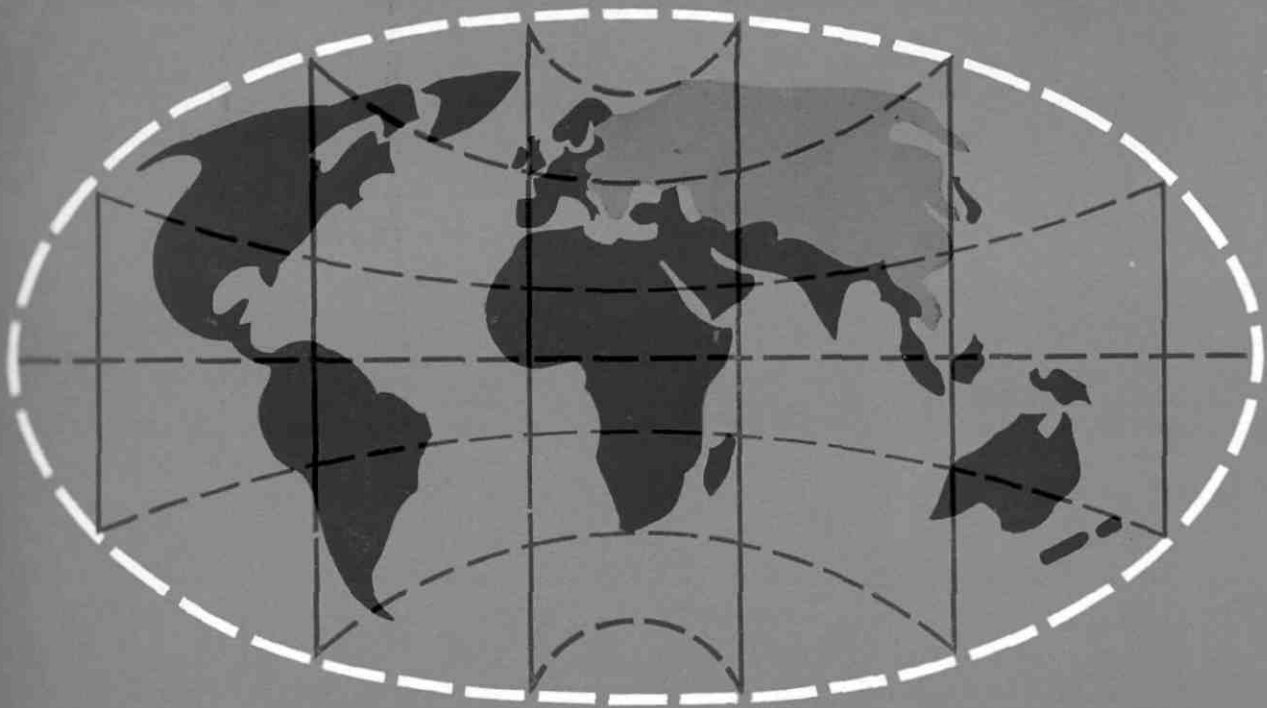


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Forthcoming Meetings:

Geneva	12-13 February	Dockers' Sectional Conference
Geneva	13 February	Road Transport Sectional Committee
Geneva	14 February	Road Transport Sectional Conference
London	15-16 March	International Fair Practices Committee
London	22-23 March	Civil Aviation Ground Staff Conference
Geneva	1-3 April	Seafarers' Sectional Conference

Robert Bratschi - an appreciation

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

ON 1 JANUARY, Robert Bratschi, the popular and respected President of our international organization, officially severed his connection with the ITF. We say 'officially' because we feel, indeed we are convinced, that after an association lasting so many years Robert Bratschi will remain with us in heart and in mind.

Well before he was elected President of the ITF at the Stuttgart Congress in July 1950, all of us in the ITF knew and liked Bratschi. A striking example of the esteem in which he was held among us was afforded by the elections to the Executive Committee at the first ITF Congress to be held after the war, the Zürich Congress of 1946, where he headed the list of candidates, receiving practically the entire number of votes registered.

Robert Bratschi's association with the ITF goes back a long way, to 1921 in fact, when, at the age of thirty, and barely a year after he had been elected *General Secretary of the Swiss Union of Railwaymen*, he attended his first ITF Congress, that held at Geneva. Some years later, in 1926, at the ITF Paris Congress, he became a substitute member of the General Council for the Austrian, Hungarian and Swiss group, the full member being his Austrian colleague Tomschik, it being understood that the office should alternate between Switzerland and Austria from Congress to Congress. It was indicative of the high regard and prestige which Bratschi had won for himself in ITF circles that he was elected a full member of the General Council at the 1930 Congress in London, on which occasion he was also elected to the Executive Committee, the Austrian representatives at the Congress conceding him the seat which, by tacit agreement, would normally have gone to an Austrian.

Robert Bratschi's association with the ITF reached its highest peak at the Stuttgart Congress in July 1950 when he was elected President of the ITF, an office which he filled with characteristic tact and understanding, whilst never failing to exercise the full authority of his office when the occasion demanded.

The fact that Robert Bratschi is held

in such high esteem in the international trade-union movement, and particularly among the transport workers, is due, on the one hand, to his strong personality – that of a man conscious of his duty, who keeps firmly to the path which he has chosen – and, on the other hand, to the considerable prestige which he enjoys in political and trade-union circles in his own country.

In the political field, he has been a member of the Administrative Council of the Swiss Federal Railways since 1921; of the National Council – the Second Chamber of the Swiss Houses of Parliament – since 1922; and of the *Grand Council of the Canton of Berne* since 1930.

In the trade-union field, he combined, from 1946 onwards, the office of General Secretary with that of President of the Swiss Union of Railwaymen, was President of the Swiss Federated Union of State Employees, and from 1934 President of the Swiss National Federation of Labour.

This brief and by no means complete summary of the trade-union and political offices held by Robert Bratschi gives an idea of his many and varied activities – activities of which the mainspring has invariably been his deep-rooted socialist and democratic convictions and his solid confidence in the future of the human race.

His sixtieth birthday, on 6 February 1951, was taken by his colleagues and friends, both in Switzerland and abroad, as an occasion to give a moving demonstration of the great esteem, affection and friendship they felt for him. The present given to him on that occasion by the Swiss trade unionists was a book entitled 'On the Democratic Front' – a collection of passages from his own speeches and writings.

The volume deals with a wide range



of questions, and illustrates the opinions of the author on all the important problems with which he has been faced during thirty years of ceaseless activity.

We may perhaps be permitted to reproduce here a few short excerpts from an article published in the official organ of the Swiss Federation of Labour in 1935 which well illustrate Robert Bratschi's views on the part to be played by the trade-union movement in a democratic State:

'... Democracy makes greater demands on the people of a country than any other form of government. The smooth functioning of a democratic society presupposes a willingness on the part of its members to take an active interest in matters having an important bearing on public welfare and affecting the general interests of the community, as well as the ability to form independent opinions on these same matters.'

'... Trade unions themselves are in some respects a kind of higher training school for democracy ...'

'... For us of the Swiss Federation of Labour, democracy represents the highest form of communal life in the State. We regard it as the only form compatible with the dignity of civilized Man. Consequently, the Federation of Labour rejects any form of compromise in this field. It holds firmly to its democra-

Brother Bratschi replies to addresses of welcome at the opening of the 1952 ITF Congress in the Konserthus, Stockholm

tic beliefs and will cooperate only with those organizations which base themselves on the same beliefs and which pursue the same economic and social ends.'

The brilliant career of Robert Bratschi in the trade-union movement has now come to a close. And yet the step which he has taken is in the nature of a continuation of that career. It is a step which he has chosen to take of his own free will, sustained by the complete confidence placed in him by the Swiss workers, and in particular by the Swiss railwaymen, and in the conviction that he is acting in their interests and in accordance with their wishes. (It was at the invitation of the Socialist group in the Grand Council of the Canton of Berne that he stood as a candidate for the office.)

Robert Bratschi communicated his decision to the ITF Executive Committee meeting which was held in Copenhagen on 29 and 30 June 1953, that same Committee over which he had presided for so many years and of which he now acted as Chairman for the last time. He announced that he had accepted an appointment as Managing Director of the Berne-Lötschberg-Simplon Railway Company, and that he would be taking office on 1 January 1954. In his new post, he succeeds a socialist, Robert Grimm, who is now retiring for reasons



of age after a long period of extremely distinguished service.

On taking leave of his closest collaborators in December, Robert Bratschi declared with feeling: 'It is hard enough to take on a difficult job; I now see that it is even harder to give one up.'

We of the ITF, whilst congratulating Robert Bratschi most sincerely on his appointment as Managing Director of the most important Swiss private railway, would like him to know that we both understand and share his sorrow now that the time has come for him to leave our movement, and that we wish

him in his new task all the success and satisfaction he so richly deserves.

Partings are always sad, but we have at least this consolation. Although our friend Bratschi is leaving the trade-union movement, he will still be active in the transport industry, where the experience he has gained in the past will serve him well. He will be working in a field of activity not so very far removed from our own and we have every hope that we shall be able to welcome him at our next Congress.

