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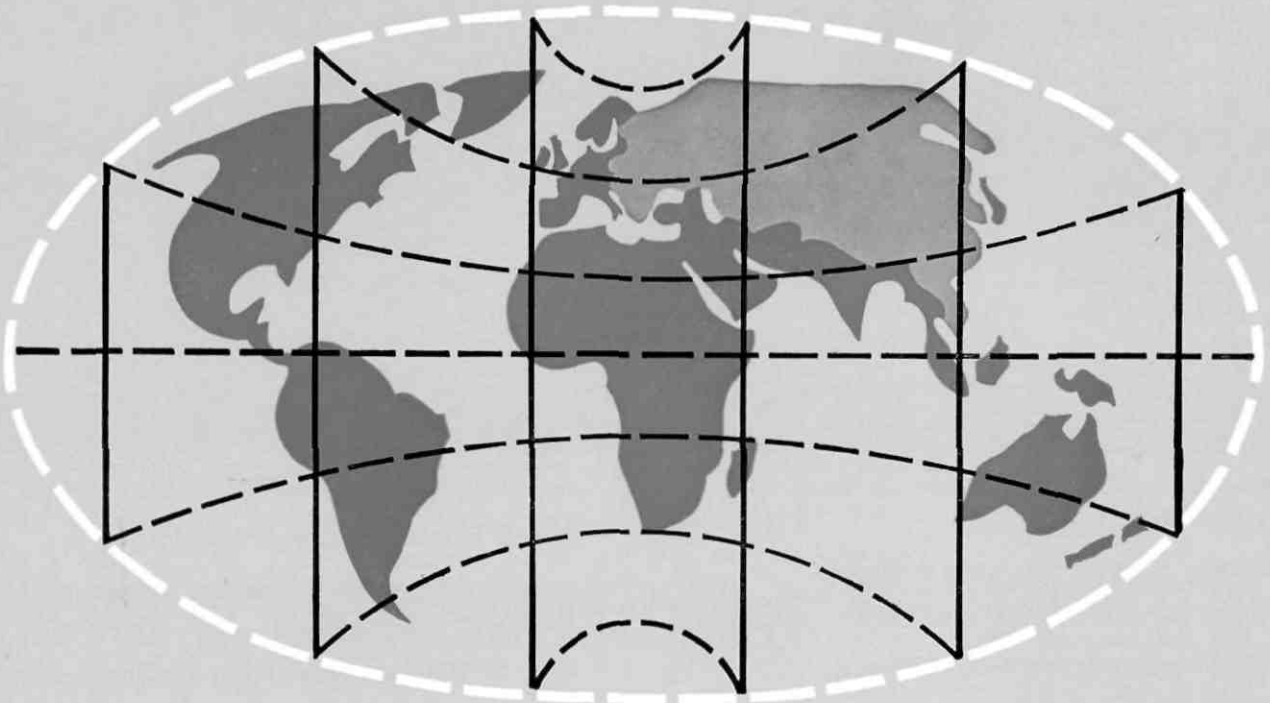

ITF

INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION

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Copenhagen	1-2 July	General Council
Rome	26-30 October	Railwaymen's Sectional Conference

A group of Swedish seafarers, now facing a new threat of unemployment, wait for work in a seamen's employment bureau

Wanted - a policy for the short sea trades

by **Omer Becu**, General Secretary of the ITF

COMPETITION in the shipping of the North Sea and Baltic region is a perennial problem. The countries of the region have always struggled to secure as large a share as possible of the available traffic. Sometimes they have relied on the efficiency of their vessels to aid them, sometimes on the comparatively low labour standards of their seafarers, or again on assistance from their respective governments. At times, the competition has been fought out between rival means of propulsion – e.g. steam versus motor vessels – at others, the struggle has been between large and small ships.

Competition and trade fluctuations

Such competition is most severe during periods of trade depression; it is least apparent when economic activity is greater, e.g. in times of war and periods of rearmament or reconstruction. Thus, the period between the two world wars was characterized by the extremely fierce competition which was carried on at the expense of the seafarers employed in the Baltic and North Sea Trades. Now, following the interlude of the war and the immediate post-war years, the phenomenon is in evidence once again. The statistics of laid-up ships and the trend of the freight market reveal only too clearly the nature of the situation.

The present position

The Scandinavian countries are today particularly hard hit. At the end of January 1953, Norway had 29 vessels of 79,000 deadweight tons laid up. On 4 March, the same country had thirty-eight idle vessels, totalling 86,500 tons d.w. With the exception of one tanker of 1,000 tons, all these were dry-cargo vessels. Of the laid-up vessels, seven were over 3,000 tons d.w. and the remainder between 1,000 and 3,000 tons d.w. In Sweden, statistics compiled by the Swedish Shipowners' Association show that, on 1 February of this year, 127 vessels aggregating 343,444 tons d.w. were idle. This compares with a total of 91 ships laid up in January. Of the February total, sixty-four ships totalling 115, 726 tons d.w. were laid up due to lack of cargoes, this figure having increased by twenty-five per cent since January. In the case of vessels between 300 and 2,000 tons the increase was even more marked, being twenty-eight per cent. Sweden's eastern neighbour Finland is in a similar plight. Approximately sixty vessels totalling 70,000 gross tons are now idle as a result of competition in the North Sea and Baltic areas. This represents some twelve per cent of the Finnish merchant fleet.

At the seafarers' expense

Seafarers' conditions of employment represent a big item in the running costs of ships. In consequence, the seafarers are liable to bear the brunt of economic measures, as shipowners are naturally inclined to take the line of least resistance. In the past, seafarers paid the price in the form of depressed wages and severe unemployment. This time, however, they resolved to take timely steps to prevent a recurrence of such attacks on their working and living standards. When the first symptoms of recession appeared, they held international discussions and made preparations for

meeting the situation in good time.

Nevertheless, this is not a problem which the seafarers can solve alone. For that reason they have appealed to all those interested in the welfare of the shipping industry to join together in dealing with it. To the shipowners because ultimately they too must suffer from the situation through a falling-off in profits; and to governments because of the importance to the national economies and defence systems of a healthy fleet of small and medium-sized vessels.

No response to initiative

There has, however, been a curious lack of response to the initiative taken by the seafarers. It is true, of course, that there are obvious difficulties involved in seeking a solution to the problem. There is, for instance, that of dealing with the shipping of one particular region in isolation from international shipping as a whole. Then too, there is the problem of dealing with coastwise and short sea shipping in such a way that the balance of a country's transport system is not disturbed (relationship between land and sea transport). Finally, one is faced with the difficulty of improving the wages and conditions of seafarers without dislocating the wage structure and wage-price policy of the country as a whole.

At the same time, the seafarers realize that when one is faced with a problem which goes so deep it is not realistic to be a perfectionist. They realize too that partial solutions can do much to mitigate the situation, and that matters just cannot be allowed to slide.

Seeking a solution

Since the problem of competition in the North Sea and Baltic trades was first taken in hand again following the war (1949/50) the seafarers' organizations affiliated with our international Federation have been seeking a solution along three lines:

Firstly, they have proposed the fixing of regional minimum or fair standards of wages and conditions for seafarers by means of regional agreements reached through the intermedium of the International Labour Organization. Such agreements would go a long way towards preventing the unbridled competition which has been so familiar a feature of the North-West European trades. That there are obstacles in the way of equalizing seafarers' conditions of employment is appreciated. In certain countries, Holland, for example, seafarers' standards are an integral part of the national structure and are related to national wage and price policies. In others, the comparative weakness of the trade union movement – especially during the period immediately following the war – has meant that the workers have lagged behind in the struggle for higher rates of pay and improved conditions of work. The seafarers of the ITF, however, are used to meeting obstacles and do not believe that they should be made an excuse for inaction.

