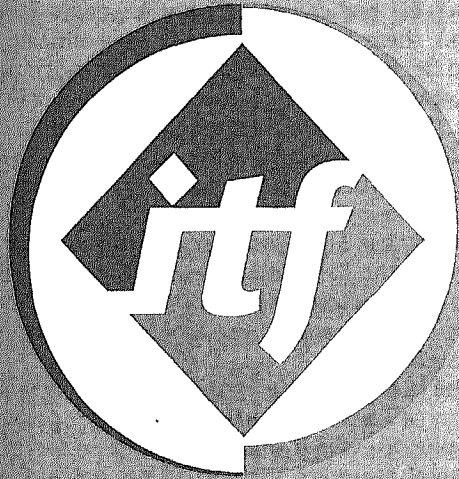


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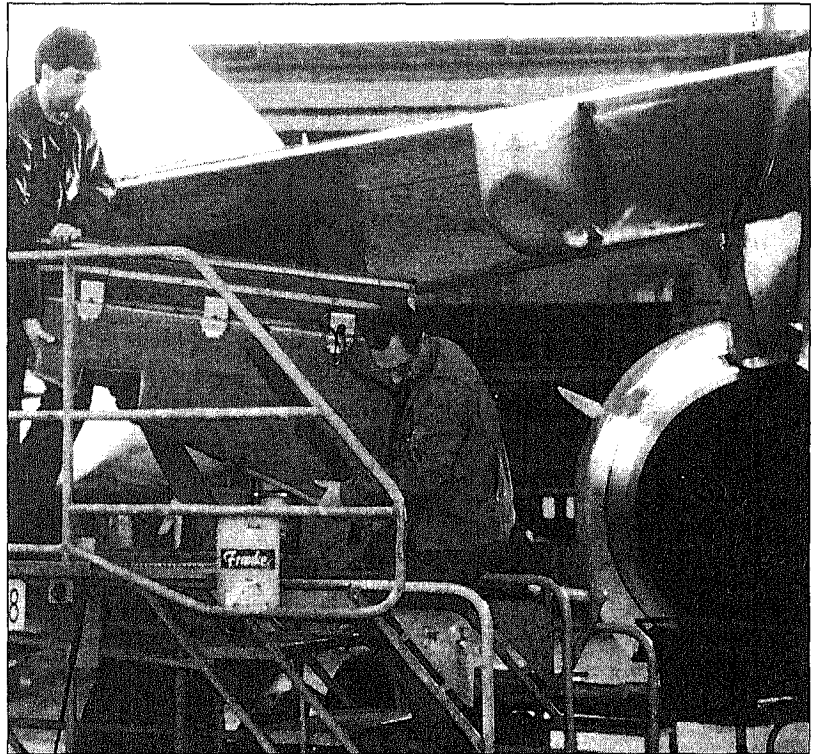


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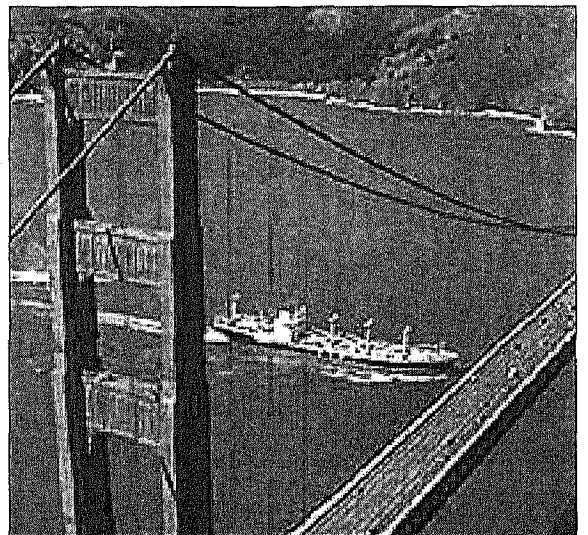


Meet the  
new  
Executive  
Board



**Aircraft maintenance  
goes global**

ITF  
campaign  
ship on  
the West  
Coast



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- Peace deal for Kaliningrad dockers
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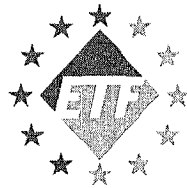
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**ITF addresses, meetings, people and obituaries**

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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 28 April 1999.

# A better way of organising trade union work in Europe



The middle of June this year will see the birth of a new and, I believe, much more effective body to represent the interests of European transport workers' unions. The new organ-

isation, the European Transport Workers' Federation, or ETF, will be formed from the fusion of the ITF's existing European Committee and the 40-year-old Federation of Transport Workers' Unions in the European Union (formerly known as the "Brussels Committee").

The path to the founding congress of the ETF, which will act both as the ITF's European region and as the Transport Federation of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), has not been an easy one.

Even before very serious financial and management problems within the FST last year made its early demise inevitable, European transport unions who were members of both the ITF and FST had been struggling for some time to find a better way of organising trade union work in Europe.

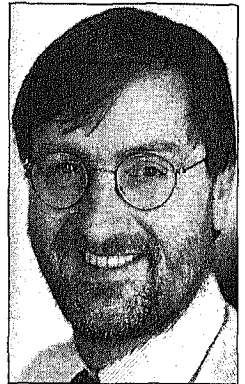
Wide differences existed on the right way forward, but it became increasingly obvious that the existence of two structures – one created to deal with the European institutions and the other trying to organise solidarity on a Pan European basis, was not sustainable. The genesis of the new body was a special meeting, held in Mallorca in 1997 at which major unions affiliated to both bodies worked out an action plan.



A resolution calling for the establishment of a working group on FST/ITF relations was adopted at the last, disastrous, General Assembly of the FST in Luxembourg in November 1997 but the Group was not established until after the sudden departure of the FST General Secretary Hugues de Villèle in May last year.

By the time the Group met in September, chaired by Wilhelm Haberzettl (Austria), the scale of the problems within the FST had become clear. Speedy work on the political, practical and financial details of a new organisation resulted in the final meeting of the FST's Co-ordinating Committee in March 1999 adopting a new draft Constitution which was endorsed by the ITF Executive Board in April. At the same time an FST Administration Committee was established to look after the outstanding financial and legal liabilities of the FST.

The ETF will be a new type of organisation.



**ITF General Secretary David Cockcroft writes**

With a wide degree of autonomy on European matters, it will work within the overall framework of ITF policy. It will work closely with the European Commission and other EU bodies but will not be dependent upon them either financially or politically. And it will bring together all democratic transport unions in Europe, West and East. For the first time, unions in Central and Eastern Europe will have their own ITF regional office – in Brussels – to look after their interests. And the new ETF sections – merging the ITF's European section committees and the FST sections – will be able to call on the full resources both of the ITF secretariat in London and of the former FST staff in Brussels.

The June founding congress of the ETF will elect a new President and Executive Committee which will in turn choose an ETF General Secretary who will also act as ITF European Regional Secretary.

For a long time, Europe's transport workers' unions have been without a single strong and effective voice working both in Brussels and at the workplace, mobilising solidarity and supporting the wider European trade union movement. Now we have an opportunity to really make a difference. ■■

*'For a long time, Europe's transport workers' unions have been without a single strong and effective voice working both in Brussels and at the workplace, mobilising solidarity and supporting the wider European trade union movement. Now we have an opportunity to really make a difference.'*

# New ITF Executive Board meets



■ Bill Scheri (left) of the US International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) receives the ITF Gold Badge from General Secretary David Cockcroft at the 22-23 April meeting of the ITF Executive Board in London. Scheri was chair of the ITF Civil Aviation Section from



October 1985 to August 1994, when he was first elected to the Executive Board from which he retired in April.

