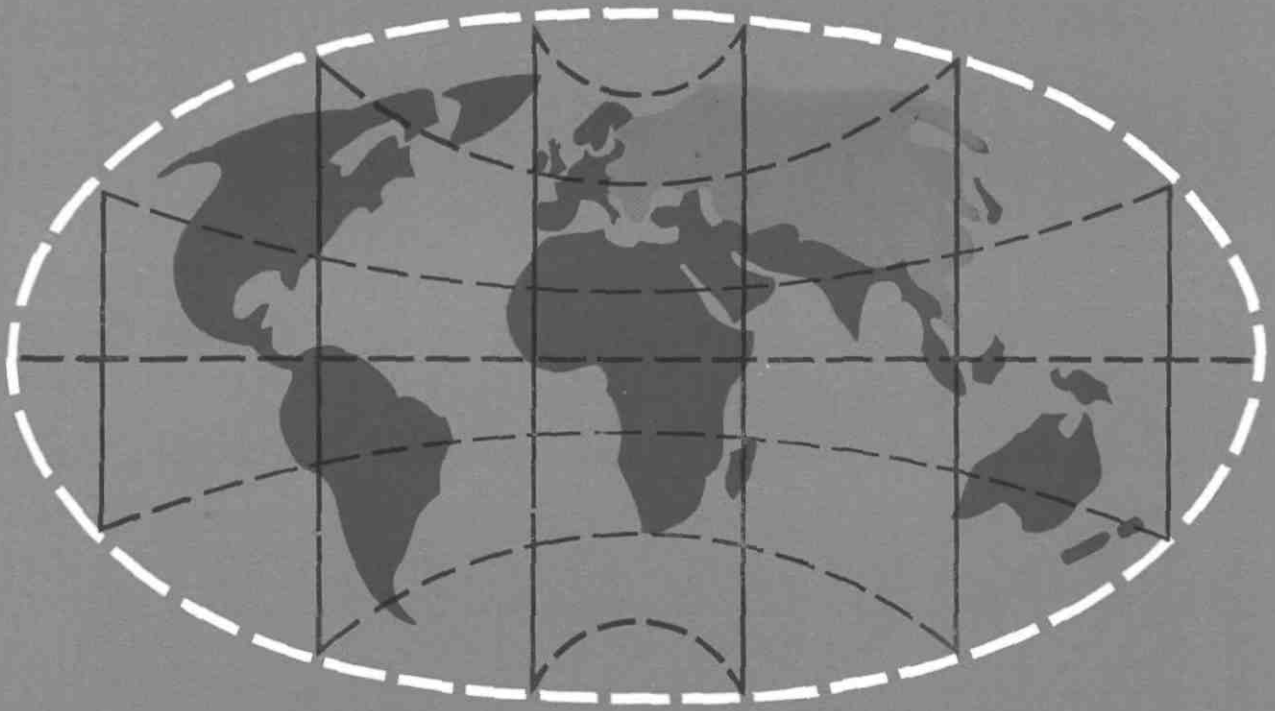


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Forthcoming Meetings:

London 14 December ITF/IFALPA meeting

London 12-14 January Executive Committee meeting

In Memoriam M. Zwalf



THE ITF HAS LOST ITS CHIEF PUBLICATION AND RESEARCH OFFICER, M. ZWALF. The letter M stands for Meyer (Meir in Hebrew, meaning 'the enlightened') and for Max, the name by which he was called by his wife and children, intimates and friends. Zwalf died on 5 November 1954, following a third attack of coronary thrombosis, fifteen months after the first.

Zwalf had been in the service of the ITF from April 1931 till his untimely death at the age of fifty-three. Up to the time of his joining the ITF staff, the items appearing in the Press Report and the 'Newsletter' were assembled by several members of a small staff, each engaged on several jobs at once and each contributing to the publications in a haphazard way. In retrospect it appears surprising that the quality of the publications suffered so little from this inadequate organization of work; not surprisingly the regularity suffered a lot and the date printed on the periodicals had little or no relation to the actual date of publication. Zwalf's task was to bring order into the publication business. Struggling patiently and tactfully against habits which in more than a decade had taken deep roots, he succeeded.

