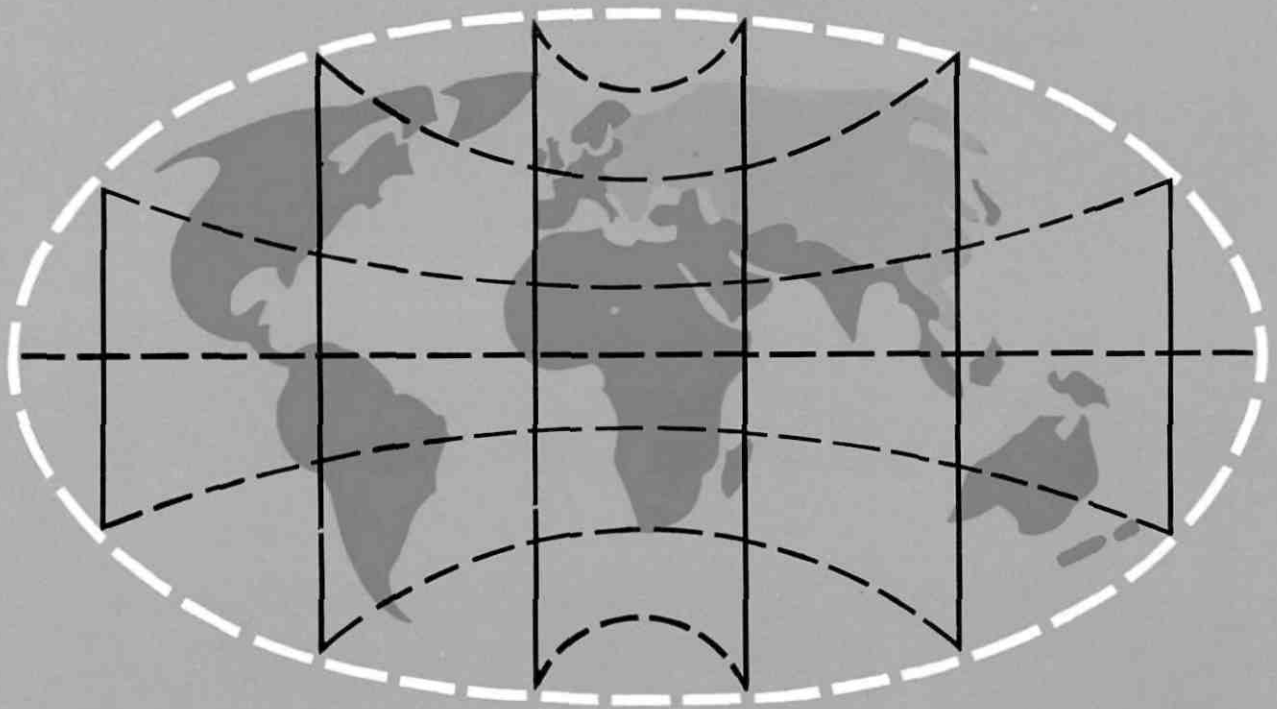


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ITF

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Head Office : Maritime House, Old Town, Clapham Common, London SW 4

Telephone: Macaulay 5501-2 Telegraphic Address: INTRANSFE

Branch Offices : USA 20 West 40th Street, 6th Floor, New York 18, NY

INDIA 4 Goa Street, Ballard Estate, Fort, Bombay 1

LATIN AMERICA Palacio de los Trabajadores, Habana, Cuba

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Forthcoming Meetings :

Rome 26-30 October Railwaymen's Sectional Conference

French railwaymen on strike

by F. Laurent, General Secretary, French Railwaymen's Federation (Force Ouvrière)

.....
From 11 to 22 August 1953, French railwaymen were engaged in one of the longest strikes in their history. They joined with other French workers in a wave of protest strikes against the Government's intention to use the special powers conferred on it by Parliament to make an assault on the hard-won rights of the French workers. Although the Government had originally refused to budge from its position, faced with the determined opposition of the railwaymen and other sections of industry, it was finally compelled to give assurances which, if carried out, will bring a large measure of victory to French trade unions and not least to our affiliate, the French Railwaymen's Federation, Force Ouvrière. Commenting on the strike, F. Laurent, their General Secretary, writes as follows:

.....

SPEAKING at the Congress of the French Railwaymen's Federation (FC) in June 1952, our friend Paul Tofahrn said:

'I am a frequent traveller in Europe and I have here been struck by one significant fact. When one sees the blatant luxury in which the French upper classes live and compares it with the material condition of the workers, one can only conclude that there is in this country a battle to be fought in the class struggle which must be conducted with the utmost vigour.'

Government opens the attack

Since June 1952, French workers, and the railwaymen in particular, have seen these privileged members of society enconcing themselves in their favoured position by seeking to extend their advantages. The financial state of the country, heavily mortgaged by unjust taxation and resultant privilege, led the Government to ask Parliament for special powers enabling it to govern by decree. Ignoring the sacrifices made by railwaymen since 1940, the Government, with economy as its pretext, sought to take advantage of the July-August holiday period, by staging an attack on the hard-won rights of railwaymen, by violating unilaterally the contract between the French National Railways (SNCF) and its employees.

In particular, under a Decree of 9 August, the pensionable age was to be raised by five years by means of a public service regulation. This was tantamount to contract-breaking on the part of the

Government and constituted a violation of the 1911 provisions on pensions, which derived from the law of 1909.

On 7 August, the railwaymen took part in a twentyfour-hour warning strike called by the French Railwaymen's Federation (FO) and the Joint Committee of the Unions of Workers in Public Services and Nationalized Industries (Cartel FO des Services Publics et Nationalisés). Ignoring this warning shot, the Government issued the Decree mentioned above. For his part, the Managing Director of the French National Railways issued a circular letter to all railwaymen giving details of how the Decree would be applied to railwaymen. Thinking to profit from dissension, he created, or announced the creation of, several



staff categories for pension purposes.

The railwaymen strike

On Monday, 10 August, the Central Office of the Federation, fully informed on the wishes of its members and their determination not to permit any attack on their rights, gave the order for a strike of indefinite duration. In doing so, the Central Office was equally mindful of the precarious financial situation of the majority of railwaymen, whose extremely low wages have failed to keep pace with the cost of living – a situation common to most French workers.

In addition, the Central Office was perfectly aware of the intention of the French National Railways to interfere with the railwaymen's right to strike by every possible means, particularly by making use of emergency call-up powers and other coercive measures. For this reason, the Central Office ordered a strike of indefinite duration, commencing at midnight on 10 August. Instructions were given for trains to be operated to destination and for the milk supply to Paris to be maintained. Apart from this, the stoppage on the French National Railways was total from 11 August.

The objects of the strike were:

- a) to secure a repeal of those provisions of the Decree of 9 August 1953 amending the regulations on pensions;
- b) to bring about a meeting of the Special Commission regulating collective agreements with a view to fixing new guaranteed minimum wages throughout French industry, and thus securing a general rise in wages;
- c) to obtain an assurance that no disciplinary action would be taken against strikers.

As was foreseen, the French Government used its emergency call-up powers in an endeavour to break the strike. Thirty-two thousand railwaymen were placed under call-up notice, but only some 7,000 obeyed. The small number of railwaymen who stayed at work under their call-up orders was insufficient to maintain the services, particularly as almost the entire operating staff disregarded orders to report for duty.

On 17 August, the Prime Minister made an uncompromising broadcast speech which had no other practical result than to stiffen the attitude of the strikers.

Caught in its own trap

The following day, however, the Gov-

ernment – caught in its own trap – agreed to negotiate with the unions whose members were on strike. Negotiations on the railwaymen's claims were closely followed by the Central Office of the CGT-FO, whose General Secretary, R. Bothereau, gave powerful support to the writer in the discussions involving our members' interests.

In spite of opposition from the Government, and particularly from the Minister of Transport and the management of the French National Railways, it became apparent on 20 August that the striking railwaymen could expect a favourable outcome.

During the night of 20 to 21 August, faced with the magnitude of the strike and the fierce determination of the railwaymen, the Government gave way. In a letter addressed to the Chairman of the Governing Board of the French National Railways, the Minister of Transport and Public Services gave an assurance that no changes would be made in the pension regulations of 1911.

In the general industrial field, the Government undertook to convene the Special Commission regulating Collective Agreements to study the general problem of wages. Finally, assurances were given that no disciplinary action would be taken against the strikers, the Government negotiators being in favour of a settlement which would allow a peaceful resumption of work.

At one o'clock on the afternoon of 21 August, therefore, the French Railwaymen's Federation FO, after having consulted or obtained the views of the majority of its member-unions, issued instructions for work to be resumed. At the same or approximately the same time, the other non-Communist trade-union organizations, ordered their members to return to work. With the French Railwaymen's Federation, they considered that the strike had now achieved its purpose.

SNCF makes difficulties

Strange as it may seem, it was the management of the French National Railways which, from 21 August onwards, systematically hindered the resumption of work by trying to go back on the promises given by the Government. They did so by refusing those railwaymen suspended for failing to comply with their call-up orders the right to resume work at the same time as the remaining strikers. The number of rail-

waymen suspended was 1,400 out of a total of 400,000.

