow. Shepel, a former DUR Vice President, succeeds **Vladimir Vasiliev**.

■ The ITF-affiliated Ceylon Mercantile, Industrial and General Workers' Union (CMU) marks 50 years as an independent trade union this

OBITUARIES

■ **Arne Kruse**, President from 1978 to 1988 of the transport group of the Danish Transport and General Workers' Union (SID), died on 24 January, at the age of 72.

■ It is with great sadness that we have to announce the tragic death, in a car accident, of **Vicky**, the wife of the ITF's African Regional Secretary **Ben 'Roxy' Udogwu**. Vicky died while on a visit to her family in Eastern Nigeria while Ben was hosting the ITF's first ever North African Regional Seminar in Cairo at the beginning of February. She was a loving wife

February, which also sees the 50th anniversary of the appointment of **Bala Tampoe** as the CMU's first post-colonial General Secretary. Although formed in 1928, the CMU dates its modern history from the granting of Ceylon's Independence in February 1948. In the past half a century it has grown from a union of little more than 300 white-collar workers in Colombo to a national union of almost 30,000 clerical and manual workers. In a congratulatory message to **Bala Tampoe** on this remarkable milestone, ITF General Secretary **David Cockroft** said: "Not only is **Bala** the longest serving General Secretary I have ever encountered, he is also still one of the most energetic and politically committed. His dedication to the advancement of international solidarity and workers' rights, his good humour and his tenacity have brought him admirers throughout the trade union movement."

■ **Ibrahim Hachem** is the new President of the General Trade Union of Railway Workers of Egypt.

and mother to six children and a constant support to Ben in his work.

■ **Joe Machida**, General Secretary of the Tomakomai Christian Seamen's Service Society and the driving force behind the Tomakomai Seafarers' Centre on the island of Hokkaido, one of the busiest seafarers' centres in Japan, died last November.

■ **Asit Mitra**, General Secretary of the National Union of Seamen of India, died on 16 February.

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FLAG OF CONVENIENCE INSPECTORS MEET



■ The ITF's international team of over 100 Flag of Convenience Inspectors and Co-ordinators met in London from 9 to 13 February for a week of intensive training and briefing on ITF policies and strategy.

– Above: Photo call of Inspectors

appointed over the past 12 months.

– Below: Hye Kyung Kim (Coordinator, Korea) and Maruti Rethrekar (Inspector, India) following proceedings.

– Bottom: One of the group seminars in session.

