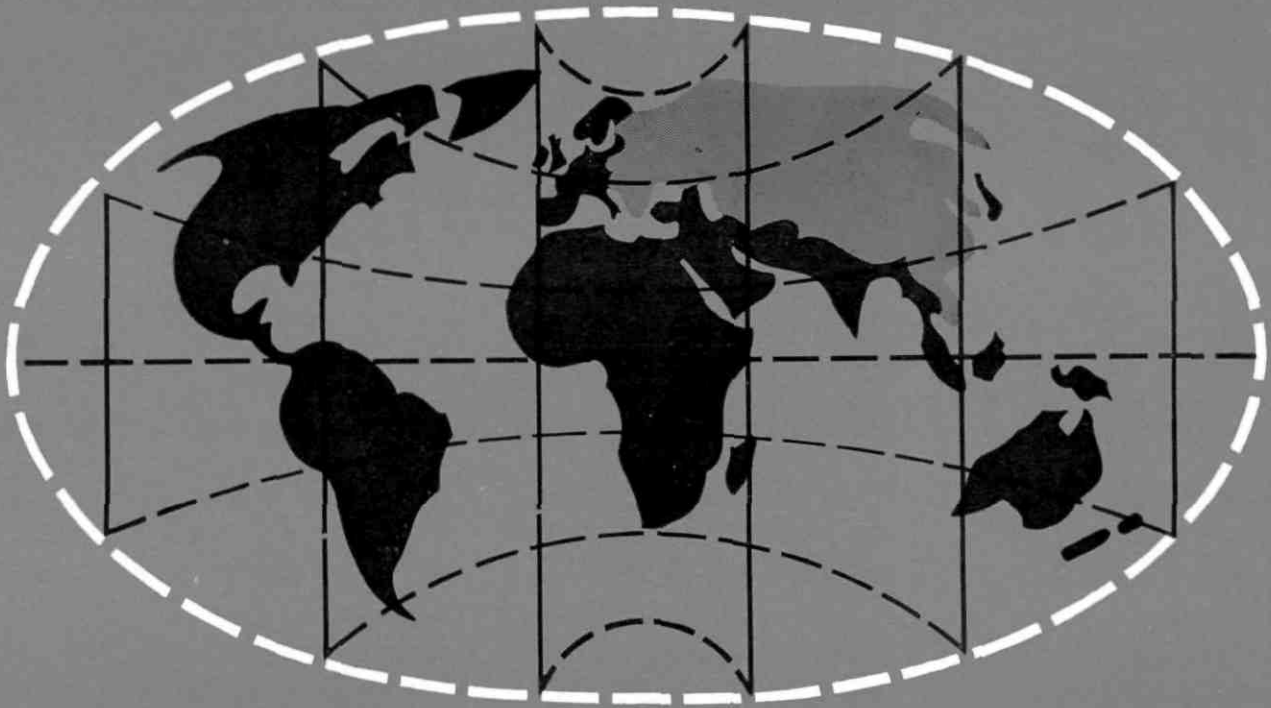


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ITF

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Forthcoming Meetings :

London 4-5 May Conference on European transport problems
London 16-24 July Twenty-third Biennial Congress

M A Y D A Y 1 9 5 4

A message from the ICFTU

To the workers of the whole world,

To those 54 million of them who are organized in free trade unions affiliated to the ICFTU,

To those in the countries of totalitarian dictatorship

who have been deprived of their elementary human rights, and who are unable to associate with us,

To those in dependent countries who are striving for national freedom by democratic means,

To workers by hand and by brain, to women workers, to young workers everywhere

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions

sends its warmest greetings on this day of international working class solidarity.

On May Day 1954, the ICFTU solemnly renews its pledge before the workers of the world to carry on the fight with unflagging energy and determination

For Bread – for ever-rising standards of living everywhere, for special aid to the economically underdeveloped countries, against the growing menace of unemployment and for a fairer distribution of the world's actual and potential wealth between classes and between nations;

For Peace – with freedom and justice and without capitulation before aggressive dictators or the abandonment of enslaved peoples;

For Freedom – for those who have come under the heel of the new Red Imperialism; for an end to all dictatorships, whatever their political complexion; for the development of democratic self-government for all peoples; for the full and free exercise of trade union rights including the right of the workers to a voice in the planning and execution of economic policy – that is, for economic as well as political democracy.

*For all these things,
so close to the hearts of the working people of every land,
the ICFTU and its affiliated organizations in 74 different countries,
have fought and will continue to fight.*

*Long live the free and democratic trade unions of all lands!
Forward with the ICFTU for **Bread**, **Peace** and for **Freedom**!*

Transport workers' affairs before the ILO

by Paul Tofahrn, Assistant General Secretary of the ITF

OF THE MANY CONTRIBUTIONS ERNEST BEVIN MADE to the cause of international trade union work, the creation of the industrial committees of the ILO is a highly significant one. Bevin intended to provide machinery for collective bargaining on a world-wide scale. In thinking in these terms he was far ahead of his time, because the conflicts of interest between employers and workers are still so much interwoven with national affairs that none of them can as yet be settled by an international collective agreement. To prove the point, it is sufficient to recall the fate of the International Labour Convention on seamen's wages. Bevin's proposal to extend the ILO machinery by setting up industrial committees went through because it was made during the war, that is at a time when no government and no employers' association could oppose it, and when no trade unionist could think of other reforms that would be agreed to by the powers of the day. Bevin availed himself of this fleeting opportunity and of his accidental prominence in world politics to force his idea upon the world. There is no better way for the international trade union organizations to discharge their debt of gratitude to him than by making the best possible use of the instrument he has bequeathed them.

Two transport workers' Charters

The Inland Transport Committee is the ILO's industrial committee number one. It met for the fifth time from 15 to 27 February 1954, in Geneva. As it could not conclude international collective agreements duly signed by employers' associations and trade unions, it did the next best thing: it worked out two documents (which, in the course of the debates, were called 'synopses of good advice') on conditions of employment in road transport and on welfare arrangements for dock workers. For both these fields, the two documents set out what, in the view of the governments and the spokesmen of the world's transport employers and workers, are desirable minimum standards.

Of course, on reading the two documents many trade unionists will consider that the advice given is not good enough, and many employers - and perhaps also some governments - will think that too much is asked of them. The answer to the first is that the standards are *minimum standards*, valid even in the most backward country, and that *better conditions ought to be and must be achieved whenever possible*. The

answer to the others is that *conditions falling short of the standards set out in Geneva are below the norms of civilization as understood by the authorized spokesmen of the world's transport employers and most prominent governments*.

True, the resolutions and memoranda adopted by the ILO Inland Transport Committee have no binding force upon anybody. Every Government and every employer is free to dismiss the good advice given in these documents, and if they do so, the ITF cannot ask the International Court of Justice to summon and punish the offenders. But that does not make the Geneva documents worthless. In every negotiation about conditions of employment in road transport or about welfare arrangements for dockers, and in every parliamentary or other debate on these questions, the documents can serve as weapons for the defence of workers' claims and interests.

Conditions in road transport

The ITF aims at equivalence in the conditions of employment of railwaymen and road transport workers. In most countries, the gap between the two is still very wide. In Geneva the ITF submitted the draft of a comprehensive resolution

providing for conditions in road transport as near to those prevailing in the railway industry as would appear practicable at present.

The employers and some Governments did not like the word 'resolution' and it was agreed to embody the common points of view in a 'memorandum'. This document covers a wide range: minimum age, physical fitness, drivers' qualifications, weekly and daily hours of work, overtime, maximum driving time, breaks, daily and weekly rest, public holidays, annual holidays with pay, wages, subsistence allowances, cessation of employment, social security, running schedules, crews, the transport of dangerous goods, health and welfare amenities and supervision. On some of these matters the memorandum contains merely a few words intended to remind the parties concerned that there is a problem to be dealt with. For instance, on annual holidays with pay, the only positive provision is contained in the following sentence: 'Every driver and attendant should be entitled to an annual holiday with pay *no shorter than that granted to industrial workers in general*.' The memorandum does not say that transport workers should get a paid holiday even if other workers have not yet obtained one. The detailed proposals made by the ITF in respect of the protection to be given to workers in case of dismissal owing to reduction of traffic or to rationalization have been replaced by the following sentence: 'Arrangements on a basis of reciprocity should be sought by the employers' and workers' organizations concerned to enable drivers and attendants to have the benefit of certain guarantees in the event of cessation of employment and *in respect of possible re-employment*.' Although that is pretty thin, the workers' representatives have accepted the insertion of this reminder rather than let the question be omitted altogether. Other questions have been omitted, e.g. Sunday work and third party insurance. While the weaknesses and gaps in the memorandum should not be overlooked, full advantage should be taken of its positive content.

Doubtless the most important provisions are those relating to hours of work and rest periods. A distinction is made between 'hours of work' and 'hours of actual work'. Hours of work include all the time at the disposal of the employer and the memorandum contains only

two provisions based on that notion, both relating to long distance transport with two drivers. In that case, hours of work, defined as all the time at the disposal of the employer, may be as high as 146 in a fortnight and thirteen or fourteen a day. In all other cases, the provisions are based on the notion of hours of *actual* work and the basis is the forty-eight-hour week. Recourse can be had to averaging, but in no week may there normally be more than fifty-eight hours of actual work and on no day more than eleven hours. In an eleven-hour day there may not be more than ten driving hours and in heavy goods and long distance passenger transport, the daily average of driving time, calculated over a period of three days, may not exceed ten. The daily rest may never be less than eight hours; it must average eleven hours over a period of four weeks except in services subject to substantial breaks and in services carried out by two drivers if the vehicle is so equipped as to enable one of the two to stretch out at rest. *The daily rest must be taken off the vehicle.* There must be fifty-two rest days in the year; each must be preceded by a daily rest, so that the weekly rest is never less than thirty-two hours.