We shall not therefore bid him farewell, but simply say 'au revoir'.

Air transport coordination conference in Strasbourg

IT IS ANNOUNCED that an important conference on the coordination of European air transport is to be convened by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in Strasbourg on 21 April next. The conference, which is expected to last about three weeks, will be attended by representatives of the member-nations of ICAO together with representatives of other interested international organizations, including the United Nations and the Council of Europe. The conference, incidentally, is being called by ICAO as the result of a request made by the latter organization.

The main aim of the conference is to discuss ways and means of improving economic and technical cooperation between the air lines of the European coun-

tries, and to further the extension of that pooling of resources which is so well exemplified by the Scandinavian Airlines System.

US to reconsider weather ship decision

THE UNITED STATES STATE DEPARTMENT has announced that it may reverse its decision and continue participation in a programme which keeps a chain of weather ships stationed across the North Atlantic for the supply of weather information to trans-Atlantic airlines.

Last October, the US Government said that it intended to withdraw the fourteen ships it had been supplying to the service because it did not consider the weather information obtained justified the annual cost, said to be nearly £4,643,000. The decision caused considerable concern among other Atlantic

nations.

In a letter to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the State Department states that the United States might be prepared to cooperate with the service in a modified form. The letter said that the US Government had noted with interest the views of other Governments, US and foreign airlines which had been submitted to ICAO.

These comments showed that there was a feeling that the weather ships should be continued, since substantial benefits accrued from them to the trans-Atlantic airlines, though it might be possible that the service could be reduced in scope and yet still perform equally useful work. In view of this, the US had decided to send a delegation to the Fourth North Atlantic Ocean Stations Conference which is to be held in Paris next month to discuss the programme.

Sweden's transport coordination problem

by Hjalmar Svensson, Chairman of the ITF Road Transport Worker's Section

ABOUT A YEAR AGO, the Swedish Transport Workers' Union undertook an investigation of working conditions in the Swedish long-distance road haulage industry. That investigation aroused a great deal of justifiable interest, both here in Sweden and abroad.

Conditions worse than expected

It was already well-known to our union that the employers in this industry were, to a large extent, ignoring both collective agreements and legislation on working hours. But no one then thought that working conditions in the industry were really so bad as they were later shown to be. The investigation, which covered approximately ten per cent of long-distance road haulage, was carried out in the following manner. Drivers were questioned about their working hours and rest periods, and the wages they received. The information was immediately noted down on specially prepared forms, which were then signed by the drivers themselves.

When the data so collected was analyzed, it was found that in seventy-four per cent of the cases investigated the drivers worked more hours than were permitted by law. Swedish legislation allows drivers to drive for eleven, and in certain cases thirteen, hours per period of twenty-four hours. In this connection, it should be noted that driving time includes duty as driver's mate, as well as time spent in loading and unloading the vehicle. When our union collected the information supplied by lorry drivers, it was found that the average time spent in the cab without rest, including loading and unloading, was no less than twenty-one hours, i.e. almost twice the number of working hours laid down by law. The drivers who held the record in this 'fati-

gue marathon' were on duty for seventy consecutive hours without once being relieved.

How it was done

Many of those reading this article will perhaps wonder how the employers managed to get their drivers, grown men and organized workers, to drive and work under such inhuman conditions. The explanation, however, is a simple one. Instead of adhering to the provisions of the collective agreement on weekly wages, overtime compensation, allowances, etc., the employers got their drivers to agree to a system of compensation based on mileage – in other words, to a form of piece-work. All monetary payments provided for in the collective agreement were – at least in theory – to be included in the 'piece-rates'. The result was that in order to earn as much as possible the drivers worked all hours of the day and night, often in company





They drive without a break. The cramped, noisy cab is often the long-distance driver's home, in which he works, sleeps and spends the greater part of his time. Most drive by night, the day being used for loading and unloading. To drive a heavy lorry for hours on end is exhausting work, calling for great concentration.

employers' organization has also appointed a special official solely for the purpose of improving the system. He is still engaged on that task.

Competition basic cause

That the underlying reason for this large-scale exploitation of human labour-power is to be found in unhealthy competition between the two great forms of transport, rail and road, is beyond all doubt. As in other parts of the world, a vigorously expanding road transport industry has created immense problems in Sweden – problems which are crying out for solution. Competition between road and rail is one of these problems, and one which is not new. Nor is it new to the ITF. The problem was on the ITF's agenda as early as the 1920's, and since then the Federation has never tired of emphasizing the extent to which this unhealthy and uneconomic competition harms both the workers and society as a whole. How such competition affects road transport employees has been shown by our union's survey.

Following proposals by Parliament, the Board of Commerce, the Price Control Administration, the State Railways and other official bodies for the solution

with their employers. How many of the fatal accidents occurring in this industry have been due to drivers falling asleep at the wheel will never be known, for dead men tell no tales.

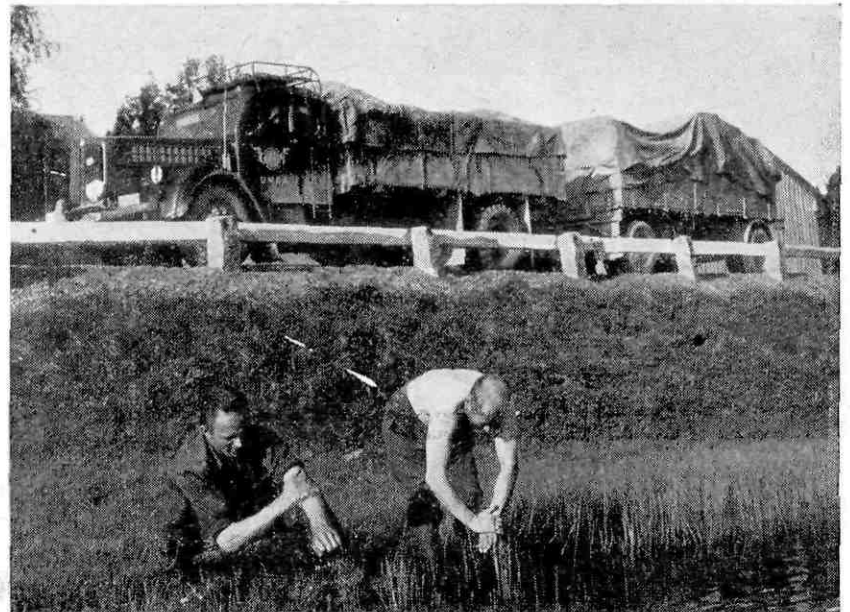
Drivers grossly underpaid

However, the employers not only ignored the stipulations on working hours laid down by law and collective agreement; they also evaded the wage provisions of the union's contract. Swedish long-distance lorry drivers earn the same wages as other Swedish road haulage workers, with the difference that their rates are increased by fifty per cent when they work between the hours of six p.m. and six a.m. Basic wages vary according to the domicile of the driver, all Swedish communities being classified under one of five official cost-of-living groups. When the union came to compare the rates agreed upon between employers and drivers with the weekly wages, overtime payments and allowances, etc. provided by the collective agreement, it was discovered that, in all the cases investigated, drivers were being underpaid by between 17 kr.*) and 120 kr. per week. The latter amount applied to those drivers who had been on duty for seventy hours without a break. To give a better idea of the

*) £ 1 equals 14,50 kronor

sum involved, it should be mentioned that the weekly wage provided for these drivers by collective agreement was then 136 kronor. In eleven months, the three men concerned were underpaid by a total of 7,500 kronor – approximately the normal annual salary of a Swedish lorry driver. The union, of course, forced the employer to pay back the money, which otherwise would have gone into his own pocket.

As has been stated above, the results of the enquiry caused something of a sensation, and the Transport Workers' Union called upon the Government to take speedy action to end this extremely unsatisfactory state of affairs. The em-



In the morning, the lorry driver stops and washes as best he can in a handy lake. In Sweden, 'good pull ups' for long-distance drivers are few and far between

of various transport problems, the Government has now interested itself in the question and set up a committee of inquiry. It is particularly gratifying to note that the directives issued to that committee by the Minister of Communications reflect so many of the opinions formulated by the ITF over the years. The Minister considers, for instance, that it is not merely the rapid technical development of motor transport which has led to the present position in the transport industry, i.e. to an intensification of competition. That development, if not regulated, will result in the taxpayer bearing the burden of transport which is not rationally organized. The situation is also affected by a number of other factors, particularly those concerning the conditions of railway operation.

Obligations of the railways

These factors have taken on special significance with the growth of serious competition to the railways from the new form of transport. There is, for instance, the fact that the railways have assumed heavy social obligations towards their employees, which are not matched by comparable commitments on the part of their competitors. The railways operate over an extensive network of lines in a country 994 miles long. Only part of that network carries sufficient traffic to ensure profitable operation in the normal commercial sense. The deficit of the remainder must be covered by the surpluses of the profitable sections, which means that fares and rates on the latter are higher than they would otherwise need to be.