The result of this attitude was an extension of the strike, all railwaymen making common cause, and it was not until Monday, 24 August, that, under orders from the Government, the management of the French National Railways saw fit to allow the men who had been suspended to resume work without further fuss. Needless to say the Communist Federation carefully exploited this hitch for more than two days in an endeavour to prove to all railwaymen that the free trade unions had negotiated without guarantees and had betrayed their interests.

In playing this lamentable game, the National Railways doubtless wished to lend support to the present Government in its desire to outlaw the Communist CGT. This could only be done, however, if the other trade union organizations were first reduced to comparative impotence. Actually, it was merely playing into the Communists' hands, and prevented a general return to work on the National Railways.

French Government taught a lesson

The strike action of August 1953, which affected the entire staff of the public services and nationalized industries, would not have succeeded but for the support given to it by the railwaymen fighting for strictly trade-union principles under the orders of the Federation Force Ouvrière.

It will serve as a severe lesson to the reactionary Government at present at the head of affairs in France. This Government, armed with special powers obtained from a Parliament unable to offer the country stable rule, thought it could introduce the most retrograde measures without encountering any opposition. It was also relying on the holiday period and on the kind of paralysis which seems to affect trade unions every year when August comes round. But the reaction was violent, and surprised everyone.

The strikes of August 1953 will, we believe, find an echo at not too distant a date if, by October next, nothing has been done to increase the purchasing power of the workers' pay, to raise the low level of wages, and to put an end to a misery of which the most serious consequence is that it aids the Communist agitators in both the political and social fields.



On 31 December next, the president of the ITF will be handing over the gavel to his deputy, Vice-President Arthur Deakin. Although Brother Bratschi may still use the ITF Journal to give unionists in the transport world the benefit of his experience, his present title will be replaced by that of General Manager of the Berne Lötschberg Railway. This change in the life of the ITF and that of Brother Bratschi himself calls for an explanation which will, in due course, appear in our columns, together with an appreciation of the services rendered by Brother Bratschi to our Federation during a period covering more than three decades. Suffice it, on this occasion, to say that Brother Bratschi is answering a call from the Swiss Labour and trade union movement and the Parliament of the Canton of Berne. Unfortunately, this entails the laying-down of many offices, including that which he has held with such great distinction in the ITF. The Swiss people's gain is the ITF's loss.

Voluntary cooperation between road and rail

by Robert Bratschi, President of the ITF

IT IS GREATLY TO THE ECONOMIC DETRIMENT of all countries that the problem of a reasonable degree of cooperation between the more important means of transport has nowhere been solved. No satisfactory settlement has even been reached between road and rail.

Of theoretical discussions and enquiries by national and international bodies there has been no lack, and books, articles, and reports on the subject fill whole libraries, but of practical results there is nothing to show.

No new problem for ITF

The ITF has no reason to reproach itself with having neglected the subject. On the contrary, it has long recognized its importance. The first time it was dealt with at all comprehensively was at the ITF International Railwaymen's Conference in Madrid in the spring of 1930, where the writer had the honour of presenting the Executive Committee's report on the subject, the conclusions of which were unanimously adopted

by the Conference after full discussion.

Without denying the importance of inland navigation, nor overlooking the growing prospects of the aeroplane as a means of transport, the Conference largely confined itself to pointing the way to cooperation between road and rail, and the conclusions arrived at drew special attention to the urgent need to find a solution to the problem.

The railway was regarded as the backbone of land transport, though the technical advantages of the motor vehicle

for certain purposes, and its growing importance, were expressly recognized. The conclusions called for arrangements that would permit of the continued technical development of both forms of transport in a spirit of cooperation, with due consideration for social needs. A struggle between the two was expressly rejected, more particularly on the grounds that it would be carried on at the expense of the workers employed.

The view was expressed that cooperation between the two forms of transport should be so organized that as far as possible each of them should be set to the task for which its technical and economic structure best fitted it. The Conference thought that this could be achieved more easily if both were in the same hands, since in such circumstances it would be in the interests of the operator

to employ for each task the most suitable and most economic form of transport of the two.

Equal treatment essential

To avoid exploitation of the users of transport and misuse of the power which lies in the hands of owners of means of transport, the Conference recommended the progressive transfer of the more important of these means to the ownership of the State, but until this aim was achieved, and so long as they were in competition with one another, it was considered the duty of the State to see that competition should be carried on under similar legal conditions, and that all should be subject to similar legal obligations. Otherwise it would be impossible to ensure full utilization of the technical and economic advantages of each form of transport.

Equal treatment was all the more necessary since it was becoming increasingly clear that it was a case of competition between publicly and privately owned transport; the railways representing the former and road transport the latter, though in most countries existing legislation tended rather to favour the private interests.

Following the ITF Railwaymen's Conference, the International Railway Congress Association also met in Madrid in the spring of 1930, and dealt, inter alia, with the same problem. Its conclusions largely coincided with those of the ITF Conference, thought it was less in favour of nationalization than of cooperation between the two means of transport in the form of financial participation in road transport operation by the railways. It further rightly advocated that the railways should themselves make increasing use of motor vehicles, as was already occurring in several countries.

ITF's view confirmed

A brief consideration of developments since 1930 shows that in the main the ITF Madrid Conference saw the problem in the right perspective, though we are not appreciably nearer our objective, as the means then advocated have not been applied. Financial participation of the railways in independent road transport undertakings has not proved sufficiently effective to bring about any fundamental change in an unsatisfactory situation.

The greatest development in the direction suggested in the resolutions adopted by the ITF Conference has been in the

United Kingdom, under the Labour Government. If that Government had remained longer in power it is very probable that we should have seen favourable economic results through the adaptation of the dimensions of the transport machinery to transport requirements, thus putting a check to further dissipation of power. Unfortunately the new Conservative Government has hastily put an end to the broadly conceived experiment, and the door has been once more opened to chaotic development. A later Labour Government will have to begin again at the beginning under less favourable circumstances.

The position in Switzerland

Switzerland must also be counted among the countries that have not made any progress in this respect since 1930. Not that there has been any lack of endeavour or experiment. In 1928, the writer tabled in the Swiss Parliament a motion similar in aims to the theses adopted by the ITF in Madrid two years later. It was accepted by the Government and adopted by Parliament. There were no immediate consequences, however, and the Bill later submitted to Parliament was so distorted and watered down that we could no longer support it. It was rejected by the Referendum of 1935.

There was no improvement in the situation in the 'thirties. During the slump, railway deficits became increasingly unbearable and road transport, swollen beyond measure, was itself on the brink of the precipice. In this situation it was the associations of carriers and private passenger transport undertakings that appealed to the State for help and protection, and the State granted to private enterprise what it had refused to its own railways and publicly-owned transport. It issued what is known as the Motor Transport Order (Autotransportordnung, or 'Ato'), which was an attempt to bring some order into the economic chaos of road transport by means of a system of concessions or permits. A permit to establish a goods or passenger transport service was only to be granted on presentation of proof of the need of such a service. And though it was only an inadequate makeshift, the order did have the effect of bringing the number of undertakings into better relation with transport requirements.

Union support of Order

The railways were naturally interested

in the matter, and they supported the Order as a preliminary measure. The two Swiss unions, of railwaymen and transport workers, affiliated with the ITF also backed it, hoping that it might be a step towards definitive legal regulations, and recognizing that the transport workers as a whole were the chief sufferers from the crisis in the transport industry in the 'thirties, as the ITF Railwaymen's Conference in Madrid had anticipated they would be.

It was a particularly unsatisfactory feature of the transitory situation created by the Order that the latter did not cover what was known as 'Werkverkehr' (transport for own account with own vehicles and personnel), which was free to expand its capacity at will. This was not of much importance during the war, owing to the shortage of fuel and the fortunate fact that the railways, being fully electrified, were able to handle practically all transport by themselves. The situation changed immediately after the war, however, when importation of petrol and oil was once more free; and the volume of road transport for own account increasingly exceeded that operated by transport undertakings. It was not possible to put a stop to this development, as legal and political conditions were not favourable. An endeavour to establish a constitutional basis for a later and more comprehensive Order failed because of the political ineptitude with which it was made. The proposal for amending the constitution was rejected by a popular referendum.

There was no alternative, therefore, but to continue for the time being the transitional situation that had been created before the war by the setting up of the Ato. The trade unions were the more willing to accept this solution because their claim that the Order should be supplemented by provisions to regulate conditions of employment in road transport by collective agreement was granted. The Union of Commercial, Transport and Food Workers (Verband der Handels-, Transport- und Lebensmittelarbeiter, or VHTL), the transport workers' section of which is affiliated with our International was responsible for the workers' side in the operation of the whole complex of orders and agreements.

Everything was supposed to be provisional and was to be definitively regulated by law in 1952. Unfortunately this endeavour also failed. In the referendum

the Bill was subjected to a demagogic attack, on the grounds that it was a danger to the freedom of the people and a kind of first step towards a Soviet State. As a result, it was defeated. But the dropping of the Bill also meant the disappearance of the transitional situation, and with it, the collective agreement, and it is now necessary to save the situation, as far as possible, by means of individual agreements.