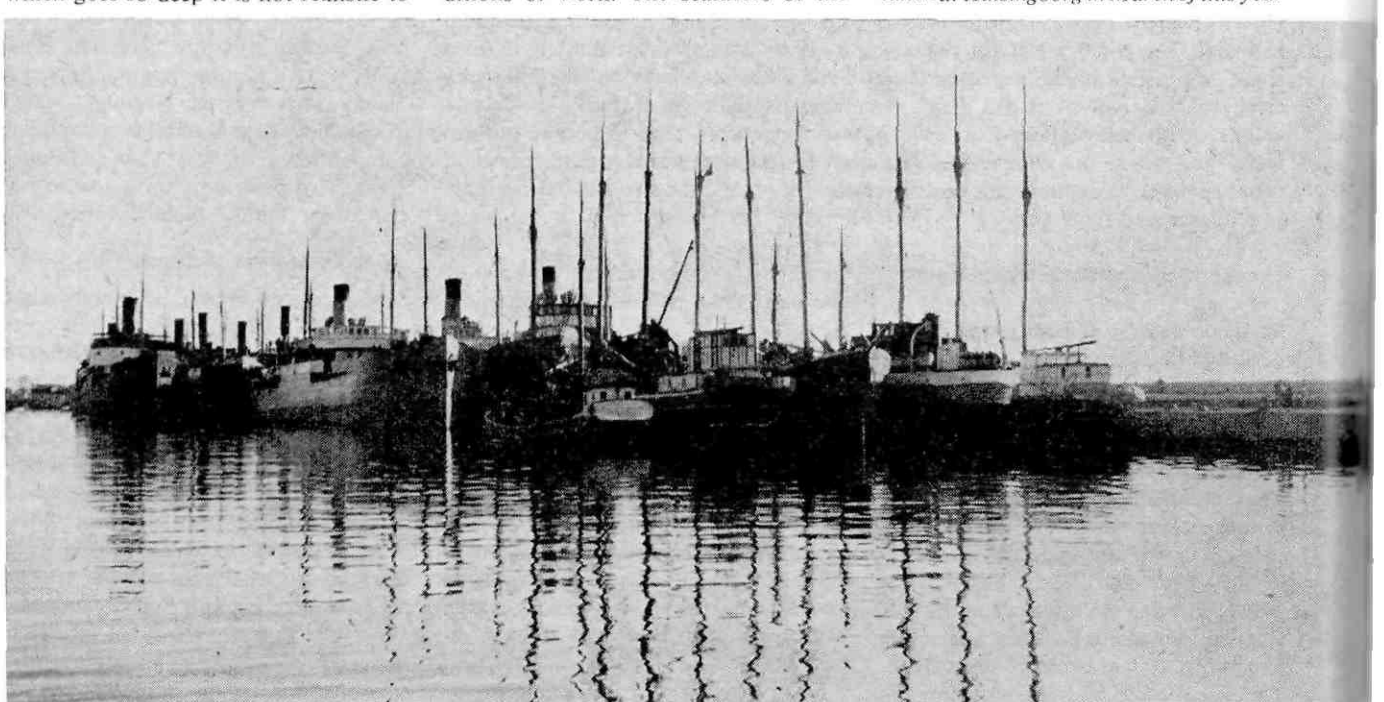
Freight rate regulation essential

The Seafarers' Section favours the establishment, through the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), of machinery for the regulation of freight rates with a view to maintaining them at fair levels. Seafarers appreciate the reciprocal relationship between their standards and the level of freight rates, the interdependence of the social and economic problems. Here again, however, the shipowners seem so far to be adopting a fatalist attitude. Yet there is no reason to believe that the control of freight rates – by measures such as conference decisions on freight rates, agreed laying-up schemes, creation of a wage equalization fund – is impossible of realization, provided only that the will to do so exists. The seafarers, for their part, are prepared to assist all attempts made by bona fide shipowners along these lines.

Seafarers constantly watching position

Last, but certainly not least, we come to the question of international coopera-

A group of small Swedish vessels laid up as the result of competition in the short sea trades. This photograph was taken at Hälsingborg in March of this year



tion between the organized seafarers themselves. The latter remember from previous experience what happens if they allow one section to be played off against another. A downward spiral is touched off, forcing the conditions of all categories down to the lowest possible level. That is why the seafarers are resolved to cooperate internationally in defending and improving the wages and conditions of the whole seafaring community. They realize that their strength lies in their unity, and they have therefore established a permanent committee, on which the various countries of the region are represented, to watch and study the situation with a view to carrying out the policy outlined above in accordance with changing circumstances.

Long-term - short-term

However, the problem has such wide ramifications that a complete solution to it probably cannot be achieved without the economic integration and coordination of European transport and the European economy as a whole. Both the seafarers and the ITF are eager to make whatever contribution they can to the attainment of this objective. Nevertheless, it is a long-term objective and in the meantime it is imperative that short-term measures be taken without delay if serious harm is not to result, not only to the seafarers, but to the shipping industry as a whole and to the national economies which are dependent on it.

The seafarers reiterate the hope that there will be the closest possible cooperation between all interests concerned – seafarers, shipowners and governments. A big step in this direction can be taken when the tripartite sub-committee of the Joint Maritime Commission meets in the near future to discuss the problem. Incidentally, if that meeting should decide to take concrete action, it would give effect to a Recommendation on regulated hours and manning standards in the short sea trades which was adopted by an International Labour Conference in 1936!

One of the many small foreign vessels from which the Scandinavian countries are now experiencing strong competition

Japanese shipping attempting come-back

THE JAPANESE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT claims that Japanese ships operating on 11 major sea routes linking Japan with foreign nations are outnumbered by the vessels of other countries in the ratio of ten to four. This reverses the pre-war situation when the Japanese merchant fleet exceeded the combined foreign ships on these runs.

To redress this adverse balance, Japanese shipping interests plan to increase the ocean-going merchant fleet up to 4,000,000 tons gross by 1957. By that date they hope to be carrying at least 50 per cent of all Japanese exports and imports. At the same time, Japanese owners are taking steps to ensure that, whatever the competitive situation over the next several years, their vessels will prove attractive to shippers.

According to Japanese owners, lack of fast ships has particularly affected Japanese services on the New York, European and Australian runs. Of Japan's 332 ocean-going ships in commission at the end of last year, 23, i.e. 22 freighters and one tanker, had speeds over 16 knots. Of the total fleet, more than a half could not exceed a speed of 13 knots. Owners are therefore turning more and more to the construction of high-speed freighters. This trend is particularly noticeable in the shipbuilding programme for the first half of the fiscal year 1953 (beginning 1 April). Of the 51 vessels, construction of which is due to commence in that period, fourteen will have speeds above the average, five of them being capable of running at from 20 to 22 knots.

Size of Scandinavian merchant fleets

THE NORWEGIAN SHIP REGISTRATION SOCIETY *Norsk Veritas* reports that on 1 January 1953 the Norwegian merchant fleet comprised 2,200 vessels of over 100 gross tons, with an aggregate gross tonnage of 6,040,000. Of this total, 1,496 vessels were motorships (4,728,000 tons) and 704 steamships (1,312,000); 365 vessels of 3,083,000 tons were tankers. Of the total Norwegian tonnage 46.2 per cent was built during the period 1948–52 and is thus less than 5 years old.

According to Norsk Veritas, the Swedish merchant fleet totalled 1,281 vessels of 2,423,000 gross tons on 1 January 1953, and the Danish fleet 645 vessels of 1,433,000 tons. The Finnish merchant fleet consisted of 427 vessels of 625,000 tons and that of Iceland numbered 141 vessels of 84,000 tons.

Growth of Israeli merchant marine

AT THE END of the first quarter of 1953, the Israeli merchant fleet consisted of 31 vessels of 112,000 registered tons. Of these, 26 were operated by the national shipping company ZIM. At present, the Israeli merchant fleet gives employment to 1,150 Israeli and 220 foreign seafarers. Last year, it carried 27 per cent of Israel's imports and 18 per cent of her exports – a total of 400,000 tons. In addition, 200,000 tons of cargo were carried between foreign ports. As regards passenger traffic by sea, 66 per cent of all travellers used Israeli vessels, 29,000 entering and 25,000 leaving the country.

An academy for the training of ship's officers, both merchant marine and Naval, is to be established at Haifa. For this purpose, the facilities offered by the Nautical School now operated by the Maritime League are to be extended, with the cooperation of the Ministries of Education, Defence, and Transport. The new training centre will be able to accommodate between 400 and 500 pupils. Due to be opened next year, it will provide five-year courses.

A contemporary print showing US seafarers applying for work at a steamship office

The first US seamen's Union

THE FIRST US SEAMEN'S UNION came into being at a meeting held in San Francisco on Sunday, 11 January 1866. The new organization, called the Seamen's Society for the Pacific Coast, marked the beginning of a long struggle to win for seamen recognition as free men and citizens.

At the time when this first attempt to organize maritime labor was made, seamen were little better than slaves on board ship. The law allowed them to be beaten, wounded, starved or imprisoned by the master for any reason which might seem to him good and proper. Not until the year 1898 was corporal punishment declared illegal and the mates held responsible for the ill-treatment of crew members.

There are numerous cases on record of seamen being beaten with belaying pins, 'triced up' – or hoisted by their wrists so that their toes barely touched the deck – and tortured in other ways. Scurvy was still common on merchant vessels and 'tweendeck fo'c'sles were the rule. Crimps and masters combined to shanghai seamen and keep them perpetually in debt, which was easy when the men were paid as little as $20 to $30 a month.

The Seamen's Society did not last long, but the idea of an organization to protect seamen stayed alive, and on 31 January 1878 the Seamen's Protective Association was formed. It achieved a peak membership of 600, but crimps and boarding-house masters soon broke it. While it existed it attempted to secure prosecution of shanghaiers and bucko mates and masters. Of one hundred cases of cruelty reported to the authorities, the only punishment recorded was a fine of $25 levied against the mate of the Western Belle.

The programme of the organization also called for a twelve-hour day at sea and overtime pay, but nothing ever came of it, and the Seamen's Protective Association collapsed in November 1882.

Development of Israeli fishing industry

A FURTHER STAGE IN THE DEVELOPMENT of Israel's fishing industry was reached recently when over five tons of fish were flown from Elat, the new port on the Gulf of Akaba, and reached urban markets in excellent condition. The success of this experiment may result in regular fish supplies from Elat, and at the same time establish the basis for a permanent fishing industry on the Red Sea coast.

The Elat fishermen, in common with some eighty per cent of all Israeli fishermen, belong to the 700-strong Fishermen's Union. Most of the fishing in Israel is carried out by cooperative and collective fishing villages, and individual fishing cooperatives, which engage in deep-sea, lake, coastal, and net fishing. The purchase of ten large fishing vessels, expected to arrive from Britain in May, will greatly increase the capacity of the industry and reduce the need to import fish.

It is hoped that about fifty per cent of

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The German fishery protection service

THE HISTORY OF THE GERMAN FISHERY protection fleet goes back to the Hague Convention of 1882 which required its signatories to operate a fishery protection service in the North Sea outside coastal waters. Germany's original contribution consisted of two fishing cruisers, and later two protection vessels were built specially for the purpose.

The post-war position

Immediately following the end of the war, Germany resumed deep sea fishing operations with what remained of her pre-war fishing fleet. Those engaged in this hazardous calling, however, sadly missed the vessels which had formerly operated the protection service. Every effort was made by the German authorities to make good this deficiency, but it was not until 1948 that permission was received from the Allied Control authorities to purchase a vessel especially for the purpose.

In October 1948 the fishery protection vessel 'Frithjof' was commissioned. A former fishing trawler of 241 GRT, it carried a crew of twenty-one and was fitted out with eight hospital beds, an operating theatre and dispensary, together with radiography and dental equipment. In addition to these medical facilities, it carried a workshop for carrying out repairs to the gear and mechanical installations of the fishing fleet as well as complete diving equipment.