The meeting was notable for being the first of the newly elected Executive Board which now has eight additional representatives including, for the first

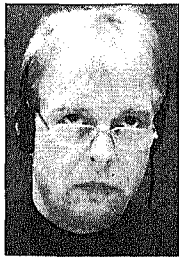
time, five seats reserved for women.

Pictured above is Erika Young, of Italy, one of the new board members in discussions with colleagues.

● Full report: pages 8-9

A new form of international trade unionism is needed to meet the challenges of the globalised economy, says the GdED German railway workers' union.

The days when international union work consisted mainly of organising trips abroad are over, declared the union's new President, Norbert Hansen.



■ Hansen: New structures are needed.

Internationally and in Europe, transport unions must build structures capable of organising action and negotiating with multinational employers, he told the GdED extraordinary congress in Frankfurt on 30 and 31 March.

In a speech which echoed the key themes of the "Mobilising Solidarity" policy statement adopted at the ITF

## German rail union leader in international solidarity call

Congress in New Delhi last year, Hansen laid particular emphasis on international action and pledged support to the soon to be established ETF (European Transport Workers' Federation).

He also pledged that the union would focus on creating alliances with other unions rather than joining mergers.

Hansen took over his position on the retirement of Rudi Schäfer, the GdED president since 1988.

In a fraternal speech to the congress, ITF General Secretary David Cockcroft congratulated Schäfer for the successful handling of the railway reform process in Germany. He went on to promise Norbert Hansen the ITF's full support in creating stronger links between rail unions both in Europe and worldwide.

The new pan European ETF would, he stressed, make it easier to create a social Europe committed to an environmentally sound transport policy and in which employers' attempts to weaken and divide transport unions in order to lower wages and conditions could be successfully resisted.

The two-day conference also elected Lothar Krauß as Vice President, filling the position created by Hansen's election.

## Australia criticised over anti-union laws

The ITF and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) have welcomed findings by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) criticising the Australian government's anti-union laws.

In a report published in March the ILO's Committee of Experts called on the Australian government to

amend its laws to restore the rights of working people to union membership and activity. The ILO has especially criticised limitations on the right to take strike and solidarity action.

During last year's attack on the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA), the government tried unsuccessfully to stop the ITF support-

ing solidarity action by port workers around the world. International union support was a key factor in getting all the sacked union members reinstated. The ICFTU and ITF have lodged a formal complaint with the ILO about the government's actions.

### Appeal to Algerians

The ITF has appealed to the government of Algeria to repatriate seafarers aboard ships abandoned in their ports who are acting as custodians of the vessels.

In one case, the 63-year-old Greek master of the Cypriot-flag *Achilles I*, which was arrested in the port of Bejala last May following the financial collapse of the owners, was confined to the port area, deprived of his passport and forced to remain alone on the ship despite his ill health. He subsequently managed to escape on another visiting ship.

The Algerians continue to hold a further Greek seafarer who has been looking after the Romanian vessel *Sulina* which was detained in Algiers last April. His documents have been confiscated by the Algerian authorities and he is also confined to the port area where the ship is tied up.

He has no money, lives alone on the vessel and is forced to beg for provisions from other ships. The Algerians claim that the provision of their domestic law gives them the right to refuse the seafarer's repatriation, taking the position that they will deliver his documents only after relevant legal proceedings are completed. ■

## Five crews abandoned each week

At least five crews are abandoned by shipowners every month, with flag of convenience registers having the worst record among flag states, according to a new study by the ITF.

Between July 1995 and the end of 1998, the ITF received notification of 199 such cases, involving 3,500 individual seafarers. But ITF officers point out that these statistics are undoubtedly the tip of the iceberg and the extent of the problem is in fact much larger.

The current economic downturn in some parts of the world will exacerbate the problem, says the ITF, which calls for the introduction of an international agreed regime to guarantee repatriation costs and back wages.

"It is clear that there is a sharp contrast between the international regime to protect seafarers abandoned in foreign ports and the international regime for compensation in instances of pollution," says the ITF document, "Abandoned Seafarers: An abdication of responsibility".

The report notes: "Oily seabirds are apparently worth more than abandoned and destitute seafarers."

The report was published

early in April in Vancouver, coinciding with the visit of the ITF campaign ship *Global Mariner* to the Canadian Pacific port.

While the International Maritime Organisation has agreed a joint IMO/International Labour Organisation working group on the question, the ITF claims it has faced stiff opposition from the industry, including P&I clubs – the industry's insurance arm – and flags of convenience in particular.

Abandoned vessels are often in poor repair and therefore worth little at auction, the report notes. Moreover, P&I clubs frequently withdraw cover, either because premiums have not been paid or through the "pay to be paid" rule.

Bad shipowners sometimes deliberately attempt to "starve off" crews, waiting for them to leave through hunger or despair before retaking control of a ship.

Crews usually lack the financial resources to take legal action, unless backed by the ITF or some other organisation.

The ITF is also calling on flag states to take responsibility for their abandoned seafarers, for port states to act quickly to relieve suffering and for the establishment of a fund of last resort to recompense abandoned seafarers.

#### Flag of ships involving three or more cases of abandoned seafarers

1 July 1995-31 December 1998

	No. ships
Panama*	70
Malta*	20
Ukraine	18
Singapore	10
Russian Federation	9
Belize*	8
Cyprus*	8
Honduras*	7
Romania	7
Liberia*	5
Pakistan	5
St Vincent & Grenadines*	5
Nigeria	3

\*Flag of convenience

**"Oily seabirds are apparently worth more than abandoned and destitute seafarers."**

The ITF has brokered an agreement to settle a dispute at the Russian port of Kaliningrad in which pressure was put on the 180 dockers to accept inferior wages and conditions and to leave the ITF-affiliated Dockers' Union of Russia (DUR). Those who refused were transferred to less well paid work or dismissed.

Both sides in the dispute have now undertaken to negotiate a new collective agreement with common pay and conditions. The

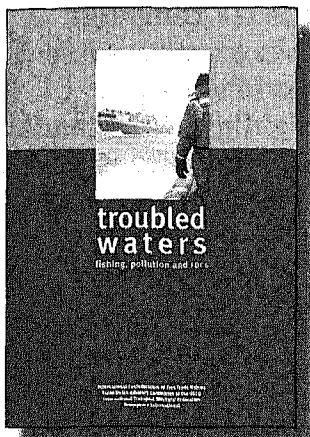
### Peace deal for Kaliningrad dockers

port employer also agreed to rescind transfers and dismissals of DUR members.

Following a strike in October 1997, members of the DUR were separated from other workers and put in DUR-only gangs which were given the worst jobs. Supporting the union, the ITF said these actions con-

stituted violations of the right to freedom of association, as laid down by the International Labour Organisation.

The peace deal was reached in March with the assistance of the ITF's Moscow-based representative Mikhail Lyakhov. ■



*"These modern-day buccaneers must not be allowed to plunder our seas for profit at the direct expense of seafarers' lives."*

# Unions and Greenpeace press for flag of convenience ban

The ITF has joined forces with other international union organisations and environmental campaigners Greenpeace International to call for an all-out ban on sub-standard flags of convenience (FOCs).

The appeal was made at a United Nations environmental meeting focusing on oceans and seas in New York in April.

To coincide with the meeting of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) from 19 to 30 April the ITF jointly published a policy document entitled "Troubled waters; fishing, pollution and FOCs". The report was undersigned by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), as well as Greenpeace.

According to the report, the FOC system permits widespread illegal fishing, including fishing of endangered species.

In addition, ageing and badly maintained FOC fleets harm the environment, with maritime casualties, detentions and oil pollution risks higher under FOC registries.