Again, in order to give the public the service which it expects, to be able to meet peak demands, and to carry out the far-reaching transport obligations imposed on them by the community, the railways must, on both profitable and unprofitable lines, maintain a traffic capacity well in excess of average needs. In other words, opportunities to make economies or to operate competitively are reduced. And it is precisely the profitable lines which are the target for road transport competition, with the hauliers taking goods traffic and freight receipts which both the railways and the State must have if they are to maintain lines in undeveloped areas and those parts of the country where traffic is light.

The Minister of Communications further states that this system of internal

This lorry was driven by a 24-year-old long-distance driver who had been on duty for 35 hours when his vehicle mounted the pavement at 5 a.m. When the lorry overturned, his head was crushed between the pavement and the cab. No-one knows whether he fell asleep, but the blood-bespattered cab tells its own story

compensation applying to traffic in different parts of the country and to lines with differing capacities, and imposed by the present rates policy, has had a significance for the nation's economy and its economic development which can hardly be overemphasized. In particular, the possibilities of industrial development in various parts of Sweden have often been decisively influenced by the existence or lack of facilities for the transport of bulk goods; and not only the growth but also the continued existence of a great part of our industry is closely bound up with the question of how such facilities have been and are to be provided. Our heavy industry and mines, concentrated in the interior of Sweden, would be very hard hit if they no longer had access to transport facilities under more or less the same conditions as now, and the rest of our economy would also be affected.

Alternatives to present position

It is obvious, however, that the existing internal compensation system, in its application to both costs and service, cannot be retained, unless important changes are made. The *only* alternatives to the present position are: either to scrap the system of internal compensation or to try to create the competitive conditions which are in fact presupposed by the maintenance of the system. That is, of course, assuming that one is not prepared to make good deficits from the State Exchequer. The adoption of the former course would, in the long run, mean closing down large sections of the railway network, the rejection of unprofitable traffic, reducing the number of trains on lightly-trafficked lines and bringing fares and freight rates for the remaining traffic into line with ac-

After his lorry has been examined for defects, the driver gets the signal to drive on from the police constable. Under the existing system, however, it is almost impossible to keep a check on the driver's working hours and the police are too few to carry out such a check effectively



tual costs, etc.

The Minister of Communications has called for an investigation of the development of the Swedish railways in the light of the growth of motor transport. The general aim of the solutions to transport problems which are to be sought is the following: to provide satisfactory transport facilities for the various parts of the country at the lowest possible cost and under conditions which ensure both commercial efficiency and a healthy development of the transport apparatus. In connection with both the demand for commercial efficiency and the question of state finances it would seem proper that the country's transport budget should be so organized that the transport industry should be able to operate entirely without subsidies from the exchequer.

An interesting experiment

The most pressing trade union problem, however, is the question of how road transport employers can be induced to abide by both laws and collective agreements. Here it should be mentioned that most countries are faced with the same problem as is Sweden. The real question is whether abuses in the road transport industry can be eliminated without first solving the problem of competition between the different forms of transport. One of the most interesting experiments made in this field has recently been made in West Germany. There, a law has been passed making it obligatory for all long-distance lorries weighing over 7½ tons and buses which carry more than fourteen passengers to be equipped with what the Germans call a journey log. This registers, on a graph, not only the

vehicle's speed at any given moment, but also the stops made during the journey. By means of this device it is possible to check both the speed of the vehicle and the time which the driver spends at the wheel. The graph can also be used to indicate how much overtime has been worked on a given trip. However distasteful it may be to involve the police in the supervision of working hours, this may well be the only way to prevent further exploitation of long-distance road transport workers and the unnecessary fatal accidents which result from such exploitation. Unless the police are able to check the journey log, this apparatus will certainly be valueless as a means of protecting the lorry driver. The German law is only a few months old, and it will be of great interest to learn something more about its effect. Already it has been reported that in certain cases the frequency of accidents has been cut by half.

What of the future?

The ITF will certainly not flag in its future efforts on behalf of the large group of professional drivers with which I have here been dealing. In this connection, one cannot do better than to underline what the ITF's President, Brother Bratschi, said in his report to the International Railwaymen's Conference held in Madrid in 1930, namely that the whole problem of competition between road and rail must be solved on a basis of complete agreement be-

Competition from road transport has resulted in far-reaching rationalization on the railways. Complete freight waggons can now be transported from door to door.

tween the two large ITF groups involved: the road transport workers and the railwaymen, both of which belong to the same world-wide organization and whose best interests that organization is called upon to serve.

Danube Commission deadlock is broken

WITH THE ELECTION OF A JUGOSLAV to the office of secretary to the Danube Commission, Yugoslavia's efforts to secure a greater influence in the affairs of this body can be said to have achieved a measure of success. Formerly, Yugoslavia had been faced by a solid bloc consisting of the Soviet Union and her satellites Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Rumania. This bloc could, and did, consistently outvote Yugoslavia. The latter's proposal at the meeting in the early part of 1953, for example, was not even discussed. This was to the effect that an Executive Committee should be set up consisting of representatives from all member-States, the president of the committee being responsible to the Commission only, in lieu of a secretariat elected by majority vote of the member-States and with a secretary having full powers between sessions of the Commission but responsible only to his own Government.

The ninth session of the Danube Commission, which was held in the Rumanian river port of Galatz at the beginning of December 1953, gave evidence of a more accommodating attitude on the part of the Soviet bloc. Yugoslavia's claim was conceded, thus putting to an end a system which had prevailed since 1948 and had permitted the secretary of the Commission - invariably a Russian - virtually unlimited authority in its affairs. A further longstanding proposal by Yugoslavia - the moving of the Commission's headquarters from Galatz to Budapest - was also approved.

Apart from the election of the Yugoslav delegate as secretary, other elections at the session indicated a similar withdrawal of the Russians from their former monopoly of key positions. Major posts in the Commission are now held by Russia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Rumania (two each) and Czechoslovakia (one). It was also decided that other posts should be filled in accordance with the Commission's agreement to effect a fair distribution of appointments among all member-States.



Are level crossings really deathtraps?

THE PROBLEM of the railway level crossing as a factor in road accidents has long engaged the attention of the authorities of the Swiss Federal Railways. Introducing an article on this subject by a Swiss Railway official, the editor of the 'Eisenbahner', the official organ of the ITF affiliate Swiss Railwaymen's Union, points out however that the extent to which the level crossing is responsible for accidents on the Swiss roads is grossly overrated.

The existence of level crossings is admittedly a hindrance to the smooth flow of traffic on the roads. The assertion that they constitute a main factor in road accidents, however, lacks foundation in fact. To describe them as deathtraps, on the other hand, is to ignore truth in the interests of sensationalism. The road accident statistics of the Swiss Federal Republic point in quite a different direction.

Of the 37,440 accidents which occurred on the roads in the year 1952, only 100 happened at level crossings on the network of the Swiss Federal Railways. That is 0.27 per cent.

Of the total number who met their death as the result of traffic accidents, three per cent did so at level crossings. It is submitted that these percentages are not unreasonably high, and certainly not sufficiently high to justify the epithet 'deathtraps'.

According to a report issued by the accident prevention service of the Swiss Federal Railways, there were forty-six accidents at the 1,747 level crossings with gates in the year 1952. Of the persons involved, nineteen were injured, four of them fatally. Motor vehicles crashed the gates on twenty-eight occasions. There were three instances of the barriers being forcibly opened with the result that two persons were injured and one met his death. Six accidents are attributed to the gates not having been shut and two to faulty servicing, resulting in five people being injured and one person being killed.

Ten accidents occurred at the eighty-three crossings equipped with visual or audible signals. These were for the most part due to drivers attempting to beat the train to the crossing, and resulted in eight persons being injured, five fatally.

The remaining 1,859 unattended level crossings on the network of the Swiss



IN THE DECEMBER ISSUE of the ITF Journal, we published an article dealing with the Norwegian aid programme for Indian fishermen in the State of Travancore-Cochin. In that article, mention was made of a new type of fishing vessel which has been specially designed for use in Travancore by Norwegian experts and is intended for eventual motorization. Through the courtesy of the Press and Information Office of the Royal Norwegian Embassy in London, we have now received the above photograph of the prototype vessel, which will serve as a model for the new fishing boats to be built in the Norwegian project area, beginning its long journey to India.

Federal Railways were the scene of forty-four further accidents in the year 1952. In these, four persons were injured and ten lost their lives. The report issued by the accident prevention service attributes these accidents in the main to careless driving and failure to observe the rule of the road.

Whilst not seeking to minimize the danger inherent in the level crossing, the 'Eisenbahner' goes on to point out that the main cause of the accidents is to be found in the behaviour of the car drivers themselves. It quotes the Federal Bureau of Statistics to the effect that one-tenth of the accidents on the road are attributable to the abuse of alcohol.

