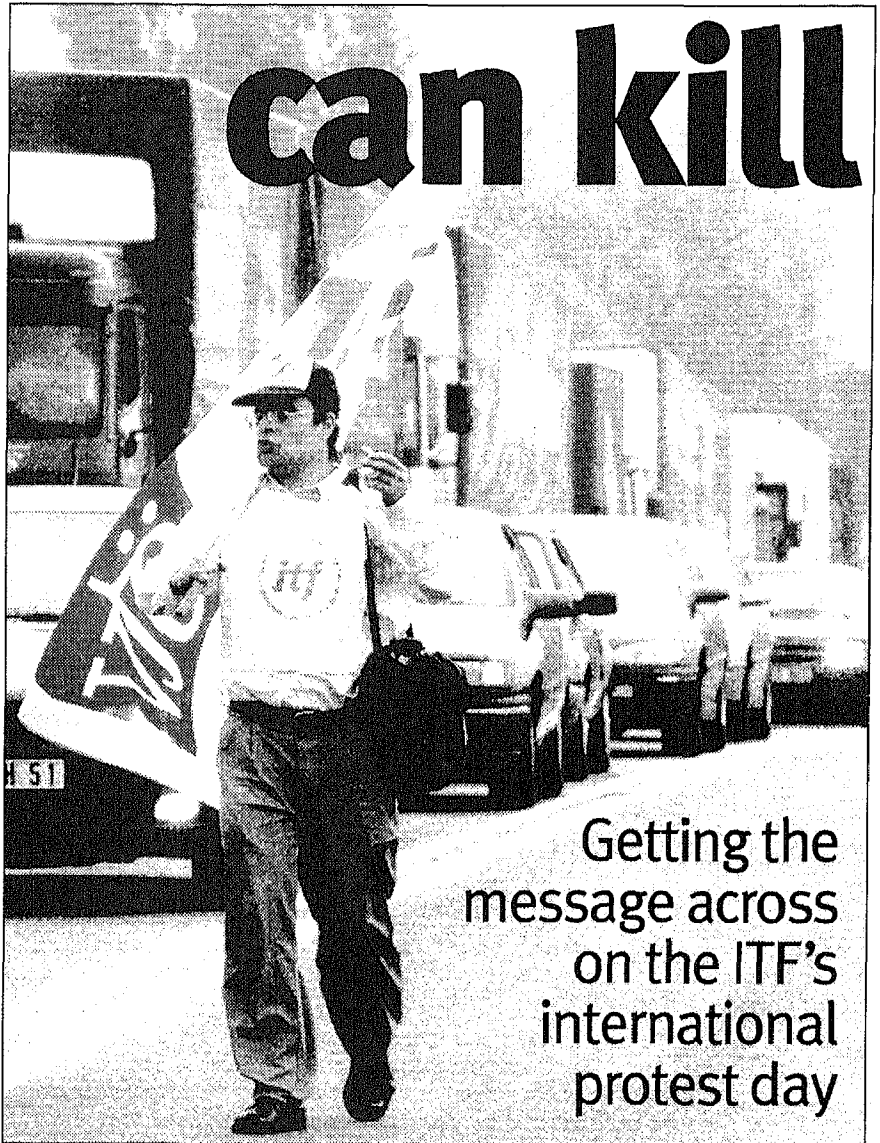
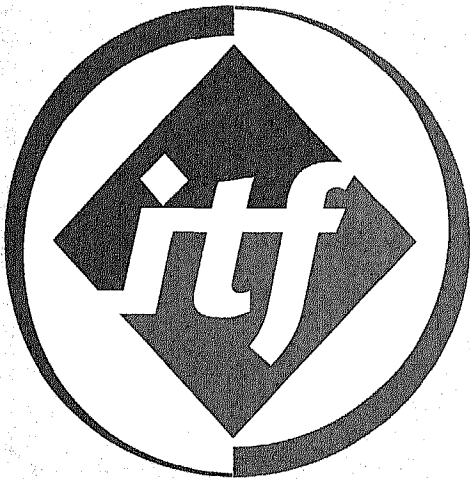


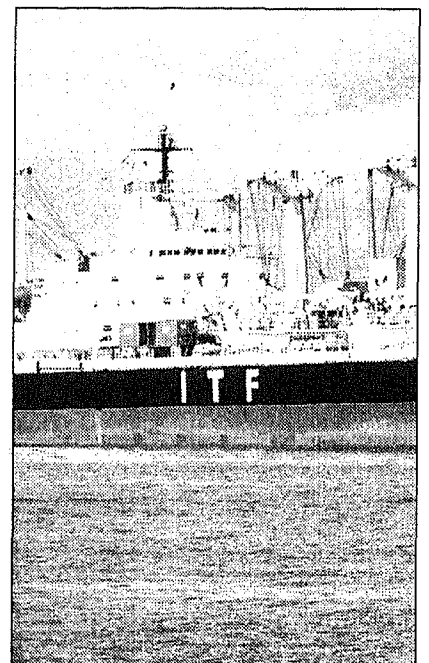
# Driver fatigue

**Plus:**  
Countdown to  
Congress



Getting the  
message across  
on the ITF's  
international  
protest day

**Global  
Mariner  
draws  
crowds on  
world  
voyage**



INFORMATIONS  
NOTIFICATIONS  
NYLETTER  
NACHRICHTEN  
HOUBROCTIN

**Inland transport**

- Canadian, US and Mexican rail unions in solidarity pact
- South African unions help draw up new transport strategy
- Why VIA Rail should stay in public ownership

3-5

**Ship's log**

- Crowds flock to *Global Mariner*
- ITF calls worldwide day of action against flags of convenience

6-7

**Countdown to Congress**

- Spotlight on India as ITF New Delhi Congress approaches
- Indian trade union movement at the crossroads
- Nuclear tests to be condemned
- ITF union membership now stands at 1.1 million
- Women transport workers: Progress, but still far to go

8-10

**Civil aviation**

- Solidarity network for BA-AA alliance
- Unions call for Fair Skies for the Americas
- Unions go into battle against effects of Asia crisis
- Low cost carrier threat to safety

11-13

**Maritime**

- Action in Slovenia
- Ships handled by non-union dock labour to be targeted
- Last British deep-sea seafarers face axe

14-15

**People**

14

■ 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 23 September 1998.

Delegates take first step towards creating regional structure

# Inter-American ties agreed by ITF unions

Over 170 delegates from unions in Latin America, the Caribbean, United States and Canada gathered in Miami from 14 to 16 July for the first ever ITF inter-American conference.

Recognising the increasing economic integration process between the different regions of the Americas, the conference endorsed in principle the idea of working more closely together within an ITF inter-American structure.

Aware of the need to minimise extra costs and bureaucracy, the conference agreed that the new arrangements would be provisional in nature and reviewed after two years. Delegates also emphasised that the main focus for inter-American co-operation should continue to be within the different ITF sections, each of which met to work out the detailed arrangements in its own sectors.

Of equal importance will be the development of detailed trade union co-operation within the emerging network of sub-regional free trade groupings led by Nafta and Mercosur.

From now on, unions within the three distinct subregional groups (Latin America, the Caribbean and North America) will meet together when they feel it necessary to deal with

industrial and international solidarity issues affecting transport workers in the Americas. Joint inter-American meetings will also take place when needed.

The ITF's Rio de Janeiro office, established in 1996 to look after the regional interests of ITF unions in Latin America and the Caribbean will, the conference agreed, now also have responsibility for assisting unions in the United States and Canada, working closely with the ITF's Washington Flag of Convenience Campaign Office and on the clear understanding that this will in no way weaken existing links with ITF Headquarters in London.

The three-day conference was chaired on a rotating basis by ITF Vice Presidents John Bowlers (US) and Marcos Castro (Argentina) and by Francis Mungroo (Trinidad and Tobago), who was elected co-ordinator for the Caribbean group.

Years of confusion about the respective roles of the ITF's European Committee and the Federation of Transport Workers' Unions in the European Union (FST) are set to end following a decision by a meeting in Brussels of major transport unions affiliated to both bodies.

The first meeting of the Working Group on ITF-FST relations, which took place on 4 September, unanimously agreed that it was time to wind up both the FST and the existing ITF European structures and create a new body.

Unlike the FST, which deals only with European Union questions, the new structure will be pan-European in scope and will act both as the European region of the ITF and as the Transport Federation of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC). It will absorb the existing FST office

## New body to unite European affiliates

and staff in Brussels and will need to be put on a firm financial footing, with running costs funded by the unions concerned.

The working group's conclusions, which first have to be approved by the governing bodies of both organisations, are only a first step. Further meetings to draft a new constitution will be needed.

The FST (previously known as the "Brussels Committee") was established in 1958 by ITF unions in the six original European Community member states to act as a separately funded information and lobbying office in Brussels.