Wages are to be fixed by collective agreements or, where that system is not workable, by statutory bodies. Wage scales are to be based on qualifications, it being understood that drivers in passenger transport, long-distance goods transport and international transport are to be on a par with skilled manual workers. Wage scales are to be reviewed from time to time with a view to taking into account changes in the cost of living, technical progress and the economic situation. *Workers are entitled to a guaranteed week.*

The welfare of dockers

The Committee's declaration on this subject reads as follows:

'The Committee considers that it would be possible, by providing suitable welfare facilities for dockers, to minimize the effects of certain conditions which are inherent in dock work, such as irregularity of employment, irregular hours, waiting time, exposure to inclement weather, the handling of dangerous goods, etc. Every welfare facility, moreover, helps to attract and to retain the necessary manpower, to develop indus-

trial and human relations in the docks, to reduce the incidence of ill-health and the consequences of accidents and, as a result, to ensure higher productivity in the form of quicker turn-round of ships. *Therefore, welfare facilities for dockers should be considered a normal feature of a port.'*

Welfare facilities in ports should be surveyed from time to time by bodies specially appointed for the purpose and composed of people conversant with welfare facilities provided for workers in other industries and in foreign ports. Responsibility for welfare arrangements should rest with special committees set up by the parties concerned and, where it is customary for it to concern itself with the matter, the government. Where individual employers cannot provide the necessary facilities, they should act in association. Dockers should have the opportunity of freely voicing their complaints and these should be investigated.

The welfare facilities must comprise waiting rooms and suitable premises in which workers may take their meals. Meals and refreshments of good quality and at fair and reasonable prices should be supplied on a non-profit-making basis. In cold weather and on night shifts hot meals should be provided. There must be good washing facilities and, for workers handling dirty or noxious cargo, hot showerbaths. Rooms with lockers for changing clothes and sufficient toilet facilities must also be available.

At or near every dock or wharf at which work is in progress, arrangements must be made for rendering rapid first

aid, in case of accident, by trained persons. Medical centres and dispensaries are a commendable feature and thought should be given to making them available also to the members of the dockers' families. Injured dockers should be taken care of and trained for other work if they cannot resume employment in the docks.

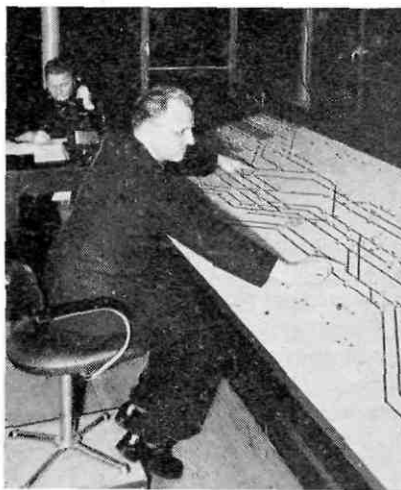
Attention is to be given to transport between call stands and working places and also between the ports and the dockers' homes. Dockers should be provided with protective clothing and equipment, such as masks or goggles, when handling certain cargoes.

Recreation, education and social life should not be overlooked.

Safety in railway and docks

The ILO submitted a report on shunting accidents in railway operation. The Committee recommended that this report be communicated to the governments and employers' and workers' organizations concerned and that a committee of experts study ways and means of reducing the frequency and severity of shunting accidents.

The Scandinavian Governments had submitted a resolution asking for a draft set of health and safety standards in transport generally to be submitted to a technical conference of government, employers' and workers' representatives. The employers succeeded by a majority of three votes in emasculating this resolution and obtaining a decision which instructs the office to take stock of the studies already made in the field of safety and health protection of trans-



OUR PHOTOGRAPH shows the latest automatic train movement control panel recently installed by the German Federal Railways at Hanover. Seated at it is the train controller. By merely pressing a button he is immediately informed of the position of any train under his control. From here he can give instructions to his colleague one storey below at the automatic panel showing the current position of the trains. The control panel operates entirely automatically, signals and points being changed within a few seconds of a button being pressed. A train entering or leaving the station can be given a clear track in a matter of twelve seconds. It is also used for controlling operations in the shunting yards. All in all, this particular panel controls 101 different general traffic and 436 shunting tracks, together with 24 main and 66 shunting signals.

port workers, with a view to determining in what areas additional study is required.

The workers obtained the adoption of a resolution asking the governments to devote attention to the necessity of reducing the risks connected with dust caused by the handling of grain in ports. Another workers' resolution was adopted asking for investigation by medical organizations of the harmful effects of carrying and lifting excessive loads, with a view to placing the question of the limitation of loads carried by one man on the agenda of the International Labour Conference. Experts are to investigate the effects of failures to mark the gross weight on heavy loads carried by sea with a view to preventing accidents resulting from the overloading of lifting appliances in ports.

Problems in certain regions

The ITF secured the adoption, at the Fourth Session held in 1951, of a resolution asking for an investigation, by special missions, of conditions of employment in inland transport in Asia and Africa. This resolution has not yet been carried out by the Governing Body of the ILO. At the 1954 session in Geneva, the ITF insisted on its implementation and secured the adoption of a new resolution repeating the request.

At the request of the employers' group, the Committee adopted, practically unanimously, a resolution asking the Governing Body to lend technical assistance to the Governments, transport employers and workers of India and Pakistan, and to consider and solve social and allied problems arising in the field of inland transport between these two countries. The authors of the resolution were guided by the work the ILO has done in Europe by bringing about the agreements on the social security and working conditions of Rhine boatmen and helping to frame the social chapter of the European agreement on international road transport.

At the First Session, held in London in 1945, and at the Fourth Session, held in Nervi in 1951, the ITF secured the adoption of resolutions asking the ILO to help solve the problems arising out of the competition between certain European ports, in particular the North Sea Channel ports. Through no fault of the ILO, nothing has been done yet. At Geneva, the ITF obtained, for the third time, the adoption of a resolution

on the subject. This time, the Governing Body of the ILO 'is invited to take steps for convening, at the appropriate stage, a tripartite regional conference for the Continental North Sea ports with a view to arriving at some form of regional agreement providing for minimum conditions of employment for the dock workers in the ports in question.'

Future work

The Mexican Government and the Mexican employers secured the adoption of a resolution that caused some stir among the railwaymen in the workers' group. The resolution affirms 'that in some countries there are systems of incentives and rewards to workers with the double objective of securing a better social climate and encouraging greater efficiency in the work of railwaymen.' The truth of that affirmation is hotly disputed by some railwaymen who affirm that incentive schemes create friction between railway workers and lead to the overtaxing of physical strength. Some railwaymen, on the other hand, had a real interest in the question and wished to obtain the information sought for by the Mexicans. All agreed to the question being investigated and the result of studies being published but most voted against the proposal to place the item on the agenda of the next session of the Committee.

The Belgian Government secured the adoption of a resolution asking for the employment of women on inland waterways to be included in the agenda of the next session.

The Committee proposed the inclusion in the sixth session agenda of the following items:

1. Methods of increasing the productivity of dockers (as proposed by the employers) or Organization of work and productivity in ports (as proposed by the workers);

- 2) Vocational training for drivers of all types of transport other than railways;

- 3) Labour inspection in road transport.

It would not be possible for the whole of this programme to be dealt with at one meeting and the Governing Body of the ILO will therefore have to reduce it.

Taken in tow by reactionaries?

The 1954 session was marred to a certain extent by the unhelpful behaviour

of the employers' group. Why did this happen?

There is a campaign afoot against the ILO. The chief planners of that campaign aim at emasculating the Organization, reducing its importance and activity, perverting the International Labour Conference, slowing down - with a view to stopping - the work on international social legislation, clipping and finally amputating the wings of the industrial committees. The driving force behind that campaign is a capitalist pressure group in the USA which suffers from hallucinations comparable with those of Senator McCarthy.

Is there a link between this campaign and the employers' attitude at the recent transport committee meeting in Geneva?

In all probability only a few of the transport employers present in Geneva knew of the campaign and we feel sure that almost all employers would dissociate themselves from its planners and inspirers. If there is a link, we can only surmise that the employers' group unwittingly allowed themselves to be taken in tow. Be that as it may, the fact is that they haggled over every question of procedure, slowed down the work of the meeting's steering committee and consequently of the Committee itself, held interminable meetings of their group causing plenary sessions to be delayed or even cancelled. For days on end they opposed the setting-up of a subcommittee charged with studying the implementation of resolutions adopted

(continued on page 68)

New US airfield control device

US AIR FORCE SCIENTISTS are reported to have produced an electronic device which can bring aircraft in to land at airports at the rate of 120 an hour. Developed to eliminate the 'stacking up' system under which planes are assigned altitudes over airports while waiting their turn to land, the device reaches out for about sixty miles and assigns landing times for approaching aircraft. It automatically computes a course and brings the aircraft into the airport at precise intervals of thirty seconds. It can be used to land aircraft not only at one specific airport but if necessary at several different airfields in an area with a radius of twenty-two nautical miles.

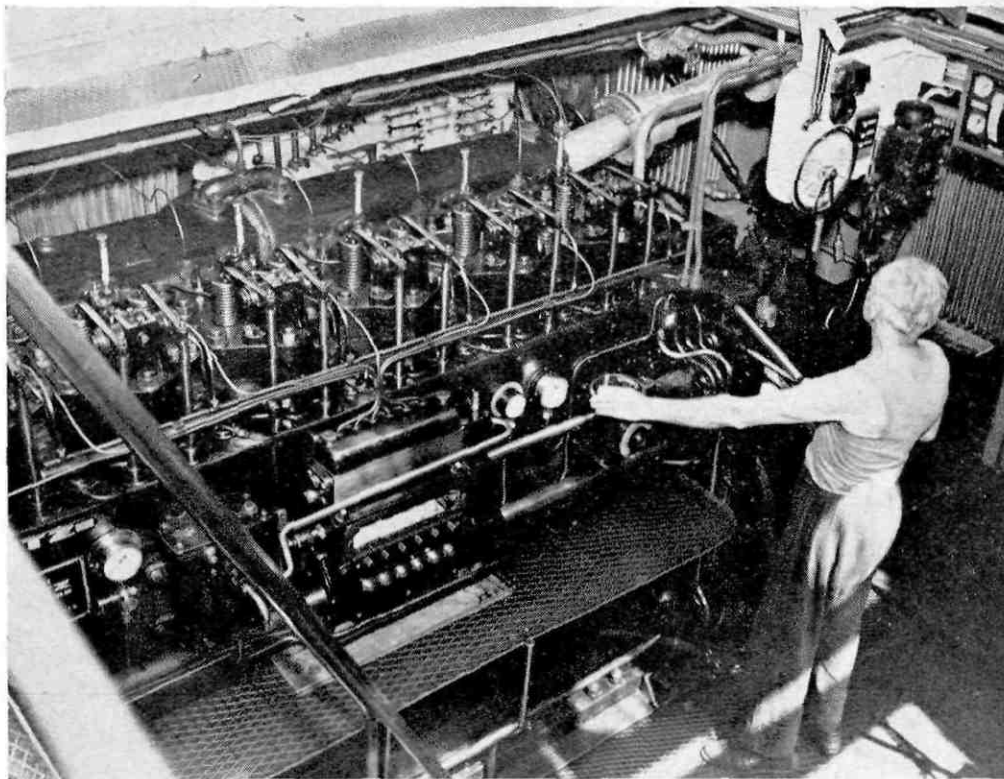
The rebirth of Austrian Danube shipping

by Leopold Brosch and Kurt Weigl

.....