Meanwhile, the Swiss railways, and in particular the Swiss Federal Railways, although not necessarily admitting that level crossings are as dangerous as road users would make them out to be, are nevertheless going to considerable expense to make them safer and to shorten the time the barriers are closed. The introduction of further safety installations, however, will entail increased responsibility for level crossing attendants and raise the question whether their rates of pay sufficiently reflect these additional responsibilities.

Registration of Greek tonnage

EFFORTS BY THE GREEK GOVERNMENT to persuade Greek shipowners overseas to register their vessels under the Greek flag are continuing. At the present time there is a total of 4,000,000 gross registered tons of such shipping, including liners, cargo vessels and tankers.

The merchant fleet registered under the Greek flag, on the other hand, does not exceed 500 vessels of over 100 tons, amounting to about 1,300,000 gross registered tons. This fleet includes 398 cargo ships totalling 1,083,000 g.r.t., twenty-three tankers totalling 11,345 g.r.t., thirty-seven liners totalling 48,092 g.r.t., and one ocean-going passenger liner 16,000 tons.

The Greek Government has pointed out that the addition to the fleet of those ships at present sailing under foreign flags could play a large part in helping to offset the country's adverse trading balance. During 1951, for instance, out of a total of about £34,285,000 in foreign exchange earned by Greek ships only about £11,428,000 was earned by Greek-flag vessels.



The London cab driver is regarded as a 'character', who has earned his own niche among London's other characters

The British cab and its driver

by **J. H. Francis**, Cab Section Secretary,
Transport and General Workers' Union

WHETHER YOU HAIL IT at King's Cross or Glasgow Central or whether you climb into a conveyance outside the station at Nether Wallop you would probably describe the vehicle you use as a cab, and its driver as a cab driver. Any of the three will perform the same function – that is convey you to your destination. Each of them is doing the same job – “plying for hire”. Yet the conditions under which each driver works are entirely different.

If one is to describe cab drivers then, it will be necessary to divide them into classes. Roughly they can be divided into (a) London, (b) the larger provincial cities, and (c) the smaller towns and cities of the provinces. All are different. There is perhaps a fourth class of cab – the vehicle which does ‘odd jobs’ in a small village, ranging from carrying Farmer Williams’ sow to the vet, to taking Jemima Ann to the dentist. Strictly speaking, however, this cannot be considered as a cab.

The London set-up

If the conditions under which the London cab driver works are not unique they at least are unusual. Except for the purposes of the National Insurance Acts he is not an employed person, he is a ‘bailee’. He works the cab on a commission basis retaining 37½ per cent of the amount registered on the meter. Tips and extras belong to him. His actual earnings are not large. Approximately they are comparable to those in industry generally but it has to be borne in mind that he gets no pay for any day on which he does not work; no payment for annual or statutory holidays, breakdowns or ‘overhaul’ periods when no other cab is available.

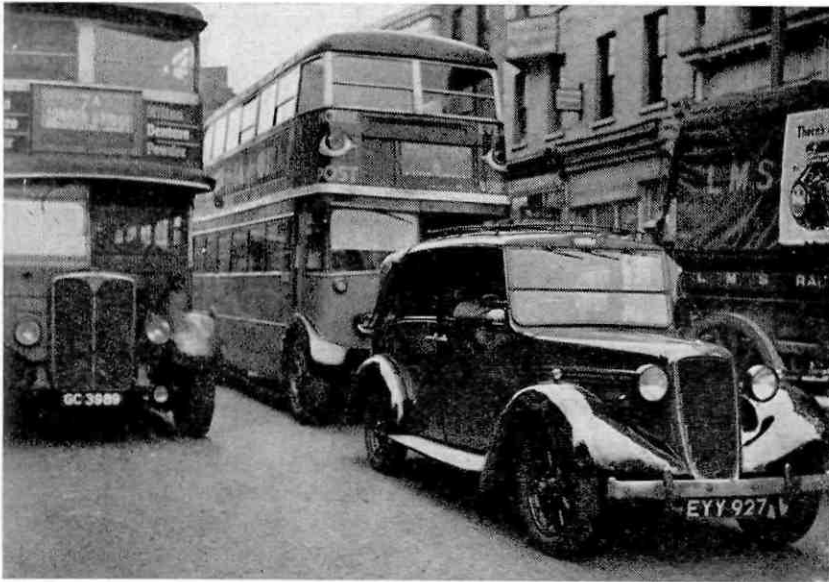
Before the war the fact that he was not ‘employed’ carried considerable advantages. He started at whatever time suited him and, subject to whether or

not a fixed ‘change-over’ time existed for the night men at that particular garage, he finished when he liked also. This happy arrangement was subject to it being made reasonably economic from the point of view of the cab owner, but if for any reason the driver ceased to see eye to eye with the owner he just withdrew his licence and went to work elsewhere. There was no difficulty about it. There may have been too many drivers for the number of passengers then available, but there were also plenty of cabs. Whether a satisfactory living could be obtained was another matter. Hours were long. There were 800 cabs and 11,500 drivers. At times there did not seem to be that number of passengers. A campaign was carried on during the early ‘thirties for some form of limitation of the number of cabs and drivers. Although the number of cabs seeking custom caused congestion in streets least able to cope with it, various Home Secretaries remained obstinately unconvinced of any necessity for control of numbers. Since the drivers felt that, having been licensed to carry passengers, they were entitled to look for sufficient passengers to obtain a living it was left to the police to deal with the resulting congestion. Magistrates Courts were flooded with cases against cabmen; in one year there were 3,200.

As can be imagined, the loose kind of relationship existing in the trade bred a

rugged individualist. Largely the driver was his own boss; he called no man master. To some extent post-war conditions have moved against him but the individualism still remains. The ratio of drivers to cabs has worsened and competition for available cabs is considerably more keen. The driver is more tied to his job than he was and many have to put up with a little more from the cab owner than they would have done. Yet the driver retains a great deal of his independence and trade union organization, particularly in the larger garages, has prevented any great worsening of his conditions so far. Approximately seventy per cent of the journeymen drivers are in the Transport & General Workers' Union, and in many of the larger garages the organization is 100 per cent. In most garages of any size there is a garage committee which is responsible to one of the seven cab branches and works in liaison with the Section Organiser. A central committee consisting of one delegate from each branch directs general section policy. This committee is still pressing for statutory control of entry – so far without success.

These facts, of course, apply only to a driver who drives someone else's cab. The owner-driver, the man who owns one cab and drives it himself and whose cabs now represent forty-three per cent of the entire cab fleet in London, is his own master entirely. He chooses



A typical London taxi cab on the job. Cruising, he has been caught in one of the hold-ups which are so familiar a part of London's traffic scene (COI photograph)

the number of hours he works and selects what hours he works. He is thus able to adjust his hours to cover as much as possible of the peak trade. Within limits the owner-driver provides a buffer for the journeyman which has had considerable value, but it is obvious that a preponderance of owner-drivers could throw the London cab trade out of balance and we are at the moment wondering whether this point has not been reached. Although there is an Association for Owner Drivers, many of them remain within the Transport & General Workers' Union.

Police control

The Public Carriage Office, an austere and forbidding looking building in the Lambeth Road, houses the Department of the Metropolitan Police responsible for the licensing and control of London's cabs and drivers. From the day an applicant files his application for a licence this is the department that takes over control of his destiny.

The candidate must have a good character and if there is anything in the least serious against him the issue of a licence is unlikely. The approval of the original application, however, is only the first step. Periodical examination on his knowledge of London follows and it is at this stage that his troubles begin.

He will be required to attend the Public Carriage Office and there he will be examined by an Inspector of Police. On each visit he will be asked about six

questions. Even if our would-be cab driver prides himself on knowing his London it is unlikely that he will answer one question correctly on his first two visits. 'Take me', says the Inspector, 'from the Savoy Hotel to the Science Museum', and the unfortunate applicant, who knows that the Savoy is in the Strand and has a vague idea that the Science Museum is in South Kensington, attempts (or doesn't attempt) the heavy task of connecting up the two points. He has to 'leave' the starting point correctly, follow the most direct route, name all roads and road junctions he traverses and arrive at his destination. Where 'one-way' traffic exists he must say so; which rules out gaining knowledge solely from maps. This series



Jack Twill has a final adjustment made at the garage before setting out for the day

of examinations may extend over a period of anything from one to two years. A stiff driving test follows and then the green badge is issued.

It is worthy of note that the London cab driver is the most legislated against individual in the country, perhaps in the whole world. He is covered by all the laws and regulations that afflict the ordinary motorist, and in addition he is subject to a host of ancient statutes, dating from 1831 to 1907, besides numerous regulations issued from time to time by the Commissioner of Police acting for the Home Secretary. He can be summoned for going too fast or too slow, for putting his cab on a rank over the authorized number, for taking a passenger under certain conditions, for stopping in certain streets when disengaged, for not wearing his badge and for 'wilful misbehaviour' – a phrase, which, like charity, covers a multitude of sins. Under these circumstances a cab driver's life is liable to be one long misdemeanour from the time he climbs into the driver's



Mrs Finbow is one of our cab driver's regular weekly jobs. She does not like motor cars and will not trust anybody but careful, kindly Jack to take her to hospital

seat to the time he vacates it. He therefore ceases to worry since it becomes not so much a question of whether he is doing wrong but what he is doing wrong.