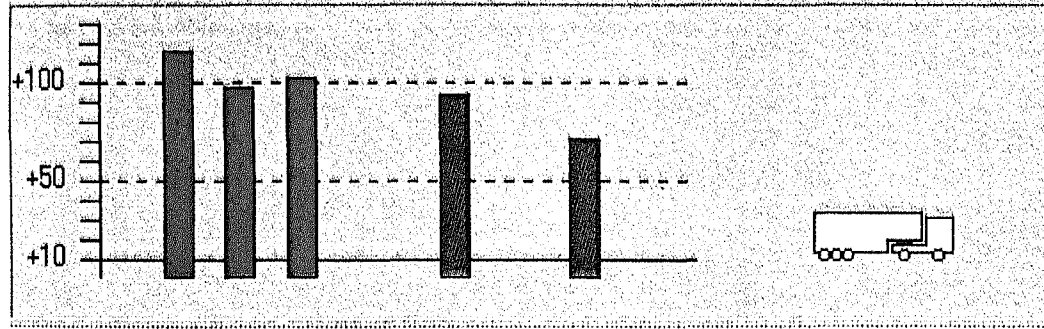
With the transformation of

the European Union into the predominant political and economic force in Europe and with enlargement negotiations under way to include many former Communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe, a fundamental review of transport workers' structures in Europe was long overdue. This was emphasised by ITF General Secretary David Cockroft in his address to the General Assembly of the FST in Luxembourg last November, and it was this Assembly which voted to establish the ITF-FST Working Group.

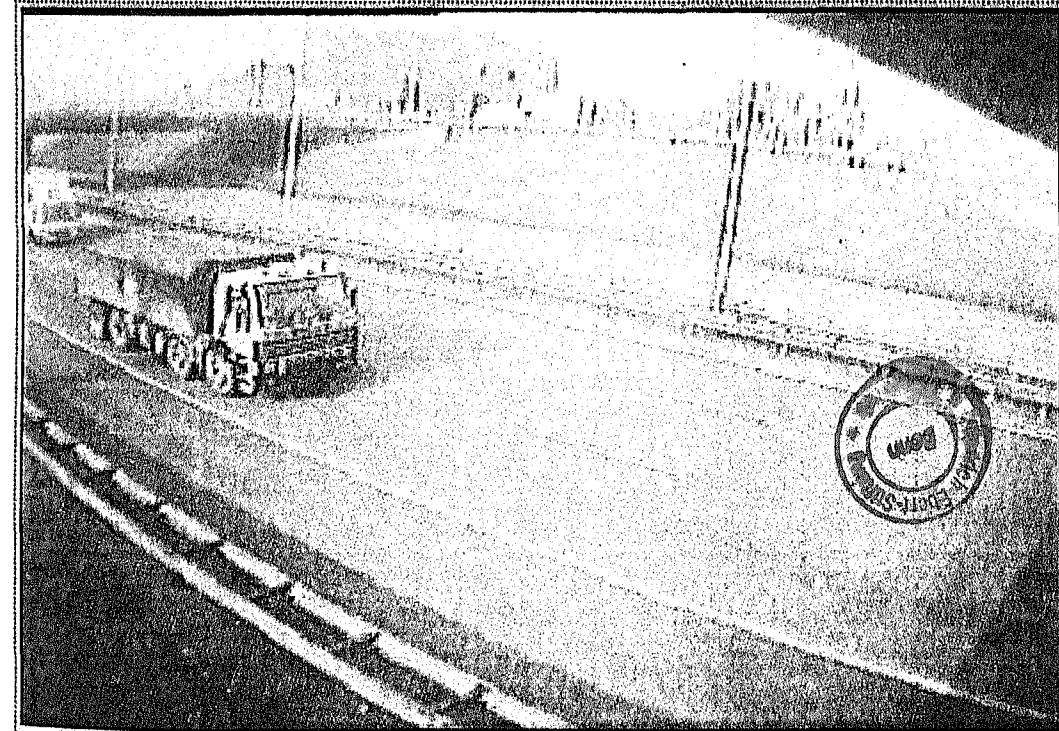


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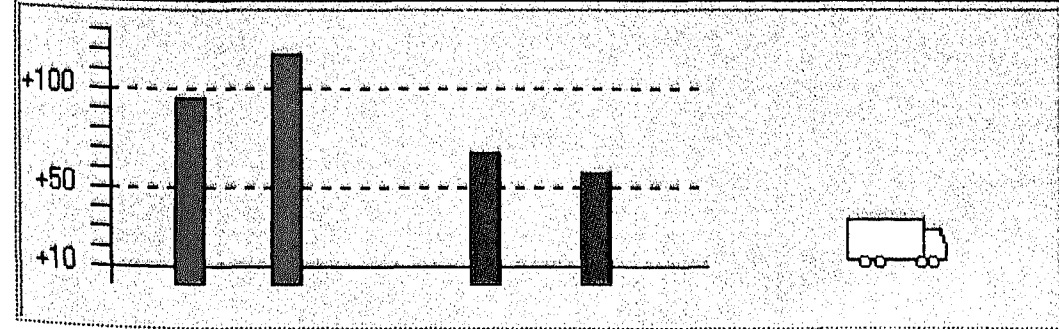


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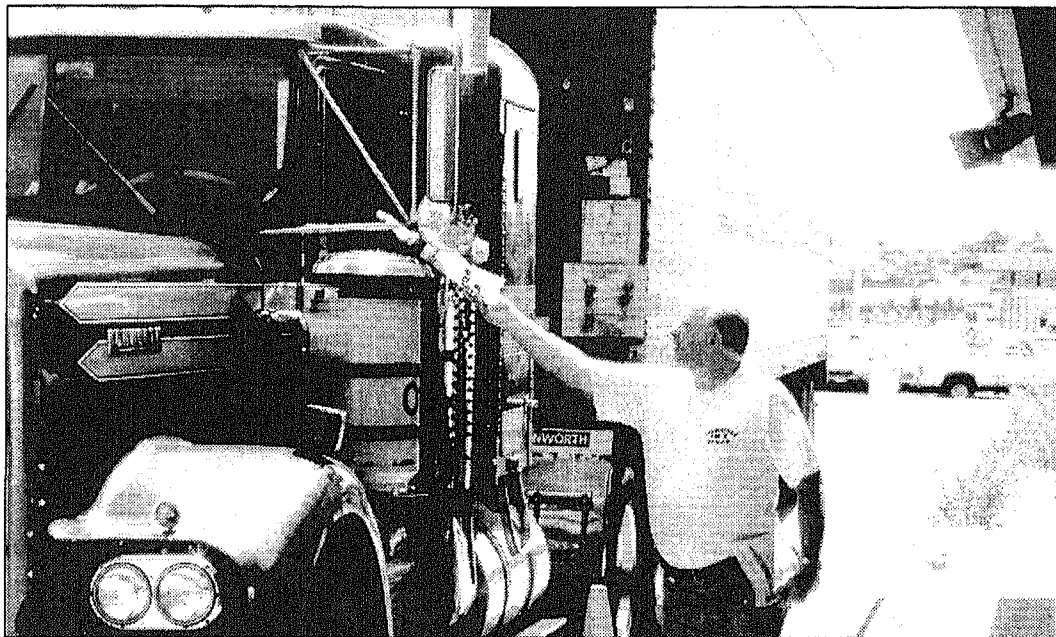
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■ Drivers at the US-Mexican border crossing at Nogales, Arizona, were leafleted by members of the IBT Teamsters' Union on the ITF day of action. Pictured here is Jim Benson, IBT Vice President at Large.



## ITF day of action hailed as a great success

Thousands of bus and truck drivers in countries around the globe joined together on 8 September in a massive international protest against the excessive hours that many of them are forced to work.

Action across all continents, which grabbed the headlines in much of the world's press, ranged from leafleting at key transport arteries and rallies and demonstrations, to slow-moving truck convoys, and short-term blockades of important ports.

The worldwide protest was co-ordinated by the ITF and the Federation of Transport Workers' Unions in the European Union (FST), as part of a long-term campaign to highlight the poor working conditions that the world's professional drivers endure, and in particular, to drive home the message that "fatigue (brought on by working 60, 80 or even 100 hours a week) kills".

At most locations the reaction from professional drivers and the public was positive, with many willing and interested to stop and receive information about the day of action, despite the inevitable delays this caused.

ITF General Secretary David Cockroft described the day as a resounding success. "We have made employers and politicians sit up and take notice. The public too is increasingly on our side. The health and welfare of passenger and freight drivers, and that of other road users, must be protected."

Securing effective and fair regulation of drivers' working hours has been a long-term ambition for the ITF. In 1979, following pressure from the ITF, the International Labour Organization adopted Convention 153, which offers modest protection for the health and safety of drivers including limiting the working week to 48 hours. The ITF would like Convention 153 to be the worldwide minimum standard for the road transport industry.

Highlights of the day of action included:

# The world gets the message: Fatigue kills

● In **Austria**, joint action by the Austrian, German and Italian unions took place. A convoy of 60 lorries on a "go slow" converged on the Brenner Pass, disrupting traffic. At the pass, a mass rally, attended by hundreds of people, took place.