Two vessels in service

It became obvious, however, that the service thus provided could not meet the demand, and in 1950 the 'Frithjof' was joined by a bigger and better vessel, the 1,000 HP motor-vessel 'Meerkatze' of 673 GRT. The 'Meerkatze', a completely modern ship, combines both medical and salvage facilities, its hospital having thirty-two beds whilst, in addition to the appliances carried by its sister vessel, it is equipped with two powerful salvage pumps and towing gear. Last year, both vessels were equipped with radar. Germany thus has at present a small but highly efficient protection service capable of giving speedy assistance to man and ship when in need.

Protection provided in 1952

During the year 1952, the two vessels made twenty-two voyages (the 'Meerkatze' eight, and the 'Frithjof' fourteen) totalling 472 days at sea. In that period 1,072 trawlermen were given medical treatment, 145 of them in the sick-bay of the protection vessel, whilst fifty-nine case were transferred to hospitals ashore. The number of non-German nationals given treatment was fifty-two. Of the total number of cases, about one-third were treated by means of advice and instructions given over the radio.

In addition to the medical service, considerable assistance is rendered in the form of repairs to fishing vessels, their equipment and machinery. In this field, the two protection vessels carried out thirty-three repairs to boilers and engines, whilst there were seven cases of structural repairs. Each of the ships in the period under review was twice called upon to undertake salvage operations involving the use of diving gear.

No picture of the activities of these two vessels would be complete without some indication of the valuable meteorological service provided. The waters which now constitute the main fishing area have become warmer in recent years. This phenomenon has been accompanied by an increase in the frequency and intensity of winter gales. The value of the regular weather reports issued by the meteorologists on board these vessels in conjunction with the North-West German Meteorological Office can therefore hardly be overestimated. During 1952, they made 1,956 weather observations, prepared 956 weather charts, and issued 516 weather reports. The occasions when weather reports or warnings were originated or relayed numbered 1,829.

Comparison with earlier activities

When these figures are compared with those for the previous year, it is found that there have been no significant changes. There has been a big drop in the

A herring trawler has hoisted the signal 'we need medical assistance'. The rubber dinghy with a doctor is seen approaching the vessel to take the injured man off.

The injured fisherman is transferred from the dinghy to the protection vessel.

In the operating room of the 'Meerkatze'

The Meerkatze – the larger of the two German protection vessels dealt with in the accompanying article

number of cases of illness, it is true, but this is largely attributed to the 1952 season having started late. Moreover, an improvement in the medical equipment carried on board fishing vessels would also tend to reduce the need for calling on the services of the protection vessels. Comparison with pre-war activity on the other hand reveals a marked increase over the entire range of services provided. In 1937, for example, the last pre-war year for which figures are available, the two vessels then engaged on the fishery protection service made only eight voyages with 198 days at sea. In that year, medical treatment was given to 249 fishermen, whilst technical assistance was rendered on 56 occasions.

Service under civil control

This extension and intensification of effort is largely the result of the scope of the present-day protection service being limited to the provision of aid to fishermen at sea. The scientific work carried out on marine biology, the taking of echo-soundings, etc., is also designed ultimately to benefit the fishing industry. In keeping with the welfare and purely industrial purposes of the protection service, it has been placed under the Federal Ministry for Food and Agriculture, the Fisheries Department of which is responsible for the operation of the two vessels. In this, it works in close collaboration with the fishing interests. The crews, drawn from among trawlermen and merchant marine personnel, have remained practically unchanged since the vessels first put to sea, and the experience they have gained can but redound to the advantage of the protection service, and consequently to the trawlermen, in ever-increasing measure.

More vessels needed

Although the 'Meerkatze' has been fully utilized during the two winters she has

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FAO to discuss fishing techniques

THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL ORGANIZATION of the United Nations (FAO), from its headquarters in Rome, announces plans to hold an international congress at which experts from all over the world will exchange technical details on their fishing-boat types and equipment. The meeting is scheduled to be held in Paris from 12 – 16 October, and in Miami, Florida, from 16 – 20 November 1953 under the auspices of the Governments of France and the United States respectively.

Fishing provides an important part of the world's food, the FAO points out. If all countries – particularly the less developed ones – are to make the most of the harvest of the seas, of both the fish themselves and their by-products, then fishing vessels, methods of propulsion, and equipment must be designed to increase efficiency and improve catches.

Fishing is fundamentally a primitive pursuit, FAO officials say. In the course of the years, a series of relatively local industries has grown up, about which there has been no interchange of information regarding either the methods employed or the design and construction of fishing vessels used. Thus, whereas in some countries fishing vessel design and construction is highly developed and scientific, in others it is completely by rule of thumb.

The enormous expansion of world fisheries and the need for more efficient food production suggest that this should not go on any longer. For this reason, the FAO is sponsoring a Congress which will bring together for the first time in history all the best brains concerned with the design, construction, outfitting and operation of fishing vessels.

First meeting of Overfishing Commission

THE FIRST MEETING of the Permanent International Commission set up under the Overfishing Convention of 1946 for the regulation of the meshes of fishing nets and the size limits of fish was opened in London on 5 May.

Delegates attended from eleven of the signatory Governments: Belgium, Denmark, France, Iceland, the Irish Republic, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. The twelfth contracting Government, Poland, was represented by an observer, whilst the Federal Republic of Germany also sent observers.

Following the election of officers, the Commission decided to make London its headquarters, and then went on to discuss the various conservation problems with which the Commission is called upon to deal. Arrangements were made for the further study of these problems in consultation with the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea, in preparation for the next meeting of the Commission, which it was agreed should be held in London in November next.

'Improved distribution of what is already available and increased production resulting from reduction of unemployment and, especially, of underemployment can both make, and are making, enormous contributions to increased welfare'

(1953 Report of the Director-General of the ILO)

Developments in Canadian urban transportation

The Canadian Department of Labor has recently published the results of a survey, carried out in October 1951, covering the urban transportation systems of thirty-five Canadian cities). Since the survey contains a great deal of interesting information on wages and working conditions in Canada's urban transportation industry we give below a summarized version of its main findings.*

Labour force

In October 1951 the street car, trolley-coach, and motor-bus systems of thirty-five Canadian cities gave employment to more than nineteen thousand non-office workers. Practically all these employees were male, for, although there are a few women trolley-bus operators in Winnipeg and 'conductorettes' in Vancouver, the total number of female non-office employees in the urban transportation industry is negligible.

Workers in urban transportation are highly organized. In all but four of the thirty-five cities included in the survey, the employees are covered by collective agreements. There are in all forty-eight agreements in existence, applying to eighteen thousand employees.

In the larger cities in particular the tremendous business expansion of the war and post-war years with its consequent increase in urban population taxed the facilities of transport systems. The extension of suburban limits meant lengthening the routes by many miles. Over the past decade, therefore, the constant pressure to maintain and increase service has meant an ever-increasing expansion of both equipment and personnel.

Changes in equipment

This expansion, moreover, has had to be carried on with due consideration not only to the number of potential passengers but also to the traffic problem as a whole. Hence, many cities have, in the interests of greater manoeuvrability, swung over to a greater use of trolley-coaches and motor-buses. When the present survey was made, only twelve of the thirty-five cities covered were still using street cars.

Changes in the type of vehicle operated have resulted in changes in the occupational structure of the industry. With fewer track-guided vehicles in use, the employment of switchmen and track-winders now tends to be less common in the industry; similarly fewer carpenters are needed since very little wood is used in bus bodies. On the other hand, sheet metal workers and body repair men are needed to maintain the lighter bodies of trolley-coaches and motor-buses, since these are most vulnerable to damage by collision. In systems where motor-buses are exclusively used, armature winders and linemen are not required; but the demand for mechanics, body repair men, and cleaners is unchanged.

Operators of vehicles comprise the largest single occupational group in the urban transportation industry. The wages of the group are generally not affected by the trend from street cars to buses and trolley-coaches. Within a city the same wage rates are customarily paid to operators of the three types of vehicles with the exception that operators of two-man street cars usually receive a lower rate

Special problems

The nature of the service provided by urban transport systems presents a number of special problems. One of these is the extreme fluctuation in activity. Such peaks and lulls in activity have an effect on the working hours of employees, entailing the use of a 'split shift' arrangement of working time. They are the result of influences which, by and large, are beyond the control of the carriers. While many of the peaks, such as those arising out of working schedules of large employers or out of special events taking place within the area served, can be anticipated, others, such as those caused by suddenly inclement weather conditions, cannot. In either case the increase in the demand for service may be for a short period only. Therefore, such conditions of employment as provision for reporting pay and minimum call-in pay assume a greater importance to the urban transport worker than to those in many other Canadian industries.

Trade union organization

Generally, in the smaller cities, there is one all-inclusive collective agreement for transportation workers. In the larger cities, on the other hand, two or more agreements may govern the different divisions of the industry: for instance, one may cover the operating personnel, another machinists, and so on.

There are two main unions in the field of urban transportation: the Amalgamated Association of Street, Electric Railway, and Motor Coach Employees of America (affiliated with the American Federation of Labor and the Canadian Trades and Labor Congress), and the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees and Other Transport Workers (affiliated with the Canadian Congress of Labor). The former derives its membership almost exclusively from the urban transportation industry. It is the bargaining agent for 58% of the 18,000 employees covered by agreements. The CBRE represents 22% of the employees.

The remaining 20% of the urban transportation employees are represented by fourteen other unions or associations. These are mostly found in the smaller cities. Except in the case of one large Local of the Bus Drivers' Association, the workers of urban transportation systems constitute only a small proportion of the membership of such organizations, which operate primarily in other fields of activity.