Unfair competition from shoddy operators has also led to unsustainably cheap freight rates. The depressed state of the maritime industry has contributed to the dearth of high-calibre seafarers, and the growing incidence of their false certification. The human factor has meanwhile been identified as responsible for 80 per cent of casualties.

The report received strong backing from several countries at the UN meeting. Referring to the poor safety record of FOC fishing vessels cited in the report, British Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott said: "These modern-day buccaneers must not be

allowed to plunder our seas for profit at the direct expense of seafarers' lives."

The paper demands that the CSD:

- Support the ultimate elimination of flags of convenience.
- Agree that FOCs prejudice the sustainable development of maritime transport.
- Ask the International Maritime Organisation to develop a legal mechanism and sanctions to ensure flag states meet international standards and comply with international law, possibly similar to those of the International Civil Aviation Organisation.
- Recommend that the IMO develop a mandatory instrument of vessel registration giving full effect to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and in particular to the requirement that there should be a genuine link between a ship's registration and nationality.
- Recommend ratification of the Food and Agriculture Organisation's (FAO) Compliance Agreement on fish conservation and management and of the UN agreement on straddling stocks and highly migratory fish stocks.
- Support quality shipping and responsible fisheries initiatives.
- Develop measures to promote greater transparency in the industry.

The joint ITF report lists vessels involved in the illegal fishing of patagonian toothfish, revealing that more than half of the total are FOC-registered, and FOC vessels are also illegally fishing bluefin tuna, the report continues.

Mechanisms must be established to eliminate the FOC system, said ITF Assistant General Secretary Mark Dickinson, launching the report.

"There is a serious weakness in the international regulatory regime which has permitted the growth of FOCs," he added. "Of course sovereign states have the right to establish shipping registries – but this right comes hand-in-hand with responsibilities.

"We recognise there are responsible FOC shipowners – but the FOC system itself allows those who are not to seriously endanger the future of our marine environment. It constitutes an institutionalised opportunity for skulduggery. The responsible maritime community should prepare to rid itself of this blight."



■ The joint ITF report supports international efforts to promote fish conservation and management, and points out that the flag of convenience system is inimical to these aims.

■ The port industry is currently subject to three different but related processes:

**Globalisation** means the clear trend towards the global ownership and management of port terminals.

**Privatisation** means the transfer of a range of port related activities from mainly publicly owned to mainly privately owned undertakings.

**Modernisation** includes the introduction of new cargo handling technologies, the automation of cargo handling and transport and the replacement of paper-based information with computerised systems and E-commerce.

## Negotiate resolution to Chilean docks dispute, urges ITF

Following protest actions in April by Chilean stevedores demanding labour regulation and negotiated redundancy terms, the ITF has said it will ask unions internationally to support its affiliates in Chile if ongoing negotiations fail.

ITF Dockers' Secretary Kees Marges criticised the Chilean government for failing to resolve a dispute which is reckoned to have cost US\$500 million so far and in which the dockers are not opposing privatisation in principle, but are asking for the regulation of port employment and for fair financial settlements for those who lose their jobs due to restructuring.

"We have been working on this issue since our Chilean unions, COMACH and CONGEMAR, brought the matter to our attention in the autumn last year," he said. "We wrote several times to the Chilean government drawing attention to the possibility of conflict and calling for negotiations, but the response has been pitiful." The ITF would now warn its affiliates to prepare for action against ships loaded in Chile arriving in their ports particularly carrying fruit and copper. ■

# Why trust is key to port reform

The trust and involvement of trade unions and the dock workers they represent is a precondition for successful port reform, the ITF told a major international conference on the worldwide restructuring of the waterfront.

The employment and social concerns of port workers must be understood and taken into account from the early stages of the restructuring process, ITF Dockers' Secretary Kees Marges told the World Bank Transport Expo conference in Washington from 12 to 16 April.

Attempts to impose reforms unilaterally or to try to evade the influence of the unions, for example, by trying to introduce labour sub-contracting arrangements were likely to provoke bitter – sometimes violent – reactions.

Marges added: "Most port workers are prepared to support restructuring provided it is based on agreements reached in negotiation between the authorities, employers and trade unions which provide firm guarantees about the future."

The ITF was pleased that at least a few World Bank port privatisation projects had drawn attention to the importance of involving unions in their terms of reference. However these were still the exception and not the rule.

Employment and income guarantees for port workers affected by privatisation were therefore essential, he said. National governments should actively work to support the principle of permanent and regular employment for port workers. Casualisation of labour, by employing untrained and inexperienced labour, should be avoided. Steps should

**"Most port workers are prepared to support restructuring provided it is based on agreements reached in negotiation between the authorities, employers and trade unions."**

be taken by all concerned to minimise any reduction in the workforce. Active employment policies, including re-training and re-location programmes, should be negotiated. ■



■ The ITF Seafarers' Trust has donated NZ\$2,000 to a campaign directed at seafarers which offers them free testing and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases at a number of health clinics in New Zealand.

## The ITF campaign ship continues its world voyage to highlight the scandal of flag of convenience and sub-standard shipping...

**Balboa, Panama, 12 February**  
Panamanian labour minister, Reinaldo E Rivera, was given a personal tour of the *Global Mariner* and its exhibition by Mark Dickinson, ITF Assistant General Secretary. It was a rare opportunity to discuss the impact of Panamanian international shipping policy – Panama is the world's biggest register and a flag of convenience (FOC) – with a member of the government. The minister spent about two hours on board, also meeting Gustavo Montalvan, the ITF Inspector in Panama.

However, formal attempts to arrange a meeting with the newly established Panamanian Maritime Authority (AMP) were not so easy. Eventually an unannounced visit by an ITF delegation, including Luis Amaya of local ITF affiliate FITTAMPS, resulted in a meeting with AMP director Rubén Reyna. He insisted that the bad days of the Panamanian register were now over. The AMP had, he said, been given a budget of about US\$30 million, compared to \$5 million in previous years and was committed to improving standards. Shipowners who did not comply with international standards would face expulsion from the registry.

Mark Dickinson said in reply that the FOC system would undermine any attempts by the AMP to improve standards on the Panamanian register and in any event expulsion would only export the problem somewhere else.

### Mazatlán, Mexico, 24 February

During a lively three day stay – during which thousands of schoolchildren visited the ship (1,200 in one hour alone!) – declarations of support for the campaign against flags of



# Global Mariner on the Pacific West Coast

convenience came from local unions, dignitaries and shipowners.

Senator Maria del Carmen Bolado del Real criticised government deregulation for encouraging some Mexican shipowners to reflag to FOCs. She vowed to continue fighting for a review of the Mexican navigation law in order to protect Mexican vessels from unfair competition from FOC vessels trading in Mexican ports and to restrict cabotage (the transportation of goods within Mexico) to Mexican-flag vessels alone.

The President of the Mexican Chamber of Shipowners, Juan Pablo Vega Arriaga, spoke passionately of his commitment to work with Mexican unions to protect the future of Mexican vessels crewed with Mexican seafarers.

The master and representatives of all the Mexican unions present gathered at the entrance gangway of the *Global Mariner* to cheer Gema Patricia, the 250,000th person to visit the ship. The total number of visitors in Mazatlán was 23,320.

## Los Angeles, USA, 4 March

California senator Betty Karnett visited the *Global Mariner* while the ship was berthed in San Pedro, Los Angeles and she was given a private tour of the exhibition. The senator was very impressed by the exhibit and strongly expressed her support for the work of the ITF and the affiliated unions.

During the two public open days, local union members and members of the public visited in their hundreds – making the total for the weekend 8,078.