A Home Office Working Party, on which the Legal Secretary and myself represented the Union, has recently reported to the Minister on what modernization of the law is necessary.

Since he is under the direct control of the police as regards licensing and the police also have the job of seeing that

the law is obeyed it might be thought that the cab driver would have a pretty thin time. Actually it works out quite well. By and large nowadays the Regulations are interpreted reasonably and fairly. In 1952, there were 267 summonses for offences under the Hackney Carriage Laws, etc., i.e. for offences which only a cab driver could commit. As there are 9,200 licensed drivers this number cannot be regarded as excessive. Representations from ourselves are always given fair consideration.

Relations with the public

Taking all things into account the London cab driver is regarded as a 'character' with his own niche among London's other characters. A picture has been built up, mainly by cartoonists and music hall comedians of a rotund and semi-illiterate individual clad in a multitude of outer garments who has to strip to the waist to find sixpence change. Nowadays, at least, nothing is further from the truth. He has his detractors but, by and large, his relationship with the public is extremely good and he has his defenders also. Some two years ago a Lieutenant Colonel attacked cab drivers in a letter to an evening paper. They were, he wrote, slovenly and surly, unhelpful and mercenary. We gathered that the Colonel did not like cab drivers. So did other readers. A surprising number sprang to the defence. A retired Captain suggested that there were more scruffy Lieutenant-Colonels around Whitehall than there were cab drivers. But perhaps the best comment came from a lady. 'Our taxi drivers are gentlemen', she wrote, 'and we love them. We love their old caps and trilby hats and would not have them different in any way'. Comment is surely superfluous after such a tribute.

The provinces

Here the cab and its driver come under different control. The Local Authority becomes the licensing and controlling body, usually by means of its Watch Committee. The driver, therefore, is removed from the direct control of a Minister, as in London; nor is he bound by the plethora of laws that operate in the Metropolis. Only the provisions of the Town Police Clauses Act apply although the Authority has powers to make bye-laws to cover certain specific points. Not all of them do so. Where bye-laws are made they are not usually

oppressive. In some cases where the boundaries of two or three local authorities cover an almost continuous well-populated area, a Joint Hackney Carriage Committee has been set up. In theory, such a Committee has no executive power and its recommendations are subject to approval by each separate Council. In actual practice, however, ratification is usually certain.

In the provinces the driver becomes a wage earner, either wholly or in part. The differences are fairly wide and it is not possible to quote an average rate but the most usual kind of wage structure is that of a fairly small basic payment plus commission on takings over a certain amount.

Trade union organization varies, being strongest in the larger cities where cabs are owned mainly by two or three firms. The number involved is not great enough in any one locality to make possible a trade union structure on the lines of London. In some places the cab trade membership is sufficiently large to form a branch on its own but normally the membership is placed in a composite branch for administrative purposes, any trade problem being passed direct to the District Official responsible or sometimes to the National Officer of the Passenger Group.

The smaller towns

Much the same set-up is met with in the smaller towns as in the larger provincial cities, though there is, of course, a much smaller volume of available passenger

traffic. In consequence, the owner-driver predominates and it is not usual to find any one firm operating more than about six cabs. In places it would be difficult to find one owner with as many. Because of this smaller amount of trade also, the division between cab work and the work usually done by 'private hire' vehicles is far less noticeable. This division is far more marked in the larger cities. In the smaller towns many of the vehicles and drivers perform a considerable amount of this work. In many cases, the owner drivers are on the telephone and probably as much work is obtained from this source as from plying for hire on the street. There are towns, in fact, where, although an owner finds it convenient to hold a cab licence his vehicle seldom, if ever, plies for hire on the streets.

General conclusions

A fair summing up would be that the cab driver, either London or provincial, is an average type of working man carrying out a not entirely easy job that is run on different lines from ordinary industry. Maybe because of that he is, perhaps, a little more independent than most. He is also thrown into a more intimate relationship with the public. Sometimes he has unfortunate experiences and sometimes (for we, too, have black sheep!) the public have unfortunate experiences. In the majority of cases, however, the driver would say that the public is o.k., and, despite the critics, the majority of the public would agree that the driver is o.k. also.

Road transport in the United States

ACCORDING TO THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION, United States highway transport is the largest single combination of economic activity in man's history. It pays one-sixth of United States taxes, provides over 10 million jobs (six million workers, for instance, are lorry drivers). More people are employed in all branches of highway transportation than on farms. Individual business establishments directly connected with the industry total over 700,000. In the United States over £50,000 million is paid annually for highway transportation services. Motor trucks account for 15 per cent of freight ton-miles and 77 per cent of the total freight tonnage handled annually. High-

way transportation also accounts for 95 per cent of all passenger-miles of travel in the United States.

It's money for milk!

THE STAFF REGULATIONS of the French State Railways provide for the payment of 170 different special allowances supplementing the basic rates of railway employees. Perhaps the most unusual is the 'cat allowance', paid to level-crossing keepers (who in France are usually of the fair sex) as a contribution towards the maintenance of cats in level-crossing huts. Apparently it has been discovered that the presence of a cat in the hut not only discourages mice but also helps to keep the lady crossing keepers calm and contented, thus reducing the risk of accidents! A new version of 'when the cat's away...?'

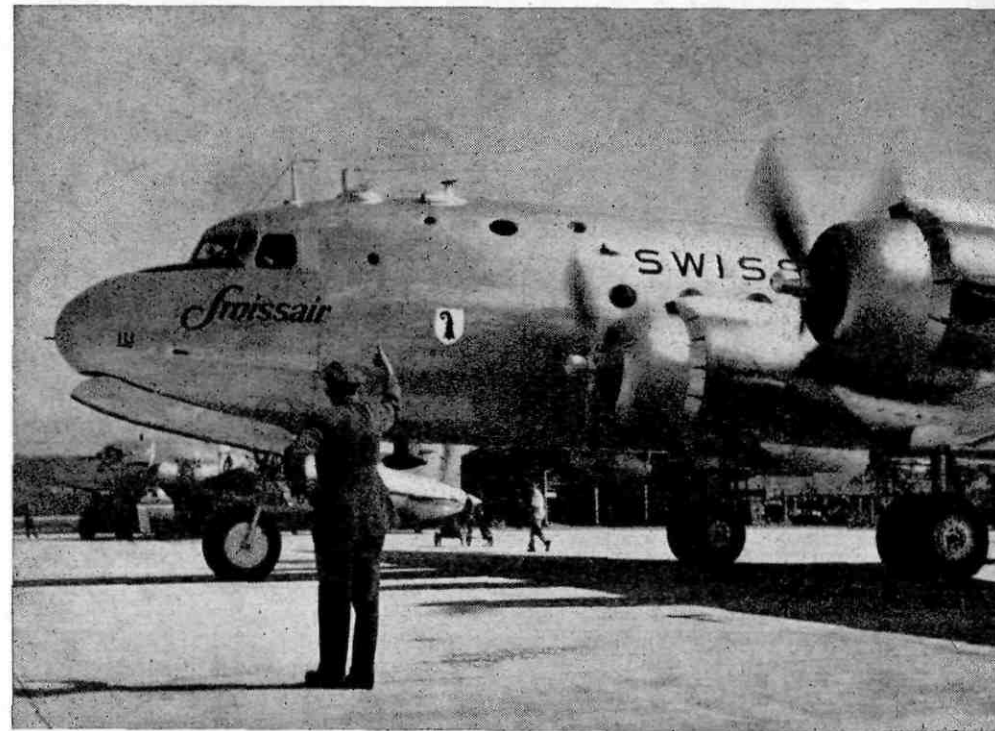
Departure Zurich 0800 hours

by Kurt Meyer,
Traffic Officer,
Swissair

'DEPART ZURICH 0800 HOURS'... If we examine the time-table for the air service to Athens, we read this brief announcement just as it would appear in the time-table of a railway or shipping company. Flying has today become a recognized mode of travel, and no-one would perhaps think of interesting himself in the many people, both great and small, who, behind the scenes, contribute to the success of each flight. And yet their activities are both interesting and many-sided.

Let us follow a passenger from the stage where he obtains his ticket from the air travel agency. The entrance to the agency immediately presents a cosmopolitan atmosphere - somehow it is possible to distinguish the travelling public; they are active and by their demeanour reveal a much-travelled air. They have confidence in the achievement of modern science - in short, they are determined to fly! Posters and photographs of foreign lands and aircraft of all types greet the prospective traveller from the walls of the agency. His wanderlust is thereby stimulated and already in imagination he is soaring over the barren yellow mountains of Greece and the cities of Athens and Piraeus, jutting out into the silver Gulf of Corinth.