Experts tackling the problem

A committee of experts, composed of representatives of the industry – including the trade unions –, persons interested in transport, representatives of management and scientific authorities, has now been trying for more than three years, to find out what can be done, within the limits set by the existing constitutional provisions, to coordinate transport, and what constitutional amendments are necessary to make a comprehensive regulation possible. So far the Committee has not been successful in reconciling the very strongly opposed interests, though it is on the point of producing an interesting report which will not be without importance even though it is not unanimous. It is essential that the Government should continue its endeavours to solve the problem even if the Committee cannot reach agreement. A scientific section, which will deal more particularly with the coordination of transport, has been added to the Post Office and Railway Department, which is responsible for transport, so that the continuance of the work is guaranteed.

But, so far as legislation on the subject is concerned, we have in Switzerland, for the time being, nothing at all. Except for what is laid down in the legislation relating to the safety of transport, every motor vehicle in the country can run when and how its owner wishes and can carry what he wishes. Its operation is subject to no laws, and traffic requirements need not be taken into consideration. All the individual need consider is his personal interests. Passenger transport in particular, in so far as it is not operated in accordance with a timetable, and is therefore not classed as 'public transport', is also subject to no law requiring it to fix and maintain its fares.

Dangers of present position

That this chaotic situation has not worse consequences than it has can only be

attributed to the fact that our country has been passing through a period of prosperity and full employment of many years' duration, so that there has been at least a living for the operators of a very much inflated transport system; but an economic slump would rapidly face those concerned with a situation far worse than that which accompanied the slump of the nineteen-thirties. The fact that Switzerland, like many other countries, has of late years passed through a period of rapid motorization of its road transport, only increases the danger of a collapse of the transport system in such circumstances. The following figures illustrate this:

NUMBER OF MOTOR VEHICLES
IN SWITZERLAND

Year	Motor cars	Motor lorries	Motor cycles	Total
1938	74,923	22,472	26,800	124,195
1946	62,972	29,486	28,815	121,273
1952	187,879	45,995	142,374	376,248

In appreciating these figures it should be borne in mind that there is no reason to believe that this development has reached the point of saturation; on the contrary, the rate of increase is a rising one. As against 19,750 motor vehicles imported in the first half of 1952, the figure for the corresponding period of the present year was 24,616. This means that there are already over 400,000 motor vehicles in the country, and by the end of the year we shall have one for every ten persons. A particularly important feature is that the number of motor lorries has more than doubled since 1938, so that we have at present twice as many as we have goods wagons on all our railways.

Attempt at voluntary regulation

In view of these circumstances an endeavour has been made of late years, under the leadership of the Swiss Federal Railways (*Schweizerische Bundesbahnen*), to reach some kind of regulation on a voluntary basis, or at least to make the situation more bearable for all concerned. For this purpose an agreement was concluded on 1 May 1952, after long drawn-out negotiations, between the Swiss Federal Railways, on the one hand, and the TAG (Treuhandverband des Autotransportgewerbes, or Trustee Association of the Motor Transport Industry) and GU (Gemeinschaft für den Ueberlandverkehr, or Long Distance Transport Association) on the other.

For obvious reasons the privately-owned railways – which even without the tramways have nearly as extensive a mileage as the Federal Railways, but which are mostly secondary railways, except for the Lötschberg group (*Bernische Staatsbahn*), which also includes main lines – kept out of the agreement in the beginning; but they later joined it after receiving certain assurances. The road transport undertakings concerned were all public carriers; transport for own account was not covered.

The purpose of the agreement, generally known as the GVV (*Güterverkehrsvertrag*, or Goods Transport Agreement), is declared to be 'the creation and maintenance of sound conditions in Swiss goods transport on the basis of voluntary cooperation'.

For the time being the agreement only applies to long-distance goods transport. A similar agreement for short-distance goods transport and passenger transport (motor buses) is still the subject of negotiation.

The parties to the agreement have accepted the following main obligations. The Federal Railways will refrain from putting motor vehicles of their own into operation, and from participating in establishing new road transport undertakings. They also agree to abstain from competitive measures in respect of rates or other matters. The privately-owned railways have retained greater freedom in putting motor vehicles into operation.

The motor vehicle operators have undertaken in principle to abstain from increasing the number or capacity of their vehicles; not to undercut the Associations' present table of rates; and to further extend the table. Rates are at least to cover costs. They undertake also loyally to observe legal provisions as to working hours and periods of rest, and to accept a new general collective agreement. In so far as new road transport undertakings are concerned, parties on the motor transport side accept the same obligation as the railways.

An Association, to which all parties belong, is responsible for the observance of the whole system of agreements: The chief authority is a joint Central Committee, which meets under a neutral chairman, who is at present a former member of the Swiss federal judiciary. To prevent the development of a combine against users of transport, representatives of the most important economic associations (commercial, industrial

and craft associations, farmers' unions and trade unions) are attached to the Central Committee in an advisory capacity. The Central Committee watches over the enforcement of the agreement, in connection with which the Chairman and the economic representatives play an important part. To prevent violations of the agreement the Central Committee is empowered to impose various penalties, against which there is an appeal to a court of arbitration.

Some surprising results

The agreement has not been in force long enough to permit of a final judgment on the results of this voluntary cooperation, but there have already been some surprises. While the agreement was still under discussion it was anticipated that in some circumstances the *number of road transport undertakings* prepared to submit to its terms might be too small to allow of its being put into force; since there were in Switzerland no longer any legal provisions to prevent any carrier from carrying what goods he liked when and where he liked. In practice it has been otherwise. The rush to sign has been considerable, and the *number of signatories* has been much larger than was originally expected. There were good reasons for this, however. The port of Basle, with its very heavy traffic via the Rhine, is the chief gateway for goods entering Switzerland, and in the port of Basle the Federal Railways play a preponderant part. Whoever wishes to share in carrying goods from the port must be a party to the Agreement as a member of one of the participating associations. For many carriers by road transport from the port of Basle is of such importance that they cannot manage *without it, and this more than compensates* for any disadvantage that may accrue from their being subject to the Agreement.

As regards the prohibition of any increase in road transport capacity, the Agreement contains a transitional clause which permits of an increase during a limited period under certain conditions. In addition, the gradual replacement of older vehicles by new also works against the stabilization of capacity. In practice these two factors have led to not inconsiderable difficulties. After one year's experience with the agreement, the number of motor lorries subject to the agreement is considerably larger than it was in the beginning, and the share of car-

riers by road in transport from the port of Basle has increased uninterruptedly.

So far, therefore, the aggregate capacity of road transport vehicles engaged in long distance transport has not been stabilized. Considerable initial difficulties had been reckoned with, however, and there is no evidence that things would have been any better had there been no agreement. But unfortunately there is no certainty that there will be better results from cooperation in the future. In this connection there are two other important matters to be settled, the question of rates and the problem of the outsider.

The rates question is still far from solution, and discussion about it is still in the early stages. It will probably offer the greatest difficulties of all. It is in connection with rates that the greater *adaptability of road transport* and the impossibility of effectively controlling it make themselves most unpleasantly evident.

The threat of non-participation

And like the sword of Damocles the danger of the non-participant hangs over the whole system. If the participating associations impose on members conditions that do not please them, there is nothing to prevent the individual operator from turning his back on his association and carrying what he likes at any rate he cares to fix, for there is no law and no authority to prevent him. And in such cases the dissident operator is also freed from the obligation to keep to the collective agreement, and can compete unfairly at the expense of his workers.

And things are not all they might be with the collective agreement which TAG and GU undertakings are required to observe under the GVV agreement. Since the Ato has disappeared, and with it the former comprehensive general collective agreement (Gavato), all the efforts of the VHTL have failed to produce even a partially satisfactory substitute.

It will be clear from all this that the endeavours at cooperation are still a good way from achieving the purposes of the Agreement. But it would be wrong to speak of failure. Even in the long run it should prove that they cannot be achieved in the way proposed, the endeavours will not have been useless. There are some things that can only be tested by practice.

The work done so far has shown, at

any rate, that the parties to the Agreement have set themselves a very difficult task. It may be that the circumstances in which the two means of transport operate differ too much from one another to make it possible to reach the goal entirely by voluntary cooperation, but the parties can at least be credited with having taken some pains to solve the problem.

Personally we are all in favour of the attempt, and believe that it should be continued, but we hardly believe that voluntary cooperation will achieve the aims pursued without some kind of legislative backing. We are convinced that the rates question and the problem of the outsider, aggravated by what we know as 'mixed transport' (carriage of goods for payment by owners of vehicles normally used for their own transport), cannot be solved satisfactorily on the basis of a private agreement. The legislator must lend a hand here. The above-mentioned coordination committee has therefore also under consideration proposals for amending the Constitution, with a view to smoothing the way for legislation that will make at least the most necessary provisions.

Conclusions: Voluntary cooperation certainly, but this still leaves for solution the problem of equal treatment of the two means of transport by the legislator. In the endeavours which it has consistently made ever since 1930 the ITF is on the right road.

Fewer staff on French National Railways

THE NUMBER OF STAFF employed on the French National Railways has been steadily declining in recent years. In 1947 the total employed was 480,200. This had dropped to 424,700 by 1951 whilst the latest figure, that for 1952, shows a total personnel of 410,800 at the end of the year. The greatest percentage reductions took place in the headquarters' staff of the regions - 21.4 per cent between 1947 and 1952. During the same period the operating staff of the regions decreased by 16.5 per cent, motive power and rolling stock staff by 15.8 per cent and civil engineering staff by only eight per cent. At system headquarters the reduction in staff between 1947 and 1952 was just over five per cent.