Before the outbreak of the Second World War, the Austrian Danube fleet played a major part in the life of this most famous of European rivers, and gave employment to no fewer than 5,200 boatmen and many more ancillary workers. When the war ended, however, sixty per cent of the tugs, forty per cent of the passenger vessels, and seventy per cent of the barges had been destroyed, and their crews dispersed. The Soviet Russian occupation brought even greater difficulties for Austrian Danube shipping and resulted in the virtual stagnation of the industry until 1948. How these difficulties have gradually been overcome by Austrian patience and good humour and by the loyalty of Danube boatmen to their industry is told in the following article by Brothers Brosch and Weigl of the ITF-affiliated Austrian Transport Workers' Union. Their organization has recently succeeded in negotiating the first collective agreement covering the wages and working conditions Austrian inland waterway workers on the Danube.

.....



AUSTRIA possesses no enclosed waterway system of her own, but in the Danube she has a share in the most important waterway of Europe (with the exception of the Rhine) – a river constituting the only East-West link by water. In contrast with the Seine, the middle and upper Rhine, the Weser, the Elbe and the Oder, the River Danube flows through mountainous country. In this connection, the 'narrows' of the Kachlet and Strudengau in the Wachau immediately spring to mind. Navigationally it must be accounted a difficult river for all those plying on its waters, making heavy demands on both men and material. In Austria alone, this comparatively young river – geologically considered – has to be dredged to the extent of about a quarter of a million tons of silt a year if the channels are to be kept

navigable and the adjacent cultivated land protected. In addition to this, some 80,000 tons of stone must be used to strengthen the banks. All this work is necessary to maintain an average depth of seven feet (2.2 metres) in the fairway at low water. The difficulties of navigation will also be increased as the result of electric power schemes on the river. The power plant at Jochenstein is in course of construction, whilst a start is shortly to be made on the Ybbs-Persenbeug project. Both plants will constitute the first barrier to the free movement of shipping on the Austrian Danube – apart, of course, from those of a political nature.

Significance for the Austrian economy

Some idea of the significance of this waterway for the Austrian economy may be

gained from the fact that in 1952 about twenty per cent of the country's exports and imports was waterborne. There was a certain amount of traffic on the Danube in the years 1948 and 1949, but the figures for these two years are of little use for comparison purposes. The picture had changed by 1950, however. In that year we transported 1.2 million tons, followed by 1.5 million in 1951, 1.95 million in 1952, and 1.5 million in the first half of 1953. We may therefore expect the two million mark to be exceeded when figures for the whole of 1953 are available.

Naturally, for reasons of which we have already made mention, this volume of traffic cannot be compared with that carried on the inland waterway network of northern France. The same may be said of passenger traffic which, in



A well-known stretch of the Danube seen from the deck of the m.s. 'Hainburg'. Immediately ahead can be seen the Linz Nibelungen Bridge and the Freinberg.

Austria, is almost entirely confined to excursion traffic. It should be mentioned at this point that it was not until the summer of 1952 that the Soviet authorities allowed Austrian shipping to ply unhampered on the Austrian Danube, that is to say, on the 450 kilometres of the river in Austrian territory. The remaining 2,000 kilometres are still closed to Austrian shipping.

The stretch of river covered by the Belgrade Convention starts at Hainburg. It is to be hoped that we shall be successful in opening up the Danube for traffic again as the result of negotiations with the Balkan States within the sphere of influence of the Soviet Union. With the development of the upper Rhine waterway and the Rhine-Main-Danube canal, a transport network of great significance to the European economy will have been created, and the Rhine together with the Danube would then become the major traffic link between East and West.

Operated by major concerns

In contrast with the traffic on the inland waterway systems of Northern and Western Europe, shipping on the Danube is operated exclusively by major concerns. Thus each of the Balkan States has its own national company. Their vessels

One of Austria's most modern passenger vessels - the 'Johan Strauss' - passing the Urfahr Heights. Passenger vessels deal almost exclusively with excursion traffic

(for the most part formerly belonging to the First Danube Steam Shipping Company and allocated to them as the result of the 1919/20 peace treaties) ply as far as Vienna, but only occasionally. One concern (Yugoslavian) operates as far as Regensburg, Yugoslavia recognizing the Belgrade and Paris Conventions. In the opposite direction, however, this company's vessels do not go very far beyond the Iron Gates owing to the tension existing between the Republic of Yugoslavia and the countries of the Eastern bloc.

The German Federal Republic has two Danube shipping companies. So has Austria, one of which being the original Danube shipping company founded in 1829, the First Danube Steam Shipping Company. A whole book could be written about this enterprise, for its history goes back to the time when the Danube similarly possessed a political

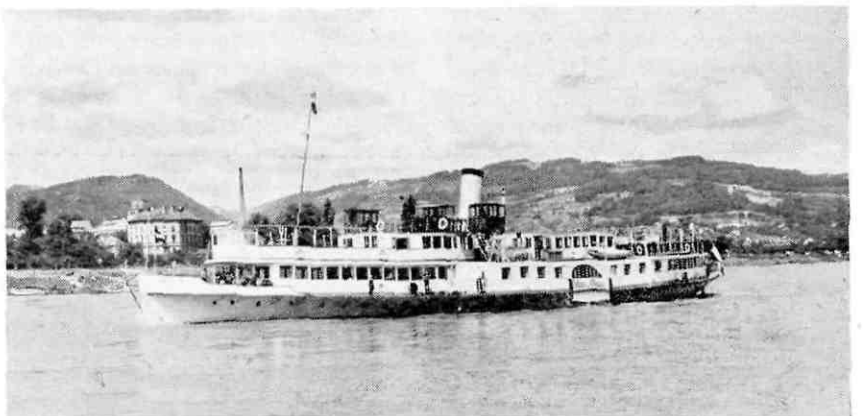
barrier - the Osman Empire.

The Austrian Danube fleet suffered considerable ravages in the Second World War. Harnessed to the Nazi war machine, it saw service in the coastal waters of the Black Sea, transporting war material, troops and wounded. With the retreat of the German army, some sixty per cent of the towing vessels, forty per cent of the passenger ships, and seventy per cent of the barges were destroyed by mines, bombs or artillery fire. How many of the crews lost their lives is unknown even today, as is also the number of those who were captured.

Reconstruction of Austrian fleet

The reconstruction of the Austrian Danube fleet began in the year 1946 and has made slow but steady progress. New life has sprung from the wrecks, but there is still much to be done before the former position is restored. More than two hundred ships and barges still lie battered to pieces in the lower reaches. Finally, the Soviet authorities declared the oldest Austrian enterprise, the First Danube Steam Shipping Company, to be 'German property', and ordered its confiscation. Only a flight to the West (to the American Zone) saved the remainder of the vessels. It must therefore be considered a generous gesture on the part of the Soviet authorities that they are prepared to shelve the question of ownership for the present and allow shipping to be resumed.

Before 1938, more than 5,200 workers were employed in Danube shipping in Austria - not counting those engaged in port work and shipyards. Today, the figure is in the region of 3,700, but small-



er distances are now covered.

The crews of foreign undertakings come under their own national laws regarding working conditions, including wages. *The only exception are the shore workers employed in the ports and shipyards, who are subject to Austrian legislation in accordance with the principle of national jurisdiction.* With the exception of Yugoslavia, however, there is very little foreign shipping operating in Austria. The well-equipped shipyard in Korneuburg, formerly belonging to the *First Danube Steamship Company*, has been confiscated by the Russians and now works primarily for the Eastern bloc and Russia, only the barest minimum of its output going to the Soviet-run concern in Austria.

Things are different in the two Austrian concerns. They keep exclusively to shipping – although the shipyard in Linz also manufactures railway wagons, machinery, bridges, etc.

The Danube flows eastwards and even in the earliest days the influences of retrogressive social policies made themselves felt from that quarter. The Viennese could tell you a thing or two about that! From the West, on the other hand, has come many a progressive tendency – excluding the events of 1938. It was under these conditions that the development of the Austrian workers occurred, and it must be placed to their lasting credit that they exercised a beneficent influence on the conditions of the workers in the Eastern countries. In those days, the Danube boatmen were still slumbering in the patriarchal conditions under which shipping was then operated, although the advent of the steamship had already sounded a warning note that new times were on the way. It may be mentioned at this point that the real pioneer of the movement bringing better social conditions to the Danube waterway workers, the Union of Commercial and Transport Workers (*Gewerkschaft der Handels-, Transport- und Verkehrsarbeiter*) was not founded until 1904. It is thus a very young organization compared, for instance, with those British unions with a history going back to the Chartist Movement.