He stops at the window marked 'Greece' and an official comes forward to deal with his requests which concern the reservation of his air passage. It may well be that on the day he wishes to travel all seats on the company's aircraft in which he had hoped to fly are fully booked, but that will not of necessity prevent his journey since, al-



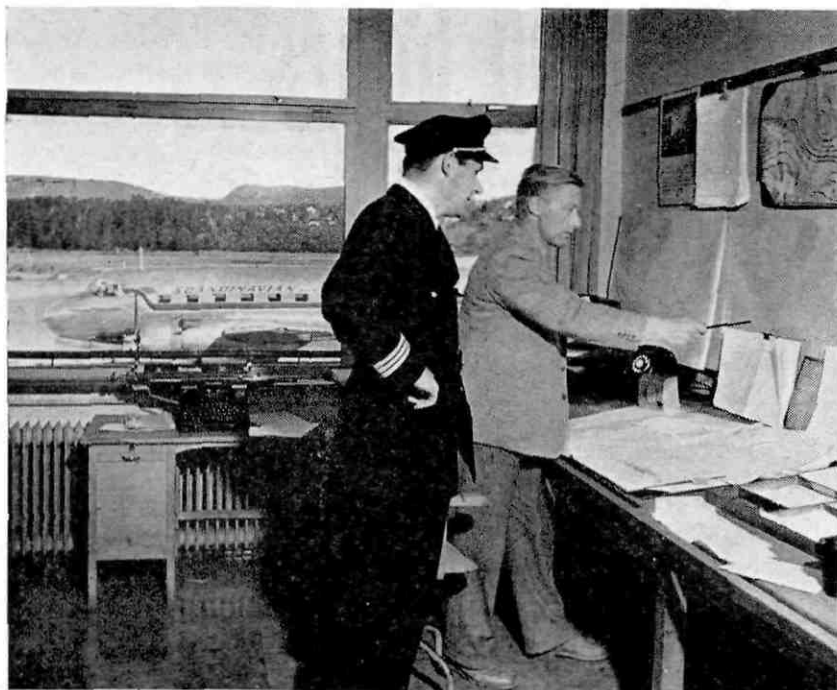
though companies operate in keen competition, an arrangement exists whereby seats can be booked on other aircraft. On the same routes it would obviously not be a commercial proposition say, for an aircraft of Swissair to depart in the morning for Amsterdam with only six or eight passengers and a Dutch aircraft to leave in the afternoon, similarly not loaded to capacity, for the same destination. And so our passenger has now been provided with an air ticket, route details, date and time of departure and his name placed on the passenger list.

Behind the scenes, the Operations Department with its various subsections is busy with flight preparations. In the Navigation Office the flight plan is drawn up as far as possible, the necessary maps and charts prepared with distances calculated and safety heights and prohibited areas plotted. In the Radio Section the crew are supplied with all relevant radio information, the position of radio and radio-directional stations, radio-beacons and airports where blind landing systems operate. The final crew composition is decided by the Central Per-

sonnel Office who select personnel on the basis of qualifications demanded by the particular route taking into account the personnel roster and ensuring that the permissible weekly flight time is not exceeded by any crew member.

While our passenger is at home making last minute arrangements for his journey, the Catering Department is already busily occupied with the preparation of menus and in the maintenance workshops dozens of highly-skilled technicians are meticulously servicing the aircraft which an experienced captain will fly to Athens.

The day of the journey dawns and our passenger arrives at the appointed time at the agency from whence he is conveyed in a luxurious Pullman motor-coach to the airport. Here again he finds a bustle of activity, a constant coming and going, a veritable whirl of people conversing in all tongues as they impart advice and take farewells. Loudspeakers announce the arrival of a transit aircraft, and the very strikingly-dressed young lady beside us gazes anxiously at the dial of the machine on which she is



The pilot of the aircraft looks at charts incorporating the latest weather information together with the meteorologist

being weighed. But the airline representative smiles understandingly; he will not divulge to her fellow-travellers that Miss Fisher weighs ten pounds more since her last air journey. By a nearby window an animated discussion is in progress; a temperamental Italian lady just will not understand why she must pay excess baggage rates. The official points out that IATA (International Air Transport Association) regulations provide for only fifteen kilograms of free luggage in Europe. All the arts and blandishments of the lady have no effect on the official and she has to change some of her dollars to pay for the excess.

In the Meteorological Office the forecasters have already long been at work assessing valuable weather information received by radio. This information will be incorporated in a written forecast and handed to the pilot, who will find it a useful aid to navigation.

Meanwhile the four-engined DC-6B is taxied by the flight engineer from the maintenance department to the passenger hardstanding, and awaits the loading of the cargo. The starter personnel bring up the ground batteries and fire-fighting equipment and the passenger steps are moved into position. The aircraft cabin is heated. The bowser is brought up and whilst refuelling op-

Up-to-date machinery and experienced personnel now considerably speed up the loading of freight on to the aircraft

erations are in progress, cabin service personnel load several hundred kilograms of food, drink, crockery, cutlery and advertising material in the galley. Nimble hands place white covers on the headrests of the passenger seats.

The Freight Department works feverishly on the completion of the manifests, after it has been informed that the whole planned freight load can be utilized. The same morning, the freight has been very minutely inspected by the Customs authorities, and is now being loaded by experienced staff. As the

freight manifest is ready the telephone rings: 'Yes, we will see, if time allows'. With a faint sigh the freight official replaces the telephone receiver. At the last moment an urgent request has been received to send streptomycin for someone who is desperately ill in Corinth. One naturally always does whatever is possible if it is a case of saving human life and many a Traffic Officer would qualify for several life-saving medals for such service!

In the Traffic Office, the 'brains' of the airport, all the information for the load and trim sheets has been received. Only the passenger list cannot be closed since two transit passengers are expected from Vienna.

Our passenger has passed through the passenger and customs controls, and, together with the other travellers, is conducted to the aircraft by a charming air hostess.

Eight minutes before departure time the arrival of the aircraft from Vienna is announced. Both the transit passengers are immediately conducted to the waiting aircraft. Baggage labels have already been prepared and only names and weights need to be entered. A few additions to the various air documents, and these too are ready to be duplicated.

Two minutes prior to departure the loadsheets are finished. The aircraft captain signs them, and passes hurriedly



through the customs control to the aircraft. He is chased by an employee who hands him the document case, while the official in charge of tarmac control does a further inspection. A few minutes later the motors start up. First one, then two, three, four... The starters remove the chocks and the Traffic Officer gives the right of way to the aircraft to the end of the runway. The pilot first revs up the engines - this is an international safety precaution. The heavy machine moves forward and smoothly, almost imperceptibly, lifts itself from the ground. We are airborne! And, you will say, with what ease... Certainly, but thanks are due to the countless checks and pains-

taking attention by qualified personnel.

At the departure airport, work still remains to be done. The radio transmission service moves into action. The entire loading must be communicated to the next station, and then the staff turn to their duties in connection with long-distance aircraft. And while our passenger has crossed the Adriatic Sea and makes for the Gulf of Corinth and the most beautiful saga of Greek antiquity again becomes real, the officials who have attended to his needs turn to other tasks. Only the flight leader notes briefly on the delay report 'Athens' - three minutes delay due to Vienna connection.' Just one more routine job completed.



Behind the scenes in the radio section of a large modern airport. Both radio-telephony (centre) and wireless telegraphy are used to contact aircraft when in flight

First Swiss maritime legislation

SWITZERLAND now has its own maritime code - the first in the country's history. It became officially effective on 1st January last.

At present, the Swiss merchant fleet consists of twenty-one cargo vessels of over 6,500 tons together with twelve coastal tankers. In addition, Switzerland operates two ordinary tankers and a further tanker for winter transport.

Twenty of the Swiss vessels were constructed after 1948. Twelve of these were placed in service following the outbreak of hostilities in Korea.

Road-rail competition in Tasmania

TO OFFSET THE EFFECTS of severe competition by road services, the Tasmanian Transport Commission has a permit system in operation. A public vehicle licensed for operation within one traffic area only may not be operated outside that area except in accordance with the conditions of a permit which is issued at a charge based on the nature of the journey, including the degree of competition with either the railways or coach services.

For passenger vehicles, the maximum charges which may be imposed are 1/2d. per unit of the product of the length of the journey in miles and the number of passenger the vehicle is licensed to carry.

For goods-carrying vehicles, the maximum charge is 0.4 d. per unit of the product of the unladen weight in hundredweights and the distance in miles the goods are carried. Special concessions are allowed in respect of the car-

riage of furniture, horses, livestock, seed potatoes, eggs, poultry, vegetables, scrap iron, fruit, cordials and straw.

US railwaymen's paper gas top circulation

LABOR, the newspaper owned by ITR-affiliated US rail unions, has the largest circulation of any weekly labour publication in the United States. For the 12 months ending 1 October last, the average number of copies going to subscribers each week was 851,725. That was about 50,000 more than the average for the previous 12-month period; circulation of the latest issue was in the region of 880,000.

Fourteen 'standard' railway labour organizations own the paper, with the Labour Cooperative Educational and Publishing Society, organized by the unions, as publisher. Editorial policy is determined by a board of directors named by the organizations. No paid advertising is accepted.