By way of comparison, in January 1938 the railway labour force totalled 522,200.



The German Railwaymen's Union watches over the young railway worker, helping to train him ensuring that he is cared for in sickness, and providing for his leisure and holidays. This exhibit illustrates some of the union's activities in this field.

Trade unions at German transport exhibition

THE GERMAN COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT EXHIBITION is being held in Munich from 20 June to 11 October of this year. The first of its kind for twenty-eight years, it presents the visitor with a complete picture of transport and communications throughout the Federal Republic of Germany. In its fourteen halls, covering some fifteen acres, and extensive exhibition grounds of another thirty-five acres, every form of transport – road, rail, water, and air – is represented.

Wherever the visitor turns, whether he is an expert or a layman, he will see something to entertain and instruct him. The technician will find the latest machine in his particular field, showing the rapid strides made in mechanization, particularly in recent years. The ordinary visitor, on the other hand, cannot fail to be interested in the various models designed to explain some complicated mechanical process to those who are not technically minded.

German unions' display

Whether the visitor regards the exhibits with the eyes of a technician or those of the ordinary citizen, there is one section in particular which will impress him with its simple and direct appeal. This is the display of the German Railwaymen's

Union and of the Union of Transport and Public Service Workers. Here the emphasis has been clearly placed on the human aspect of transport activity. Throughout their displays, these two affiliates of the IFF have constantly stressed that the worker is the central point about which all industrial activity revolves.

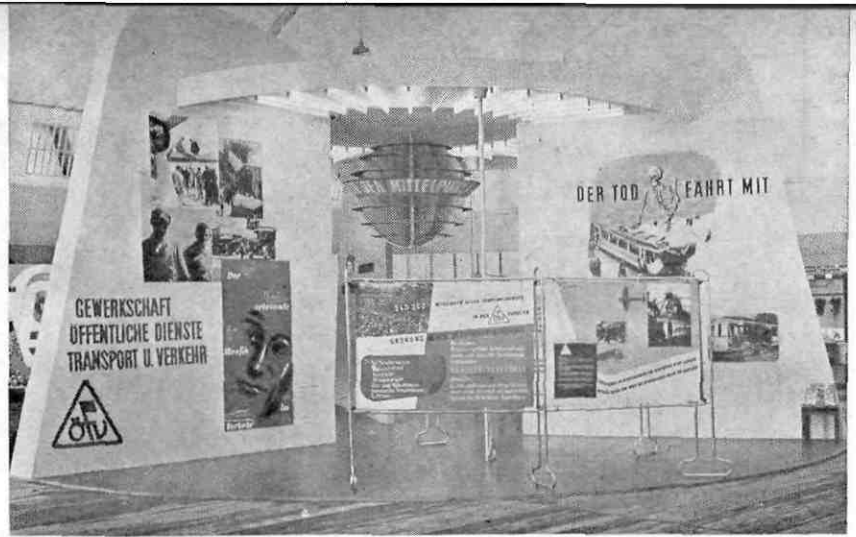
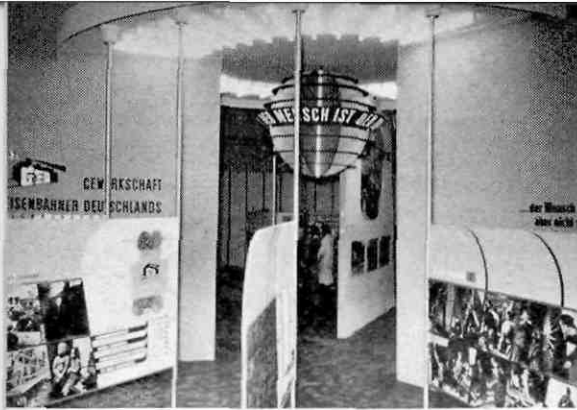
Human factor in transport

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony, Professor Heuss, President of the German Federal Republic, said that, in this world of increasing mechanization and technical progress, we must never lose sight of the fact that it is the human being on whom we must ultimately rely for safety in the field of transport, whether he be a ship's master, a pilot of

a civil airliner, or a railway signalman. The German Railwaymen's and Transport Workers' Unions have done justice to that thought. The very pavilion in which their display is housed is a symbol of the human element in transport, suggesting strength based on co-operation. Admirably designed posters and a wide selection of photographs illustrate the difficulties and responsibilities of all those who work in the various branches of the transport industry.

Unions' activities and aims

The exhibition stand of the unions depicts the stages in their struggle to secure better living standards for transport workers, to assist them in acquiring higher qualifications in their calling, and to ensure that they are given legal aid and their social rights are protected. One section is devoted to the educational work undertaken by the unions in order that their members should be better equipped to negotiate with the employers. Pictorial graphs show the growth in the membership of the indivi-



The stand of the German Union of Transport and Public Service Workers. The panel on the left displays the name of the union and two posters showing the transport workers' for whom the union caters. On the right: a grim reminder that 'Death rides beside you'. The tubular metal stand in centre reminds the visitor that the 240,000 members of the union in inland waterways, shipping, road transport, narrow-gauge and secondary railways, municipal transport undertakings, and civil aviation demand an efficient and economic transport system under a Federal Transport Council. The globe bears the inscription 'Man himself is the pivot about which all things revolve'.



Left, from top to bottom:

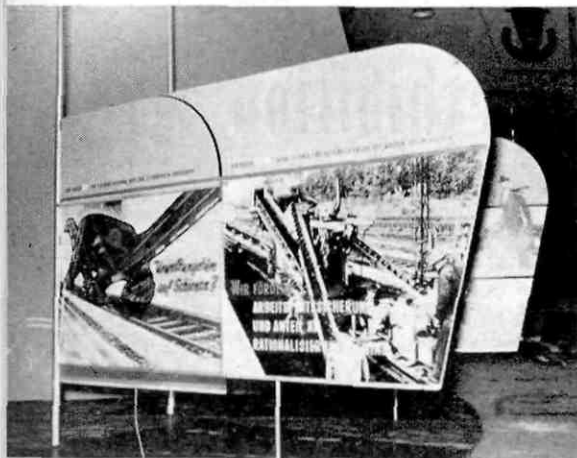
Part of the stand of the German Union of Railwaymen.

Panel giving exact figures and illustrating the answer to the question, 'what happens to the contributions to the funds of the German Railwaymen's Union?' These are spent in housing schemes, further education Press department legal aid, refugee assistance, and death benefits.

In its outlines not unlike some saurian

monster from a past era, this product of our mechanical age straddles the permanent way. The German railwayman's attitude to mechanization and rationalization is to accept them but to stress that such progress should not be at the cost of the workers, by causing unemployment.

The railway is here symbolically represented as an essential means of communication in a modern State. An interesting panel showing aspects of the railway workers' daily tasks.



A wall panel illustrating the life and working conditions of the many kinds of transport workers for whom the Transport and Public Service Workers' Union caters.



dual unions and their increasing importance in a modern economy.

A primeval monster

One of the most interesting exhibits on the Union of Railwaymen's stand shows the outlines of a prehistoric monster. On drawing nearer, the curious visitor, who might well be expected to ask himself *what such a creature is doing in an exhibition devoted to transport*, finds that it is accompanied by a huge photograph of a modern labour-saving ballast-cleaning machine, the outlines of which are surprisingly similar to those of the monster. In this symbolic fashion, the German railwaymen point the moral that, in this present mechanical age, the machine is not unlike some primeval monster which can be controlled only by the combined efforts of the workers acting through their unions.

By these means, and with the aid of modern poster advertising technique and artificial lighting, the German transport workers' unions have produced an extremely interesting display which cannot fail to convince the general public of the significant role played by the unions in the world of transport. On leaving this remarkable exhibition, the ordinary visitor will carry with him a vivid impression of, and insight into, the life and work of these without whom no transport system can function – the transport workers themselves.

US unions sponsoring symphony concerts

AMERICAN UNIONS entered a new field of cultural activity earlier this year when a number of labour organizations combined to sponsor a concert given by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. Among the unions giving active support to this venture were a number of road transport and railway unions affiliated to the ITF.

The concert marked the culmination of a series given by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra under the sponsorship of the United Steel Workers. These proved so successful in the various towns in which they were presented that it was decided to hold the Pittsburgh concert as a climax and celebration. An excellent symphonic programme was arranged, interspersed with popular numbers of the late George Gershwin, polkas and waltzes. Officials of the Pittsburgh Symphony Society were warm in their praise of the venture, and predict that the idea will spread from coast to coast.