Wage rates

The level of wages in the industry reached its highest point during 1951, having increased by 12% between October 1950 and October 1951. The index on the base of 1939 rates as 100 rose from 192.1 to 215.2 during the twelve-month period. This compares with the 13% increase in the general average for all industries

*) Halifax, Sydney, Moncton, Saint John, Lévis, Montreal, Quebec, Drummondville, Sherbrooke, Brantford, Cornwall, Kingston, Peterborough, Hamilton, Kitchener, Fort William, Port Arthur, London, Oshawa, Ottawa, Sarnia, Sault Ste. Marie, St. Catharines, Sudbury, Toronto, Windsor, Winnipeg, Moose Jaw, Regina, Saskatoon, Calgary, Edmonton, Lethbridge, Vancouver, and Victoria.

covered by the Canadian Department of Labor's annual survey.

Moderate differences in wage rates exist between regions. According to the survey, rates in Ontario were the highest; those in the Maritimes the lowest. Other regions ranked in the following order: British Colombia, the Prairies, and Quebec Province.

As already mentioned, street car and bus operators are by far the largest occupational group in the industry. Wage rates for operators have steadily risen, so that by October 1951 they were earning maximum wages ranging from eighty-eight cents to $1.40 per hour in the areas covered. For skilled non-operating workers, the range was from ninety-two cents to $1.71 per hour. The latter group comprises long-established craft groups, such as machinists, carpenters, and electricians. The unskilled group, including such occupations as track men and cleaners, received rates of pay which varied between sixty-six cents and $1.33 per hour.

Work week

The most common work schedule in transportation during October 1951 was *forty-eight hours – six days of eight* hours. However, several of the larger systems were on a five-day forty-hour week. Seven of the systems investigated during the course of the survey and employing almost half of the workers engaged in Canadian transportation stated that they had a five-day week for some or all of their employees; five of these (four of which were in Western Canada) had a five-day schedule for all their employees.

The trend in Canada's urban transportation is towards modern single-decker buses

Vacations with pay

The transportation systems in all thirty-five cities provided at least one week's vacation with pay after a year (in one case less than a year) of service. In twenty of the centres, with a total of 15,580 employees, a two week vacation was given after one year of service; in most of the others a service requirement for two weeks' vacation with pay ranged up to 5 years. Extended vacations, in most cases of three weeks, were granted in the majority of these centres if the periods of service ranged from ten to twenty-five years.

Statutory holidays

The majority of the systems reported the observance of eight to ten statutory holidays; in twenty-three cities the 16,000 non-office employees covered did not receive pay for these unless they worked. Returns from nine cities (covering about 1,200 employees) indicated payment for all observed statutory holidays even if not worked. One of the remaining three gave no information on the subject and the others reported payment for some of the holidays observed.

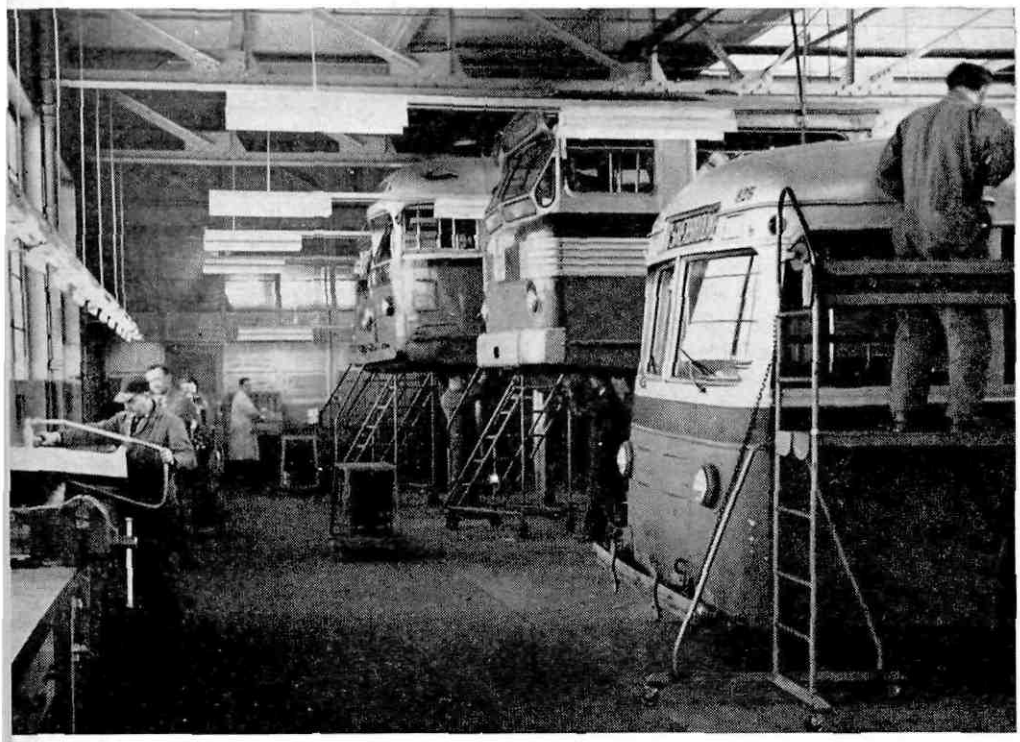
Special wage clauses

Transportation systems in twelve centres employing a total of 14,000 men reported escalator (sliding scale) arrangements with their employees with provision for wage adjustments based on the movement of the official cost-of-living index.

Included in these were the three largest Canadian cities: Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver.

In this branch of the transport industry there are frequent occasions for the application of reporting pay and minimum call-in pay, particularly the latter. There was considerable difference in practice, however, among the cities studied in the survey.

Reporting pay, a guarantee of a specified amount to employees finding no work available for them upon reporting



A section of a large Canadian bus repair and maintenance centre. This is just one corner of the body repair workshop

for a regular tour of duty was provided in sixteen of the systems; fourteen others did not have such provision. The practice was more common in the larger cities and of those which did provide for reporting pay, two hours' remuneration were given in seven cases and six for a full shift of four hours.

In the others, payment varied, six hours being given in two of the centres.

The minimum call-in pay is a guarantee of a specified minimum amount,usually in terms of the individual's wage rate credited to employees who may be called in to work during their off-duty time between tours. In the transportation companies used in this study, eight indicated they did not have such a practice and seven others did not reply to the question. In those which answered affirmatively two hours pay was the most common, with fourteen cities reporting this provision.

Health welfare and pension plans

Twenty-eight systems indicated having group sickness or accident plans covering their employees. The male non-office employees in these comprise 95% of the total.

Pension plans were reported by twenty-three systems employing all but eight per cent of the total male employees in the industry.

New agreements reached on Danube shipping

AUSTRIA AND HUNGARY have agreed to reopen shipping communications between the two countries on the Danube, which have been suspended since the end of the war in Europe. The agreement is regarded as an important step towards restoring the international character of the Danube.

Under the terms of the agreement, which is valid until the end of 1954, Austrian vessels will carry passengers and freight in transit through Hungary to Jugoslav ports, while Hungarian vessels may pass through Austrian territory to Germany.

At the same time, it has been announced that agreement has been reached on joint Jugoslav-Rumanian administration of the Iron Gates section of the Danube. The pact provides for Jugoslavia and Rumania to have an equal number of employees in the Iron Gates administration. In addition, it covers piloting and the towing of vessels.

Canadian rail Brotherhoods want establishment of national transport policy

A NATIONAL TRANSPORT POLICY was the major demand of the Dominion Joint Legislative Committee of the Railway Transportation Brotherhoods when it presented its annual memorandum to the Canadian Cabinet.

Recognizing that the basic question of federal versus provincial jurisdiction over interprovincial and international motor vehicle traffic on Canada's highways remained to be solved, the Brotherhoods said that they wre awaiting with interest the decision of the Privy Council on the matter.

The Committee declared that effective regulation and control of all interprovincial and international highway traffic could be established by an amendment to the Transport Act which would place motor vehicles in the same position as railways and ships. It would thereupon become the duty of the Board of Transport Commissioners to coordinate and harmonize their operations with those of the highway carriers. These carriers would lose some of their freedom of action but would acquire a status which they do not now enjoy.

Rail and road in Belgium

OFFICIAL FIGURES recently published in Belgium clearly show the extent to which road transport is gaining on the railways in the competitive struggle between the two forms of transport. The statistics, for the year 1951, show that in that year fifty-four per cent of the total volume of passenger traffic (in passenger-kilometres) was accounted for by road vehicles, the figures for rail and local light railway transport being thirty-six and ten per cent respectively.