Accidents among Indian dock workers

THE LATEST ANNUAL REPORT of the working of the Indian Dock Labourers' Regulations discloses that the number of reportable accidents increased during the year from 1,909 to 2,002, and the number of fatal accidents from 18 to 20.

Over 35 per cent of the accidents were caused by 'handling goods', while 15 per cent were due to 'persons falling'. The latter cause also accounted for more than half of the fatal accidents.

There was a big increase in the number of 'non-reportable accidents', the total rising from 985 to 1,586. Of these, ten were fatal. The accidents are styled

'non-reportable' because the persons involved did not fall within the purview of the Regulations.

The 2,002 reportable accidents, classified according to ports, were as follows:

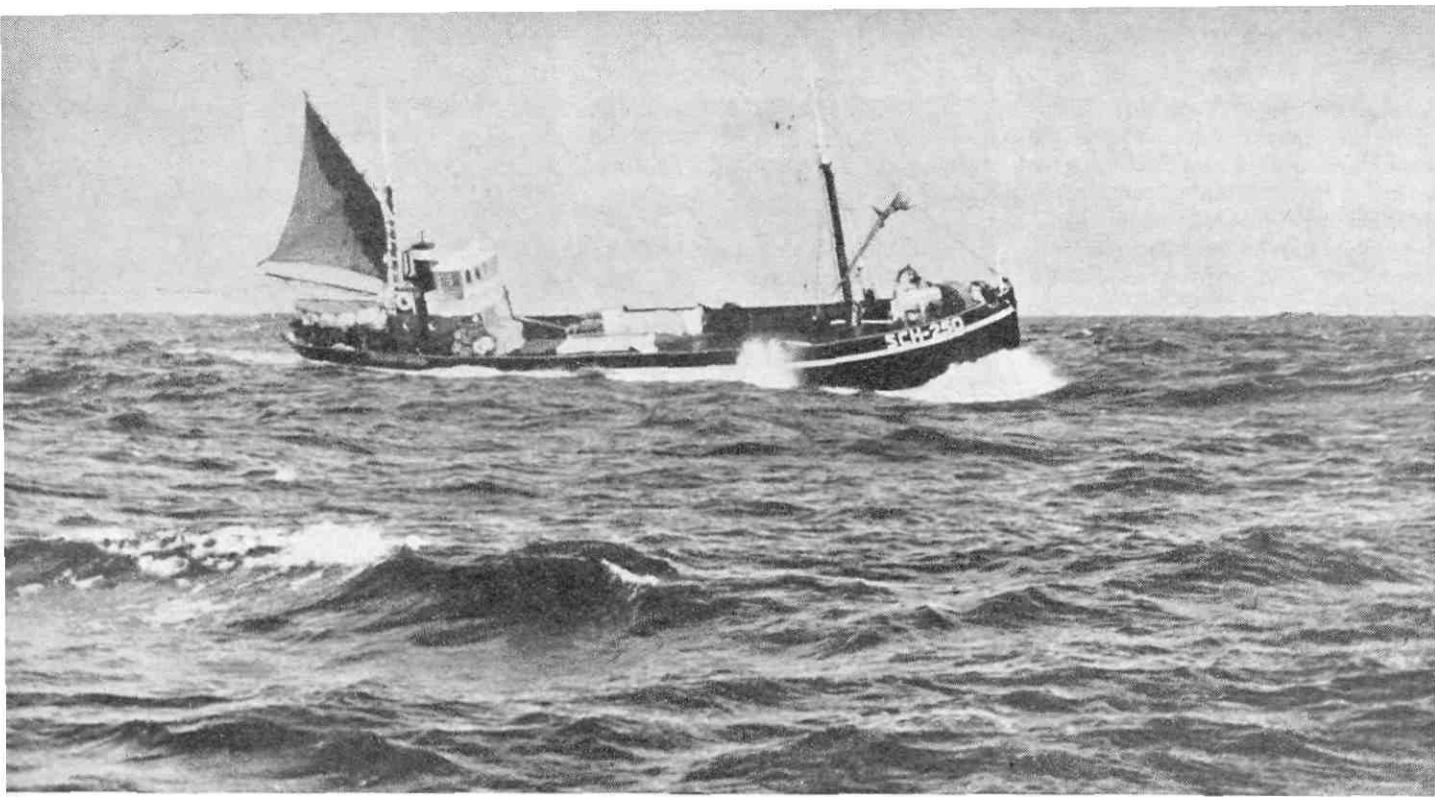
Port	Accidents	Fatal Accidents
Calcutta	1,083	9
Bombay	507	4
Madras	345	1
Cochin	36	5
Vizagapatam	31	1

Most of the accidents occurred owing to non-compliance with safety regulations. And yet the number of prosecutions during the year was only six!

Italian rail-road coordination

THE ITALIAN STATE RAILWAYS and representatives of the major omnibus and motor coach companies have concluded an agreement introducing a measure of coordination between these two forms of transport. Under the terms of the agreement, which remains in force for a period of six years, bus and coach fares on routes served by a train service will be the same as the third-class rail fare. Long distance coaches will charge second-class rail fares over the same routes. In return, the railway administration has undertaken not to introduce road services in substitution for or extension of rail services.

A mixed commission, including representatives from the State railways and the bus and coach operators, is to be set up with the object of reaching agreement on the licensing of bus and motor coach routes. This mixed commission would thus appear to be a step in the direction of rail-road coordination.



One of the many Dutch herring fishing vessels which work out of the port of Scheveningen

The Dutch herring trawlerman

by **Age Scheffers**, Editor of *Het Vrije Volk*

THE LIFE OF OUR HERRING FISHERMEN is a hard one – harder than the general public realizes. As a rule, films and features about the herring season are fabricated during the bright summer months, when a sunburned commentator can look out over a fishing fleet lying peacefully off the Dogger Bank. In autumn and winter, however, our fishermen have to carry on without either sun or publicity – on board their trawlers, which are certainly not comfortable vessels in rough weather.

It is then that their life becomes hard and their job no picnic. Nets have to be hauled in all hours of the day and night, often in gales and heavy seas, in hail and snow, with the fishermen struggling to keep their footing on the slippery deck of a heavily-rolling ship. Sometimes a breeze develops into a storm and the trawler has to ride it out – for twenty and sometimes forty hours. When that happens, the twelve fishermen huddle together in the fo’c’s’le, in the forward section of a trawler which, under the buffeting of the sea, gives a fair imitation of a giant see-saw.

Accommodation often poor

On many (older) trawlers, the fo’c’s’le

looks something like this: two tiers of three bunks on each side; under the bunks two small benches on either side of a narrow table. There is room for six fishermen on each bench, but the amount of space per man is limited because the benches are shorter than the length of the three bunks, the remaining space being taken up by lockers. In the narrowest part of the fo’c’s’le, the benches are so close together that the fishermen have to sit with their knees jammed between those of their neighbours on the opposite side of the table.

In these cramped quarters, they sleep in the twelve bunks and eat at the narrow table. When bad weather makes fishing impossible and the trawler has to

ride out the storm, they have the choice of sitting on the benches or resting in their bunks, for hour after hour.

Modernization the answer

There are, of course, trawlers with a proper messroom, in which the crew members can eat in comfort. On the older vessels, however, the fo’c’s’le has to serve as mess, sleeping quarters, smoking saloon and reading room combined for twelve men who deserve something better. Only modernization of the fishing fleet can put an end to such conditions, but so long as obsolete vessels continue to be operated many hundreds of fishermen have to make do with completely inadequate facilities.

Modernization of the fleet is also necessary in order that a modern wage structure can be introduced. Fishermen are often paid on a share basis and the old, slow vessels with their small engines bring in a smaller catch than the faster and more powerful trawlers which

are used, for instance, during the summer season. The crews of such vessels therefore earn less than their colleagues on more modern trawlers – although their work is often of a harder and more hazardous nature.

Legacy of social neglect

The ITF-affiliated Dutch Federation of Transport Workers is the principal trade union organization in the herring fishing industry. It has won that position by an unswerving and tenacious struggle on behalf of the fishermen – a struggle which, although not yet ended, has almost completely wiped out the enormous legacy of social neglect from which this group of workers suffered. The tactics followed by the Federation in that struggle are well suited to the mentality of the trawler fishermen: level-headed fellows with a strong sense of the rational and a large dose of sound commonsense, ready to fight for what is attainable and responsive to frankness and confidence.

The Federation and the fishermen find themselves faced by trawler owners whose antiquated ideas on wages and social rights die harder than is good for the well-being of the industry. As a result, the inevitable development towards better social and human relationships is slower than is either necessary or desirable. The fact that so much has nevertheless been achieved is a feather in the cap of both the Federation and the members from whom it derives its strength.