● At its highest point an estimated 3,500 trade unionists from the FO and CFTD were involved in action across **France**. Between 6am and 12pm the Calais ferry and shuttle terminals were blocked and there were actions at Caen, Cherbourg, Dieppe, St Malo, Ouisterham and Clermont Ferrand. The main roads on the French/Spanish and French/Italian borders were blocked. The main routes between Lille and Antwerp and between Valenciennes and Liège were also blocked. There were also actions on the Belgian border. Bus drivers were also involved. In Avignon they blocked off their own station, the first time such action has ever taken place. Spanish drivers, who were

### Cover picture

■ A striking German truck driver carrying his ÖTV union flag walks along the traffic jam of trucks and cars near the French border with Germany at Strasbourg. There were hold-ups at border crossings throughout Europe during the ITF day of action.

Photo: AP/Christian Lutz



# The world gets the message: Fatigue kills

## Dutch devise new truck weight check

Overloaded trucks not only cause excessive damage to the road pavement, writes *ITF Assistant General Secretary Graham Brothers*, they are also a threat to the safety of their drivers and other road users, as well as presenting unfair competition to operators who respect vehicle and axle weight limits. Truck drivers often do not have the means to verify the weight of their vehicles before the start of a journey and consequently have to pay fines if stopped for weight checks.

The Dutch government has been undertaking a project using weigh-in-motion in conjunction with video in order to achieve a higher detection rate and to target companies which are regular overloading offenders. The project, known as Weigh-In-Motion in combination with Video (WIM-VID), comprises sensors laid in the road surface which weigh a vehicle as it passes over at speed. A video camera alongside the sensors photographs the vehicle as it passes (see loose leaf insert).

The weight measurements and video images are transmitted simultaneously to inspectors at a static weighing site; a colour print-out indicates which of the vehicle's axles and axle combinations are overweight if this is the case. Vehicles indicated to be overweight are then stopped by the police and required to proceed to the static weighing station, where they are weighed again and action is taken against offending vehicles. ■



■ A rally (left) of members of Ghana's General Transport, Petroleum and Chemical Workers' Union was held in Accra, along with action – including “go-slow” convoys, overtime bans and press conferences – by African affiliates in Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Mauritius, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

caught up in the action, supported it.

● Action took place in 25 locations throughout **Germany** involving all local branches of the ÖTV. Over 30,000 leaflets were distributed. Two major border actions took place at the French/German border and the Polish/German border. At the French/German border point, 100 lorries blocked the route allowing only one vehicle through at a time, causing a traffic jam of several kilometres involving about 800 trucks.

● In **Italy**, leafleting took place at the borders with Slovenia, Switzerland and France. Union members did not blockade the border points but traffic was slower than usual as drivers stopped to take publicity material.

● **Luxembourg** was virtually isolated, as Luxembourg trade unionists, supported by their neighbours, closed all main border crossings.

● The CCOO and UGT in **Spain** took action at Ayamonte (Huelva), where leaflets were distributed, Fuentes de Oñoro (Salamanca), where traffic was disrupted all morning, and in Tuy

(Galicia), where a two-hour delay took place. Spanish unions also acted in co-operation with French unions in blocking the border with France at Irún and La Junquera for several hours. According to reports, around 1,000 trucks formed a 10km queue on the Spanish side of the border.

● In **Switzerland**, transport unionists led actions at border crossings with France.

● In the **United Kingdom**, representatives of the TGWU and the ITF met transport minister, Lord Whitty, at the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions. The TGWU also leafleted transport routes in the south east of England.

● Protests were also staged throughout **Africa** (see caption above), as well as in **India, Japan, Mongolia, New Zealand, Bulgaria, Estonia, Norway, Brazil, Paraguay** and the **USA**. ■

An historic agreement pledging cross-border solidarity was signed by the USA-based Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees (BMW) and Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE) and by the STFRM (Sindicato de Trabajadores Ferrocarrileros de la República Mexicana) in Mexico City on 23 July at the First North American Railway Labor Conference.

Recent investments by US railways in the Mexican privatisation programme have created common rail employers and owners from Canada through the US into Mexico.

Hosted by the STFRM, the unions adopted a framework of open and full communication, harmony and friendship to bind all rail-

## Canadian, US and Mexican rail unions in solidarity pact

■ After six weeks on the picket lines, public transport workers organised by the Transport Workers' Union of America (TWU) in Philadelphia, USA, are back at work with a new contract providing substantial wage increases. The introduction of part-time workers which was the main issue of the dispute will now go to arbitration. The TWU thanks all ITF unions that supported their strike, which began on 1 June.

way workers in Canada, Mexico and the USA to “create a new and powerful force” in the new global economy.

● Meanwhile, the BLE and United Transportation Union (UTU) have reached an agreement to “explore the creation of a new organisation, uniting the two rail operating unions”. The unions have created five committees to examine specific details of union work. The overall process will be managed by an oversight committee which includes both unions' presidents. ■

■ *Right: Participants at the ITF's first seminar of road transport workers' unions in South Asia discuss issues facing unorganised workers in the industry. Funded by the German education foundation FES, 23 trade unionists from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka attended the meeting held in Kathmandu from 19 to 21 July. Working group meetings of the seminar revealed the appalling conditions of the professional drivers. Many work more than 12 hours per day without proper rest*



*facilities while benefits, paid holidays, medical care, and social security are often not guaranteed. Conditions are even worse for unorganised drivers. The employers can get away with such conditions because of high unemployment rates. The participants pledged to further promote their organisation drive as well as to take part in the ITF's forthcoming Road Transport Action Day to highlight the need for change.*

## South African unions help draw up new transport strategy

The new South Africa has seen that short-term planning for transport is not enough. The government has set up a project called "Moving South Africa" to come up with plans to take the country up to the year 2020. Former Assistant General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, Harald Harvey, has been seconded by the union to head the project.

The problems confronting transport planners include a road accident fatality rate of 10,000 a year, declining use of rail and bus transport, the overloading of vehicles by hauliers, a lack of investment in road maintenance, long commuting distances

and disproportionately high transport charges. The task of reversing these problems is made harder by the shortage of public finance and trained personnel.

"Moving South Africa" has been set up with a Project Team in which all transport parties, including the trade unions, participate. The objective is to come up with practical recommendations for high impact interventions, including how to prioritise the investment of scarce resources. Working parties are developing positions on practical issues such as improvements in transport networks to facilitate increasing economic integration of the Southern African region; targeted development of new technology; appropriate low-technology applications; targeted infrastructure development to attract investment in manufacturing; and appropriate responses to the impact of the development of global transport providers.

"Moving South Africa" was published in September as an interim consultative report. The ITF's South African affiliates hope that whatever the outcome of the project, it meets the objectives of expanding employment with decent minimum conditions of employment.

### ITF Assistant General Secretary Graham Brothers writes...

## Why VIA Rail should stay in public ownership

VIA Rail, Canada, was established in 1977 as a government-owned corporation and took over responsibility for intercity rail passenger services from Canadian Pacific and Canadian National. VIA Rail has suffered acutely from a shortage of capital for new equipment and a lack of government financial commitment to services required in the public interest.

In 1997 the Minister of Transport requested the Cana-

dian Parliament's Standing Committee on Transport to undertake a review of rail passenger services, in particular VIA Rail's role, operations and funding.

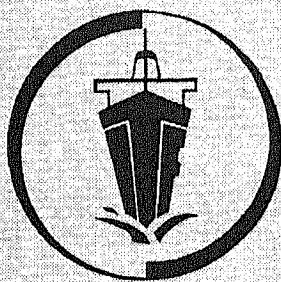
The committee took evidence from a wide range of interested parties, including the ITF's affiliate, the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW-Canada). It has now published its report and made a number of recommendations, notably that:

- the Government make a long-term commitment to VIA Rail operation of passenger services (minimum 10 years), including funding of C\$170 million per year to recapitalise rolling stock, infrastructure and services;
- services operated in remote areas must be protected in the public interest and funded by the federal Government;
- if VIA Rail is unable to negotiate reasonable track access agreements with the private

freight railways, the government should use its legislative powers to ensure access;

- VIA Rail should have the status of a government-owned commercial corporation;
- limited public funding should be provided for continuing study of the feasibility of high-speed rail.

CAW-Canada commented that for the most part the report is consistent with the recommendations it made when it appeared before the Parliamentary Committee.



# Crowds flock to Global Mariner

## ITF ship takes flag of convenience exhibition and campaign to ports around north west Europe in first leg of world voyage

### London 7 July **Named and shamed**

The *Global Mariner* set sail on its world voyage with the ITF "naming and shaming" 20 of the world's worst rogue shipowners, managers and manning agents. The 20, from Greece, Indonesia, South Korea, Romania, Ukraine, Guinea, USA, Turkey, Israel, Norway, Colombia and the United Kingdom, have, according to the ITF, the worst record of abuse of seafarers and for substandard shipping.