In the case of goods traffic the trend in favour of road transport during the last two decades is particularly marked. The following table, for instance, shows the distribution of freight (in millions of ton/kilometres) between road, rail and water transport:

Year	*Rail*	*Road*	*Water*	*Total*
1927	8,597	282	2,044	10,923
1930	7,756	485	2,387	10,628
1937	6,729	785	3,237	10,751
1948	6,160	1,791	2,209	10,160
1949	5,669	1,935	2,629	10,233
1950	5,463	2,173	2,998	10,634
1951	6,630	2,725	3,474	12,829

When the same figures are expressed as percentages of the total volume of traffic, the following picture emerges:

Year	*Rail*	*Road*	*Water*
1927	78.7	2.6	18.7
1930	73.0	4.5	22.5
1937	62.6	7.3	30.1
1948	60.6	17.7	21.7
1949	55.4	18.9	25.7
1950	51.4	20.4	28.2
1951	51.7	21.2	27.1

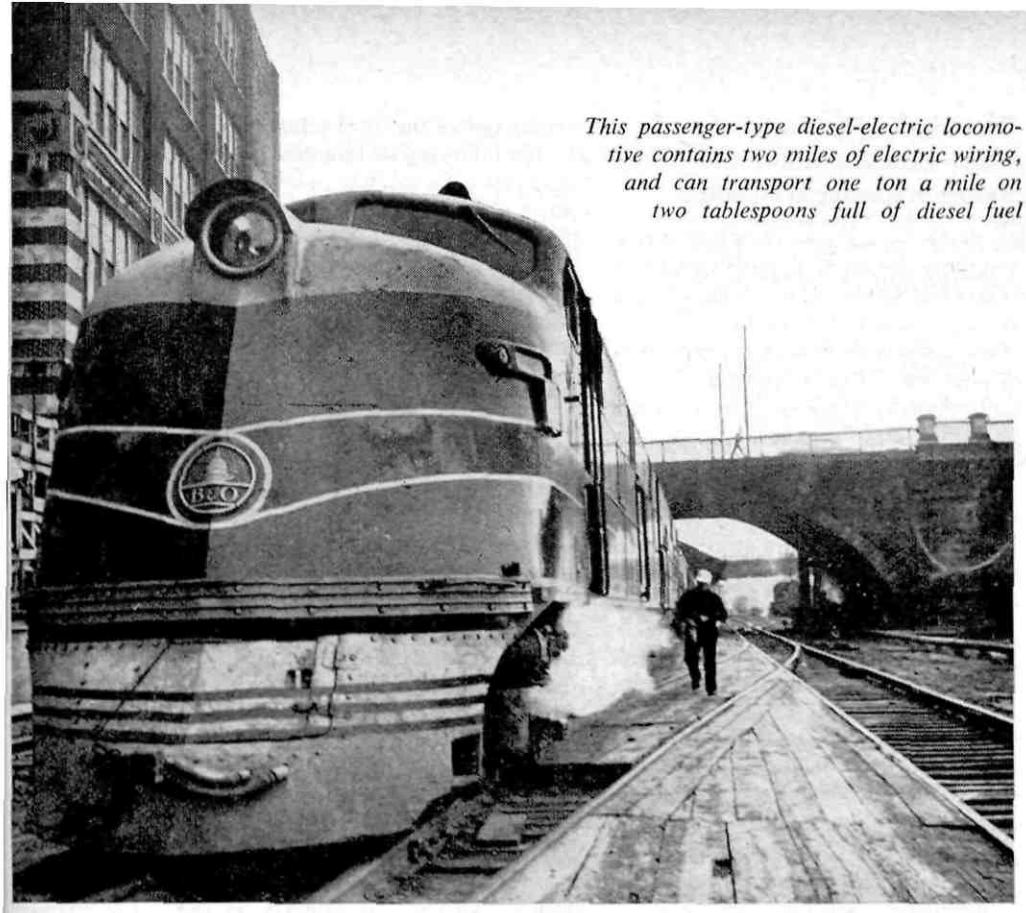
Benevolent society for German transport workers

AS IN MOST HIGHLY INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES, the constant increase in the volume of traffic in Western Germany has multiplied the occupational risks to which those engaged in transport are exposed. Involvement in an accident and subsequent court proceedings is one such risk – often with disastrous consequences. Realizing this, the German Federation of Labour, in association with a number of its affiliated unions, founded a Trade Union Benevolent Society for the protection of German transport workers at the beginning of 1950.

In return for a modest monthly contribution of DM 1.30 (approx. 2s.3d.) from lorry drivers and DM 0.90 (approx. 1s.6d.) from tramway and railway employees, the Society provides legal aid and advice, supplies Counsel in the event of court proceedings, and pays costs and any fines or damages awarded by the Court. In addition, the Society makes a family allowance in the case of a prison sentence and pays a lump sum to dependents on the death of a member.

During the short time it has been in existence, the Trade Union Benevolent Society has handled more than 6,000 cases involving legal aid and claims for damages, and has obtained a favourable verdict in 3, 264 of them. It has paid out DM 300,000 in connection with these cases, and met death claims amounting to DM 10,000.

The present Society is not the first of its kind. The transport workers' need for insurance against such risks was recognized as early as 1910, when the union then catering for them established a similar benevolent society. This, however, was taken over by the Nazi Labour Front in 1933. When the war ended in 1945, the society was placed under an Allied administrator. All efforts to reconstitute it as a trade union institution having failed, the German Federation of Labour decided to found the present benevolent society.



This passenger-type diesel-electric locomotive contains two miles of electric wiring, and can transport one ton a mile on two tablespoons full of diesel fuel

Diesels replace steam on US railways

ACCORDING TO the *New York Times* diesels are replacing steam locomotives so fast on the US railways that 'the nostalgic wail of a steam locomotive's whistle will become nearly as rare in another three years as an Indian war whoop'.

In 1935, only 113 diesels were in operation on the entire United States Railway system. Now there are nearly 21,000. During the same years, steam locomotives have dropped to 15,105 and the Association of American Railroads expects a further drop to about 6,000 by by the beginning of 1956.

Not only are the steam engines fast disappearing, but the total number of locomotives has dropped from 57,571 to 36,788 since 1929. However, because of the greater pulling power of diesels, straight electrics and modern steam engines the total tractive effort has changed very little. Diesels are cheaper to operate than steam engines and are easier on roadbeds, which reduces maintenance costs. In addition, the diesel accelerates more rapidly and smoothly than a steam locomotive, and the location of the cab at the front of the engine gives the locomotive engineer excellent visibility.

Our photographs show a typical modern United States diesel-electric locomotive, manned by its engineer Lee Ogier. Ogier's run is from Washington to New York, the last lap of a 1,000-mile trip from Chicago. When the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad's fast train, the Capital Limited, arrives in Washington after an overnight trip from the West, its locomotive is changed for a fresh one – the one Ogier will drive.

Ogier's day begins at 5.30 a.m., when he catches a train from his home in the country to the Washington terminal, where he must report at 8.10 a.m. After signing in with the crew dispatcher and giving his locomotive the required safety check, he is ready to leave at 9.30. Four hours and nine minutes later, he takes his train into the company's New York terminal in Jersey City, New Jersey. Then he returns home as a passenger aboard another train, arriving 14 hours after his day started.

Thirty-nine years ago, Ogier was a section hand, just starting his railway career. Three years later, he advanced to a fireman's job on a steam locomotive. After another six years, he became an engineer and now, at 56, he looks forward to retirement at the age of sixty-five on a monthly pension, which he will receive for the rest of his life. The pension will come from a fund to which the employer and employee have contributed equally during the term of the latter's employment.

Lee Ogier says that the modern diesel-electric locomotive lacks the thrill of its predecessor, but admits that the dieselcab is far the more comfortable

Canadian railwaymen's wages up 110 per cent since 1926

ACCORDING TO figures issued by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics and published in the Canadian *Labor Gazette*, in twenty-five years the average annual earnings of employees of Canada's steam railways rose 110 per cent from $ 1,479 in 1926 to $ 3,110 in 1951. The 1951 figure was 97 per cent above the 1939 average, $ 1,578.

Over 200.000 employed an South African railways

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF in the employ of the South African Railways has passed 200,000 for the first time. At the end of December the figures were 105,402 Europeans and 96,210 non-Europeans. The 100,000 mark was reached in February 1936.

Social insurance on the US railroads

SOCIAL INSURANCE for employees of the US railroads is largely governed by two legislative enactments: the Railroad Retirement Tax Act and the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act. Under the former, both employees and employers contribute equally to a scheme designed to protect employees and their families against loss of income due to old age, disability, or death. The cost of the unemployment insurance programme, which provides insurance against financial loss as a result of unemployment or sickness, is borne exclusively by the employers.

Under the retirement scheme, each employee contributes at the rate of 6¼ per cent of his monthly earnings up to $ 300. His employer pays a like sum. Contributions are paid to the Bureau of Internal Revenue which deposits them in the general fund of the Treasury. They are then credited currently to the railroad retirement account.

When the scheme was established, considerable importance was attached to its being self-supporting. It was also intended that the costs should be spread over the entire period of the scheme in such a way that it would not be necessary to increase the rate of contributions at a later date. Under this method of financing, contributions will exceed benefits for a number of years until a reserve is built up. At present, this reserve is invested in special Treasury notes bearing three per cent interest. In due course, this interest will be sufficient to cover the difference between the amounts contributed and the sums paid out in benefits, the present contributory rate of 6¼ per cent being the maximum laid down under the tax schedule.

For the fiscal year ending 30 June 1952, it has been calculated that, of each dollar contributed, 63 cents were paid out in benefits to retired railroad employees and to survivors of deceased employees; 36 cents went to reserve, whilst administrative costs accounted for only one cent.

Contributions towards the unemployment and sickness scheme are collected from the employers by the Railroad Retirement Board under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act. Up to 1948, the railways paid an amount equivalent to three per cent of the earnings of each employee up to $ 300 a month. At that rate, income exceeded expenditure, the excess being deposited with the US Treasury and invested. In 1948, the contributory rate was put on a sliding scale, ranging from one-half to three per cent of the taxable payroll, depending on the amount of money in the unemployment insurance account. Subsequently the rate was fixed at one-half per cent, where it is expected to stay for some years to come. Since July 1947, when they first became payable, sickness benefits have been met from the unemployment insurance funds.

US railroads' safety records

ACCORDING TO A STATEMENT recently issued by the President of the Association of American Railroads, there is every indication that a new US safety record was set up in the year 1952. Preliminary reports covering the first eleven months of the year show that, during that period, there was only one fatality for every 2,200,000,000 miles of passenger travel, a rate of .045 per 100,000,000 miles. Information covering the remaining month of the year indicates that this record safety rate will at least be maintained. The previous best in the 65 years during which figures have been kept was 1949, when one passenger fatality occured for every 1,200,000,000 passenger miles.