For a long time the task of publishing officer has been a disappointing one. Zwalf's ambition was to establish an international transport workers' journal that would occupy an honourable place among trade union journals and a prominent place among international trade union publications. In 1933, however, Hitler aimed such a serious blow at the

ITF's finances that the monthly journal could no longer be published. Zwalf tried to limit the damage by increasing the volume of the duplicated 'Press Report', to which he added copious 'editorial supplements'.

The new ITF journal which was launched in England during the war was, for financial and other reasons, a modest affair. The editor was cut off from the European Continent, and from overseas he received only scanty material, the value of which was often reduced to nil by enormous delays. When these difficulties ceased, Zwalf's renewed efforts were hampered by the smallness of the financial means that could be put at his disposal. At last, in 1951, he was allowed to spend more money, not as much as he would have liked but enough to revive his enthusiasm and bring him in sight of his goal. The International Transport Workers' Journal as it is today is Zwalf's creation.

Daily, at his desk, in the train and at his home, Zwalf waded through a stack of newspapers, trade journals and periodicals of many descriptions, and saw to it that the attention of the secretaries and section officers was drawn to articles dealing with matters falling into

their province. In Amsterdam, and again in London, he did not leave the General Secretary in peace until he had obtained the help of trained research workers, and also the necessary equipment, for filing reference material and keeping order in the ever-growing library. The fact that the reference files and library assembled in Amsterdam fell into the hands of the Nazis and were dispersed and destroyed had become one of his permanent heartaches.

Editing the publications, sifting the flow of incoming material, reading numerous papers and books, and attending to documentation is obscure and sometimes uninspiring routine work. Zwalf did it diligently, conscientiously and tirelessly for he appreciated to the full its importance for the proper functioning of the organization.

But to give a measure of the man, it must be emphasized that he was a trained economist and a thinker with a penetrating mind. Those responsible for framing ITF policy relied on him for information on the economic aspects of certain problems they had to tackle. Zwalf was seldom content with giving them a mere exposition of the facts and their economic implications. He went into the history of the problem on hand, pointed out underlying political and social factors, and expressed his opinion. When Zwalf came to the ITF, the war debts and reparations settlement bedevilled economic life in Europe and was

discussed in all international trade union gatherings. He was instructed to explore the problem. That was a job to his liking. In his report he marshalled the facts in a manner that laid bare what kind of forces were at work and what they aimed at. That report led to the adoption of a resolution by the ITF Congress condemning the war and reparations settlement as contrary to the interests of the working class.

In the late 'twenties began the discussion on the coordination of transport. The 1935 Congress received a report drafted by Zwalf which not only listed the facts as they were then but also showed why some forces were driving towards chaos in transport and what kind of framework was required to solve the problems raised by the birth and development of road transport. That report, however, was not his last word on the question. Thinking further on it in the light of what was happening in the field of transport under the impact of war, he propounded the view, later officially endorsed by the responsible bodies of the ITF, that a good and lasting solution of the problem could be found in the framework of a transport organization embracing continents or large parts of continents. The idea of a European transport authority as advocated by the ITF took shape in Zwalf's brain in the years 1941-2. It speaks strikingly for his perspicacity that in studying the policy of the Allied Governments and the USSR in relation to post-war transport organization he recorded in print in January 1942 that the USSR would be hostile to any scheme of European unity.

When the Marshall Plan came along in 1947/8 the ITF decided to convene a special conference in order to study what ERP could be made to mean for European transport and transport workers. In record time Zwalf produced an ample documentation for the information of the Conference which was to give a new impetus to the idea of a European transport authority.