The *Global Mariner*, with its exhibition depicting the exploitation faced by seafarers on flag of convenience ships and the dangers that FOC vessels pose to their crews and to the marine environment, is being sent on its year-long voyage to mark the 50th anniversary of the ITF's campaign against FOCs.

### Reykjavik 11 July **A warm welcome**

The *Global Mariner* was warmly welcomed by Jonas Gardasson of the Icelandic Seafarers' Union and Borgthor Kjaernsted, the ITF Inspector. The exhibition was opened to the public on 12 July. The Icelandic Trade Union Centre's brass band played at the opening ceremony. During the afternoon an accordionist moved around the ship playing sea shanties and traditional Icelandic songs. Among the 400 visitors to the ship were local trade union leaders including Benedikt Valsson from the Icelandic Officers' Association.

### Bergen 16 July **Making a splash**

After a rough sea passage where the swell caused heavy rolling and helped the newer crew members to find their sea legs, the *Global Mariner* arrived in time for an evening press conference. This resulted in a major newspaper warning Norwegians of the importance of bringing back and keeping the country's vessels under their national flag.

The Norwegian ITF Co-ordinator, Birger Pedersen, and Inspectors Steinar Garberg and Ketil Karlsen arranged an impressive exhibition on Norwegian transport workers. There were also poetry readings, folk dancing and music provided by local artists and performers. Over 400 people visited the ship.

### Kotka 22 July **10,000 visitors...**

Most of the crew took part in a parade to mark the start of the annual Kotka Maritime Festival on the day after arriving in Finland. They marched at the front, closely followed by a brass band of Elvis lookalikes.

A reception on the following evening was opened by retired ITF Inspector Jatta Moilanen, who

presented the ship with a personally embroidered tapestry: "United we stand, divided we fall". Special guest was Antero Kekkonen, Deputy Chair of the Social Democrats and member of the Finnish Parliament. There was also a visit from the Festival King and Queen.

Around 10,000 people visited the ship during the 16 hours that the exhibition was open over the weekend. Each morning there were people on the quayside waiting to board. Thirty enthusiastic volunteers from Finnish unions, led by ITF Inspector Markku Uimomen, supported the crew in supervision duties.

### Riga 28 July ...7,000 more visitors

The first three days in port were spent having repairs done to damage on the port side incurred in London. Then the *Global Mariner* took up her berth near the heart of the old city of Riga.

Advance publicity organised by the Latvian National Seafarers' Union resulted in over 7,000 people visiting the exhibition during the 18 hours it was open, far exceeding the 2,000 originally expected.

Many positive comments were left in the visitors' book including the following from the Vanalegu family: "Thank you for the opportunity to watch ships in our time. It is wonderful that there are trade unions fighting to have vessels to be registered under national flags."

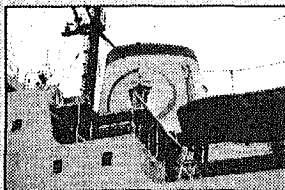
The visit culminated in a farewell reception attended by all the national trade union leaders.

### Gdynia 5 August **Unions win talks**

A press conference and reception held on the day of arrival was attended by the Mayor of Gdynia, the Presidents of all Polish ITF maritime and dockworkers' affiliates, along with several Members of Parliament, shipping and port officials, and the daughter of a Master who perished with the bulk carrier *Leros Strength*, who is also a member of parliament.

Representatives of the Solidarnosc union reminded those assembled of the proposition they had put to the Polish Government to establish a round table committee on the future of the Polish shipping industry.

Prior to the visit of the *Global Mariner* there had been no response. But after 7,000 of the 28,363 visitors who boarded during the three and a half day stay had passed through the exhibition, government officials telephoned Solidarnosc to set up a meeting between shipping unions and the Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek.



### Next ports of call

- **Lisbon** (Portugal)  
17-26 September
- **Halifax** (Canada)  
2-7 October
- **New York** (USA)  
9-13 October
- **Baltimore** (USA)  
14-19 October
- **Savannah** (USA)  
21-26 October
- **Fort Lauderdale** (USA)  
27 October-2 November
- **New Orleans** (USA)  
4-8 November
- **Houston** (USA)  
9-12 November
- **Veracruz** (Mexico)  
14-18 November
- **San Juan** (Puerto Rico)  
23-26 November
- **Port of Spain** (Trinidad)  
28-30 November



"Since the very beginning of Solidarnosc we have been urging the government to solve the problems of flags of convenience," said Janusz Maciejewicz, President of the maritime section of Solidarnosc. "Now the Government is considering a Polish second register – inviting foreign shipowners to fly the Polish flag. We are afraid for our industry and for our seafarers," he added. "Opening our national fleet to foreign owners can only make things worse. We have to ask the government whether they really want a shipping industry."

Media coverage of the visit was intense with national and local TV, radio and press issuing daily reports on the events taking place in Gdynia. Local volunteers provided by local ITF unions assisted the crew to run the exhibition.

#### **Copenhagen 11 August Media attention**

Holger Nielsen, Executive Board member of the ITF and chair of the transport section of the SID Danish general workers' union, welcomed the *Global Mariner* by pointing out that more than 250 Danish ships were registered outside Denmark.

This ensured that the visit received heavy national media attention, which even encouraged many representatives from the Danish maritime authorities and the shipowners' association to visit the exhibition. Some 2,000 members of the public visited the ship.

#### **Oslo 19 August 50,000 mark passed**

Despite the heavy rain which fell during the first two days of the visit, over 1,600 people came on board. This means that the running total for visitors now stands at over 50,000 after only 8 port visits.

Amongst the visitors in Oslo were both shipowners and several people from the Norwegian Shipowners' Association (NSA). Comments were positive and the NSA even asked for a copy of the *Al Ross* animation film shown in the exhibition. The ship also attracted visitors from Oslo Port Authorities, the Norwegian Maritime Directorate and the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

#### **Hamburg 28 August In the spotlight**

There was an unexpected slide show in Hamburg harbour soon after the *Global Mariner* arrived in Germany. The screen was provided by the hull of the *OPDR Lisboa*. Phrases such as "I am an FOC vessel" and "My owner does not like collective bargaining agreements" were projected onto the vessel along with the logos of the ITF and ÖTV (German seafarers' and dockers' union).

The visit opened officially with a press

**"After 7,000 of the 28,363 visitors who boarded during the three and a half day stay had passed through the exhibition, government officials telephoned Solidarnosc to set up a meeting between shipping unions and the Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek."**

conference, with reports later carried on radio, TV and in the newspapers. The Mayor of Hamburg, Ortwin Runde, welcomed the ship and the ITF at a reception. After the speeches there was a performance of songs by Bertolt Brecht.

The visit closed with a discussion forum on the future of German ports and German shipping. Participants included representatives of German shipping lines, German port employers and trade unionists. One of the issues raised was competition between ports in Europe, in particular with relation to the Green Paper on the port industry issued by the European Commission.

The *Global Mariner* had a prime position in harbour alongside the *Cap San Diego*, a permanent museum ship. Almost 9,000 visitors came on board during the three midweek open days. Special thanks must go to the huge number of ÖTV volunteers who with their hard work secured the success of the visit and allowed the crew a break.

#### **Rotterdam 1 September Queuing to board**

Even before the ship opened to the public a queue had formed on the quayside and over two days more than 6,800 visitors came on board.

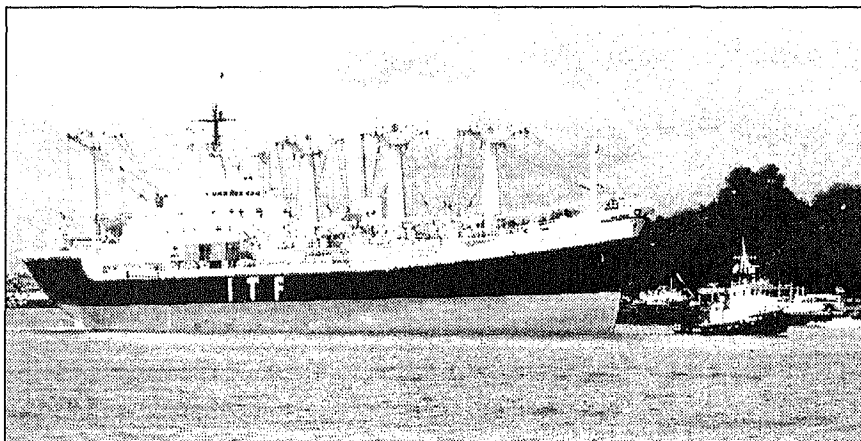
Two forum discussions took place. There was one on the FOC Campaign, organised by the FWZ, the Dutch Seafarers' Union. The other meeting, organised by FNV Bondgenoten, dealt with developments in the Rotterdam port and the role of the union in the reform and modernisation process.