Early life on the Danube

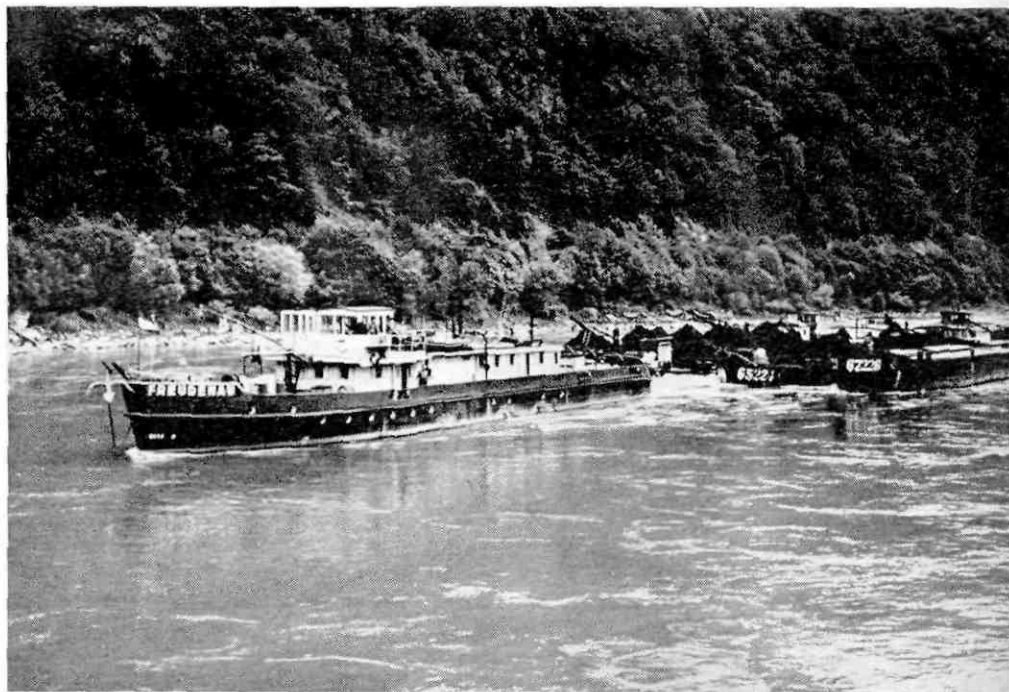
It is noteworthy that three-quarters of all those who get their living from Danube shipping originate from Hungary, Rumania, etc. This is due to the fact that the lower reaches of the river are

more placid. They took to a life on the river in preference to bowing under the lash of some Hungarian feudal magnate or Rumanian boyar who exploited them to the last drop of blood. In spite of long working hours, poor pay, few holidays and little security, life as a boatman on the Danube did at least offer them a right to an old-age pension and relief from the fear of starvation – all in all, a far better life than that of a land-hungry farmer having 'too little to eat and too much to die'.

Other forces were also at work: the desire to see something more than just the village pump, to get out and around in the world and to see other countries. Somewhere there might be an opportunity to earn a better living. Hence the rush to get a job with a Danube shipping concern, especially on the part of those coming from the countries men-

shipping worked without rest or pause. At the most, in the winter season there would be interruptions due to freezing up or danger of ice floes. On such occasions the paid holidays, sometimes accrued over a number of years, would be absorbed, the boats for the most part being concentrated at the large towns. Everyday life was modest, simple and quiet, but they had sufficient for their needs. There was no hunger, although there was a lack of means for cultural progress. For recreation they went either to the inn or to the 'cafans' along the quayside.

If the boats were wintering at one of the riverside towns, the children living on the vessels could go to the local school, or the teacher would come to them, otherwise the master of the vessel would have to play the school teacher. Many a deckhand or boilerman would



The motor vessel 'Freudenau' pulling a train of barges downstream near Innzell. Some 3,700 workers are employed on Danube shipping, as against 5,200 before the war.

tioned. Whole families with all their worldly goods could be seen on towing boat and barge. The mates would be drawn from the countries through which the Danube flows; the skippers and engineers from the navy or merchant marine of the former Austrian Empire, both of which were a true hotch-potch of the races which went to make up Austria's old Danubian empire.

For three seasons in the year, Danube

learn to read and write for the first time in this way.

The impact of the First World War

This enforced idleness during winter had another advantage. It gave the recently founded union an opportunity of contacting the Danube waterway workers and letting them know its aims and demands on the owners. Most of this fell on barren soil, however, for in those

A view of the old port installations at Linz. On its east side, Linz now has a large modern port built since the war for the use of Austrian Danube shipping.

river itself was made hazardous by the wrecks of vessels sunk by bombing.

Large numbers of the waterway workers were scattered to all parts of the world or were in captivity, in so far as they had not drifted off to those countries which claim to have a monopoly of workers' paradises – in the form of State capitalism. There was starvation in the towns, and currency inflation did its insidious work. The reconstruction programme for shipping and port installations was begun under these conditions and with badly paid labour. Waterway workers and those employed by the shipping companies ashore, right up to the highest levels, turned themselves into shipyard hands and building labourers, etc. They put in an appearance wherever there was a need for workmen, and if there was one thing which kept the Danube shipping going, it was their faith in its future.

By now, the Danube waterway workers had one single union and were solidly behind it. They were thus a power to be reckoned with, and yet they were powerless, hampered by a welter of rules and regulations left over from earlier times and the Nazi period and purporting to regulate working conditions and wages.

On the other hand, the shipping enterprises themselves used up the last of their reserves and had to call on the government for assistance, whilst the latter in turn was dependent on the generosity of the Allied Powers. It was a case of 'take what you can', seeing that the par-

days there was too much apathy. It took the events of the First World War, the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the creation of a national state to bring about a change and awaken the waterway workers from their social slumber. On the other hand, an end was put to the hegemony of the First Danube Steamship Company. The riparian States, it is true, had previously operated their own companies, but they had been of minor significance. Now, however, all the vessels belonging to Austria were distributed among the successor States under the terms of the peace treaty.

This was balanced by a rapid improvement in the living and working conditions of the workers employed by the Danube shipping companies. The first strikes were carried out, as was the boycott of the Hungarian White Terror organized by the I.T.F. Collective agreements were signed and regulations were introduced governing hours of work, job security and wages. The events in Austria found their echo in the Danube States where conditions also began to improve on a modest scale. Then the sharp competition between the various shipping companies made itself felt, resulting in an economic crisis in the year 1929. Many of the gains made since 1918

were lost. The advent of German fascism in 1938 put Danube shipping on the same level as that of the Rhine, Weser and Elbe – on paper. Now they were all equal – equal to nothing, that is to say, under the 'employees' Führer' in charge of the concern. And so things remained until 1945.

The immediate post-war years

It is difficult to imagine how things were in 1945. Some idea of the conditions prevailing has already been given. Warehouses were in ruins, cranes and rails just a tangled mass. Navigation of the

Children are no longer seen on board the Danube barges or tugs. Nowadays, most of them receive a regular schooling ashore whilst their parents travel up and down the river



ty from whom it was intended to 'take' did not himself know whether he would be operating the concerns at the end of it all.

The boats move again

It was not until 1948 that shipping operations began again, at first on a modest scale, but later more fully. With the expansion of activity, the old, obsolete rules governing shipping on the Danube were abolished year by year and replaced by new and better interim regulations. When in the summer of 1952, the Soviet authorities finally allowed the Austrians to operate shipping within the entire Austrian territory, the union kept the promise it had given to the Danube waterway workers, and fought for and obtained a collective agreement for them. It is true, that this agreement does not solve all the problems facing the waterway workers of the Danube - conditions on the river are much too complicated for that - but it does constitute a foundation on which to build something better in the future. There is still a great deal to be done. Above all, one

fundamental problem has still to be solved - that of an eight-hour day for those engaged in Danube shipping.

In literature and music, the Danube is famous throughout the world; the life and bustle of this river have frequently been portrayed in novels, stories, and travellers' accounts. But the Danube is perhaps best known through the melody of Johann Strauss. There is nothing strange in this to our members and officials, for those who were not Austrians have either drifted away or have been absorbed and are now German-speaking. Children are no longer seen on barge or tug - they have all been sent off to regular schooling. Culturally, therefore, our Danube waterway workers have made a gain - but here too it meant not a little work. It is a small step forward compared with the early days. And when the day comes for Austrian vessels to pass through the Theban gates they will certainly not sing the hymn of Marcus Aurelius to the Ister, although the strains of the *Blue Danube* may be heard. Their minds, however, will be on the first verse of the 'Internationale'.

Swedish teams from 177 vessels met teams from Norwegian and Danish ships. The committee's activities are not confined to football, however, but cover a number of other games such as deck tennis and chess.

The earliest efforts of the Welfare Committee in the recreational field concerned the provision of films. Projectors have now been supplied to seamen's hostels in a number of Swedish towns and films are provided free of charge. It is planned to supply ships with films, but there are still difficulties as regards customs duty. Efforts are now being made to secure remission of customs duty on films to be shown to seamen on board vessels in foreign ports.

Unemployment among US seamen

ONE OUT OF THREE US SEAMEN employed two years ago is now out of work, according to a statement issued by the American Merchant Marine Institute. At the beginning of the year, only 72,707 seamen were manning the approximately 1,200 active sea-going vessels compared with 110,000 in January 1952.

Since last August, some 10,000 jobs have been lost by US seamen as a result of substantial laying-up of private vessels and government-owned, but privately operated, ships. Many of the latter had been in service for the transportation of military and foreign aid cargoes.

Although employment on C-type cargo vessels (employing about one third of seagoing labour) showed a slight increase compared with August last, the manning rolls of tankers, passenger vessels and Victory and Liberty ships all showed a marked decline. The largest drop was registered by Victory ships, employment falling from 10,425 in August to 4,781 on 1 January.

Of the total personnel on the 1,200 vessels, constituting the active privately owned merchant marine, 26,867 were serving in the deck department, about the same number in the engine room, and a little over 19,000 in the steward department. On 1 January, US maritime labour included 56,453 men in unlicensed jobs and 16,254 serving as ship's officers. The respective totals for August were 64,235 and 18,336.

Not included in the report were some 17,000 civilian seamen, including Civil Service personnel, serving aboard ships owned by or under the custody of the Military Sea Transportation Service.

Welfare facilities for Swedish seamen

THE SWEDISH MERCHANT SERVICE WELFARE COMMITTEE can look back on its five years of activity with no little pride. In that period a number of seamen's hostels have been put into operation, and the Committee has every reason to feel gratified at the amount of interest shown by Swedish seamen in the recreational facilities provided, especially in the field of sport.