Considering accidents of all kinds, the statement continues, there can be no doubt that 1952 was the railroads' safest year. In the first eleven months, the number of fatal accidents involving not only passengers, but employees, users of level crossings and even trespassers, fell by about ten per cent below that of the previous year. Non-fatal accidents declined by approximately 13 per cent. These figures, it is pointed out, are the more remarkable when considered in relation to the increase in the amount of traffic handled. Compared with 1939, the safest year of the pre-war period, freight had nearly doubled and passenger travel increased by a half in 1952. Nevertheless there were approximately 30 per cent fewer fatalities in accidents of all kinds, so that the fatality rate in relation to the volume of business handled in 1952 was much less than half that of the best pre-war year.

End of United states rail-air wage board

A FURTHER STAGE in the termination of wage stabilization controls in the United States was marked on 7 April last with the issue of the final report of the Railroad and Airline Wage Board.

Established in September 1951 in implementation of an amendment to the Defense Production Act, the RAWB was empowered to administer wage stabilization controls over carriers and employees subject to the Railway Labor Act. During its period of existence the Board processed 1,402 cases.

Of the petitions submitted to it, the Board approved 84 per cent and modified or rejected 16 per cent. About 69 per cent of all the cases involved railroad carriers and their subsidiaries. The remainder concerned airlines. In the main, the rail claims involved adjustments conforming to existing practices or wage patterns, whereas those concerning airlines frequently involved not only general increases in wages but a variety of fringe adjustments.

Affiliates of the ITF figured prominently amongst the organizations which called in the services of the Board, the Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks joining in 71 petitions, while among the airline labour the International Association of Machinists was a party to fifty and the Air Line Pilots' Association to thirty-nine.

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been in commission, German fishing interests are of the opinion that one vessel alone cannot provide a fully adequate protection service in the far northern waters, it being possible to use the smaller 'Frithjof' only for the North Sea fishing grounds. A second vessel of the size of the 'Meerkatze' is therefore badly needed. Nevertheless, the two vessels at present operating can show an impressive record.

Transport and the economic future of Africa

Lack of transport and related marketing facilities present the most obvious obstacle to increased participation of the indigenous agricultural economies of tropical Africa in trade. A statement made in a recent official report concerning Northern Rhodesia may be applied to a considerable part of tropical Africa: 'At present the will of the cultivator to turn his hand to the production of cash crops is often influenced by this confidence, or lack of it, in his ability to market his produce. Existing communications are poor. Present marketing facilities are improvized and elementary, and consequently the primary producer of many areas has to take a risk of selling his surplus crops or of leaving them to rot uneaten. It is believed that there are many who in present circumstances are unwilling to take this risk.'

The historical background

Historically, the development of modern transport, particularly railways, in tropical Africa has been associated chiefly with the export of minerals and certain agricultural products. In some cases, for example in east Africa, strategic and administrative considerations have also played a part. Although these transport developments have facilitated the growth of cash cropping by indigenous producers, they were not aimed primarily at the development of indigenous agricultural economies. They have required heavy capital investments from outside, which were made almost entirely on the prospects for export trade.

During the period of low world prices for primary produce in the nineteen thirties, relatively high transport costs in tropical Africa set rather narrow limits to the extension of cash crops by indigenous cultivators even within the general area of transport facilities. This fact, in its turn, tended to discourage any sizable further investments in transport. Since the Second World War, however, world prices have been favourable to the extension of the production area for certain export crops of indigenous agriculture, particularly ground-nuts and cotton. In many cases export crops have reached the limits of the capacity of existing transport systems. In Nigeria, for example, post-war export prices for ground-nuts have generally been sufficiently high to stimulate production for export in virtually all regions which are physically within reach of rail or river. Partly as a result of the fact that the upper reaches of the River Benue are not navigable for several months of the dry season, there have frequently been very large accumulations of stocks of ground-nuts at Kano and other centres. Similar transport problems exist in British east and central Africa. According to a recent official statement regarding the Rhodesian railways, 'the capacity of the line was formerly well in advance of requirements, but traffic has expanded rapidly as a result of post-war development, and plans are being made to increase the carrying capacities of the railways'. In many cases transport and other freight handling facilities, such as ports, continue to be handicapped by the lack or the deferment of maintenance and renewal, largely as a result of the war; the situation has been aggravated by heavy traffic demands in recent years. One observer has stated that 'some £ 40 million have been spent on east African transport since the war, and it is still difficult to detect any real improvement'.

Post-war plans

All post-war development plans for tropical Africa have recognized the need for improving and extending transport facilities, and a large part of the total investment envisaged in these plans is to be devoted to this purpose. Thus, in the plans for French territories south of the Sahara, the proportion is about sixty per cent; in the Belgian Congo more than fifty per cent; and in the plans for the British territories as first announced, approximately twenty-five per cent.

A substantial part of this expenditure is intended to improve existing transport facilities rather than to open extensive new areas. Such improvement of existing facilities is necessary since most transport systems in tropical Africa are unable to handle effectively the volume of traffic offered. This is particularly the case, for example, in British central Africa where the expansion of mineral production for export is being hampered by long hauls and poor access to the sea, as well as by inadequate port facilities at Beira. At the beginning of 1952 congestion had grown so serious at Beira that there were twice as many ships in the port as could conveniently be handled. In spite of efforts to improve port facilities and operations, serious congestion has been frequent in many ports in the area. As a result, both exports and imports have often been inordinately delayed and freight rates to and from several ports have been subject to special surcharges to compensate for lost time.

Although the encouragement which has been given by high prices and government policy to cash cropping by indigenous cultivators has put a strain on existing transport facilities in almost all parts of tropical Africa, the improvement of these facilities may not of itself lead to any great extension of the commercialization of the indigenous agricultural economies, unless the facilities are also extended to reach new areas. The plantation crops did not necessarily traverse the most favourably endowed areas of indigenous cultivation. In recent years the development of highways as feeders to major railway and river systems by bringing new areas within their reach.

Road transport development

Highway development figures prominently in the plans of all governments in tropical Africa. As was stated in the *Review of Economic Conditions in Africa*: 'In all cases, the largest single item of expenditure under the heading of communications is for the construction of new roads and the improvement of old ones. In French West Africa, for example, it is proposed to develop 18,000 kilometres of new roads, and in French Equatorial Africa, where there are at present about 15,000 miles of dirt roads, mostly not usable in the rainy season, an extensive programme of reconstruction and surfacing to create all-weather roads is projected. In British Africa, expenditure on roads is a large proportion of the total anticipated expenditure for all territories with the exception of Zanzibar

In central and east Africa, plans provide for the construction of arterial roads in Kenya, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland and Tanganyika'.

Railway plans

In 1952 a group of British and American consultants undertook an exhaustive survey for the United Kingdom Secretary of State for the Colonies of the economic possibilities of a number of proposed railway routes and links between the East African and Rhodesian railway systems. With regard to the economic development of various areas to be served by the proposed railway lines, the report of these consultants stated that 'with the exception of the south-west Tanganyika mineralized area, development must be based almost entirely on agriculture, and those responsible will be wise to consider whether some part of the funds which would be spent on rail construction, equipment and on bearing initial losses, could not better be devoted in the early phases of development to high-grade all-weather roads, to the promotion of agricultural development of various kinds and possibly, in the early stages, to the lowering of road freights by government assistance.'

Referring in particular to the proposed link between north and south, the report further stated 'that it may well be that today the correct approach to the problem is to allow road transport to carry the burden hitherto borne by the low-cost (rail) line and to postpone rail construction until traffic has begun to build up to such a point that higher standards of rail construction are warranted and their sound economics is assured. A special advantage of road transport as against rail, particularly during the early phase of development, lies in its greater flexibility and in the fact that the roads themselves can be constructed and vehicles obtained more quickly.'

The engineering survey prepared by the East African Railways and Harbours Administration indicates the practicability of constructing railways over the various routes contemplated. However, since much of the main north-south link would pass through difficult terrain, the report estimated the cost of its construction at about £33 million on the basis of January 1952 prices.

Weather conditions a drawback

The limitations of road transport in Africa should, however, not be overlooked. Most of the highway systems are not constructed to carry substantial or growing traffic, and only a small part of the existing highway systems consists of all-weather roads usable all the year round. To the extent that the roads operate as feeders to main railway nad river systems, they increase the strain on these systems and make improvement in them a necessary parallel development. In general, however, both the smaller investment required for construction of good-low-cost roads and the fact that highway transport has been estimated to be more economical than rail transport for a traffic volume under 400,000 tons annually, would make road transport, apart from its function as feeder to existing main railways and river systems, more economical in meeting thedevelopment requirements – largely agricultural – of the area concerned.

Long stretches of Ethiopia's roads are badly rutted and impassable like this one

Transport development the key

The further commercialization of the indigenous agricultural economies depends on the extension of transport and related marketing facilities to areas where at present they scarcely exist, as well as on improvement in existing facilities. The capital costs of such a development of transport are likely to be high, both in absolute terms and in relation to the national income of the territories. They are greatly beyond the local communities'

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Books and the British seafarer

The organisation of ships' libraries in Britain

by **Ronald Hope,** M. A., D. Phil.

MY ATTENTION WAS DRAWN recently by the Editor of *The Seaman* to an article in the ITF Journal called 'Books and the Swedish Seafarer'. This outlined the organization of ships' libraries in Sweden, an organization which, in 1950, despatched a total of 45,000 volumes to Swedish ships.

It interested me particularly because the growth of the Swedish seamen's library system resembled that of the British Seafarers' Education Service at many points. There are also some differences, particularly in finance, to which I shall return later.

How it started

In Britain, as in Sweden, a real interest in ships' libraries developed in the second decade of the twentieth century. Before that time the missionary societies had done valiant work in providing ships with books but, up to 1914, most of these were much-worn and largely unsuitable, and a high proportion were what the Swedes describe as 'devotional'. There were no proper funds with which to buy new books.