#### **Le Havre 7 September Public debate**

The ship was accompanied into port by a trawler displaying a banner saying "Remember the *Noble Art*", which referred to a French trawler sunk by a Turkish cargo vessel.

One of the highlights was a public debate on abandoned seafarers which was attended by Christian Serradji of the French Ministry of Transport. During the visit the captain and some of the crew visited the *Kifangondo*, an Angolan ship which has been in Le Havre for 4 years. The Angolan crew were invited to be part of the exhibition team and they gave very much appreciated help.

Because of bad weather, the number of visitors during the first three days was quite low – 1,200. However, the weather took a turn for the better on Sunday and 1,360 visitors came on board, making a total of 2,560.



■ Entering Rotterdam.





# Spotlight on India as ITF

## Indian trade union movement at the crossroads

**Mahendra Sharma and Sangam Tripathy of the ITF office in New Delhi write...**

### Labour

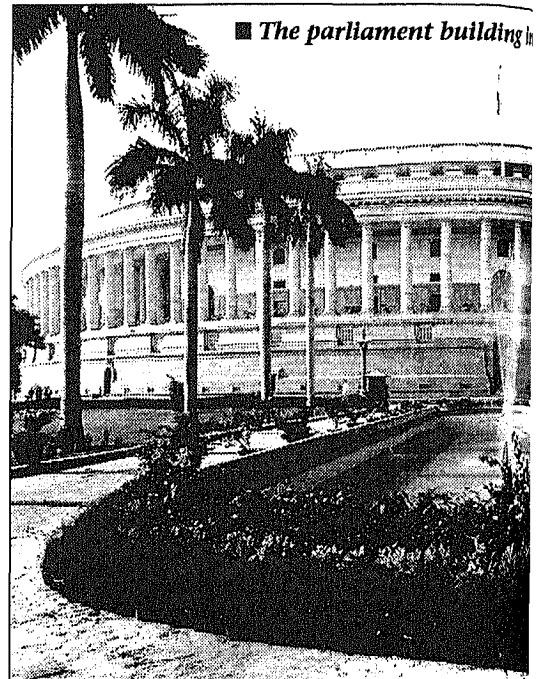
India, with its population of about 950 million, is amongst the most populated countries of the world. Figures in the Ninth Five-Year Plan (1998-2002) document show that two out of three employed persons in 1997 were involved in agriculture, accounting for 237 million people out of a total 397 million employed people. The trade and transport sector came next, employing 46.8 million, followed by manufacturing with 43.6 million, the service sector with 39 million and construction with 14.4 million.

### Unions

Trade unions in India have been in existence since 1890. The history of the trade union movement is inextricably linked with the history of the struggle for freedom. However, once independence was achieved, differences in ideology brought about division in the movement. Now there are 10 recognised central trade union organisations (CTUOs) having links with one or other of the political parties. However, only one out of five registered unions in the country is affiliated to a CTUO.

The number of workers covered by collective agreements is barely 2 per cent of the total labour force.

There is thus dominance of regulation by legislation. Union density in the informal sector, which accounts for 90 per cent of the labour force, is negligible. Over 40 laws to protect and promote workers' welfare have thus far been enacted although enforcement is very weak. The minimum wage varies from state to state



and within a state, from industry to industry. In the private sector, agreements at enterprise level on issues of labour flexibility are on the increase.

### Phase of transition

The new economic and industrial policies announced by the government of India in 1991 have had far reaching implications for labour and trade unions in the country. In the wake of ensuing liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation, more jobs have been lost than created. Nearly 200,000 people were retired out from the public sector alone from 1991 to 1994. And as shrinkage of jobs has overtaken the organised sector, we see more and more people entering the unorganised sector. For these people lack of job security, assured wages and absence of any worthwhile form of social security stares them in the face.

Protests by the trade unions have not been able to impede the structural reforms started by the government. With only a few areas where the government has temporarily conceded ground, for example by postponing the restructuring of the banking and insurance sectors, the net result since 1991 therefore has been the marginalisation of the labour movement.

### The agenda ahead

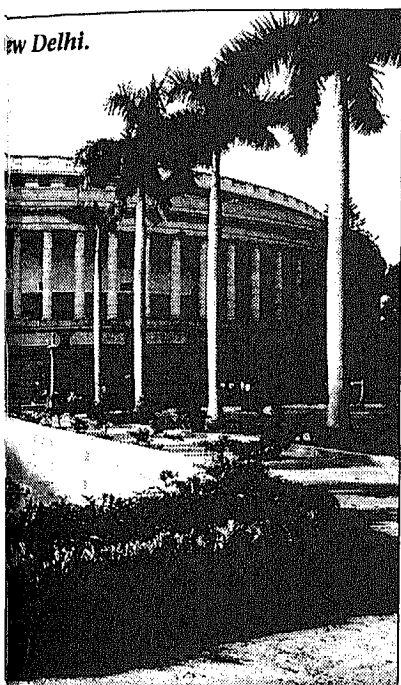
It would not be absolutely wrong to say that the biggest challenge to trade unions comes not so much from governments and employers but from trade unions themselves.

The agenda ahead may include the following items as part of an action plan:

■ *Protests by the trade unions, including ITF affiliates (right) have not been able to impede the structural reforms started by the government.*



# New Delhi Congress approaches



## Nuclear tests to be condemned

Delegates attending the ITF Congress in New Delhi will be called upon to reaffirm the federation's unconditional opposition to the development, deployment and use of nuclear weapons.

In an emergency resolution, which was drafted following the nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan earlier this year, the action of the two governments is condemned and all nations are called upon to prioritise economic and social development rather than the production of armaments.

An exhibition, organised by Rengo, the Japanese National Labour Centre, will be on display at Congress, which recalls the devastating consequences of the use of

nuclear weapons in Japan in August 1945, when tens of thousands of people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki were killed or injured, and hundreds of thousands left destitute.

The ITF is also considering staging (in conjunction with Congress) a public protest in New Delhi to highlight the unequivocal opposition of the world's transport trade unions to nuclear weapons.

Worldwide condemnation followed the nuclear tests conducted by India in May, and Pakistan's subsequent test later in the month, leading to concern that staging Congress in India could be seen as condoning their actions. However, along with ITF affiliates from other countries, those in India are strongly opposed to their government's nuclear policy and to the development of nuclear weapons in general.

- Organising is to be a top priority. There is a desperate need to extend the support system of the organised sector trade unions to agricultural workers, workers in the informal sector, women and child labour.
- Trade unions need to merge and reduce their numbers at various levels and be independent of political parties and the government.
- Trade unions also need to engage in an honest examination of their structures and spare

***"Organising is to be a top priority. There is a desperate need to extend the support system of trade unions to women and child labour."***

no effort in improving internal democracy.  
● Lastly they need to adopt proactive policies and programmes more attuned to the current economic situation.

The atmosphere is encouraging and the opportunities promising. What is needed is a change in attitudes.

## ITF union membership now stands at 1.1 million

In 1924 Edo Fimmen, ITF General Secretary, paved the way for the first non-European affiliations to the ITF. These included a union from British India Railways with a membership of 8,500. In March 1925 a violent railway strike involving thousands of workers broke out in India. Although the strike ended after four months without any achievement, it marked a "beginning of awakening of the East" for the ITF. By 1926 two seafaring unions had also affiliated to the ITF.

There is also historical evidence that some time around 1929 India was willing to host the first regional Conference of the ITF in the "Far East", although the British colonial



■ Assistant Secretary Mahendra Sharma in New Delhi.

regime did not allow it. However, more and more affiliations continued and by the late 1950s the Indian and Japanese memberships became the twin pillars of the

ITF's Asian organisation.

Today the ITF membership in India stands at over 1.1 million transport workers in more than 30 affiliated unions from all transport sectors.

The ITF Co-ordinating Committee of Indian Affiliates oversees and co-ordinates the activities of the affiliates. In 1993, a sub-regional office of the ITF was opened in New Delhi to better serve the needs and activities of the affiliates in the South Asia region.

The holding of the ITF Congress in India, the first time in a developing country, is being looked upon by the Indian affiliates with much pride as a recognition of the transport workers' movement in India and its achievements and the potential it carries into the new millennium.



### Commemorating trade union rights

Delegates attending Congress will be asked to endorse a call for the ITF to exert its maximum influence on governments who have not yet signed up to International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions 87 and 98 guaranteeing fundamental trade union rights.

International recognition of the freedom to form and join independent trade unions is being commemorated this year, the 50th anniversary of ILO Convention No 87.

Signed in 1948, Convention 87 was the first time that trade union rights were recognised at international level and provided a guarantee in principle of the right for unions to organise, the basic building block upon which all other trade union rights are constructed.

Convention 87 is closely linked to ILO Convention 98, signed the following year, which included the right not to be discriminated against at work for trade union activities and the right to collective bargaining.