The first hostel to be established for Swedish seafarers was that in Brooklyn, USA. This has always enjoyed great popularity and extensions are still being made to it. Only a short time ago, a shipowner donated a sum of \$5,500 towards its library of films. In Europe, as the result of cooperation between Belgian, Danish, Norwegian and Swedish seafaring interests, a hostel is to be opened in Antwerp, containing some sixty beds for the use of Scandinavian seafarers. Farther afield, in Istanbul, the premises formerly housing the Swedish Embassy have been converted into a recreational centre for Swedish and other Scandinavian seamen.

In Sweden itself, an association working in collaboration with the Welfare Committee has established a small hostel in the Far North, whilst work is progressing on a seamen's hostel in Malmö

in the extreme South. The demand for facilities of this kind is still very great, however, and well exceeds the supply.

Thanks to the allocation of ten million kronor from the surplus funds of the Swedish War Insurance Board, the Welfare Committee is in a position to set aside a million kronor a year for constructional purposes to meet the big demand for new premises. First on the list is Oxelösund, which has a reading room but no lodging facilities, whilst a number of other towns are in need of hostel and recreational facilities or the extension of existing ones.

The sports committee, set up in 1949, has made considerable progress, and now has twelve local committees in Sweden and twenty abroad. A sports secretary and organizer has been appointed in Stockholm and Gothenburg, and in a recent world football series,



One of the few known photographs of Ernst Wollweber - the man behind the Communist spy and sabotage network which operates in the maritime industry

Ernst Wollweber - maritime mystery-man

ON 29 JANUARY OF THIS YEAR, Norwegian police headquarters announced that it had uncovered a spy ring in the Oslo area, specializing in military, and more particularly naval, espionage. Investigations into the extent of the network are still in progress, but up to the present twelve persons of both sexes have been arrested and most of them will be held in custody until the inquiries are sufficiently advanced to bring them to trial.

The leader of the group was a 44-year-old Norwegian named Asbjörn Sunde, who is known to have had contacts with both the Norwegian and international Communist movements for at least twenty years. An ex-seaman, he early became a member of the Norwegian Communist Youth organization, and, in 1937 went to Spain, where he fought with the 'Dimitrov' Battalion. Little is known of his activities from then until approximately 1941-2 when, following the German invasion of the Soviet Union, he became the leader of a Norwegian underground sabotage group, adopting the pseudonym of 'Osvald'.

After the war, he published a book, entitled 'Men in the Dark', in which he told something of his experiences as a member of the wartime Communist underground. Although, for reasons which are now obvious enough, he was never an official member of the Norwegian Communist Party during the post-war years, he is known to have maintained his contacts with the organization and indeed took an active part in ejecting the dissident Communist leader, Peder Furubotn, from the Party's central offices in 1950.

The Norwegian security police now reveal that they have had Sunde under observation since the year 1948. He first began to attract their attention when it was noticed that, despite the fact that he was apparently without any form of

regular employment, he was never short of money and seemed to spend the greater part of his time travelling around in Oslo or visiting the Norwegian naval base at Horten, which is only a short distance from the capital.

Suspicion deepened when it was discovered that Sunde took great pains to cover his tracks and that he was meeting officials of the Soviet Embassy in extremely irregular circumstances. It was while he was on his way to meet one of these officials, Attaché Meshevitinov, that the Norwegian police struck. The man who had been nicknamed 'Comrade Ratcatcher' in Spain, because of his skill in trapping rats, had himself walked into a trap.

Since his arrest, the Norwegian authorities have discovered that other members of the spy ring have also had meetings with Russian Embassy officials. Meshevitinov, of course, has hurriedly left the country under the protection of his diplomatic immunity.

There is, of course nothing particularly novel in the discovery of this Communist espionage group. It is, after all, merely a repetition of what has already

Asbjörn Sunde, the 44-year-old Norwegian ex-seaman and leader of the espionage ring which has been uncovered by the Norwegian police in Oslo. He is thought to have been the head of the Norwegian section of the Wollweber organization.

happened in many other Western countries. However, it has one unusual feature, namely the growing belief that Sunde was not only the head of the group in Oslo but was in fact the Norwegian leader of the notorious Wollweber organization, which has specialized in maritime espionage and sabotage for many years. It may therefore be of some interest to trace the development of this larger network, which seems to have had its origins in the pre-war Communist international seafarers' movement.

The story begins in 1920, when the Russian union of seamen and port workers made its first attempt to become a member of the I.T.F. The failure of this approach was followed, in March 1921, by the calling of a conference of 'revolutionary seafarers' in Moscow, attended by representatives of Russian,



German, Argentine, and Finnish seafarers. They decided to take steps to set up an International of Revolutionary Seamen and to organize an international congress of seamen at Petrograd (now Leningrad).

In the meantime, Communist groups in other transport unions had already made contacts with the Russian Transport Workers' Union. When the Red International of Labour Unions (RILU) was set up at the self-styled 'First Congress of Revolutionary Trade Unions', Gregor Atshkanov of the Soviet Seamen's Union noted, for instance, that 'revolutionary unions of transport workers and revolutionary minorities' were represented.

Later, these same representatives were to be found at another 'First Congress' - this time of the 'revolutionary transport workers'. However, they decided that the time was not yet ripe to establish a Revolutionary Transport Workers' International. As Atshkanov put it: 'Only a small number of unions reflected the revolutionary class standpoint and very few of them were affiliated with the RILU.' The delegates therefore contented themselves with setting up an 'International Propaganda Committee of Transport Workers'.

In August 1921, representatives of the International Propaganda Committee held at a conference in Moscow with Communist seafarers from Germany, the Argentine, and Australia. The American Industrial Workers of the World was also represented. It was at this conference that the first steps were taken towards creating the basis for the later development of the Wollweber organization.

The conference decided to set up what it then called 'port offices' in the major ports of the world, the aim being to maintain contact with the International Propaganda Committee of Revolutionary Transport Workers and to keep it informed on maritime matters. Later, these 'port offices' were to become better known as International Seamen's Clubs. The International Seamen's Club movement eventually assumed sizeable proportions and by 1928 claimed branches in the following ports: London Newcastle, New York, Philadelphia San Francisco, Baltimore, Marseilles, Odense, Esjberg, Hamburg, Bremen, Antwerp, Archangel, Leningrad, Odessa, and Vladivostok.

These clubs became an important



The Communist International of Seamen and Harbour Workers (ISH) was set up at a Congress held in Altona, Hamburg, in 1931. Among those on the Congress platform was Ernst Wollweber, making one of his extremely rare public appearances.

part of the Communist machinery for infiltrating democratic maritime unions and for spreading revolutionary propaganda among seafarers and dockers outside the Soviet Union. In fact, so important had they become that, at the Fifth Conference of the Revolutionary Transport Workers held in Moscow in 1928, a special resolution was adopted calling for 'not a single ship without a ship's committee or a revolutionary nucleus'. A contemporary Communist pamphlet spoke of 'the revolutionary wing of the unions organized by the International Seamen's Clubs' and described one of their basic tasks as 'to struggle against the preparations for imperialist war, and to organize the defence of the USSR'.

By 1931, the leaders of the Communist seafarers' movement felt themselves strong enough to set up their own International in opposition to the I.T.F. This was done at a Congress held in Altona, Hamburg. It is at this point, too, that Ernst Wollweber appears on the stage, making one of his rare voluntary public appearances. Although, as is often the case at Communist-sponsored international gatherings, he did not seem to

play an important role on the Congress platform, it is believed that he was probably the brain behind the formation of the new organization, which was named the International of Seamen and Harbours Workers (ISH).

The ISH established its headquarters in Hamburg under the nominal leadership of a German Communist, Albert Walter, who was elected its General Secretary. Two other names which should be mentioned here are Arthur Samsing and Martin Hjelmen, both Norwegian nationals. Samsing was responsible for the organization of some 200 to 300 Communist cells aboard Norwegian merchant vessels. Martin Hjelmen, who was later to take over from Samsing, was given the task of working among seamen in Oslo, where he directed the local International Seamen's Club.

The coming of Nazism in 1933 brought the end of the ISH in its original form and the destruction of its headquarters apparatus in Hamburg. Its General Secretary, Albert Walter, went over to the Nazis and the organization itself passed into the hands of Ernst Wollweber, who had in the meantime



This photograph of seamen giving the clenched-fist salute was taken outside the International Seamen's Club in Hamburg during the First Congress of the ISH.

fled to Copenhagen. Later he was to move successively to Antwerp, Paris, and Oslo, and to concentrate his activities to an ever-increasing extent on the building up of an espionage and sabotage network which operated over the whole of Western Europe, and probably also in the Far East and America.

Wollweber eventually set up his headquarters in Scandinavia, and from it he directed sabotage operations against German, Italian, Japanese, and later Spanish ships. One of the principal activities of the organization in Scandinavia itself was the smuggling of Swedish dynamite over the frontier to the Norwegian port of Narvik, from whence it could either be shipped out or transported to Oslo - Wollweber's temporary home. Most of the dynamite was stolen from the iron-ore mines in North Sweden, and the work of building up a network of contacts in Sweden was entrusted to Martin Hjelmen, the Norwegian representative of the ISH. It was during this period that Hjelmen made a mistake which was later to cost him his life.

In Lulea he recruited a mineworker named Gustav Ceder. Ceder was an old

and loyal member of the Swedish Communist Party, but he was not equal to this kind of work. His nerve failed him, and in February 1939 he reported to the Swedish police that he had been pressed into the service of a sabotage organization by a Norwegian named Nielsen, the under-cover name which Hjelmen was then using. The existence of the group and the identity of at least one of its leaders was now known to the Swedish authorities, but it was not until a year later that they were able to lay their hands on 'Nielsen'.

Sunde's membership of the 'Wollweber League', as it later became known in Sweden, is believed to date from approximately the same period. The ex-seaman from Horten may possibly have joined it even earlier, for he had already had contacts with the ISH, Samsing, and Hjelmen. It is thought more likely, however, that he was recruited during his service in Spain and was brought in to assist Hjelmen, who in 1939 was devoting more and more of his time to organizing in Sweden.