A definition of 'railway'

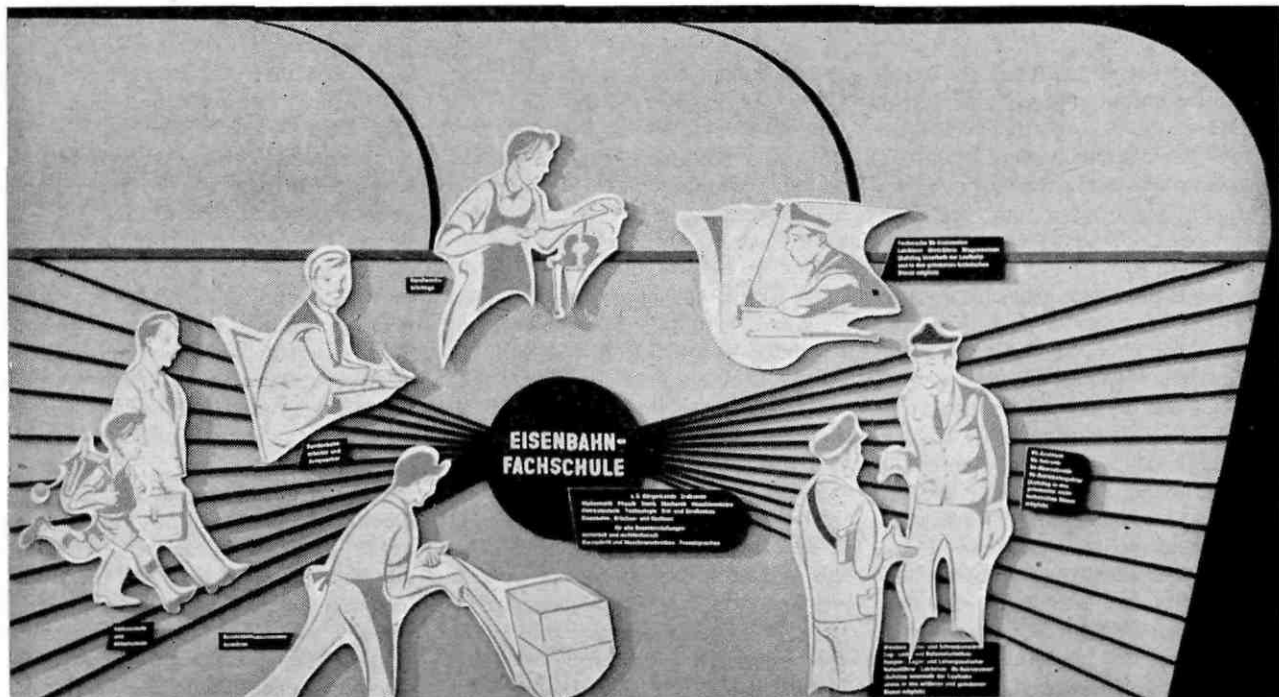
A GERMAN COURT OF LAW is alleged to have produced, at an unverifiable date but at any rate many years ago, the following verbal monstrosity when called upon to define a railway: 'an enterprise

having as object the continuous transportation of persons and goods over not insignificant distances upon a metallic foundation which, by reason of its consistence, construction, and smoothness, is calculated to ensure the transport of heavy masses and/or the attainment of a comparatively high degree of rapidity in the movement of goods and persons, and which, by virtue of these qualities, in conjunction with the natural forces employed in producing such movements (steam, electricity, animal or human muscular effort, and, where the change in the level of the path of movement is suited thereto, the weight of the transport vessels and their loads, etc.) in connection with the operations of the enterprise thereupon, is capable of producing a comparatively powerful effect which, according to circumstances, is only of limited use to mankind and may be destructive of human life and detrimental to health.'

Road transport nationalization in India

NATIONALIZATION OF ROAD TRANSPORT in India is proceeding in many of the States, although in no State is the process complete. A number of States, including Assam, Bihar, Orissa, Punjab, and Travancore-Cochin have made profits on their transport undertakings.

A training school run by the Union helps the young railwayman on his upward path.





Our picture shows the first main-line diesel electric locomotive to be used on British Railways. Built in 1947, it weighs 127 tons 13 cwt and is of the 0-6-6-0 type with a 16 cylinder 1,600 H.P. engine of a maximum tractive effort of 41,400 lbs. It is seen here coupled with a second unit of the same design on the inaugural run of the 'Royal Scot' from London to Glasgow on 1 June 1949. These two units, which can work independently or coupled, have also proved capable of dealing with express freight trains. In addition to these units, there are two diesel electric locomotives in main-line passenger service on the British railways, whilst a fifth unit, also a different design, is employed on branch-line mixed traffic. The present-day fleet of diesel locomotives for use on passenger or freight work on British Railways is completed by two further units of which one is under construction whilst the other, an experimental unit of 2,000 H.P. with a speed of 78 m.p.h., is reported to be still undergoing trials.

Training the footplate staff

Psychological aspects of instructing steam drivers in the operation of mainline diesel-electrics

TO ANYONE who has spent a life-time on steam locomotives, the diesel-electric locomotive is a complex machine, and the older driver does not always take readily to it. He is inclined to accept the theory that you cannot teach an old dog new tricks. After discovering that the driving controls are comparatively simple, and the diesel obeys his commands at the touch of a single master-control handle, some of his confidence may return; but if some fault intervenes, he feels sympathy with the novice car owner to whom the underneath of the bonnet is a closed book.

Basic principles soon grasped

The training of enginemen to operate diesel-electric locomotives was not difficult with the introduction of shunting locomotives, which carry little in the way of auxiliary equipment to complicate their layout. The basic principles of the diesel shunting locomotive are soon grasped, and this type has been developed into a reliable machine. Such locomotives seldom operate far from the motive power depot, and a driver can rely upon prompt assistance from the maintenance staff should a fault develop

which is beyond his power to rectify. At the worst, shunting will be held up for a while until the fault is put right, or another engine is provided.

A factor in popularising the diesel shunting locomotive amongst enginemen, apart from the cleanliness of the cab, has been the turning of the tables against the shunting staff in busy freight yards. No longer need the driver call a halt to raise steam, or go to the water column, or rest from continuous activity with the regulator and reverser of the steam engine. The driver of the diesel finds that he can run the shunters

off their feet with the greatest of ease.

Diagnosis of faults

With a main-line diesel the picture is somewhat different. On first inspection, a driver cannot imagine himself in sole charge of such a machine. Even if he can drive it, he still has uppermost in his mind the fact that sooner or later some part of it will not behave as it should, probably in the most outlandish spot. There is this much to be said for the steam locomotive, that when it goes wrong the driver is seldom left in doubt about the cause of the trouble; the evidence is usually visible. With a diesel-electric locomotive, diagnosis of faults must proceed by a logical process of deduction and elimination, which implies a fair understanding of both mechanical and electrical principles. The driver may refer to his printed fault-finding list, but his confidence may desert him at a critical moment.

It is not easy to formulate a training scheme which will ensure that traffic is not delayed by minor faults on the locomotive of the kind that with the steam locomotive would be classified as preventable failures. The first objective must be to create the right attitude towards this new form of motive power.

The task of the instructor is to dispel any cause for alarm, and to avoid phrasing his description of the mechanism in words that to his audience are just mumbo-jumbo.

A slow process

With a driver who is willing to learn, the first step is to instruct him on the layout and components in the engine room and switchgear cubicles. This cannot be done whilst engine and locomotive are running, and it is necessary to have the locomotive out of service for this purpose. Owing to the restricted space in the interior of the locomotive, the instructor usually can deal only with one or two men at a time; in consequence, comprehensive training is a slow process. It is possible to use a locomotive for instructional purposes on days when it is stopped for maintenance attention; but whilst this may be practicable at the depot on which the engine is based for servicing, it does not cater for enginemen from other depots who will have to operate the locomotive in the course of its diagrammed duty. Before the commencement of ground training, it is an advantage to allow the trainee to ride on the locomotive in normal service in the company of a qualified engineman, and to let the trainee operate the driving controls under his guidance.

Good points of a main-line diesel-electric soon become obvious to an experienced top-link driver. Apart from prominent assets, such as comfort and the excellence of visibility from the driving compartment, enginemen soon notice that the performance of the locomotive is remarkably consistent. They can pass the same timing points on the journey day after day at the same time. *Timekeeping does not depend upon* those variables which so readily affect steam locomotives, such as different varieties of coal and the mileage accumulated since last shop repairs. It has been particularly noticeable with many diesel locomotives that a high mileage is not accompanied by serious falling-off in performance.

Much devolves on the fireman

The training of the fireman is as important as that of the driver. The driver cannot leave his controls whilst the engine is running, and it devolves upon the fireman to look after the train-heating boiler and to keep a check on the various

Equal pay for equal work in South Africa

THE SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR TRANSPORT, a Federation of seven local unions of tramway and busmen, considered at this year's annual meeting the problem of non-white employees entering the transport industry.

We reproduce from the Council's journal the following account of the discussion:

The Committee stressed that whilst each affiliated Union had its own domestic problems, the greatest menace now confronting transport workers on a national basis is the cheap labour policy which Local Authorities and Public Transport Undertakings are endeavouring to foist upon transport operators by trying to introduce non-European drivers and conductors at uncivilized wages and working conditions.

The Durban Union introduced the discussion on this matter of vital importance by submitting a full statement through their delegate, General Secretary Middleton.

This statement set out the history of the attempt to introduce cheap labour in the Durban Municipal Transport services by the employment of non-Europeans at lower rates of wages. The statement also dealt with the danger to the established standards of transport workers and pointed to the long struggle of transport unions which preceded the attainment of those standards.