Despite the conventions, however, trade union activists remain targets of violence, and basic trade union rights continue to be threatened. Figures released this year by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions revealed that nearly 300 trade unionists were killed in 1997, nearly 2,400 were arrested and detained for union activities, and more than 50,000 people lost their jobs. Also, many countries have yet to ratify Convention 87, including China and the USA. ■

***“As in all other walks of life, the most common problem that women often face in the transport industry is sexual harassment by male colleagues.”***



## Women transport workers: Progress, but still far to go

**Congress will be preceded by the ITF Women's Conference, the conclusions of which will be presented to Congress.**

**Here, RR Prathima, of the Madras Port Trust Employees' Union, describes the problems faced by Indian women transport workers...**

Today the women's movement is a worldwide phenomenon. In a short period, women's consciousness of themselves and their roles has revived. Opposition to their employment in diverse fields is also steadily diminishing.

The position of women in Asian countries, however, has lagged behind. Government policies, social perceptions and local culture and customs have often had a hindering impact.

India has an elaborate system of laws to protect the rights of women under the constitution. In the transport industry, the principle of equal pay for equal work irrespective of sex is guaranteed at least in the organised sectors.

As elsewhere, women are concentrated in the clerical and service occupations.

### Railways

Many women with excellent academic qualifications sink into the oblivion of a non-descript working life. Keeping the trains rolling in and out of the stations and keeping track of railway finances can be a demanding assignment – and it is the likely place to find a women executive. Yet, domineering males in the industry can never stomach a woman holding higher positions.

### Civil aviation

Large numbers of women are considered for employment in the aviation industry not for their brains but for their looks, ending up being treated as a commodity. Women cabin crew are still grounded on attaining a particular age. A battle needs to be waged not only on the legal front but also against social prejudices.

### Road transport

Except for desk jobs, women are denied employment as drivers even if they hold a valid

driving licence. Only a few women are employed as bus drivers. Only now do we have women autorickshaw drivers in some cities such as Madras, Bombay and Pune.

### Ports

Here too women are restricted to deskwork. Women are not permitted on night shifts except in a few categories and certain jobs are prohibited. They are often denied the training that will make them eligible for promotion. Despite these disadvantages, women's employment in the industry is on the increase.

### Tourism

Year round employment with some semblance of fair and affirmative action in hiring and training of women needs to be promoted by the Indian Tourism Development Corporation and all other similar bodies.

### Seafaring

In the maritime industry, as well as in inland water transport, female employment is very scant, and usually confined to clerical and office jobs.

As in all other walks of life, the most common problem that women often face in the transport industry is sexual harassment by male colleagues and higher ups. This problem cannot be solved merely by enacting laws but requires social change. When the harassment is from higher ups, it sometimes results in the loss of employment – and always leads to mental agony and inefficiency.

Clearly, women transport workers have to carry on the fight ahead demanding equality and equal opportunities at the workplace. I am reminded of a saying in one of our religious scriptures. It says: “But, if you will not fight this righteous war, then having abandoned your own duty and fame, you shall incur sin.”

■ The Miami meeting was the latest in a series of international meetings organised by the ITF to bring together trade unionists within the emerging global alliances. The ITF has already established formal co-operation agreements for the Star Alliance and for the alliance which includes Delta and Swissair (known as the Alpha Trade Union Alliance).

ITF affiliates representing workers in British Airways (BA), American Airlines (AA) and other carriers associated with the planned new alliance, including Canadian Airlines, Qantas, Iberia and Aerolíneas Argentinas met together at Miami Beach in July 1998 to develop a co-ordinated trade union response to the proposed global alliance.

As well as reviewing the latest proposals from European and US competition authorities, the unions discussed the impact of the proposed global tie-up on workers from the affected airlines and compared notes on the extent to which unions were being consulted by their managements on developments.

The meeting followed a

## Solidarity network for BA-AA alliance

preliminary announcement by the European Union Competition Directorate which suggested that the EU would conditionally approve the new alliance subject to a reduction of frequencies on some routes and the transfer of some Heathrow slots to other carriers.

The unions participating at the meeting resolved to exchange information, assist each other mutually and co-ordinate action in relation to the alliance. To give effect to these commitments, they signed a formal Interna-

tional Trade Union Co-operation Agreement which also committed the unions to solidarity action.

The agreement also mandated the ITF to organise a series of union meetings in 1999 and to prepare a development plan for a specific Internet information site dedicated to the alliance. In the absence of any official name for the BA-AA tie-up, the group agreed to call itself the ABC Trade Union Alliance.

● On 21 September, BA, AA, Cathay Pacific, Canadian Airlines and Qantas announced the formation of their "One World" alliance.

## Unions call for Fair Skies for the Americas

Civil aviation unions from North, South and Central America and the Caribbean, participating in the ITF Inter-American Conference at Miami Beach in June, adopted a policy statement calling for "Fair Skies for the Americas".

The policy statement acknowledges the rapid development of an integrated aviation market between North and Latin America and in particular highlights the signing of "open skies" agreements between the United States and countries in the Southern hemisphere.

While the US-Latin America aviation market is one of the fastest growing in the world, the policy document points out that workers have more often been victims than beneficiaries of regional integration. Liberalisation and deregulation have unleashed ferocious cost cutting and competition which have led to hundreds of airline bankruptcies, cost hundreds of thousands of jobs throughout the Americas, and left many communities without socially and economically vital air links.

The statement pointed out that, contrary to their stated claims of opening up markets, "open skies" agreements had led to the creation of new monopolies. Some national airlines in Latin America risk being relegated to the role of feeder carriers to the big US airlines.

In response to these challenges, the strategy paper proposes the development of "smart"

regulation to achieve Fair Skies for the Americas. In particular, the policy called for regulation which would:

- encourage fair competition and market access but maintain, through minimum safeguards, the right of all countries to participate in international air transport.
- ensure the vital public service role of civil aviation for the provision of air transport services to geographically remote communities.
- retain ownership and control rules which prevent flags of convenience entering the aviation industry.
- provide harmonised safety rules which ensure the safest operating and professional standards throughout the region.
- introduce safeguards against any form of outsourcing or export of work that detaches vital safety tasks beyond effective safety oversight by the aviation authorities, or beyond effective social protections.
- establish minimum labour standards and labour rights throughout the region.
- ensure effective participation by the trade unions as industry stakeholders in discussions and negotiations concerning international air agreements and safety harmonisation within the region.

According to Stuart Howard, Secretary of the ITF Civil Aviation Section, the statement also sends an important signal that unions throughout the Americas are adopting a common and united approach to meeting change and defending workers' rights.

**"Some national airlines in Latin America risk being relegated to the role of feeder carriers to the big US airlines."**

# Unions go into battle against effects of Asia crisis

ITF Civil Aviation Secretary Stuart Howard writes...

## Message to ICAO

The structure for the international policing of safety has not kept pace with the globalisation of the industry. This is a key point which the ITF will be taking to the ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) General Assembly in September. It will be hard, however, to outdo the brutal frankness of Dick Stirling, Director General of the Asia Pacific Airline Association, who recently noted: "Frankly, many highly reputable airlines have been amazingly lucky so far in putting their codes and their passengers on the flights of other more marginal operators. The law of averages dictates, however, that luck will one day run out, and when a group of blue-rinse widows from Florida are spread across an Asian mountainside by a code-share cowboy, the game will be up." ■

## Going "virtual"

Malaysian Airways is responding to the crisis by undertaking a massive contracting out. According to Orient Aviation Magazine the company's chairman Tan Sri Tajudin Ramli "has set his sights on transforming the Malaysian flag carrier into a 'virtual' carrier". The company plans to contract out catering, maintenance, ground handling and aircraft ownership. ■

The airline industry is a sensitive barometer of the economic environment. The effects of any economic downturn on air travel are usually swift and severe.

There is no surprise that the current crisis in the Asia/Pacific region has hit airlines hard. Carriers have responded by cancelling aircraft orders, dropping routes, contracting out areas of their operations, and seeking global alliances.

Aviation unions in the region recently assessed the impact of the crisis on unions at an ITF meeting held in Sydney.

## Japanese improve co-ordination

Even before the full force of the Asian crisis had hit Japan, Japan Airlines had announced a restructuring plan involving 5,000 job losses. A range of cost cutting measures have brought friction with trade unions.