It was while he was in Sweden that Hjelmen was arrested. Caught in a raid by the Swedish police, he was found to

have three passports in his possession. One of these was in the name of Osvald Jensen, an alias known to the Swedish police as a result of the information given to them by Ceder a year earlier. Nevertheless, the Swedish authorities did not reveal to Hjelmen that they knew his identity. They hoped that he in turn would lead them to others of the group.

He was therefore tried in the ordinary way for being in possession of forged documents, and sentenced to a short term of imprisonment. By the time he had completed his sentence, the German invasion of Norway had taken place. On his release, however, he chose to be deported back to Norway. That decision was his death warrant. Hardly had he crossed the frontier when he was seized by the Gestapo. The same fate met another member of the organization, Barley Pettersen, who had played a leading part in the smuggling of dynamite from Sweden. Both were executed by the Germans in May 1944.

Wollweber himself was still in Oslo when the German invasion came. He fled over the border to Sweden together with his sister-in-law (he had married a Norwegian woman in Leningrad in 1933), but shortly afterwards he was arrested by the Swedish police, who soon disproved his claim to be a Danish citizen. Accused of sabotage and the theft of dynamite, he twisted and turned in a vain attempt to avoid revealing the secrets of his organization. The Nazi Government demanded his extradition to Germany, and, according to the former Swedish Social Minister, Gustav Möller, it was this threat which caused the Soviet Minister in Stockholm, Madam Kollontay to intervene on his behalf. As a result of the intervention, Wollweber agreed to make a full confession in return for his deportation to Soviet Russia once he had served his sentence in Sweden.

He reappeared after the war in the Soviet Zone of Germany when he became an official of the East German Transport Ministry. One of his principal occupations in that post seems to have been the organization of a school for Communist saboteurs, again specializing in maritime sabotage. More recently, the ex-sailor who is reputed to have been one of the first to raise a red flag in the Kaiser's Imperial Navy was made Security Minister in the East German

(continued on page 61)

Conditions of employment in long-distance roadtransport (2)

IN THE SWEDISH LINJEBUSS COMPANY, permanent drivers in international transport are paid by the month. Drivers employed in national transport and who have worked forty-two hours in the week are guaranteed full weekly wages.

The American Trucking Associations states that most union contracts provide for minimum wage guarantees. When paid by the hour, most employees are guaranteed at least a four-hour minimum. If required to be available daily for service, an employee is guaranteed a forty-hour minimum weekly rate. Some contracts provide for a fortnightly wage.

The Netherlands goods transport company states that there is a guaranteed wage scheme equivalent to a fifty-one-hour working week; the Netherlands passenger transport company states that no such system is in force in the undertaking.

Notice

All the undertakings providing information state that workers are entitled to notice in case of dismissal.

The American Trucking Associations states that unless an employee is discharged because of dishonesty, drinking on the job or carrying unauthorized passengers, he must be given at least one warning notice. This notice is effective for a period not longer than nine months in most contracts. Union employees have the right to appeal the discharge.

The French Labour Code provides for one week's notice by either side. In

addition, the national collective agreement for road transport provides that if the employer decides to lay off workers because of a reduction in business activity or conversion of the undertaking dismissals must be so arranged as to take account of workers' family responsibilities, length of service in the establishment, and occupational qualities. Workers dismissed in such circum-

stances, who have been employed in the establishment for at least one year at the time of their dismissal, must be given priority if the undertaking takes on workers during the following year. If re-engaged, they keep any seniority benefits they may have had when they were dismissed.

In the Netherlands passenger transport company, workers must be given four weeks' notice, unless the period of service is less than two years, in which case two weeks' notice is given. One week's notice is given in the Nether-



(continued from page 60)
Communist Government.

It is, of course, pointless to speculate on the extent to which Wollweber is still directing the organization which has for so long borne his name. It seems unlikely, however, that Soviet Russia, which in 1941 took the unusual step of publicly acknowledging him and his value, should now allow him to waste his talents as an imitation Himmler in one of the occupied territories. The trial of Sunde and his accomplices may provide the answer - but it is doubtful.



lands goods transport undertaking.

In the United Kingdom, employment is usually on a weekly basis and a week's notice is given on either side. If wrongful dismissal is alleged, there is scope for union representations.

In the Swedish Linjebuss Company permanent drivers (a driver becomes permanent after four months' full service) are entitled to fourteen days' notice. However, if the driver is guilty of drunkenness, or fraud or serious misconduct during services, he may be dismissed without notice. If a driver considers that the circumstances of his dismissal are not in conformity with freedom of association, he may request an enquiry to protect his rights, before his trade union proceeds to other measures.

SAFETY

Minimum number of drivers

The American Trucking Associations states that two-men operations apply only if the run is more than 450 miles in a 900-mile round trip. If one man makes the trip, he is entitled to have his lodging paid for by the employer. Many trucks designed for long-distance transport have sleeper berths, which must conform to rigid Interstate Commerce Commission standards as to ventilation, dimensions, etc. However, most drivers' contracts call for lodgings in company-owned terminals or their equivalent.

The French national collective agree-

ment for road transport provides that a team of two drivers must operate day and night long-distance services (a) if operation by a single driver would necessarily result in a driving day of more than eight hours; and (b) if the vehicle has a trailer.

The Netherlands passenger transport company states that two drivers are required in certain circumstances (traffic intensity, road conditions, mountainous journeys, etc.) or if the length of the trip is such that a single driver would have to drive, for example, for more than nine hours. In such cases, there is equipment enabling the driver not on duty to rest. The Netherlands goods transport company states that there are two drivers only in the case of international transport or if the vehicle has a trailer exceeding a given tonnage. There is no equipment on the undertaking's vehicles enabling the driver not on duty to rest.

The Linjebuss collective agreement for international transport provides for two drivers on trips abroad, an arrangement which was introduced as much as a safety measure as for the worker's protection. In national transport there is only one driver, but if the working hours exceed five, a new driver takes over. If two drivers are carried, there is equipment enabling the driver not on duty to rest.

Maximum driving time

In the United States, under Interstate

Commerce Commission regulations, the maximum driving time is ten hours in twenty-four. However, most United States union contracts provide for an eight-hour working day.

In the United Kingdom, maximum driving time is statutorily fixed at five-and-a-half hours. However, a driver may perform an eight-and-a-half hour tour of duty if at least forty-five minutes are spent in writing up arrival and departure times or waiting at the depot at the beginning or end of work.

In the Netherlands, the maximum continuous driving time is reported to be four hours in the passenger transport company and five hours in the goods transport company.

In Sweden, maximum driving time is fixed at five hours under the Royal Decree of 25 October 1940. In international transport, where the same team of two drivers operates throughout the trip, each trip is organized so as to give drivers reasonable hours of work. The two drivers agree between themselves as to the division of driving time which is, as a rule, three, four or, at the most, five hours per driver.

In the United States, under Interstate Commerce Commission regulations, driving time is regarded as continuous if the breaks do not exceed ten minutes; in Sweden, this is the case if the breaks do not exceed thirty minutes. The same applies in the Netherlands in the passenger transport company, but the

goods transport company states that the period of driving time is not regarded as continuous if there is a thirty-minute break.

The minimum period of rest in the United States is ten hours after eight hours' driving and in the United Kingdom half an hour after five-and-a-half hours' driving. The Netherlands passenger transport company states that on regular services there is a ten-minute break after each hour's driving and a half-hour break after five hours' driving in tourist transport. The company points out that the halts are longer in practice and that there is never five hours' continuous driving in that kind of transport.

Observation of statutory speed limits

The American Trucking Associations states that timetables must fit statutory speed requirements. Under Interstate Commerce Commission regulations, no motor carrier can schedule a run between points in such a period of time as would necessitate the vehicle being operated at speeds greater than those prescribed by the jurisdictions in or through which the vehicle is being operated.

In the Netherlands, the goods transport undertaking states that company regulations impose a speed limit of fifty km. per hour. The undertaking employs a number of speed inspectors and some vehicles are equipped with a tachograph to check whether speed limits have been observed.

In Sweden, the Linjebuss collective agreement for international transport provides that the undertaking shall arrange driving time in such a way that no driver has to break speed or traffic regulations, either in Sweden or abroad.

Carriage of dangerous goods

The American Trucking Associations states that there are rigid Interstate Commerce Commission standards regarding dangerous goods, laying down the circumstances under which commodities such as dynamite and explosives may be transported, and which must be adhered to by the operating companies.

WELFARE

All the undertakings supplying information indicate that they provide welfare facilities.

In the United States, the American Trucking Associations states that truck terminals along well-traversed truck

routes provide restaurants, sanitary lodgings with shower, first-aid stations, telephones, etc. If no terminal facilities are available, the driver is entitled to compensation for quarters at the current room rate.

Under the French national collective agreement for road transport every vehicle must be provided with a fire extinguisher and a first-aid outfit. In addition, each undertaking must provide a sufficient number of wash-rooms, changing-rooms, latrines and, where necessary, showers for the work-people, bearing in mind the number or employees, nature of the work and the number of people present at a time. In the case of dirty work such as the carriages and handling of coal, cement and plaster, hot showers must be provided. In the case of unhealthy or dangerous work which may injure workers' health, the Labour Law Department must suggest appropriate measures, after consultation with the works committee or the staff delegate. The employer must provide the workers with facilities for heating food and, if there is a sufficient number of employees, must provide well-lighted, clean, ventilated and heated premises.

In the Netherlands, both undertakings providing information state that they provide canteens, waiting rooms, wash-

ing and sanitary installations. One of the undertakings states that coffee is available to drivers at very low prices (ten Netherlands cents a cup).