Local schools showed huge interest and over 2,000 students visited the ship in class groups over the first two days.

The success of the visit was a fitting farewell for ITF Inspector Ray

Familathe. Ray retired from inspector work after the visit, to be able to spend more time on ILWU duties, leaving his colleague Rudy Vanderhider to fly the ITF flag in Los Angeles.

## San Francisco, 9 March

The arrival of the *Global Mariner* in San Francisco – including a two-week stopover for routine maintenance – was overshadowed by a dispute involving a flag of convenience ship in port. The case of the Cypriot-flag *Hollandic Confidence* made headlines in the local press during the first days of the visit. The ship had just docked in a nearby yard, having lost a hatch cover in heavy weather and been met by the US Coast Guard and escorted into San Francisco.

The Ukrainian crew were at one point on deck with their life jackets, ready to be picked up by a Coast Guard helicopter, but in the end they stayed on board and managed to bring the vessel into port. Barry Binsky and Rudy Vanderhider (ITF Inspectors from San Francisco and Los Angeles) made contact with the crew and ensured that they received their wages.

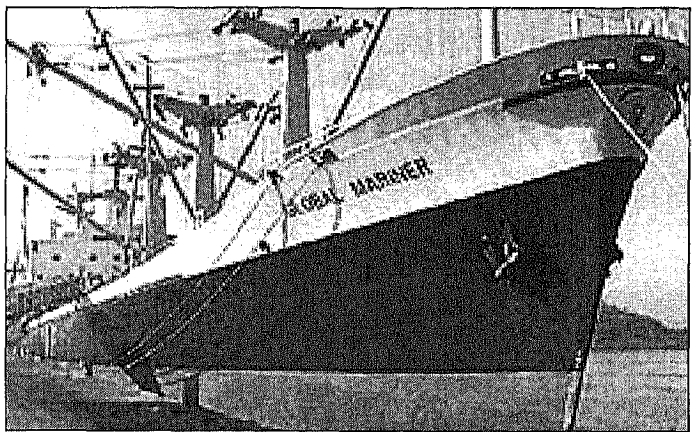
Welcomed by one of the boats of the San Francisco Fire Department outside the Golden Gate, the *Global Mariner* was donated a berth by the port of San Francisco. With local pilots, linesmen and tugs all donating their services free, this was, after Los Angeles, the second port on the US West Coast at which this generous contribution to the FOC campaign was made.

Welcomed by ILWU president Brian McWilliams, the *Global Mariner* attracted some 2,200 visitors during the only open weekend of the long San Francisco stay.

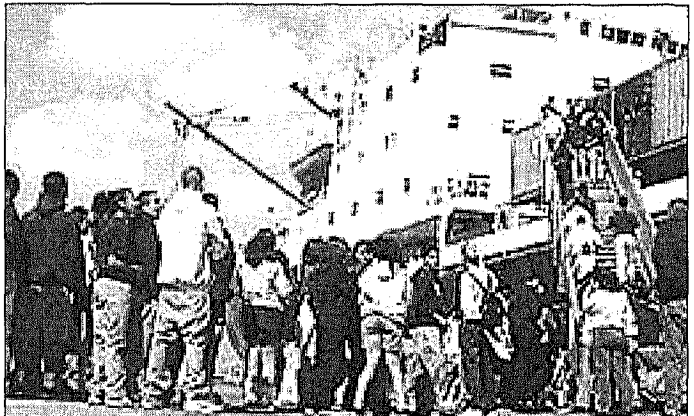
## Portland, 24 March

Flags of convenience had been high on the public agenda in the state of Oregon in the weeks leading up to the *Global Mariner's* arrival. The reason for this was the grounding of the Panamanian-registered *New Carissa* with a local Congressman, Peter DeFazio, only the week before introducing legislation in Washington to increase the powers of the US Coast Guard when dealing with foreign-flag vessels. If successful, the new legislation would allow the US Coast Guard to more aggressively control the entry of vessels into US waters and harbours. "I want to make flags of convenience a little less convenient," said DeFazio.

On both open days there were



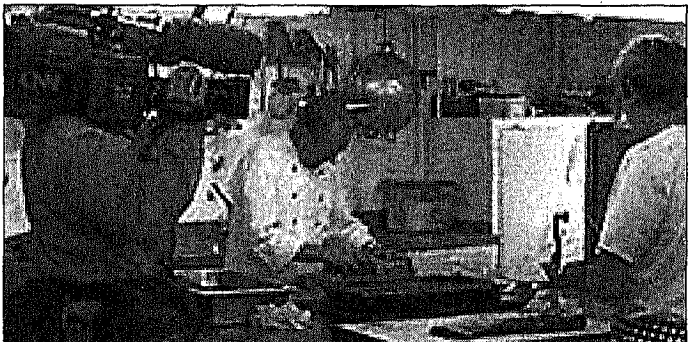
■ The *Global Mariner* berthed in Balboa.



■ School pupils wait to board the *Global Mariner* in Los Angeles.



■ Entering San Francisco under the Golden Gate Bridge.



■ CNN camera crew in the *Global Mariner* galley in San Francisco.

## SHIP'S LOG

long queues for the exhibition. While waiting, visitors were treated to a performance of union songs by the choir of the Everlasting Amalgamated Union Local 824. Their final performance was in the engine room of the *Global Mariner*, where they sang the Internationale. The total number of visitors for Portland was 5,802.

### Seattle, 30 March

The *Global Mariner* was the focus for a large rally by waterfront workers in Seattle on 1 April, organised as a precursor to contract negotiations with employers. Nearly 1,000 workers from port unions attended and converged on the pier by the ship, accompanied by most of the *Global Mariner* crew. Using the ship as a platform, various speakers addressed the crowd, stressing the need for unionisation and solidarity.

Mayor Paul Schell welcomed the *Global Mariner*. "Seattle is a labour town and always will be," he said. Despite the cold and rain, almost 5,000 visitors saw the exhibition over the Easter weekend.

### Tacoma, 5 April

The *Global Mariner* berthed next to the Kaiser Aluminum loading dock and straight away found itself involved in another labour dispute. Kaiser Aluminum in Tacoma has been in dispute with Local 7945 of the United Steelworkers' of America since September last year. Unionised workers have been locked out of the plant and non-union workers brought in to do their work.

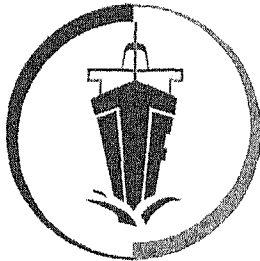
Meanwhile figures from the

government's OSHA (Occupational Health and Safety Administration) indicate a massive increase in accidents. The number of days per quarter lost through workplace injury for January to September 1998 was 35, but in the final quarter of 1998 the figure was 327.

Local 7945 members have had no pay since the lock out, and the workers and their families have been suffering real financial hardship. The *Global Mariner* crew made a financial donation and the ship donated foodstuffs to the pickets at the gate.

In the two open days, both of them working days, there were 3,862 visitors to the ship and exhibition.

On the evening of 7 April, just before departure, the ship hosted a symposium held by the local University of Washington on "Workers and the Global Economy", which was attended by over 150 students.



Waterfront workers gather for their demonstration in Seattle.



### Kosovo statement

On the crisis in the Balkans, the Board condemned the ethnic cleansing policies of Slobodan Milosevic, supported the democratic forces in Kosovo, Montenegro and Albania and expressed solidarity with the ITF-affiliated Independent Union of Workers in Maritime Shipping Trade and Transport of Montenegro, whose members are employed both on Yugoslav and foreign-flag ships, in seeking to safeguard the jobs of its members.