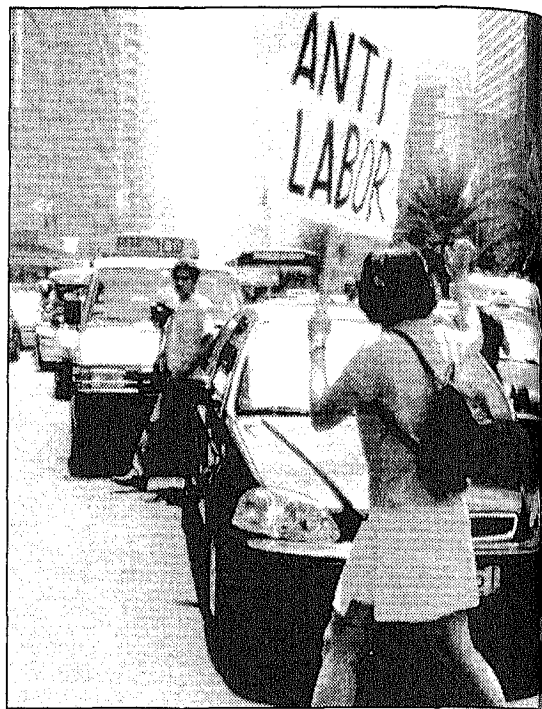
When unions complained at more intense rostering and flight and duty times the company threatened to end the check off system for one of the JAL unions and to end co-operation on rostering to allow for union business.

The chief area of cost cutting, however, has been the introduction of around 1,800 cabin crew on short term contracts with inferior conditions. The unions have been fighting this casualisation, insisting that contract workers must be made permanent after three years, as well as gaining improvements in conditions for temporary crews.

Perhaps the most significant development, however, has been moves towards greater co-operation between aviation unions in Japan. Inside JAL five of the smaller in-house unions representing cabin crew, ground staff and flight engineers are developing much closer co-ordination.

At the same time the largest JAL union KOKU-DOMEI has been co-ordinating closely with the union in Japan's second largest carrier All Nippon Airways (ANA).

There are now plans to set up a new organisation KOKU-RENGO which will combine the



two into the largest ever civil aviation trade union in Japan.

## Australians get a grip on outsourcing

Australian aviation unions have developed a response to the threat of companies contracting out major areas of work. Qantas has tried to insulate itself from the Asian crisis, dropping routes to Asian destinations while opening new routes to Europe and Latin America. The airline has sought to cut costs by contracting out a wide range of activities, particularly ramp, customer service and maintenance operations.

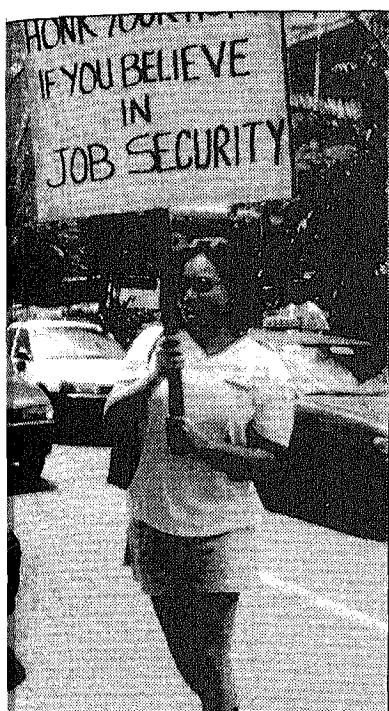
However, the unions had established an "Outsourcing Protocol" in their bargaining agreement of December 1996. This insisted that Qantas employees had to be allowed to put in their own tender for any work the company planned to contract out. Moreover, it stipulated that no bid by any outside company could step outside of the existing basic pay and conditions already agreed by the unions for the airline industry.

According to the Transport Workers' Union, union tenders have kept customer service and ramp service work in Brisbane, Perth, Melbourne, Sydney, Cairns, Coolangatta and Sydney airports. Qantas and the unions have signed five-year contracts in those airports to ensure security of employment in addition to maintaining agreed productivity targets.

Ansett's international operations are almost all within the Asia/Pacific region and the airline has been hit hard by the drop of traffic in the region. The FAAA has been fighting to protect cabin crew jobs.

## PALEA: the union that refuses to die

In 1994 the ground staff union PALEA became known as "the union that refuses to die" after



■ *Philippine Airlines cabin crew demonstrate for job security outside company headquarters in Manila.*

Philippine Airlines (PAL) tried to sack the entire union leadership. This was barely a year after privatisation and the airline coming under the control of tobacco magnate and plantation owner Lucio Tan.

In 1998 the regional economic crisis and the need to drastically reduce routes provided a new opportunity for the company to attack the unions.

A dispute over the forced retirement of pilots over the age of 40 years resulted in the sacking of all the airline's 600 pilot workforce and a company announcement of 5,000 forced retrenchments among cabin crew and ground staff. The unions believed that this was make or break time for union organisation at the airline.

Last July, a government strike ban was ignored as PALEA launched an indefinite strike and surrounded the airport with picket lines. The union besieged the airline head offices in the business district of Makati. ITF unions pledged international support and provided financial assistance.

The strike action brought the company to the negotiating table. The numbers for retrenchment were reduced to 1,800 and these were to be voluntary and aided by compensation packages.

After winning these gains the union barely had time to breathe before it was faced by a new ultimatum from the PAL management. The company is demanding that the union sign up to a deal in which the union would receive 20 per cent of the shares in the company in return for a 10 year period of no

changes in the collective bargaining agreement.

The union has said it cannot tie itself to such a deal. The company has said it will shut down PAL's operations completely.

### **Indonesia: crisis creates opportunities**

In a number of the countries particularly badly hit by the current economic crisis, the airlines are still government owned. Many of the unions report that in these countries governments fearful of social unrest and aware of the key role of aviation in stimulating economic activity, have avoided making mass lay offs at airlines (for example Thai Airways, China Airlines, Korean Air).

The crisis in Indonesia, however, has brought a level of social unrest which has dislodged the dictatorship of Suharto. A new government has been prepared to allow some increased union freedoms (including signing ILO Convention 87). For the first time it will be legally possible for the 20,000 employees of the state airline Garuda to join a trade union. The existing Civil Aviation Workers' Union (affiliated to the ITF) up until now was only allowed to organise employees in foreign airlines.

Now there is the sudden and enormous opportunity for union organisation at Garuda and bringing Indonesia more fully into the world of aviation trade unionism. ■

## **Low cost carrier threat to safety in the region**

The pressure to cut costs caused by liberalisation and deregulation threatens to undermine safety standards in Asia/Pacific as in other regions. The ITF civil aviation regional meeting in Sydney last July triggered a major debate on aviation safety in the Australian press. The ITF drew attention to the proliferation of low cost new entrant airlines in the Asia/Pacific region.

The Philippines has provided a good example of ITF concerns. Since domestic deregulation in 1994, there have been five start up carriers: Grand Air, Air Philippines, Cebu Pacific, Star Asia Airways and Asian Spirit.

In mid 1996 the Philippines Air Transport Office grounded Air Philippines after it had two accidents in three days. An investigation revealed that the airline did not possess a general maintenance manual, a minimum equipment list, written procedures for use of the maintenance log book and written policies for the production control division.

In February 1997 a Cebu Pacific DC-9 crashed into a mountainside in the southern Philippines killing all 204 passengers and crew. Investigators are looking into the possibility that the pilot was not given a route check by the ground crew.

Grand Air has had three aircraft confiscated due to unpaid debts. In August 1998 Grand Air was grounded for flying aircraft without properly certified pilots.

Asian Spirit was grounded in September 1998 for a "non

compliant attitude" to safety with deficiencies in record keeping, aircraft inspections and personnel training.

In June 1996 at Nadi airport in Fiji, Ajendra Ram, an airline traffic supervisor was concerned that an Air Fiji flight getting ready to take off was overloaded with baggage. When Ram tried to insist that all passengers and baggage should be unloaded for reweighing he was suspended by the company. When Ram's union, the Fiji Aviation Workers' Association took his case to an arbitration tribunal it re-instated Ram describing the company as "overly concerned with economic considerations at the expense of safety concerns".

In December 1997 the Australian Civil Aviation Authority sent a letter sent to all licensed aircraft engineers saying: "Sufficient anecdotal evidence exists to show that some organisations pressure licensed engineers to certify work which they would not ordinarily have signed for, or to breach regulations in some way which would affect air safety."

In July 1998 an aircraft of the small Australian carrier Aquatic Air crashed near Sydney killing five people. The carrier had just been re-issued its operator's certificate after being grounded in May 1998 for safety breaches. ■

## Flag of convenience campaign round-up



■ **Capt Anne Rutherford** (above) from Australia is the first prize winner of the ITF's essay competition to mark the 50th anniversary of the flag of convenience campaign. She is the recipient of a cheque for US\$1,680 for her essay answering the question: "Is there a better way to regulate the shipping industry?"

Dr Z Oya Özçayır from Turkey has been awarded the runner-up prize of \$840. Grant Hunter from Denmark wins third prize and a cheque for \$420.

The influence of the ITF's flag of convenience (FOC) campaign has been extended in Europe to Slovenia, thanks to the efforts of new ITF Inspector Branko Krznaric. Branko sent a warning to the owners of an FOC vessel calling at Portoroz, which resulted in negotiations leading to the signing of an ITF uniform total crew cost (TCC) agreement.

The vessel, Malta-registered *Berkan B* was previously covered by a Marine Transport Workers' Trade Union of Ukraine agreement, but had recently changed ownership.