After preliminary talks with the seamen's and officers' unions, the shipowners and voluntary societies, the Seafarers' Education Service set to work in 1919 and, in this, it predated the Swedish effort by a good five years. From the beginning the SES also had the advantage of a central administration, the need for which the Swedes only discovered by experience. It was not until quite recently that the Swedish library organization was finally housed in premises of its own but, for thirty years in Bloomsbury, and now at Mansbridge House, the SES has always worked from its own offices, and it has always emphasized the importance of maintaining a centralized book stock in order to fulfil its primary purpose – that of bringing to seafarers the books they want to read.

The position today

Nowadays the SES supplies libraries to 1,550 ships. Each year, from Mansbridge House, it sends out more than 4,000 libraries – a combined total of a quarter of a million books. Any book asked for by members of a crew will be supplied and, in addition, British seafarers may borrow almost any non-fiction on personal loan. In 1,550 British ships the SES library has become as much a part of life on board as duty-free cigarettes or clean sheets. 'The library', writes a representative seafarer, 'has been almost our only source of relaxation these last fourteen months'.

Each year the Service buys more than 30,000 new books to keep its stock fresh and up to date, and to replace books worn out or lost in use. It has made arrangements for books to be exchanged abroad where a ship does not return regularly to the United Kingdom and, on behalf of one company alone, sends 1,000 books to the Indian coast every four months.

This is a record to be proud of and it has not been established over night. Cooperating shipowners have been persuaded to install these libraries because the demand and the need are there, but there are still many vessels even now which do not carry them. Each year, however, brings more owners into the scheme as the need is made apparent, not least, of course, by seafarers themselves who have had experience of the libraries in other ships.

Readers' tastes

The Swedish writer in ITF comments that some seafarers do not read at all and that religious books are not popular. Our own experience suggests that comparatively few seafarers never read a book, but that the number of books read in the course of a voyage by different men varies enormously. Fifty books in four months is not unknown. A book a week is fairly common. But some men will read no more than two or three books in a three-month passage.

There are, of course, books and books. The fireman who asked us for the whole of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* could be excused if he kept the three giant volumes for more than three days. (I could also understand it if he didn't keep them for as long as that!) But Westerns and thrillers are less solid fare and as such more easily digested.

It is almost impossible to generalize about seafarers' tastes in reading. After all, why should they be any more precise or more narrowly defined than tastes ashore? Westerns and thrillers are popular in most ships. Novels packed with action, good historical fiction, the good modern novel – all these go down well, as do travel and adventure stories and biographies. The emphasis all the time is on the good book in its class, and that is the book which the Seafarers' Educational Service tries to buy.

Wider reading

We find, as the Swedes have done, that the average seafarer reads more – and reads more widely – than the average landsman. It is also true that a long voyage will often lead a man to take up a book outside his usual range, sometimes to find that he enjoys it, much more than he expected to – and this is why the Service always includes in its libraries a reasonable proportion of good non-fiction. Reading is more than a relaxation; it is a means of self-development. It is important, therefore, that the library should offer a wide range of books of many different kinds.

Requests for books

I have before me as I write the list of books which those on board the m.v. *Rangitoto* wanted in their last library. It is one of hundreds of lists which come from ships to the Seafarers' Education Service and, to me, these lists illustrate better than anything else the difference between a mere collection of books and a library.

On the *Rangitoto* lists there are forty-seven titles. They include Lloyd Douglas's *The Big Fisherman*, Jules Verne's *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, *The Kon-Tiki Expedition*, Aldous Huxley's *Ape and Essence*, Plato's *Republic*, Virgil's *Aeneid*, H. G. Wells's *Outline of History*, Mark Benney's *Gaol Delivery*, Lin Yutang's *My Country and My People*, Hans Fallada's *Little Man, What Now?*, Van Wyck Mason's *Eagle in the Sky*, Peter Fleming's *Brazilian Adventure*, and Gunther's *Roosevelt in Retrospect*. Peter Cheyney, Somerset Maugham,

Nevil Shute, Thorne Smith, Howard Spring, John Steinbeck, Leo Walmsley, J. B. Priestley, James Hilton and Rumer Godden were also there.

It is part of the Service's pride that a ship which sends in a list of books like this sails with them on board. If the books are not in stock, they are bought new, and it is only where titles have long been out of print that is it sometimes impossible to meet a particular demand.

College of the Sea

It sometimes happens that a seafarer is interested in a particular subject – astronomy, perhaps, or history or philosophy – interested to such an extent that, however large the ship's library, he will be unable to satisfy his desire for books in this one field.

This is where the College of the Sea comes in.

Through the College he can borrow such books on personal loan. To one seafarer in Singapore alone, the service has sent more than thirty books on economics and economy history in a year, and not only were they sent but they were read.

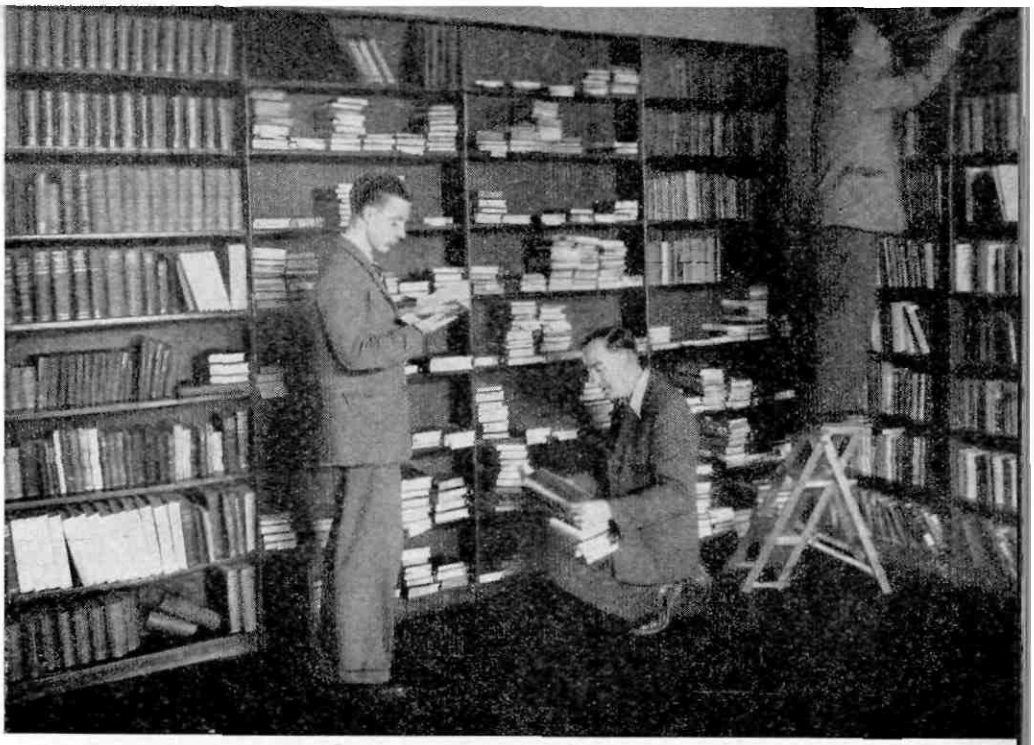
The College also arranges tuition, where this is desired, in all general subjects and, through its annual competitions, it stimulates original and creative work. The College of the Sea, an intrinsic part of the Seafarers' Education Service, is unique and nowhere in the world is the seafarer offered such a wide range of facilities.

Of course the College is not so much used as the library service and there is still room for great development. While 60,000 men use SES libraries, only 2,000 borrow books on personal loan. The College offers the facilities, but it is for the seafarer to make use of them if he wishes to do so.

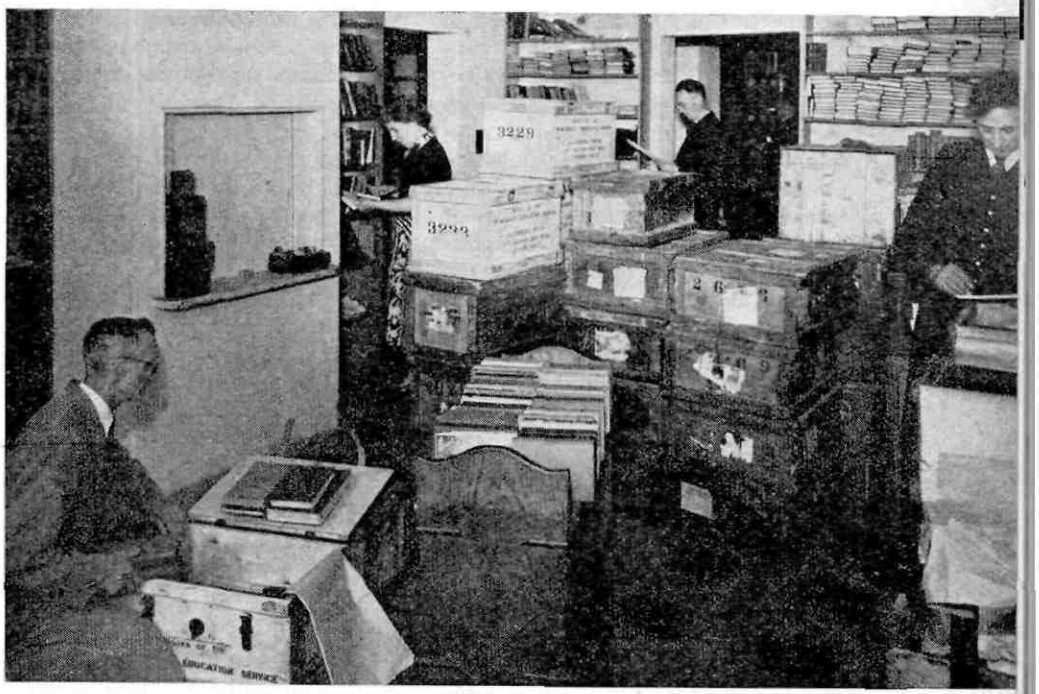
Mansbridge House

In January 1952, the Seafarers' Education Service and College of the Sea moved to attractive and commodious new headquarters at Mansbridge House, 207 Balham High Road, London, S.W.17. The headquarters are easily reached by underground or overhead train to Balham and by a variety of buses from all parts of London.