The Board called on governments and the international community to take steps to alleviate the consequences for Danube navigation workers as a result of the destruction of bridges over the Danube and ensure its reopening at the earliest opportunity.

The Board supported the joint position of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and ETUC (European Trade Union Confederation) which calls for the immediate withdrawal of all Yugoslav military and police forces from Kosovo, and the establishment of an international peacekeeping force including Russia to be followed by an immediate suspension of the Nato intervention.

### ITF campaigns

In discussions on the Congress plan of action, "Mobilising Solidarity", the Board called for more political campaigning by the ITF. Practical measures were proposed and strongly supported, including an ITF summer school on international issues and educational exchanges between affiliates.

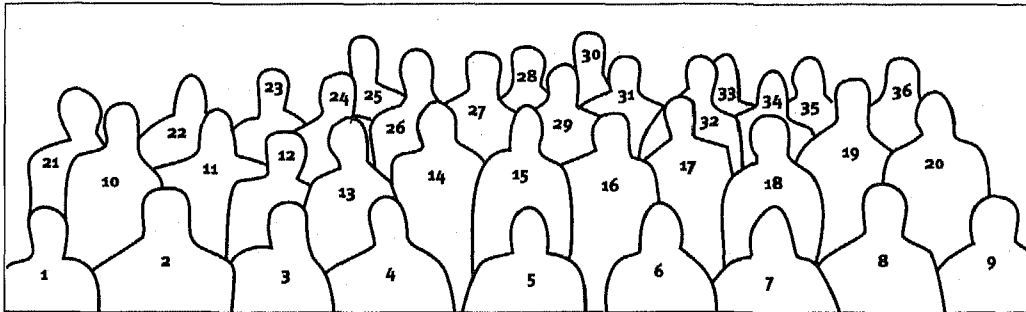
Strengthening national co-ordinating committees to enable them to make better use of electronic communication and to carry out joint translations was vital, the Board also agreed.

### New Inland Transport Sections Secretary

The job of Secretary of the Inland Transport Sections will go to Makoto Urata, who is currently the Assistant Secretary of the Road, Rail and Inland Navigation Sections.

Urata, who joined the London ITF Secretariat from the ITF's Tokyo office in 1997, started his trade union career in 1986 working for the Japanese inland transport affiliate, Shitetsu Soren. Urata's experience in transport policy issues and his past work both with an affiliated union and with the ITF's affiliates in the Asia/Pacific region stand him





## Concern over impact of Kosovo conflict on transport workers

Twenty-one new affiliates from 18 countries were taken into ITF membership at the Executive Board in London on 22-23 April which considered, among other topics, consequences for transport workers of the crisis in the Balkans and future strategies to mobilise international support among transport workers.

in good stead for next year, when he takes over the position full-time on Graham Brothers' retirement.

### Banana resolution

The Board also agreed to adopt a resolution supporting Caribbean transport workers affected by the WTO findings on European Union importation of bananas from the region.

Banana exports to the EU are vital to the economies of Caribbean states, accounting for half of export earnings and over one third of all employment. But these exports depend on special arrangements for access to EU markets, designed to compensate for the difficult conditions and higher costs of production.

This trade is now threatened by a case against the EU brought to the WTO disputes panel at the request of the US, on behalf of Chiquita, and supported by the Latin American banana growing countries.

"Transport workers in the Caribbean will suffer the negative consequences of this ruling. The ITF is joining other trade union organisations including the ICFU, IUF and AFL-CIO in campaigning for the WTO to re-examine the issue" explained General Secretary David Cockcroft.

### 40th Congress goes to Canada

Board members decided to accept an invitation from Canadian affiliates to hold the ITF's 40th Congress in Canada in 2002.

### Photo call

- 1 Saki Rizwana (Bangladesh)
- 2 Shoshiro Nakanishi (Japan)
- 3 John Bowers (Vice President) (USA)
- 4 ITF General Secretary David Cockcroft
- 5 Umrmaal Purohit (President) (India)
- 6 Juan Palacios (Vice President) (Argentina)
- 7 Caroline Mandivenga (Vice President) (Zimbabwe)
- 8 Wilhelm Haberzettl (Vice President) (Austria)
- 9 Uzoije Ukaunna (Vice President) (Nigeria)
- 10 Shigi Wada, ITF Asia/Pacific Regional Secretary
- 11 Francis Mungroo (Trinidad)
- 12 Masahiko Nakamura, ITF Japanese Office
- 13 Kazumaro Suzuki (Japan)
- 14 Per-Erik Nelin (Finland)
- 15 Ch Mohammad Ashraf Khan (Pakistan)
- 16 Greg Oca (Philippines)
- 17 Omar Gomes (Brazil)
- 18 Remo di Fiore (Italy)
- 19 Denise Hill (Canada)
- 20 ITF Assistant General Secretary Mark Dickinson
- 21 Jonny van den Rijse (Belgium)
- 22 José Javier Cubillo (Spain)
- 23 Yves Veyrier (France)
- 24 Bill Scheri (USA)
- 25 Norbert Hansen (Germany)
- 26 Robert Scardelletti (USA)
- 27 Hans Wahlström (Sweden)
- 28 Bill Morris (Great Britain)
- 29 Randall Howard (South Africa)
- 30 Wouter Waleson (Netherlands)
- 31 Vasily Zubkov (Ukraine)
- 32 Wolfgang Warburg (Germany)
- 33 Julien Tahou (Ivory Coast)
- 34 John Coombs (Australia)
- 35 Christopher Veselka (Czech Republic)
- 36 Erika Young (Italy)

### Not pictured

- Alicia Castro (Argentina)
- Kwon Eul Ryong (Korea)
- Jim Knapp (Great Britain)
- Jim O'Neil (Canada)
- Anatoly Vassiliev (Russia)

Executive Board photos: Jacky Chapman

**ITF Civil Aviation Secretary Stuart Howard examines how the aircraft maintenance sector is being affected by the trends towards contracting-out and globalisation**

Aircraft maintenance is in a process of global restructuring. A growing number of airlines are contracting out their maintenance work and selling off their maintenance facilities. British Airways, for example, recently sold its engine overhaul operation to GE. This follows the current dictum that airlines should focus on the core airline business and contract out most of their supply activities such as maintenance and catering.

The new technologies required for modern aircraft maintenance make it an extremely cost-intensive and increasingly specialised business, while improved aircraft models requiring less frequent maintenance make it harder for any individual airline to justify the investment.

Yet a number of carriers like Lufthansa, Air France, Swissair and Singapore Airlines have adopted a different strategy. Not only are they keeping aircraft maintenance in-house they aim to become global maintenance providers.

As more airlines give up their own maintenance (or parts of it), the bigger the third party maintenance market becomes. It is a market currently estimated to be worth around \$25 billion per year.

The airlines which want to stay in the business of aircraft maintenance are doing it by setting up independent subsidiaries. They believe this will enable the managements of the different business units to focus on their respective specialised activities while retaining the advantage of going under a global brand name. Lufthansa not only belongs to a leading global airline alliance but its LSG-Sky Chefs subsidiary is the world's largest airline caterer and Lufthansa Technik is currently a world leader in aircraft maintenance.