When the vessel arrived at Portoroz, Branko wrote to the new owners, Bilgili Denizcilik Nakliyat Sanayi Ve of Istanbul, to advise them that the previous agreement needed to be replaced by an ITF-approved agreement.

The company agreed and authorised the master to sign the ITF uniform TCC agreement, and individual employment contracts for the Turkish and Azerbaijani crew who were happy to find themselves the beneficiaries of improved conditions of employment. The agreement was concluded on 20 August.

Branko was also successful with a back wages claim for crew members of the Liberian-flag *Petrobulk Rainbow* which was covered by a Singapore TCC agreement. He discov-

## Presence in Slovenia pays off

ered that the wage increase which came into effect in January 1998 had not been implemented. He calculated a back pay claim which led to the recovery of US\$11,450 for the crew.

### Another case of double book keeping

Northern UK Inspector Bryan Allen recently inspected the vessel St Vincent-flag *Mas Prosperity* in Hull and discovered that the crew were being cheated of their rightful wages under the terms of the ITF approved TCC agreement covering the vessel.

The crew were being forced to sign one set of wage accounts which indicated they were being paid according to the agreement but were also signing wage accounts for their real wages, which were far below the agreement rates.

Unfortunately, only five of the Egyptian crew members were prepared to make a complaint (the rest were too afraid).

The ITF Actions Unit wrote to the company, Mas Marine

Management of Piraeus, Greece, informing them of Bryan's findings.

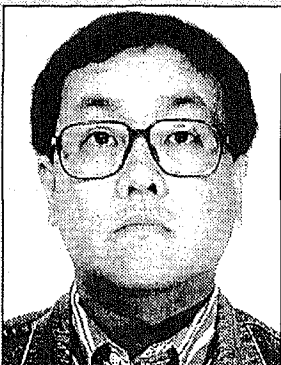
The company apologised and explained that the difference in pay was due to a mistake by the previous captain. The five crew members who were prepared to stand up for their rights flew home, sharing US\$20,927 between them.

### Back pay success

The Panamanian *Daria 1* arrived at Tilbury in the UK in July, where a routine inspection was carried out by Inspector John Wood. He discovered that the Ukrainian crew had not been paid since joining the vessel in March. Operated by Transorient Overseas of Piraeus, Greece, the vessel was covered by an ITF approved TCC agreement.

John calculated the outstanding wages to be US\$97,010.52 and contacted the company. They arranged for the amount to be paid by their local agent before the vessel was allowed to leave.

## PEOPLE



■ **Mac Urata.**

■ **Jane Barrett**, Assistant Secretary in the Inland Transport Sections, left the ITF at the end of September to return to her native South Africa where she will be working for the transport unions. Jane, former South African Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) General Secretary and later a union organiser, came to the ITF in September 1994. As well as working with the transport unions, she will be overseeing the planned merger between the TGWU and the South African Railway and Harbour Workers' Union (SARHWU) and will be involved with transport policy work for the transport unions. She will be keeping her close ties with the ITF, taking on occasional educational work for the Federation.

■ **Makoto (Mac) Urata** has been appointed as the new Assistant Secretary in the Inland Transport Sections. Mac, who has been working as Senior Section Assistant in the department for the past eight months, came to ITF headquarters from the ITF Japanese Office. Since joining the ITF he has

been involved with co-ordination work for the ITF transport policy project. Mac has an extensive background in transport trade unionism, having also worked in the general policy and international affairs department of the Japanese private railway and bus workers' union federation Shitetsu Soren.

■ **Sonja Janatka** has been elected as the first woman vice president of the Austrian Transport and Commercial Workers' Union HTV.

■ **Parker Kamara**, current holder of the Mols Sørensen scholarship at the University of Wales in Cardiff, was re-elected General Secretary of the Sierra Leone National Seamen's Union at its August congress in Freetown.

# Ships handled by non-union dock labour to be targeted

The ITF is drawing up a target list of ships handled by non-union labour for distribution among unions organising dock workers.

The list will be restricted to ships handled during disputes relating to anti-union practices or union-busting, and may include:

- Ships which have been handled by terminals where ITF affiliates are prevented from organising workers and/or confronted with other anti-union policies;
- Ships handled by terminal operators or labour supply companies employing cheap labour not covered by a collective labour contract signed by an ITF affiliate, and competing unfairly with unionised terminals;
- Any other ship which the ITF Secretariat is informed has been handled by non-union labour as a result of anti-union practices.

This list will be distributed to all ITF affiliates organising dock workers. Seafarers' unions will be asked to contact members on board the ships listed to inform them why their vessel is targeted.

"We will concentrate on ships handled by terminals where trade unionists have found themselves the victims of anti-union policies," said ITF Dockers' Section Secretary Kees Marges.

The initiative is the next step in the ITF's worldwide campaign against anti-union policies in the port industry, resulting from a decision of the ITF Dockers' Section in Miami in

June 1997 at which unions signed an International Solidarity Contract, pledging mutual support.

"As soon as unions get the list and background information on why each ship is included, they can decide what can and should be done in line with the resolution on anti-union policies adopted in Miami in 1997," Marges explained.

Since the start of the campaign the ITF has asked members around the world to take direct action to support an affiliate in several cases; the MUA in Australia and the CMU in Sri Lanka, among others. In other cases the ITF has asked affiliates to express their views to company managers who have tried to replace trade unionists with unorganised workers.

The first target list will be presented to unions during the ITF Congress in New Delhi.

***"We will concentrate on ships handled by terminals where trade unionists have found themselves the victims of anti-union policies."***

The virtual disappearance of British ratings from deep-sea shipping is in prospect following the decision by the Anglo-Dutch P&O Nedlloyd consortium to replace the 300 British and 30 New Zealand ratings on its fleet of 19 containerships with Filipino seafarers.

British officers will continue to be employed, and the ships will remain registered in the United Kingdom.

The ratings - members of the British RMT ratings' union and the New Zealand Seafarers' Union immediately voted by 178 to 36 to hold a ballot on industrial action.

The company told union representatives that the changes would halve the current US\$14million annual ratings payroll. According to industry analysts, net

## Last deep-sea British seafarers face axe

profits forecast for this year are projected at \$65million, rising to \$130million in 1999.

The decision, which was announced in August, was condemned by Britain's Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott, himself a former merchant seafarer. "This is a blow to the British shipping industry and especially to loyal seafarers who work in it," he said.

RMT described it as a knife in the back for British seafarers.

ITF officials also deplored the company's decision and feared that it signalled a growing trend among ship-owners to replace crews with cheaper seafarers from developing countries without reflagging their vessels.

ITF

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COUNTDOWN TO  
CONGRESS



**Inside:**  
**Indian unions prepare  
to welcome ITF  
delegates**  
— pages 8-10

***“The statement  
aims to refocus  
ITF activities to  
reflect the  
emergence of the  
global transport  
economy in  
which disputes  
involving  
affiliates  
increasingly  
have an  
international  
dimension.”***

## MEETINGS

- Joint Seafarers' and Dockers' Flag of Convenience Campaign Review, London, 1 October
- Asia/Pacific Regional Committee, New Delhi, 26-27 October
- Women's Conference, New Delhi, 26-27 October
- Executive Board, New Delhi, 27-28 October
- 39th ITF Congress, New Delhi, 29 October to 5 November
- Maritime Safety Committee and seminar, Manila, 30 November to 2 December

# Practical steps towards mobilising solidarity

Here are 15 of the 45 recommendations contained in a major policy statement which will be submitted for debate and approval at the ITF Congress in New Delhi from 29 October to 5 November.

The statement, entitled “Mobilising Solidarity”, aims to refocus ITF activities to reflect the emergence of the global transport economy in which disputes involving affiliates increasingly have an international dimension.

The statement considers ways that the ITF must adapt internally, and what affiliated unions themselves should do...

- Unions should include international modules in their education programmes.
- The ITF should develop suitable course materials.
- The ITF should co-ordinate a database of trade union experts able to participate in other unions' education activities.
- Education activities should include the production of manuals on dealing with international solidarity action.
- Unions should send officials and staff for training in international questions to ITF headquarters and regional offices.
- The Internet/World Wide Web provides a new opportunity to spread information quickly at minimal cost.
- International support networks based on the ITF but not controlled by it need to be set up to maximise use of the new technology.
- Unions should work with the ITF to designate contacts/co-ordinators at strategic workplaces to respond quickly to requests for solidarity.
- It is impossible to cope with the demands of today's global economy using the ITF's traditional approach of translation and interpretation into a limited number of official languages.
- Official languages need to be replaced with a more flexible approach in which languages are provided according to need.
- The ITF should shift emphasis towards campaign-based work.
- Some unions need training in campaigning techniques.
- The ability to stop or slow down transport services is the heart of solidarity action.
- Traditional forms of solidarity action must give way to new ones.
- Action should be carefully customer-friendly, avoiding unnecessary disruption to innocent third parties.
- The law must be treated with respect but not used as an excuse for doing nothing.