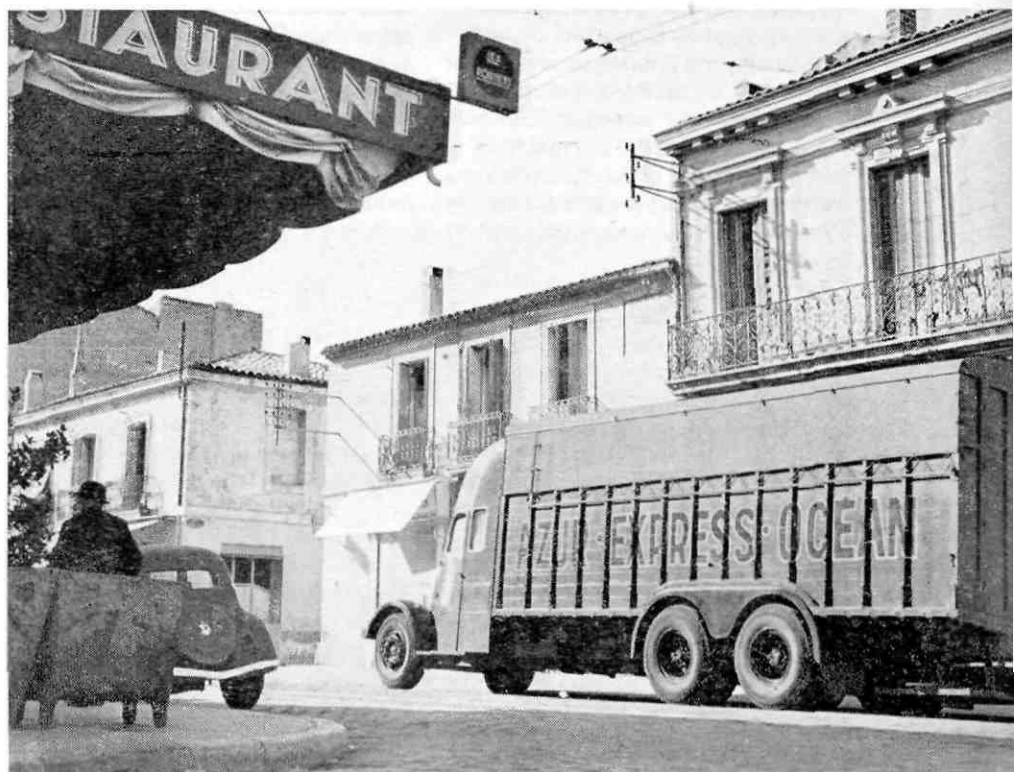
In the United Kingdom, drivers, as other members of the community, are covered by the National Health Service and the general social security system. It is general for companies to provide welfare facilities at termini in the shape of canteens, washing and lavatory facilities. Arrangements are also made with cafés, etc., at stopping places en route.

In Sweden, in national transport, welfare facilities of the kind mentioned are generally provided. As regards international transport, the Linjebuss Company states that the situation is hardly comparable, since accommodation is arranged for the drivers in the hotels where the passengers stay.

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Subsistence allowance

In the United States, the American Trucking Associations states that long-distance drivers are as a rule entitled to lodging at the employer's expense. A typical union contract provides that comfortable sanitary lodging shall be furnished by the employer in all cases where an employee is required to take a rest period away from his home ter-





minal. In lieu of the company furnishing satisfactory lodging, the employee shall be paid \$1.50 for each rest period, or be reimbursed for the actual cost of the room.

In the Netherlands, both undertakings supplying information state that drivers who may be away from home as a result of their duty are entitled to subsistence allowances to cover the cost of board and lodging. The passenger transport company adds, however, that this is paid by the tourist company which hires the bus. Pocket money granted by the company on top of this varies from 2.50 to 3 florins per day.

In the United Kingdom, if a driver has to sleep away from home as a result of his duty, he must be provided with board and lodging by the employer or a corresponding allowance.

In Sweden, board and lodging are provided by the company on international trips, under the Linjebuss collective agreement for international transport.

Return home

In the United States, the American Trucking Associations states that drivers who may be unable to get home with a vehicle they are driving for reasons beyond their control are entitled to train or bus fare home at the expense of

the employer, under provisions in union contracts.

The French national collective agreement for road transport provides that the employer shall be financially responsible for returning the driver to his home in the case of serious illness or employment injury occurring while the driver is on a duty tour.

Both companies providing information in the Netherlands and the Swedish Linjebuss Company also state that the employer is financially responsible for returning drivers to their homes in all such cases.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Sickness and employment injury insurance

The undertakings providing information in the United States, France, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands state that drivers are insured against sickness, old age and employment injury as a result of a general social security system (sickness and employment injury as regards the Netherlands). In Sweden, the question of compensation for employment injury and sickness is regulated, in the case of national transport, by the bus drivers' collective agreement, and in international transport by the Linjebuss collective agreement for inter-

national transport. Under the latter agreement, permanent drivers are entitled to medical care starting from the day when the sickness was first attended by a doctor, provided it was not caused by alcohol or by the victim's own fault and is not of a chronic nature. The company pays hospitalization expenses and doctor's fees and, if necessary, the cost of transporting the sick person to his home. In addition, drivers employed abroad must be insured against damage and accidents during the journey. The insurance policy must be such as to provide a daily compensation of ten crowns for accidents of a temporary nature and a lump sum of 25,000 crowns in the case of invalidity or death. The company is also responsible for damage to the person or property of third parties unless this be deliberately caused by the conductor, or due to drunkenness or serious negligence.

Both the Netherlands undertakings which provided information state that they make themselves responsible for covering drivers against risks of sickness and employment injury abroad if they are not covered by the national social security system.

Retirement pensions

In the Netherlands, the passenger transport company states that there is a pension scheme in the undertaking. Drivers do not have to contribute themselves and the company pays the full premium. The relation of the retirement pension to earnings is 1.75 per cent for each year of service, with a maximum of seventy per cent of the wages. If a driver enters the company's service at such an age that he will not be able to collect a reasonable pension, the company grants him a lump sum when he has reached pensionable age. The goods transport company states that drivers may become members of the undertakings' pension fund after one year's service. The pension is equivalent to 1.25 per cent of wages for each year of service, with a maximum of fifty per cent, the average wage for the last ten years of service being taken as a basis. Widows are entitled to a pension equivalent to twenty-five per cent of the driver's wages.

There is no pension system in the Swedish Linjebuss Company, but it is stated that the Swedish Transport Worker's Union envisages opening negotiations on this subject with the Employers' Association in the near future.

The taxi problem in Belgium

by **Georges Hendrickx**, Belgian Transport Workers' Union

IN BELGIUM, generally speaking, working conditions are the same throughout any particular industry, regardless of locality. This, however, does not apply to the taxicab trade. Wages and working conditions generally in this branch of the passenger transport industry not only vary considerably according to locality, but also as between enterprises operating in the same district. This is a state of affairs no union could be expected to approve and the Belgian Transport Workers' Union (affiliated to the ITF) is making every effort to introduce a measure of uniformity.

There are two types of enterprise operating taxis in Belgium so that, from the very beginning, taxi-drivers find themselves, as it were, divided into two classes. The first type of enterprise operates so-called licensed taxis having ranks assigned to them in various parts of the town. The second class of operator runs a taxi-hire service. These taxis do not ply for hire but are kept in the garage, bookings being made by phone. As a consequence of this difference in the system of hiring, the earnings of the two kinds of driver vary considerably. For instance, a driver hired at a rank does not return there, but proceeds to the rank nearest to the point where he set his fare down. A driver employed by a hire service enterprise, on the hand, must return to his garage.

In the first case, empty mileage is merely the distance between the destination of the last customer and the nearest rank. It is therefore always less than the 'loaded' mileage. In the second case where the driver has to go back to his garage, half his trip is invariably 'dead' mileage. Moreover, drivers who return to a rank are earlier available for a further booking than those who are required to make a longer empty return trip to their garage. This is the essential difference between the two types of taxi enterprise.

There are taxis in nearly every town of some importance. These may be either licensed (i.e. operating from ranks approved by the municipal authorities) or non-licensed (i.e. working from garages). Both types of taxi are to be

found in the larger towns. Wages and working conditions, however, vary not only from town to town but also from one enterprise to another. In Antwerp, for example, an undertaking, licensed by the town authorities, pays its drivers twenty-five per cent of the takings. A driver taking 400 francs in fares on one day gets paid 100 francs for that day. If the fares amount to 600 francs, the driver's share will be 150 francs.

There is, however, an agreement between the employer and the Belgian Transport Workers' Union whereby drivers are paid a minimum of ninety-six francs a day in the event of his twenty-five per cent of the fares actually collected working out to less than this amount. This minimum is calculated on the basis of a week's takings, i.e. if a driver has taken less than 2,300 francs in fares in one week, his employer still pays him 576 francs. In Brussels, one of the numerous enterprises (but the only one holding a licence) pays twenty per cent, but without any guaranteed minimum. Non-licensed undertakings pay from ten to

fifteen per cent in Brussels, and seventy-five francs a day in Antwerp.

The situation in other Belgian towns is worse still. In one town, for example, taxi fares are seven francs a kilometre, as in most other localities. The employer, however, does not pay his drivers on the basis of a percentage of the takings. Instead, he charges his drivers five francs a kilometre. With fares at seven francs a kilometre, it would appear at first glance that the drivers get two francs a kilometre, which works out to about twenty-eight and a half per cent. But the matter is not as simple as that. The driver has to pay his employer five francs for every kilometre shown on the taximeter. This means that although he gets 35 francs for a trip of five kilometres, the driver has to pay his boss for ten kilometres at five francs a kilometre, i.e. fifty francs, since he has to pay for the return trip as well. In this particular case, the driver would have to add his tips to the fare he has received before he could pay his employer. This, of course, presupposes that he has picked up sufficient in tips.

Tips in most cases amount to about ten to fifteen per cent, but the inland revenue authorities invariably assess them at a flat rate of fifteen per cent.

Working hours vary as widely as wages and, here, too, a few examples will help to give a clearer picture. In the



Belgian taxi-drivers at the funeral of a colleague who was murdered for his takings. Such cases of robbery with violence are becoming increasingly frequent and taxi drivers are therefore demanding more effective protection against such risks.



The latest type of Belgian taxi. Hardly distinguishable from an ordinary private car, it is increasingly replacing the old-style taxi shown in the next photograph



A type of taxi formerly seen much more frequently in Belgian towns. The glass partition between the driver and his passenger offers him a measure of protection against attack. Belgian taxi-drivers are demanding the re-introduction of this protective partition. The employers have countered with cheaper but less effective solutions

Antwerp undertaking mentioned, above drivers have a working day of eight hours, viz. ten hours on the job with a two-hour break for meals. They work on five consecutive days, followed by a day off. Alternatively, a driver may work on a day shift one week and do a night shift the following week. Elderly drivers never do night work. Other undertakings have a working day of ten to twelve hours and a working week of six or even seven days. A few small enterprises make their drivers work for twenty-four consecutive hours every other day. This is in contravention of the law, but the authorities responsible for keeping a check on hours of work are sometimes so inadequately staffed that steps against offences of this kind are rarely taken.