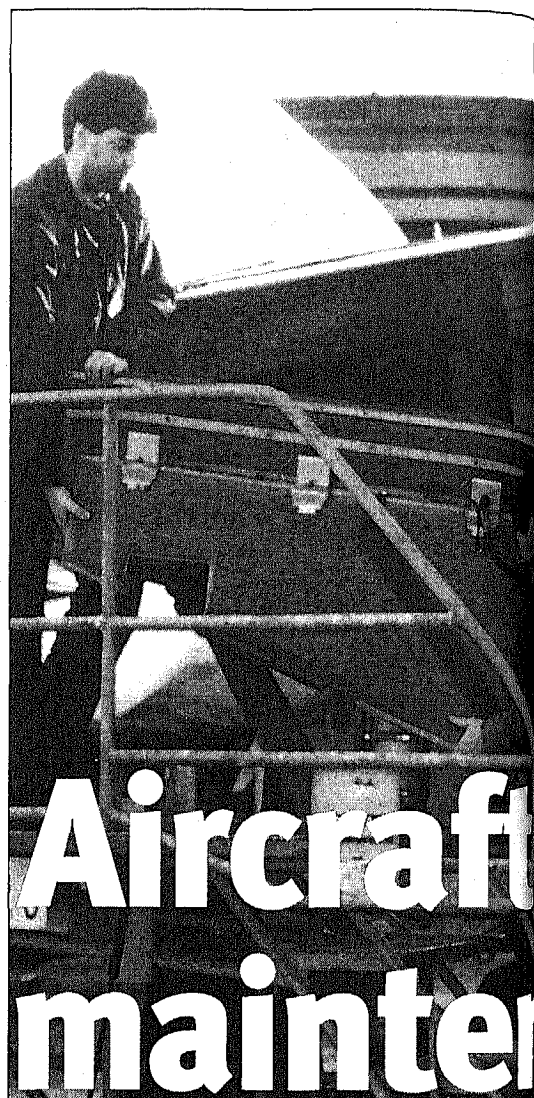
#### **Jobs and conditions suffer**

The trend of airlines contracting out aircraft maintenance has led to massive job losses and the transfer of work and workers into companies where conditions and benefits for employees are usually inferior to those that were in the in-house operation.

But even when airlines retain aircraft maintenance and decide to become global players there have usually been losses for employees. The first step has usually been the transfer of maintenance work into a subsidiary company.

When Thai Airways put its maintenance operations into its U-Tapao subsidiary the employees lost many of the benefits which they had gained by being employed in a state-owned airline. When Lufthansa set up its Lufthansa Technik (LHT) subsidiary in 1995, its maintenance workers, who are organised in the ÖTV trade union, managed to retain their core benefits and conditions, but work intensity substantially increased.

However, as maintenance operations become global, unions are concerned that the companies will have increased opportunities to relocate work around the world with the



# **Aircraft maintenance goes global**

aim of chasing lower employment conditions. Increases in Lufthansa's fleet have meant that no jobs have been lost in Germany and indeed Lufthansa Technik is creating new jobs. The union is concerned, however, that the development of LHT maintenance bases in Ireland and mainland China should not mean that new jobs will only go to locations with cheaper labour costs and fewer union rights than in Germany. Lufthansa Technik also seems set to take over the maintenance base of Philippine Airlines in Manila.

The ITF-Cardiff University report *Contesting Globalisation*, which reports the results of a survey of ITF unions, notes "the

*'The regulatory authorities have assisted this nomadic approach to aircraft maintenance with the development of internationally standardised certification of maintenance stations.'*

# ...transfer of jobs and pressure on conditions feared by unions

The ITF organised a meeting of aircraft maintenance unions in the Star Alliance in Hamburg from 8 to 10 February. The meeting was addressed by Wolfgang Lubermayer, Chairman of Lufthansa Technik (LHT), who stressed that the development of LHT would keep aircraft maintenance jobs in the airline industry rather than giving them up to maintenance operations run by the manufacturers and parts suppliers.

One of the key issues of concern to unions, however, is the movement of jobs within the alliance. There are fears that specialised "centres of excellence" will be developed within the alliance network, to which all alliance partners will transfer specific types of aircraft maintenance. Lubermayer's view was that alliances were still too undeveloped to implement such a strategy, but he recognised that at a regional level there are already some signs of this trend.

The New Zealand unions suspect that Ansett may move its engine overhaul work on B747-400s from New Zealand to the Lufthansa joint venture in Beijing. Major checking work might then be moved from Melbourne to Auckland. Unions at United Airlines have a 20 per cent limit on any outsourcing of maintenance work, but they have also been informed that maintenance

may be co-ordinated with Air Canada. There are Danish union fears that SAS maintenance work may be moved from Copenhagen to Hamburg.

This international mobility of work within the new airline alliances has also led these airlines to directly compare their maintenance costs with those of their partners. They are using such comparisons to put pressure on unions to change working practices and lower labour costs.

All the unions are clearly committed to adapting to the changed industry structure and most have managed to do this through negotiation with the employers. Certainly there is a belief that while alliances have spelled job cuts in many areas, the added strength and weight of an alliance structure might be the only means of survival for maintenance operations to be kept within the airline industry. For unions the key task is to ensure that these operations involve unionised jobs and that the new international labour flexibility in aircraft maintenance is not used to undermine unionisation.

■ Though there have been job cuts, unions believe global alliance structures may ensure that maintenance work remains within the airline industry.



emergence of global out-sourcing where services are sub-contracted on an international basis (reported by more than half the sample of unions). Examples include Swissair's maintenance centre in Shannon, Ireland; Singapore Airlines', JAL's and Cathay Pacific's TAECO maintenance operations in Xiamen (China)".

The regulatory authorities have assisted this nomadic approach to aircraft maintenance with the development of internationally standardised certification of maintenance stations.

## Alliances

Alliances are liable to have a long term impact on aircraft maintenance. The co-ordination of fleet purchasing among alliance partners will eventually affect their maintenance requirements. It may also have an impact on jobs. Maintenance unions in Sabena had to fight against a Swissair decision to change the aircraft type that Sabena was buying and therefore incidentally threatening the jobs of hundreds of maintenance workers who would have found themselves

# Aircraft maintenance goes global

qualified for the wrong aircraft type.

There will be a tough fight for the global aircraft maintenance market, but airlines like Lufthansa, while maintaining that they are seeking custom from any and every airline also believe that their membership of a global airline alliance may give them a strategic advantage in the aircraft maintenance market, by gaining them the major share of alliance maintenance business.

Already there seems to have been some movement in that direction. All of Austrian Airlines' heavy maintenance is now done by Shannon Aerospace, a joint venture of its Swissair Qualiflyer partner SR Technik and LHT.

Lufthansa Technik has a joint venture with its Star Alliance partner SAS Components and is co-operating with United Airlines on Boeing 777 maintenance, and is in a joint venture maintenance project with Air Canada. In Chicago, it jointly owns Airliance Materials which consolidates its surplus spares inventories with Star Alliance partners United Airlines and Air Canada. These three

partners, with a combined fleet of over 1,000 jet aircraft, account for 10 per cent of the world's surplus parts market – valued at \$1.3 billion annually – making the venture, formed in May, a major player.

While LHT by no means wants to restrict itself to the Star Alliance, clearly it aims to effectively become the in-house Star Alliance maintenance provider (in the same way that its LSG-Sky Chefs subsidiary aims to become the in-house Star Alliance catering provider).

When the alliances begin to operate joint purchasing policies more effectively, deciding to buy all their supply services from one source, they can either use that huge combined purchasing power to drive prices down or to favour a single supplier with an enormous guaranteed market. Whichever way they decide to play it is likely to determine the future shape of the globalised aircraft maintenance industry. ■

## Victory for Air Gabon cabin crew after two-year fight

On 31 December 1996 state-owned Air Gabon sacked its entire workforce of 94 cabin crew for their membership of the SNPNC union. The sackings followed industrial action by the union in which the company used scabs to break the strike. The ITF organised a number of international protest actions to try to support the union. At one point during the dispute an attempt by the ITF to take out an advert in the government-controlled press was even blocked.