Delegates from other centres referred to their difficulties in these matters. It

was pointed out that in parts of the Cape, non-European labour had been introduced in certain transport undertakings at the same conditions as those applying to Europeans. Port Elizabeth was opposed to the use of non-Europeans in municipal transport occupations for the reason that the tramway company had informed the Union that they could not guarantee equal pay always, and the Union was convinced that, once non-Europeans were employed, sooner or later the company would ask that they should work at lower rates of pay.

The President of the Council summarized the position showing that the tremendous industrial expansion made a lesser number of Europeans available for work in transport services. In addition, there was the difficulty that many workers did not find the nature of transport amenable due to exposure to the weather, lengthy spread-overs, and such like conditions peculiar to transport. The only safeguard for the transport worker was to be found in equal pay for equal work. The lower wages obtaining in certain industries which were governed by wage determinations constituted a grave danger to the conditions of organized transport workers.

It seemed inevitable that non-Europeans would be employed in transport just as they are being employed in other industries, and in this situation if the trade union movement did not fight for

(continued on page 144)

gauges in the engine and switchgear compartments, and to report all signs and symptoms out of the ordinary. Indicator lights are fitted in the driving cab to give warnings of overheating, low oil pressure, failure of battery charging and of motor cooling blowers; but the registration of most of the appropriate gauges may have to be read in their particular positions inside the locomotive. The fireman must be competent to carry out his driver's instructions when a fault appears, in an endeavour to keep the locomotive running to destination or to the next booked stopping place. In the event of fire, the fireman's initiative may

be a decisive factor in avoiding serious damage.

Many present-day firemen have a wider outlook on mechanical matters than older drivers, and during their terms of national service many of them get the opportunity of dealing with internal combustion engines of one kind or another.

Experience shows that many firemen take to a diesel locomotive more readily than their drivers, and such enthusiasm is not wholly explained by the absence of any shovelling duties.

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'Diesel Railway Traction'

The men of the sea come out of the dark

by Paul Hall, Secy.-Treasurer, Atlantic and Gulf District Seafarers International Union

THE CHANGE that has been wrought in conditions for seamen in the fourteen years since the Seafarers' International Union, Atlantic and Gulf District, was founded is little short of astonishing. When our union started out, the seaman was regarded as a second-class citizen in every sense of the word. The laws that protected others were overlooked when it came to him, and he had no organization to turn to that could protect him against the high-and-mighty ship operator.

The 'good old days'

So it was that the seaman ate pretty low on the hog in those days. He was crowded with his shipmates into small, unhealthy, badly ventilated and smoky focsles. He slept on a mattress that was stuffed with straw, the 'donkey's breakfast' as the old-time sailing man called them. His food, or what passed for it,

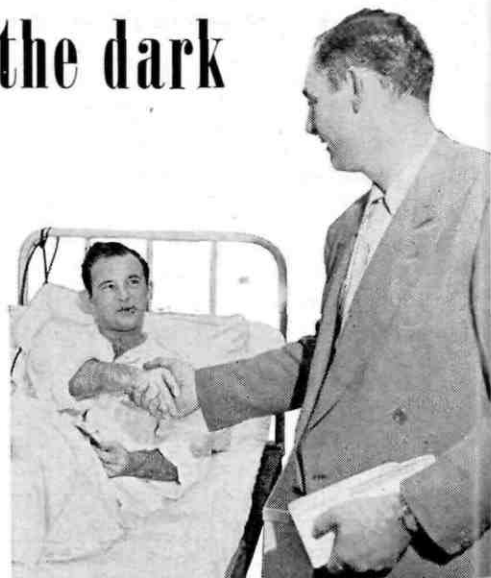
Walter Siekman, SIU Director of Welfare Services, gives a bond to Seafarer Hilding Palmquist as Mrs. Rita Palmquist and their child, Rose Marie, look on. For each child that the wife of a Seafarer bears, the Seafarers Welfare Plan pays a \$ 200 maternity benefit and the Union contributes a \$25 US bond in the child's name.



was pretty poor stuff, with the 'two-pot' - 'steak for the captain and stew for the crew' - prevailing.

If a man wanted to have something to put in his cup of coffee, he packed a few cans of evaporated milk in his sea-bag. Otherwise he drank it black. He also brought his own towels, soap and matches or did without. He ate his sorry grub out of a tin plate and drank out of a pewter mug. Clean clothes were a luxury and sanitation was poor. It is no surprise, then, that tuberculosis raged through the focsles and struck down seamen left and right.

Along with these foul conditions, the seaman worked seven days a week in all kinds of weather for \$50 to \$70 a month. And when the shipowners wanted to pretty up their scows, there were the 'field days', when all hands turned



A representative of the SIU Welfare Services Department gives Seafarer Leonard Murphy a 'get well' wish after giving him his weekly Hospital Benefit.

to, without pay, to swab, scrape and paint the ship.

'Sharks' ashore

Conditions were little better shore-side. Without home or family, the seaman usually grabbed himself a flop in a run-down waterfront boarding house. These ratty joints were run by crimps who squeezed the seaman's few bucks out of him for the dubious privilege of letting him ship out again.

One seafarer, writing in the union's newspaper recently, gave a pretty good idea of what shipping was like to them.

'In those days,' he said, 'shipping was out of fink halls which usually were in dark old buildings . . .

'There were a few old benches, usually dusty and often covered with bed-bugs. There was no hourly job call, so that a guy couldn't step out for a breather . . .

'By the end of the day, if you hadn't shipped, you were tired out and dirty, needing both a good bath and a soft chair to relax in.'

Meaningless laws

For a man to open his mouth against conditions on board ship was to run into all the power of the skipper. At the least, it meant being booted off the ship at the next port of call. If he tried to organize ashore and protest mistreatment by crimps and shipowners, the

local cops were always handy to jug him for 'vagrancy'. The seaman was the most legislated individual in the country. Congress had passed a lot of laws about him, but they meant little to the penniless seafarer without friends or organization to turn to for help.

Seafarers organize

This was the situation the Seafarers' International Union had to face when it started functioning on 1 November, 1938, in three dingy rooms at 2 Stone Street in New York City. But the few hundred seamen who started the union were determined to see it grow. It is appropriate then that our union, one of the youngest in the American Federation of Labor, celebrated its fourteenth anniversary with the announcement that it would award \$1,500 annual college scholarships each year to members or children of members. Yet none of that comparative handful of men who started the union would have dreamed of scholarships, or any of the other benefits the SIU has won. For that matter \$1,500 was quite a few hundred dollars more than the whole union had in its treasury.

In November of 1938, these men saw AFL organization as the only way they could keep from being crushed between two forces. On the one side were the shipowners who were out to squash the union before it even got started. On the other side was the well-heeled and powerful waterfront apparatus of the Communist Party, which had already scooped up thousands of seamen in the NMUCIO, as well as a number of other maritime workers.

Fight for survival

Under such conditions there were very few who would have been willing to risk a quarter at fifty to one odds that the union would survive. The fact that it did survive and grow to its present state is a tribute to the militant, aggressive and determined membership that fought a great fight against seemingly insurmountable odds to make the union what it is today.

In its very first year the union found the going pretty rough, but took it in stride. It successfully fought through several strikes, including those at the P and O and Eastern SS companies. These strikes and innumerable job actions by aroused seamen who no longer would take a pushing around from

bucko skippers and shipowners served notice that the union was here to stay. At the same time, the union successfully defeated Communist attempts to shackle its growth and block its organizing progress.

Grievous war losses

No sooner had the new union achieved a footing when war broke out in Europe. In May, 1941, German subs struck at the SIU-manned *Robin Moor*, sending her to the bottom. The *Robin Moor* was the first US ship to be sunk by the Nazis.

This was only the first of a long line of ships to go down, carrying with them the bodies of many brave seamen. During the war the Seafarers' International Union lost 1,600 men to enemy action, while thousands of other suffered from injury and exposure to cold, wind and waves before being rescued. In the first few years of the war, the toll among merchant seamen was far higher, on a percentage basis, than all the losses of the armed forces.

After Pearl Harbour the German subs really went out to dump our unarmed and unprotected merchant ships. In the five months up to June 1942, when convoys were organized, 154 Allied ships were sunk along the Coast and Northwest Atlantic. Even after convoying started, the sinking continued. Some SIU-contracted companies lost every ship that they started with at the beginning of the war.

The most dangerous trip of all was the run to Murmansk. Hundreds of American seamen lost their lives in the freezing Northern seas to deliver the supplies which the Soviet armies used to beat back the Germans. With every ship carrying TNT in her holds, a sub or plane strike would blow her to bits with the men aboard her. The most famous convoy of all was PQ 17, the 'Fourth of July' convoy in 1942. Eighteen out of the thirty ships in the group were lost, many of them vessels crewed by the SIU.

Early challenges met

Despite the risk, the SIU experienced no trouble in manning its ships. While U-boats were dumping ships off Atlantic City, the union hall at 2 Stone Street in New York was crowded with men answering the hourly job calls. During the war, attempts were made by some government officials to have maritime hiring placed under a government

agency. These attempts were eagerly seconded by Communist-dominated waterfront outfits which were ready to ditch labour's rights, with their policy of all-out aid to Russia. It was the SIU that balked this move, which might have meant the end of the precious hiring hall right, by manning all the ships it was called on to crew. The SIU proved that a free trade union could meet the challenge of war without need for a takeover by the government.