The worker's delegates on the Joint Council for the industry have long been striving to secure a national agreement on wages and working conditions in the taxi-cab trade. One of the improvements for which the Belgian Transport Workers' Union is pressing is that taxi-drivers' pay should be based on an hourly or weekly rate and not, as at present, on the actual takings. Up to the present, however, the union has met with considerable opposition from the owners and has made but little progress. Nor, in spite of continued efforts, do prospects for an improvement in the near future appear very promising.

Although the wages and working conditions of Belgian taxi-drivers vary considerably, there is one thing which they all share in common. This is the danger of attack with intent to rob them of their takings. In the course of the last few months at least half-a-dozen drivers have been the victims of such cowardly attacks by criminals who have not even stopped at murder in order to rob them of the few francs they were carrying (in most cases not more than a few hundred). Only on one or two occasions was the taxi stolen. So serious has this problem become that, following the funeral of one of the victims, a delegation waited on the appropriate Minister and pressed for immediate protective measures against such attacks.

It should be mentioned that, before the war, nearly all taxis had a glass partition between the driver's seat and the passenger's compartment. After the war, however, these old type cars were replaced by new ones, mostly of American design, to which no alterations were made other than the addition of the compulsory taximeter. Thus it happened that the glass partition disappeared without complaints or remarks from any quarter. Then came the attacks and the taxi-drivers were made aware of the danger to which they were exposed and against which the partition had formerly afforded them a measure of protection.

The workers' representatives insist

upon a bullet-proof partition. The employers have countered with a number of cheaper but less effective solutions.

After lengthy discussions, the Committee set up to study the problem made the following suggestions:

- 1) A 'panoramic' driving mirror, enabling the driver to see what is going on behind his back;
- 2) Fares wanting to be taken to a destination beyond a populated area to be set down on reaching the limit of the populated area;
- 3) A bullet-proof partition to be constructed between the driver and his passenger.

As a result of the representations made and following the recommendations of the committee, the Ministry has sent out a questionnaire to taxi undertakings in Belgium asking owners and drivers to vote for or against the panoramic mirror and/or the glass partition.

Doubtless the owners, mindful of the extra cost to them entailed by the introduction of these protective devices, will endeavour to influence the drivers to vote against them, even to the extent of maintaining that the additional financial burden will drive them out of business. The Belgian Transport Workers' Union, on the other hand, is urging its members to vote for these devices and not to allow themselves to be misled by these attempts to play on their fear jobs.



'Pirate' taxis in a Belgian town - now almost a thing of the past. In Belgium, taxis either operate from garages, to which drivers return on completion of their journey, or are licensed by the municipal authorities and assigned to specific cab-ranks. There are considerable variations in the earnings of the two types of taxi drivers

Agreement signed on international road transport

A GENERAL AGREEMENT with a Set of Rules, with which carriers engaged in European international transport will be required to comply, was signed in Geneva on 17 March by the representatives of ten European governments. The signatories were Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and Yugoslavia. Switzerland is expected to sign shortly, whilst special arrangements are being made for its application in Austria and the various Zones of Germany.

The Agreement, drafted by the Inland Transport Committee of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), aims at promoting the development and improvement of international transport of passengers and goods by road in Europe to the full extent required by economic and social needs. The signing of the Agreement, officially entitled 'General Agreement on Economic Regulations for International Road Transport', thus constitutes a first step towards the setting up of a rational regime for international road transport in Europe - the need for which has been constantly stressed by the I.T.F.

Based on a French administrative concept, the Agreement is accompanied by a Set of Rules laying down regula-

tions relating to the transport undertaking itself and to the vehicles. Supplementary provisions for carriers engaged in international transport, and special conditions applicable to certain transport operations are dealt with in annexes. One of these, prepared with the cooperation of the International Labour Office, lays down that drivers engaged in international transport should hold a certificate of physical fitness, and covers the question of hours of work and overtime, daily and weekly rest periods and maximum driving periods, wages, sickness and industrial accidents, subsistence allowances for drivers travelling abroad, etc. Another annexe deals with technical standards for vehicles engaged in specialized goods transport, e.g., the carriage of petrol, whilst further annexes will be added on such matters as passenger transport, documents for the enforcement of provisions applicable to passenger and goods transport.

Atlantic weather ships to stay

THE ATLANTIC WEATHER SERVICE provided by ten floating weather ships strung out across the North Atlantic has received a new lease of life following an international agreement concluded by the fifteen countries participating in the scheme. This important meteorological service was in danger of being discontinued following the announce-

ment last year by the government of the United States that it would withdraw from this international operation because 'the benefits derived by the US are no longer commensurate with the cost'.

Representatives from fifteen countries (Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and United States), at a meeting convened in Paris by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), have agreed on a new system of distributing the responsibilities of maintaining the stations.

According to the new agreement, which becomes effective this July for a two-year period, participating governments will either operate or make financial contributions to the programme, which calls for nine ocean stations in place of the former ten. Four of these will be operated by North American States (three by US and one by the US and Canada), and five by European countries. A total of twenty-one vessels will be required to maintain these stations. The European States have also reached agreement on the continuation of the present system of manning their sector of the network. As from 1 January 1955, and for a period of 18 months, the European States which supply vessels and crews will establish a rota system of patrols and relief of the various weather ships.

The continuation of this important weather service, operated through the ICAO, is thus ensured, and the danger of a gap in the complex meteorological service in this part of the world averted.

Fishermen's cooperatives for Egypt?

IT IS REPORTED that fishermen's cooperatives in Egypt are being planned by that country's Department of Coastguards and Fisheries. Present plans call for cooperatives at Lake Manzala and Mariut, but the system could be extended to cover all lakes and sea fisheries. An appropriation of £40,000 to finance the plan has been requested from the Government. Of this total, one-half would be used as a loan to finance cooperative associations for the fishing industry, and one-half would be in the form of a gift from the Government.

Existing plans include the building of model communities for the fishermen, together with improvements in health, education and social conditions.

West German Railway Labour Force



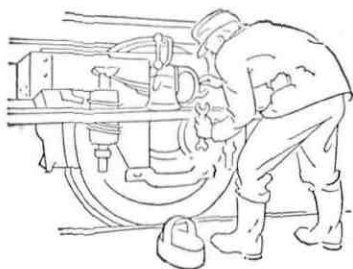
ACCORDING TO THE LATEST FIGURES issued (for the end of 1953), the German Federal Railways now employ some 500,000 persons. This represents a decrease of 14,000 over the previous year. The exact figure is 508,200, of which some 10,000 are female staff. The total is made up of about 224,700 permanent officials, 271,700 weekly paid or salaried staff, whilst youths, apprentices and trainees account for approximately 11,800.

The decrease of some 14,000 compared with the previous year is in accordance with the German Federal Railways' policy of staff reduction, as a result of which some two-thirds of the staff leaving the service of the railways in the year under review (about 23,000) were not replaced. Intake, covering the remaining one-third, was almost entirely confined to young persons as a counter-balance to the unfavourable age factor among railway staff. The only exceptions

the railway staff (including inspection personnel), whilst train control duties (train control officers, supervisors, sig-

total personnel are engaged on maintenance of the permanent way and station and track installations (including signals and telecommunications). Of the remaining staff, 2.8 per cent are engaged on permanent way inspection (includes level-crossing keepers), and 6.3 on administrative duties (general office staff). The remaining 2.1 per cent are responsible for the motor transport vehicles operated by the German Federal Railways.

The number of railway stations in operation on the German Federal Railways system is in the region of 5,000 - not counting the minor halts which number some 2,500. In most cases, the ticket and luggage offices, as well as the goods and accounts sections, are all operated as a single unit. In the larger towns, however, these sections are frequently run as independent services. There are thus some thirty ticket offices, ten luggage offices, 310 goods sections and about 60 accounts offices operating as separate entities on the German railways.



were former railwaymen returning from captivity or internment camps.

Of the 496,400 adult workers employed by the German Federal Railways, a little over ten per cent are drivers, codrivers or firemen on steam or electric trains. Nearly six per cent are train personnel

nalmen and station guards) account for a further 22.1 per cent. Ticket issue and accountancy, luggage and goods handling is the responsibility of 11.8 of the railway staff, whilst 13.8 per cent of the



(continued from page 52)

at previous sessions. The net result was a considerable waste of time. The sub-committees had to make good the loss by night sessions and hurried work. Paradoxically enough, once the sub-committees got to grips with the real problems, the atmosphere became normal and many compromises were reached thanks to the active cooperation of the employers.

Two reflections

The Fifth Session of the Inland Transport Committee was a highly interesting experience. To begin with, the ILO had supplied a series of excellent reports. An instructive chapter of the General Report, devoted to recent events in the transport industry, can be read with profit by every economist, administrator, social worker and politician concerned with transport. The general discussion is always important for its bearing on the orientation of the Committee's work, but its interest goes - or should go - beyond the two hundred persons taking part in the proceedings.

A digest of the last session's general debate and specialized work should be widely distributed among all concerned and these latter should urge their Ministries of Labour to make the information generally available.

The Committee is growing large: thirty-two countries were represented at the 1954 session but that size is insufficient to satisfy the interest prevailing in the world of transport. In the countries not represented there is a widespread desire to take part in the Committee's work. With the present size of the Committee, work is already difficult, and a world transport labour conference would probably become unwieldy. There is a problem to be solved and the obvious solution was indicated by the Indian employers' representative: 'the regional approach'. That problem is soluble by money and additional ILO staff only. It is the task of the world trade union movement to enlist the cooperation of the Ministers of Finance. Parliaments and employers' associations in order to obtain for the ILO the means to enable it to speed up social progress.



(inspectors, guards), whilst local repair and general maintenance staff account for a further 11.8 per cent. Major repair and workshops employ 11.6 per cent of

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

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