The union has steadfastly maintained its struggle for union rights and the jobs of those victimised by the company for their membership of the union and has pursued their case in the courts for more than two years.

We have now been informed by Alain Lecland-Bayonne, General Secretary and President of the Crisis Committee for the SNPNC Gabon, that "at the end of a two-year-long legal battle, the courts are reinstating us and giving us back our jobs". He adds: "We are firmly convinced that we would not have achieved this result without the steadfast and resolute support of our comrades throughout the world, whom you rallied to our cause. From day one! Please accept the sincere thanks of all the SNPNC air stewards and stewardesses for this."

All our congratulations go to the SNPNC Gabon for this victory for union rights. ■

## Mitsubishi's apology for sexist advert

Mitsubishi corporation has apologised to the Thai Airways cabin crew union and to the ITF for an advertisement placed in Thai newspapers. The advert for a Mitsubishi heavy duty air conditioner uses double entendre on the idea of "air service". It featured a Thai Airways pilot who is asked an ambiguous question about whether he slept in a room with air conditioning or with one of the cabin crew.

The Thai Airways cabin crew, who are organised in the Thai Airways International State Enterprise Employees' Association, produced a leaflet mocking the advertisement and launched a media campaign calling for a boycott of the product. Union President Chamsri Sukhotirat wrote to the company complaining that

the advert "stereotyped and denigrated the cabin crew profession".

An initial response from the company dismissed the campaign as coming from an unrepresentative minority. However the union campaign gained support, particularly from women's organisations in Thailand. A delegation from the union met government minister Supatra Masdit, of the Prime Minister's Office, who agreed the advert contained sexual connotations. On 8 March – International Women's Day – the union hired roadside hoardings calling for sanctions against goods advertised in a sexist way. The ITF Tokyo office raised the issue with Japanese unions.

By 20 March, Mitsubishi had had enough. Managers from Mitsubishi made personal contact with Chamsri

Sukhotirat and made a formal apology to the union. The company published the apology in full page advertisements in four newspapers, and it was also aired in the Thai broadcast media. Mitsubishi representatives also visited the ITF regional office in Tokyo to make a similar apology. The ITF has been running an ongoing campaign against sexism in the airline industry. ■

*'The Thai Airways International State Enterprise Employees' Association produced a leaflet mocking the advertisement and launched a media campaign calling for a boycott.'*

■ The Japanese government set up a committee to study bus design and construction safety following a series of serious accidents.

*Photo: Kyodo News*



Martin Mayer of the TGWU (UK), a member of the ITF Bus Construction and Design Working Party, reports on the working party's visit to Japan on 24 and 25 March...

# How Japan is aiming to improve bus safety

## ITF working party visits coach manufacturing plant

The ITF Bus Construction and Design Working Party went to Japan in March to see at first hand the improved construction methods now being used by Japanese bus and coach manufacturers to protect drivers.

Improvements are being introduced in Japan following a series of serious collisions involving, modern long-distance coaches which have a low level driver's position and a large panoramic windscreen. Because of the insubstantial front-end construction of these vehicles several drivers have been killed and the Japanese unions have campaigned to get construction standards raised.

In 1995, the government agreed to set up a study committee involving manufacturers, operators, trade unions and academics. Its recommendations, published in July 1998, were adopted voluntarily by the four major Japanese bus and coach manufacturers and became standard from December 1998.

The ITF working party visited the Isuzu bus and coach manufacturing plant at Utsunomiya, where we were able to see the new construction methods which had been devised following seven collision tests. The new standards include these features...

### Front-end strengthened construction

This involves strengthening the front end of the chassis, reinforcing the front and side steel frame structure, creating a new steel buffer bar across the width of the vehicle below the windscreen and strengthening the floor of the driver's cab. This not only strengthens the whole front end construction to withstand impact but is also designed to create a "survival space" for the driver.

### Driver protection: added features

All coaches are to be fitted with driver's seat belt and airbag. Collision tests have shown that airbags are effective if the seat belt is worn. A collapsible steering wheel minimises injury to the driver.

### Overall strengthened construction

This includes: strengthened rear end to withstand shunt accidents; strengthened roof construction to protect occupants in the event of roll-over; steel partition separating engine from passenger compartment (for fire protection).

### Added safety measures (some optional)

- Improved passenger seats to withstand impact.
- Elimination of protrusions on rear external mirror designed to assist driver's view of the road immediately in front of the bus (so-called 'under mirror').
- Rear view video to assist driver vision when reversing.
- Computerised distance finder in the cab which tells the driver if they are too close to the vehicle in front.
- Fold out seat with safety belt for attendant.
- Electric suspension, ABS brakes, rack and pinion steering (less play so more precise handling).

We were joined on the visit by Takeyoshi Nara, Vice President JREU (East Japan Railway Workers' Union), and his colleagues who had been lobbying for these improvements. They also took part in discussions in Tokyo on a new draft ITF booklet on bus construction and design to be published shortly.

**'A collapsible steering wheel minimises injury to the driver.'**

# Swedish bus strike ends with new pay offer – and guaranteed toilet breaks

A 13-day strike by 15,000 Swedish bus drivers ended on 10 March when the strikers accepted the bus companies' revised offer of a 6.15 per cent pay increase spread over two years and regular scheduled toilet breaks (of between six and 11 or eight and 15 minutes, according to the length of driving time) to be agreed at local level. Unsocial hours payments are also part of the deal.

The strike, called by the Swedish Municipal Employees' Union from midnight on 24 February, following the rejection of a totally unsatisfactory mediated offer, won widespread support from the general public and brought buses to a virtual halt in major cities such as Malmö and the Swedish capital Stockholm.

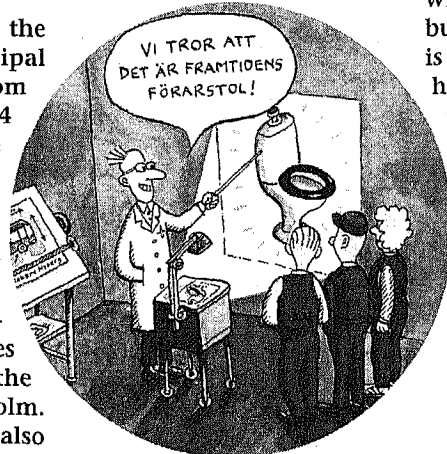
The employers have also

given a written undertaking on training, the organisation of work and the working environment which should lead to a significant improvement in the working conditions of bus drivers.

Fellow bus workers in Scandinavia showed solidarity with the drivers; the Norwegian Transport Workers' Union, whose members work for a private

company on the strike-bound routes between Oslo and Gothenburg and Stockholm, promised that its members would not carry out duties undertaken by the strikers, while other Scandinavian workers, notably the Swedish Transport Workers' Union, which also organises bus sector workers, observed a strictly neutral stance in the dispute.

A similar pay and conditions agreement, again featuring locally negotiated "relief" breaks, was signed by the municipal employees' union later the same week for 3,000 workers with municipally owned bus companies. The union is especially pleased that it has been able to agree financial compensation for the raising of the pension age from 63 to 65.



■ Right: "We believe this is the driver's seat of the future," says the cartoon produced by the Swedish union during the successful strike.

## US rail unions act on crossing safety

Unions representing railway engineers, signal staff and conductors in the US rail network held an emergency meeting following the accident on 15 March in which 11 people died when an Amtrak train hit a truck on a level crossing at Bourbonnais, Illinois. The three unions, the UTU, BLE and BRS, agreed to set up a task force and encourage rail workers to telephone or email with information about dangerous crossings. The unions plan to compile a list of dangerous rail crossings – out of the total of 259,000 crossings in the USA. The unions said they wanted the Federal Railroad Administration to do more to improve crossing systems. ■

## IN BRIEF

### New contract agreed in New Zealand

Tranz Rail and New Zealand's Rail and Maritime Transport Union negotiators have reached agreement on the Tranz Rail collective employment contract. The union says that the negotiations met its key objectives of protecting the job security of members, achieved a 2 per cent pay increase from 30 May in a difficult climate and ensured that single person remote control is not implemented without agreement, and with the union being satisfied that the work practice is safe.