Similarly, it was the SIU that fought and won the combat zone bonus beef, assuring seamen combat pay when they got into the areas where subs infested the seas and enemy planes were thick overhead. Here, too, the SIU's determined fight for labour's rights benefited all seamen.

Communists beaten

With the end of the war, the SIU faced an entirely new set of problems. In the course of the war, the bulk of the union's original membership had been lost. The union was starting over again, with most of its members being new men who answered the call to man the ships during the war.

Then, too, the union faced two major challenges. With the war at an end, the Communist Party line did another about-face and Communist waterfront stiff, led by Harry Bridges, opened a drive to crush AFL maritime unions, the chief stumbling-block in the way of their complete domination of American maritime labor. They set themselves up as a high-sounding outfit, the Committee for Maritime Unity (CMU), whose real purpose was to do a job on non-Communist waterfront unions and win control of this vital element in the United States.

But the SIU and other maritime unions met them head-on with the formation of the AFL Maritime Trades Department. The first test of strength came at Coos Bay in Oregon, when the CMU tried to snatch the steamships that are manned by the Sailors' Union of the Pacific, the West Coast branch of the Seafarers' International Union. This was met with counter action in all ports by the SIU and other AFL-marine unions. The would-be raiders failed miserably, and shortly afterward the CMU wound up in the ashcan.

Organizational drive

The other major problem faced by the



The crew of the SS Hurricane (Waterman Steamship Co.) gather in the ship's messhall and listen as the recording secretary (right) reads the minutes of the last meeting. SIU union meetings are held regularly aboard ship while at sea.

union at the war's end was an organizational one. The SIU had some twenty major companies under contract, but there were many more seamen who were sailing on *unorganized ships*. The union opened a vigorous organizing programme which is still going strong and has brought eighty additional companies under union contract since then.

The first target of the drive was the giant Isthmian Steamship Company, a subsidiary of the multi-billion-dollar United States Steel Corporation. Isthmian had repeatedly fought off attempts by other unions to organize the fleet. But the SIU hit Isthmian with more organizers in more places than the company had ever seen before. Wherever Isthmian ships stopped there was an organizer and a union representative. Company attempts to discourage organizing were fruitless and only spurred the seamen aboard their ships to go SIU.

As one Isthmian crew member put it at the time, when he asked the captain for Saturday overtime pay 'he raised the roof. He said that his company doesn't recognize such newfangled ideas and that when Isthmian goes SIU he will throw down the ladder any patrolman (SIU equivalent of union delegate)

who comes aboard his ship... So the crew is wishing mightily for an SIU election victory.'

The result of the campaign was an *overwhelming election victory* for the SIU in a National Labor Relations Board election. It took several months to complete voting on the 120-ship fleet. This victory was won in the face of dual union attempts to obstruct the SIU drive. And today, when the SIU patrolman goes aboard an Isthmian ship to represent the crew at the payoff, as is done on all SIU ships, he is welcomed as a union representative.

A second notable victory was scored in the Cities Service organizing drive. Here the union was invading the traditionally non-union tanker field. After a hard-fought campaign that lasted for years the SIU won out over the combined opposition of a phony company union and a well-organized network of labour spies. The activities of these spies against the SIU in this drive were the subject of a Senate committee hearing in Washington.

A proud record

Along with organizing, and battling Communist activities, the union never

lost sight of its programme of improving wages and conditions. Over the past few years, these gains have equalled those made by shoreside workers in long-established unions.

Then, too the SIU membership has long been on record for this union to aid other legitimate trade unions in their beefs. That's why the union has helped out telephone operators, garment workers, telegraphers, shipbuilding workers, teamsters, financial employees, steel workers and insurance agents.

Having achieved good conditions, job security and solid wage gains for the membership, the union has embarked on a new tack these past two years. With improved conditions, members now had homes and families with all the responsibilities and problems that come with them. Then there were others who through injury or illness were no longer able to work.

From the start the union wanted to assure its members the fullest possible protection and speediest service. Consequently it undertook to administer these programmes by itself. This proved a complete success. With the union running the show, seafarers could get hospital benefits for as long as they needed them - years if necessary. A death benefit of \$2,500 was set up to help families of men who passed away. A maternity benefit of \$200 was started this year plus a \$25 defence bond from the union for each baby.

It's very easy to qualify for these benefits. As long as a man has been on an SIU ship for one single day in the previous year he's eligible under the Seafarers' plan.

In addition, the union provides a disability benefit of \$20 a week for seamen no longer able to work. This applies at any age and is good for as long as it's needed. Just a few weeks ago, the union added the scholarship programme which has been described elsewhere in this article.

Another welfare programme is concerned with providing decent shoreside facilities for seamen. Many of our men live far from the ports out of which they ship. Yet they have to come to these

ports and stick around a while until they catch a ship. To meet this problem the union plans to build modern and comfortable union halls in all ports, with plenty of recreation facilities. This has already been done in our New York hall, where a member can pass the time of day in between job calls in our recreation rooms, eat in our low-cost cafeteria and bar, equip himself in the union-operated haberdashery, and take his entertainment in the Seven Seas Room, the only union-owned and -operated night club in the United States.

The same type of rig is going up in Baltimore in a new hall which is under construction there.

And to meet the need for decent lodging ashore, the union is planning a hotel which will spell the doom of the flops and dog-houses where seamen have had to live.

Another problem licked

These things have been made possible by the SIU policy of full membership participation. It may seem a little far-fetched to talk of this with a membership that is out to sea most of the time. But the union has licked this problem by its own up-to-the-minute communication system.

Our newspaper, *The Seafarers' Log*, a twenty-eight-page tabloid-style publication, is airmailed bi-weekly to all ships at their next port of call. The scope of the paper keeps the members fully informed of all doings.

Important union policy is decided by thirty- and sixty-day referendums so as to give all a chance to vote. Regular shipboard meetings supplement the

shoreside meetings of the union and often come up with valuable ideas for our union programmes and policies.

As an example of how this works, we announced our new maternity benefit in the 13 June issue of *The Seafarers' Log*. A week later we had a letter from one ship's crew saying: 'We were having our regular shipboard meeting when the crew was told by the chairman that the union had established new benefits for childbirth under the Welfare Fund. There was a loud hurrah from the prospective daddies aboard the ship.'

So it is through the union newspaper and regular shipboard meetings that we have succeeded in licking the problem of communications.

Better things to come

The union's programme is not yet complete. There are still many things that can be done to assure even greater security and more protection for United States seafarers.

Yet as one old-timer put it, at the first meeting in our new headquarters hall:

'I can remember the day not so long ago when seamen were treated like dirt; when we had to go from port to port in a boxcar because there was no such thing as transportation, and other conditions were equally bad . . .

'Brothers, all I can say is we sure have come a long way.'

An oiler aboard the SS Cape Saunders (Alcoa Steamship Co.) opens the main sea suction valve to let water into the condensers for a supply of fresh water.

SIU reports on union disciplinary scheme

A FULL REPORT on membership trials and appeals, believed to be the first ever issued by a United States union, has been printed in the *Seafarers' Log*, official organ of the ITF-affiliated Seafarers' International Union, Atlantic and Gulf District. It covers all trials conducted under the union's new constitution, in effect since 15 October last, heard before rank-and-file trial committees elected by the membership in the port involved.

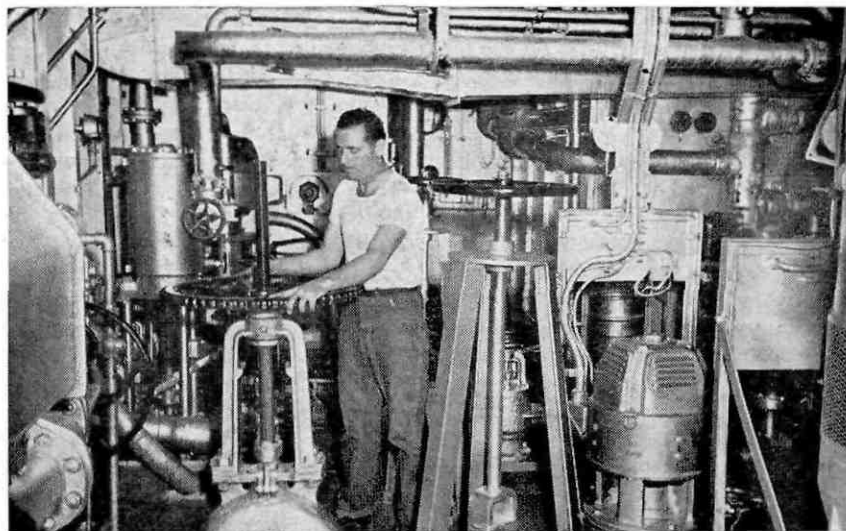
According to Brother Paul Hall, Secretary-Treasurer of the Atlantic and Gulf District, the purpose of the report was to find out how the new constitution has been operating and to acquaint SIU members with the working of trials and appeals procedure. 'The union's disciplinary apparatus,' he said, 'was set up with the idea in mind that seafarers not only work together on the ship, but spend twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, living together on the job'.

'Consequently, the man who strays out of line causes considerable inconvenience, unpleasantness and hardship to his shipmates. That is why the membership of our union has self-imposed discipline with respect to proper performance of duties. We intend to continue the practice of reporting on trials and appeals periodically so that the entire membership will be aware of the working of this particular section of the constitution.'