Seafarers come to Mansbridge House every day. They are welcome visitors and feel, I hope, that they are welcome for there is nothing like personal contact to make the Service a living organization. It is hoped indeed that this steady stream of visitors will grow into a river, until for every seafarer no visit to London is complete without a visit to the SES.



A corner of the Deputy Librarian's Office, with shelves of books specialy requested by ships' crews. Each year the Service buys more than 30.000 new books



The Packing room. Fifteen to twenty ships' libraries are sent to sea each day

Finance and funds

I said at the beginning that there were great differences between the Swedish and British library organizations on the financial side. In Sweden libraries are paid for largely by the Government and the seamen's union, with other contributions coming from shipowners and various societies.

In Britain these roles are reversed and the shipowners are far and away the largest supporters – in a financial sense

Inside the main office. The files contain lists of books supplied to 1,570 vessels

– of the Seafarers' Education Service. In 1951 they contributed more than £22,000 towards the year's expenditure, while the Government which, through the Ministry of Education and the education authorities, supports only the College of the Sea, contributed no more than £3,000. Outside these sources of income are a great number of organizations and private persons, including the seafarers' unions. In the past two years the National Union of Seamen has donated £1,000 to the Mansbridge House Building Fund and, in addition, it allocates £100 a year to the general funds of the Service.

Some of the reasons for this different structure are historical. In Britain many shipowners recognized the need for libraries many years before the Government, and the Service has grown up as a voluntary society. While shipowners and the seamen's unions have been represented on its governing body since the very first meeting in 1919, the State never has and, even at the present time the Ministry of Education is represented only by an 'assessor'.

But the Service needs greater financial support in all directions if it is to carry on and develop its work for the benefit of seafarers. At the moment it owes £10,000 on its new headquarters. In addition, owing to the unprecedented increase in the price of books over the past twelve months, expenditure is expected to exceed income in 1952. Its standards cannot be maintained without more money, nor yet can it meet the ever increasing demand which comes from the sea.

The money, of course, will be forthcoming. It is one of the remarkable things about voluntary societies in Britain that, all the time they are doing a good job, somehow or other they never go broke. The British people have a long tradition of service of this kind and although there are difficulties – major difficulties from time to time – they are always triumphantly overcome.

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present capacity to save. To the difficulties presented by topographical and climatic features must be added complications arising from the fact that large areas of tropical Africa are infested by tsetse fly and are in consequence very sparsely inhabited. The relative sparseness of the population is likely to result in a low density of traffic in relation to distances covered so that the high costs which have been a feature of existing transport in tropical Africa are likely to be experienced in any considerable extension of these systems to other areas. Moreover, in many areas most forms of mechanical transport would have to rely on imported fuel.

(from *Aspects of Economic Development in Africa*, a report by the United Nations)

(continued from pag. 84)

the demand will soon be met by local fisheries. With the proposed expansion of the port of Jaffa and the construction of the new Kishon port near Haifa, there should be a considerable improvement over present harbour facilities.

The Fishermen's Union, in cooperation with other agencies, has sponsored a fishing school. Vocational training courses for adults are also organized, at which various fishing methods are studied, often under the guidance of instructors recruited from abroad.

Wireless helps the sick at sea

NORWEGIAN MERCHANT SHIPS can now put calls through to Bergen Radio when they are in need of expert medical advice while at sea. These calls, of which 500 were received last year, are immediately passed on to the local hospital where a team of specialists is available both night and day. Neither Bergen Radio nor the hospital makes any charge for this invaluable service.

German merchant fleet to be doubled

IN A STATEMENT made on 11 April, the West German Minister of Transport said that by 1955 the Federal Republic's merchant fleet will have almost doubled its present tonnage. The fleet is expected to total between 2,500,000 and 3,000,000 tons in 1955 compared with the present 1,500,000 tons. Before the war, Germany's merchant fleet amounted to more than 5,000,000 tons.

West German road accidents cause alarm

THE ALARMING INCREASE in the number of accidents on the roads of Western Germany is causing the authorities deep concern. In the year 1949, with some 1.4 million vehicles on the road, there were approximately 96,150 accidents. This works out to one accident for every 15 vehicles. By 1950 the number of vehicles had risen to 1.9 million. The accident figure, however, showed a sharper rise to 182,700, i.e. one accident to every 10 vehicles. This disquieting rise in the accident rate was continued in the year 1951. In that year, with an average of 2.5 million vehicles on the roads, there were 319,800 accidents, or approximately one accident to every eight vehicles.

INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION

President: R. BRATSCHI General Secretary: O. BECU Asst. Gen. Secretary: P. TOFAHRN

Founded in London in 1896. Reconstituted at Amsterdam in 1919.
Headquarters in London since the outbreak of the Second World War.
147 affiliated organizations in 50 countries. Total membership: 6,000,000

Seven industrial sections catering for

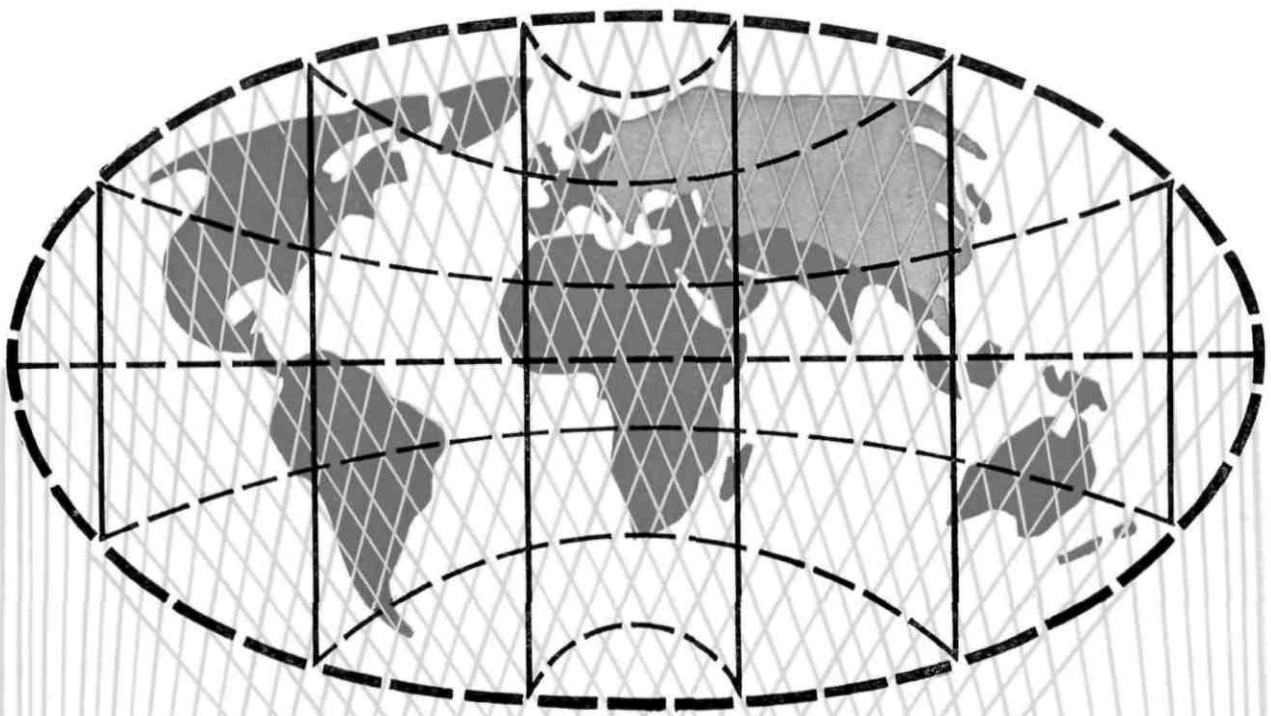
RAILWAYMEN · ROAD TRANSPORT WORKERS · INLAND WATERWAY WORKERS · DOCKERS
SEAFARERS · FISHERMEN · CIVIL AVIATION STAFF

The aims of the ITF are

to support national and international action in the struggle against economic exploitation and political oppression and to make international working class solidarity effective;
to cooperate in the establishment of a world order based on the association of all peoples in freedom and equality for the promotion of their welfare by the common use of the world's resources;
to seek universal recognition and enforcement of the right of trade union organization;
to defend and promote, on the international plane, the economic, social and occupational interests of all transport workers;
to represent the transport workers in international agencies performing functions which affect their social, economic and occupational conditions;
to furnish its affiliated organizations with information about the wages and working conditions of transport workers in different parts of the world, legislation affecting them, the development and activities of their trade unions, and other kindred matters.

Affiliated unions in

ARGENTINA (ILLEGAL) AUSTRALIA AUSTRIA BELGIUM BRITISH GUIANA CANADA CEYLON CHILE CHINA COLOMBIA CUBA DENMARK ECUADOR EGYPT EIRE ESTONIA (EXILE) FINLAND FRANCE GERMANY GREAT BRITAIN GREECE ICELAND INDIA ISRAEL ITALY JAMAICA JAPAN KENYA LEBANON LUXEMBOURG MEXICO THE NETHERLANDS NETHERLANDS WEST INDIES NEW ZEALAND NORWAY NYASALAND PAKISTAN RHODESIA SAAR ST. LUCIA SOUTH AFRICA SPAIN (ILLEGAL UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT) SWEDEN SWITZERLAND SYRIA TRIESTE TRINIDAD TUNISIA URUGUAY UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



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