Some recent achievements

It may be useful at this point to summarize what has been achieved in the social field during the last few years:

- a) The system of sickness insurance has been brought into line with that applying to other Dutch workers. Benefits are now paid for a maximum period of fifty-two weeks as against thirty-six weeks previously. In the case of tuberculosis sufferers, the maximum period is three years. In addition, weekly benefits have been increased.
- b) Fishermen now have a vacation entitlement of one day for every month of service. Before 1952, the maximum was six days per annum.
- c) The payment of a vacation allowance is stipulated by collective agreement. Prior to 1952 there was no allowance.
- d) The guaranteed wage stands at fifty

Cramped quarters like these are to be found on many older Dutch trawlers

guilders per week (i.e. almost £5). Before 1952 it was forty-one guilders.

e) Compulsory sickness insurance now applies to fishermen. Formerly, seafarers and fishermen were outside the scope of the scheme.

f) Fishermen's earnings are calculated per period of two months. Before 1952, a proper settlement was not made until after 8 December, low earnings during the slack season being made good during the autumn.

These improvements, won during the last few years, illustrate the enormous social neglect from which Dutch herring fishermen suffered until quite recently.

Of course, as regards modernization of the fleet – the basic cause of poor accommodation and unequal pay for equal work – the Federation can do very little, although it sounded the alarm more than twenty years ago and strongly supports any initiative in this direction.

Towards a fixed wage

Nevertheless, everything has been done to create the best possible conditions in the existing fleet. And it must be remembered that, not so very long ago, fishermen worked exclusively on a share basis, with no guaranteed wage. In other words, they bore the risks theoretically assumed by the operator, their wages forming the closing entry in the trawler-owners' balance sheet.

The introduction of a guaranteed wage was the first step towards a modern wage structure in the fishing fleet. Bi-monthly settlements were the second step. The inevitable corollary of those two advances is the payment of a fixed wage plus a smaller catch bonus.

In 1952, hopes of achieving that aim were temporarily dashed, despite a walk-out by the herring trawlermen. The Federation demanded a monthly settlement of fishermen's earnings as a temporary measure designed to bridge the gap between the present system of remuneration and the introduction of a fixed wage.

The Netherlands Board of Arbitration, however, found against this claim, stating that insufficient evidence existed to enable definite conclusions to be drawn from the working of the bi-monthly system. The Board therefore ruled that the system should be continued for a further year, to give both sides of the industry an opportunity of studying the pros and cons of its revision. Therefore, herring fishermen are still working on the bi-monthly basis. But the question of a monthly settlement remains on the agenda. And after that: the fixed wage.

Ration scales shameful

There is something else on the agenda too. Fishermen, who have to work in all





When not hauling in the nets, crew members set to work gutting part of the catch

tion vis-à-vis the rest of the world. A fitting reward for that contribution would be a long overdue improvement in wages, catering and accommodation.

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Correspondence

Training the footplate staff

SIR – In the September issue of the *ITF Journal* you published an article with the above title containing the following: ‘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.’

These assertions call for the following remarks:

The British Railway trade unions have always upheld the principle that training shall be a liability of the employer. If diesel engines are to be put into service in a substantial number of British motive power depots and tuition is to be undertaken by the Management there is likely to be a good response from the drivers.

Though one of the older drivers, I prefer diesel-electric, electric and turbo-power units – of which I have had some experience – to steam engines. (Perhaps the preference would be less pronounced if the unions had not succeeded in retaining two men on the footplate.) When the older men get to know the advantages of the diesel engine there should be no reluctance on their part to say goodbye to steam with its dirt and oscillation. – Yours, etc.

R. J. Travers, Executive Committee,
NATIONAL UNION OF RAILWAYMEN

Correction

WE MUST APOLOGIZE for an error which appeared in the report on the Rome Conference contained in our December issue. On page 180, lines 19 to 21 should read: ‘. . . the majority of the 160,000 railwaymen are not organized at all, while the organized *minority* is shared between. . .’

kinds of weather, need to be properly fed. Working hours are long, the work is exhausting, the need for solid, appetising meals is obvious. Despite those facts, the ration scales of herring fishermen are little less than shameful.

At present, each fisherman receives 600 grams (500 grams equal 1.1 pounds) of meat and bacon per week – for all and not only main meals. A Dutch merchant seaman, on the other hand, receives 2,100 grams per week, whilst a German fisherman is entitled to 2,800 grams. In addition, the Germans receive 500 grams of marmalade, 250 grams of sausage, 250 grams of cheese, and two eggs. All the Dutch herring fishermen gets is 250 grams of cheese.

Here too, the Dutch trawler owners have excelled themselves in meanness. During recent negotiations on the subject, the Federation put forward a compromise proposal providing for 600

grams of meat, 200 grams of bacon, and 500 grams of sausage, cheese, etc. But even this modest request was rejected by the owners. In the end, the Board of Arbitration awarded an additional 300 grams of meat provisional pending the results of an inquiry into rationing scales by the Catering Council.

The incredible shortsightedness of the owners has thus delayed another urgently-needed improvement in Dutch fishermen’s conditions. The shameful comparison with German fishermen’s rations remains. However, the proposed inquiry will doubtless provide ammunition for a new attack on the antisocial obstinacy of the owners.

The herring fishermen of Holland, working under difficult and dangerous conditions, play an important part in keeping their country’s larder well-stocked and provide a valuable export which helps to strengthen her economic posi-

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

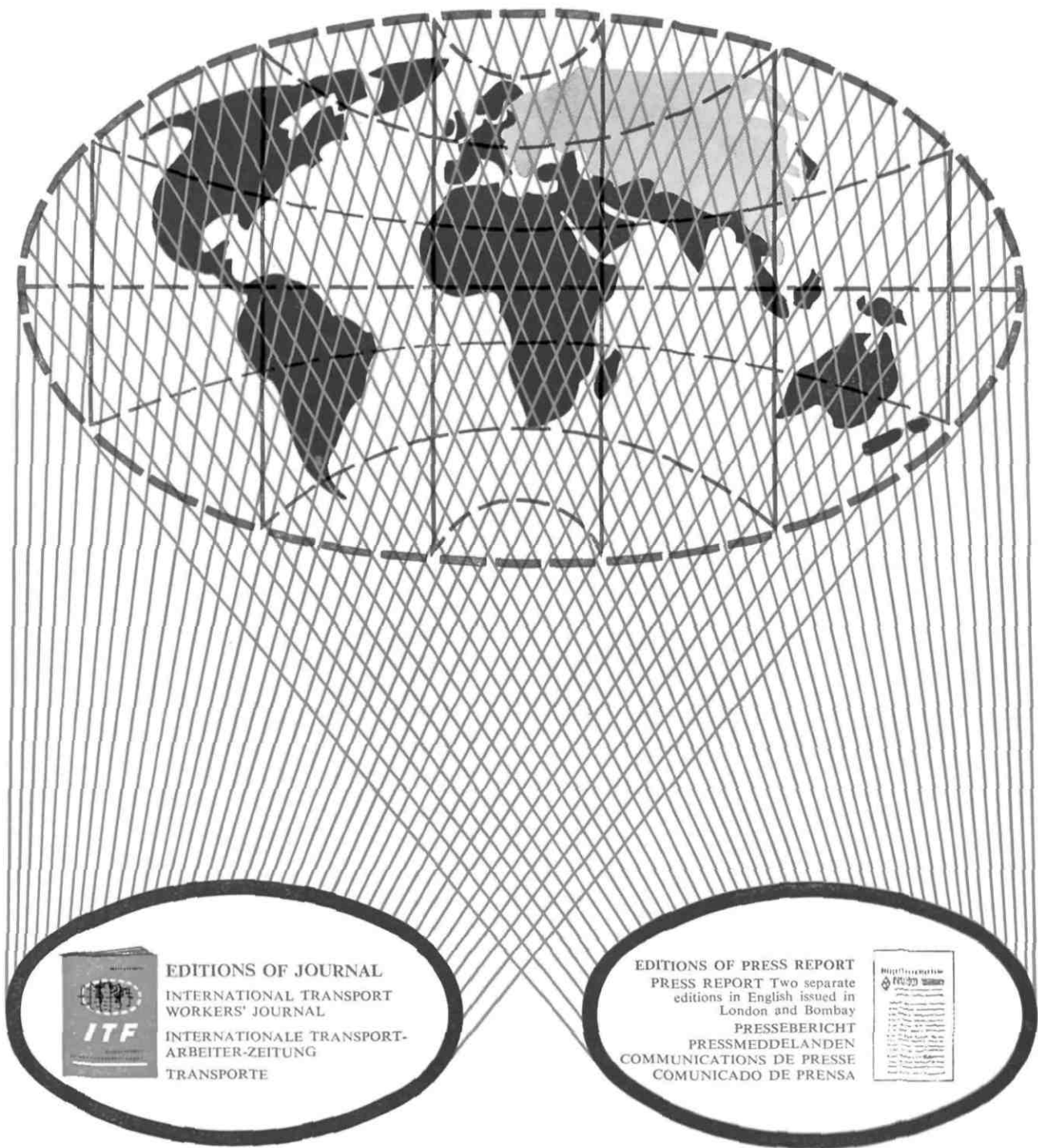
The aims of the ITF are

*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)
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