Of the thirty-three trials during the nine-month period covered by the report, nine dealt with missing ship deliberately or otherwise, eight with disorderly conduct in the union hall, nine with drunkenness aboard ship, failure to stand watch or neglect of duty on board, five with misconduct aboard ship, three each with failure to execute duties, deliberate and malicious vilification, and refusal to co-operate with union representatives in the discharge of their duties, and two each with destroying or pilfering ship's property, attacks on shipmates, and the use of drugs.

Other charges, of which there was one each, included: altering ship's discharges with intent to collect vacation pay twice, failure to pay replacement who stood watch for accused, usury, refusal to order stores specified in the union contract, acting as informer, begging in the union hall, misconduct in the union hall.

Of the six appeals handled so far,



under the SIU's disciplinary scheme three resulted in reduction of sentence, one in a reversal of the trial committee's findings, and two in the upholding of the sentence imposed. Penalties under the constitution include expulsion, suspension up to a maximum of two years and fines up to a maximum of \$ 50 (£7.17.2). In only three instances listed by the report was expulsion involved, but a fine was imposed in seventeen cases.

Seafarers' conditions in Yugoslavia

SOME INTERESTING SIDELIGHTS on the conditions under which seafarers work in Yugoslavia are given in a recent issue of *Sjömannen*, the monthly magazine published by the ITF-affiliated Swedish Seafarers' Union. The information given is based on an interview with Sime Matijasevic, the President of the Yugoslav Seafarers' Union, who recently visited Sweden as a member of a trade union delegation at the invitation of the Swedish TUC.

Matijasevic stated that the total membership of his organization was in the region of 13,000. Since the Yugoslav merchant fleet has an aggregate tonnage of approximately 350,000 this figure may seem rather high, but Matijasevic explained that his organization caters not only for ratings and officers, but also for personnel employed by shipping lines and shipping offices, certain port workers, and some groups of stevedores.

Turning to wages, the Yugoslav official revealed that a fully qualified seaman receives a monthly wage equivalent to the present 'normal' wage in shore industries, i.e. 8,600 dinars or approximately £10.5.0. at the official rate of exchange. In order to qualify for the top rate, however, the Yugoslav able seaman, motorman or fireman must first acquire a certificate of proficiency similar to that now required in the United States and British merchant marines. Special schools exist for training seafarers up to this standard. During his first year of service the Yugoslav seaman is paid 50 per cent of the normal wage and during the second and third years 75 per cent.

However, the seaman's 8,600 dinars do not represent his gross salary. Firstly, his basic wage is free of tax. In addition, he receives a supplement of 50 per cent for foreign-going service plus a further eighteen dollars per month when on the United States run. Then come his social security payments. A married seafarer

draws 3,000 dinars per month in respect of each child. In case of illness, medical treatment and medicaments are free, whilst full salary is payable for a period of up to one year.

Seamen are entitled to from twenty to thirty-five days' annual leave, depending on length of service. In addition, both the seaman and his family get a rebate of 90 per cent for a maximum of six sea or rail journeys per annum. Seamen are also covered by the general old age pension scheme, which means that they can retire on a pension equal to one half of their normal wage at the age of fifty-five.

IMCO nearer realization

THE UNITED NATIONS REPORTS the ratification by Argentina and Haiti of the Convention on the Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) drawn up in 1948 to establish a United Nations specialized agency in the field of shipping.

According to the same source, the Convention has been ratified or accepted by thirteen governments to date. These are: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Burma, Canada, France, Greece, Haiti, Ireland, Israel, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States.

IMCO will come into being when the Convention has been ratified or accepted by twenty-one States, of which seven must have at least 1,000,000 tons gross of shipping. Once established, the new UN agency will promote international cooperation in maritime navigation, encourage maximum use of safety measures at sea, and seek the removal of shipping restrictions and discrimination.

US developing lightweight coach

SOMETHING REVOLUTIONARY in the way of lightweight passenger coaches may soon be seen on United States railways as the result of experiments being conducted by two leading American railway companies. They are the New York Central System and the Chesapeake and Ohio Company who announced earlier in the year that they were pooling their research resources with the object of developing a new, lightweight, low-cost passenger coach capable of travelling at more than 100 miles an hour whilst maintaining armchair comfort.

The new car, blueprints of which were drawn up four years ago, is thirty feet long, compared with the seventy feet of a standard railway coach. Standing a

mere eighteen inches above the railbed, it has only two wheels on a single axle at the rear of the car. The front of a second car rests its weight on the rear of the first. Air-conditioning units and mechanical equipment will be housed in a special 'adapter' car placed at the head of the train.

Those responsible for the planning of the new coach state that the ideal train will consist of thirteen articulated units. Articulation by means of rubber diaphragms will give the train the appearance of a snake moving as a unit. It will be able to take curves at a higher speed because the weight of the other cars prevents any given car from jumping the track.

In an experimental run last year, such a train carrying a party of American railway presidents attained a speed of 104 miles an hour without vibration. This train will now serve as a pilot model, being tried out first as a 'de luxe' day-coach. Later it will be adapted as a sleeper. It is hoped that by using coaches of this type considerable savings will be effected in the high costs of building and maintaining railway passenger cars.

(continued from page 139)

the principle of equal pay for equal work, the non-Europeans could, and would, negotiate separate agreements at lower rates of pay, and the Europeans would be unemployed.

It was a matter of protecting the civilized wage standards so far achieved.

After lengthy discussions in an endeavour to reach unanimity on a resolution which the conference should adopt, it was finally agreed, with Pretoria voting against and Cape Town abstaining:

'That this conference resolved to recommend to affiliated unions that a ban on overtime be applied if employers attempt to introduce non-European operatives at lower rates of pay and that the principle of National action be referred to the affiliated Unions, and that a conference to discuss this vital issue be convened shortly.'

Pretoria's opposition was based on the inclusion of compulsory overtime in the Award by which their conditions are governed, and a ban on overtime would therefore constitute a strike in their case.

The reason for Cape Town abstaining from the vote was that the delegates felt the matter should be referred back to affiliated unions before a decision is taken, since it involved such vital issues.

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

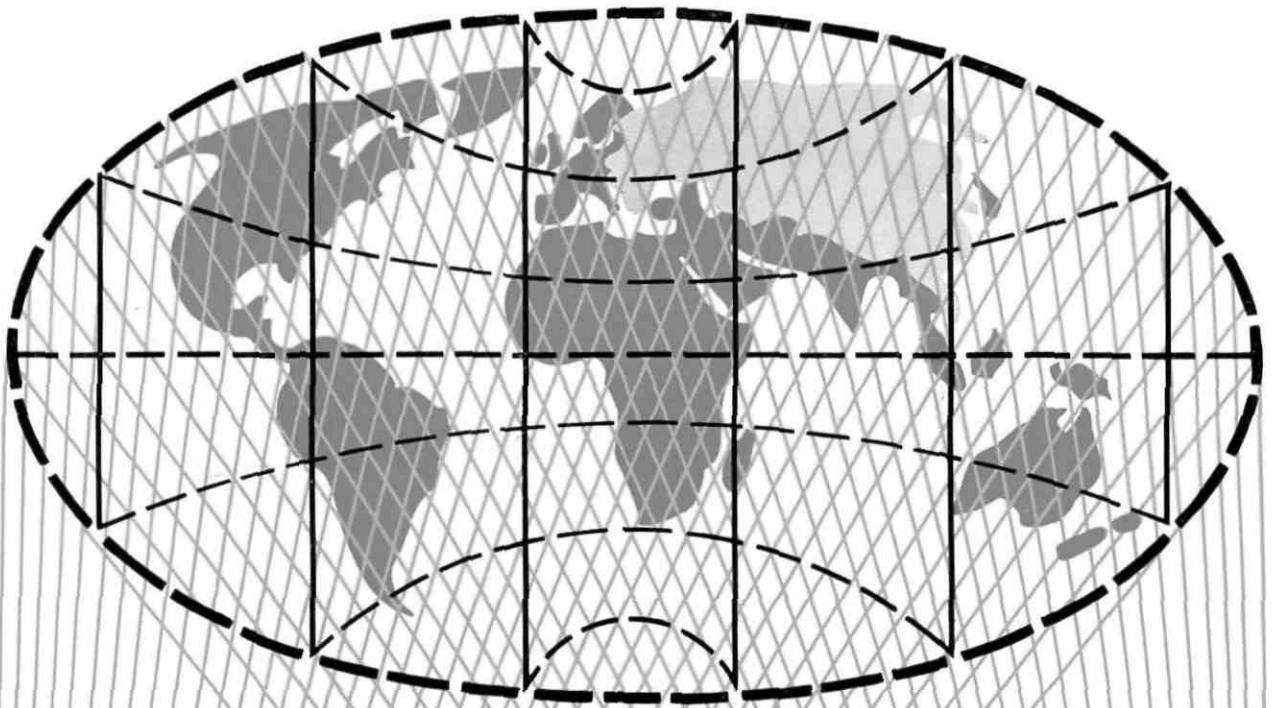
The aims of the ITF are

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 econ-

omic, 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 LUXEM-
BOURG 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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