### First US contract with Wisconsin

The US-based Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE) announced in April the ratification of its first contract agreement with Wisconsin Central. The agreement covers more than 300 locomotive engineers who selected BLE as their collective bargaining representative in a ballot in July 1997. Prior to the BLE victory, Wisconsin Central was the largest non-unionised US rail operator. ■

### Protest over Spanish driver deaths

The communication and transport union of the CCOO Spanish trade union confederation marked the death of 395 professional drivers in 1997 by placing as many memorial markers in central Madrid on 27 April – designated by unions around the world as the day to commemorate the toll of those killed and maimed at

work. The Spanish union points out that the death rate for drivers on the country's roads is higher than in the construction or mining industries, and, while there are moves towards a 35-hour week in many countries, drivers in Spain can be required to be at the wheel for up to 56 hours a week and still carry out other duties. ■

### Zimbabwe suspends rail plans

The National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ) has suspended its railway restructuring plans and will now consider a new programme presented to the company and its shareholders in March. This follows representations made by the ITF on behalf of the Zimbabwe Amalgamated Railwaymen's Union (ZARU). The threat of up to 4,000 job losses has in the meantime been suspended while NRZ assesses the suitability of the new programme. Responding to the news of the suspension, TL Shana, General Secretary of ITF-affiliated ZARU, said: "The suspension is a result of the ITF's letter which discouraged the minister of transport from going ahead with NRZ's restructuring plans. We would like to thank the ITF wholeheartedly for this." ■

## ITF MEETINGS

- Road Transport Workers' Section Meeting plus Taxi and Telematics Working Groups, London, 11-14 May
- European Seafarers' Regional Committee, Limassol, 12-13 May
- European Inland Navigation Flag of Convenience Meeting, Prague, 26-27 May
- Civil Aviation Section Committee, Rome, 3-4 June
- Civil Aviation Section Meeting on Regulatory Affairs, Rome, 7-8 June
- Fisheries Section Committee, London, 7-8 June
- Railway Workers' Section Committee, London, 16-17 June
- Asia/Pacific Seafarers' Regional Committee, Bangkok, 22-23 June
- One World Solidarity Airline Alliance Meeting, London, 22-24 June
- Asia/Pacific Regional Committee, Bangkok, 24-25 June
- Interamerican Road Transport Meeting, Washington, 28-29 June
- Alpha Airline Alliance Meeting, Istanbul, 30 June-1 July
- Fair Practices Committee Steering Group, London, 5 July
- Seafarers' Section Committee, London, 6 July and 7 July (am)
- Dockers' Section Meeting, London, 6 July and 7 July (am)
- Fair Practices Committee, London, 7 July (pm) and 8-9 July
- Trustees of the ITF Seafarers' Trust, London, 10 July

## PEOPLE

■ **Laurenz Bodinger**, National Transport Secretary of the Austrian Transport and Commercial Workers' Union (HTV), retired at the beginning of this year.

■ **Bill Brett** retired in March after 10 years as General Secretary of the British Institution of Professionals, Managers and Specialists (IPMS). Bill remains for another year as chair of the ILO (International Labour Organisation) Workers' Group, a position which he has held since 1993. The new IPMS General Secretary is **Paul Noon**, formerly group secretary for the union's Ministry of Defence staff. IPMS national aviation officer **Joe Magee** has also taken early retirement.

■ **Castalia Herrera de Velásquez** has been elected as the new women's secretary of the Honduran National Port Company Workers' Union SITRAENP, succeeding **Marling Ewens de Payne**.

■ **Louis Fort**, of the maritime section of the French FGTE-CFDT transport workers' federation and until recently ITF Inspector in the port of Le Havre, has been awarded the maritime order of merit, in recognition of his long service in defence of seafarers.

■ **Arne Hansen** (Norwegian Navigating Officers' Union) and **Jens Fage Pedersen** (Danish Navigating Officers' Association) have been elected President and Vice President respectively of the Nordic Navigating Officers' Association.

■ **Obaidul Hoque** has been re-elected President and **Md Enayet Hossain Akhand** General Secretary of the Bangladesh Railway Employees League.

■ **Yevgenij Izotov** was elected President of the Ukrainian Marine Trade Unions Federation (UMTUF) at its Congress in Odessa on 25 March.

■ **Faiz Mohammad** has been elected President of the Foreign Airlines Workers' Association of Pakistan, with **Mohammad Ibrahim** as Vice President and **Zahir ur Rehman** as Secretary General.

■ **Margaret Prosser** has been elected as the new Deputy General Secretary of the British Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) in succession to **Jack Adams**, who retires in May. As TGWU national organiser since 1992, Margaret has been responsible for the union's recruitment and organisation programme. She is also an ITF lay auditor and a former TGWU Women's Officer.

■ **Rudi Schäfer**, President of the German Railway Workers' Union (GdED) and a member of the ITF Executive Board from 1990 to 1998, retired at the union's extraordinary Congress at the end of March. He is succeeded by **Norbert Hansen**, GdED Vice President since 1996. **Lothar Krauß**, a member of the GdED Executive Board since 1996, was elected as the new Vice President. **Günter Ostermann**, elected in October 1998, is also GdED Vice President.

■ **Bill Scheri** retires on 1 June as General Vice President of Transportation of the US International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM). Bill was chair of the ITF Civil Aviation Section from October 1985 to August 1994, when he was first elected to the ITF Executive Board from which he retires this April.

## OBITUARIES

■ **Georg Larsen**, President from 1962 to 1980 of the Danish Locomotivemen's Union, died on 29 January, aged 80.

■ **Michael Mtambo**, a long time member of the National Executive Committee of the Zimbabwe Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU), died on 14 March.

■ **Gudmundur Pétursson**, President from 1969 to 1973 of the Icelandic Seafarers' and Fishermen's Union, died on 22 October 1998, aged 86.

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### violence

Another driver murdered - what can be done? by Mark Gruberg, San Francisco United Taxicab Workers

### UK rail privatisation

Privatisation of the British Rail (ITF railway information)... plus more

### links

- PATT (Parents Against Tired Truckers)
- Sindefer (Portuguese railway union)
- Taxicabs Around the World and significant documents by Terry Smythe.

### publications

Changes still continue in New Zealand (itf railway information)



### research and studies

- Taxi deregulation: international comparison
- What makes bus driving stressful? by British Transport & General Workers' Union

For more information on the work of the inland transport sections:

- road transport
- railway
- inland navigation
- urban transport committee

- Plus:
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  - campaigns

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● What we print is available electronically as well.

● Sites of interest related to our sections.

Updated on a daily basis, the ITF web site is easy to use and simple to navigate around - with a growing site index and soon-to-be-launched search engine. It provides news about the ITF's work and the activities of its eight

industrial sections, ITF affiliates and the international labour movement.

As well as news, the web site offers practical advice, information and help for affiliates and their members and there are links to the ITF's partners.

For advice, information and news on the global transport trade union movement log on to:

[www.itf.org.uk](http://www.itf.org.uk)

International Transport Workers' Federation

Fédération internationale des ouvriers du transport

Federación Internacional de los Trabajadores del Transporte

Internationella Transportarbetarefederationen

國際運輸勞連

Internationale Transportarbeiter-Föderation

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