Zwalf has thus left his imprint on the ITF's work. He became a member of the ITF staff by a decision of Edo Fimmen, who had known him as a young man of eighteen or nineteen. In 1931 there was no shortage of unemployed applicants for any job but Fimmen prevailed upon Zwalf to give up his job in the offices of the Dutch Socialist Party. Fimmen, a born leader and man of action, wished

to have the services of Zwalf, a theoretician who, under the guidance of very able socialist teachers, had learned to study the laws that govern the action of the forces which shape history. Zwalf held the view that the capitalist economic system was essentially unstable and dynamic and he advocated that the labour movement should base its strategy on that fact. The movement should consciously and systematically aim at taking advantage of periods of prosperity for driving hard bargains and achieving social reforms, and of depression - and war - for bringing about changes in the structure of the economic and political framework. He urged the labour movement to be itself a history-shaping force, he urged it not to be content to take things as they are and leave them as they are. Mere improvement of conditions of life and work not accompanied by irreversible socialistic changes appeared to him insecure gains. On the strength of this view he admired the health service created by the British Labour Government and regretted that the Transport Act of the same Government did not go far enough. The total instead of partial nationalization of road transport would, according to Zwalf's conviction, have proved as irreversible as the health service and the nationalization of the railways and mines.

Zwalf was a Jew and proud of being a Jew. His attachment to the Jewish race did not, however, influence his attitude towards any person or nation, not even towards Germans and Germany. When he had reason to praise or criticize a person, a Jew could not count upon favours, for the only thing that then counted was what makes a man or a woman good or otherwise. When judging nations he paid attention only to the factors that make the laws and government of a country just and progressive. By virtue of this attitude he abhorred Stalin as much as Hitler and detested the Soviet regime as intensely as the Nazi Third Reich. The Hitlerite persecution of the Jews outraged his sense of justice and shook him to the depths of his being. From his first post-war trip to Amsterdam he came back to London with a broken heart: his widowed mother, his brother and sisters, his wife's relatives, all had perished in the Nazi inferno. It is significant that he died from an ailment of the heart.

Zwalf has not stood in the limelight of

ITF Congresses, but his services were no less valuable for that. At his post he has done his duty and won for himself a memorial in the hearts of his chief and colleagues at the ITF Secretariat.

Conference of European Ministers of Transport

THE CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN MINISTERS OF TRANSPORT met in Paris on 21 and 22 October to discuss matters concerning European transport coordination. The Conference was attended by the Transport Ministers of fifteen European countries, whilst the us sent an observer.

On the question of coordinating investments in the transport industry, the fifteen Ministers agreed to submit the plans of their respective countries to the Conference and its technical departments for the purpose of examination with a view to securing agreement on the development of transport in the various member-States along lines allowing the fullest possible consideration of general European requirements.

The Conference also reached agreement on the setting up of a European financing company (Eurofima) for the construction and leasing of railway trucks. This company is due to be established within the next six months with its headquarters in Switzerland. The railway undertakings in the member-States will contribute to the company both financially and by providing railway trucks. It is hoped that by these means impetus will be given to standardization of railway rolling stock.

A question which has engaged the attention of the Conference since it was established in Brussels in 1953 is the problem of the development of the European main road network. In this field, it was agreed that those countries which had a common interest in any of these roads should form working parties to study their development and possible improvement.

On the subject of inland waterways a number of projects were recommended for attention, including the Rhine-Main-Danube link-up and the canalization of the Moselle. The Conference also expressed the desirability of pressing on with the question of coordinating freight rates on internal and national waterways, and recommended speedy effect being given to the unification of rates on the Rhine decided on in the year 1952.

AT THE REQUEST of the Railwaymen's and Road Transport Workers' Sections, the 1954 Congress of the ITF decided that the question of transport coordination should be studied and discussed anew. The discussions began on 14 October at a joint meeting of the Railwaymen's and Road Transport Workers' Section Committees which approved a tentative statement of principles of transport policy for European countries.

The statement reads as follows:

- 1) Transport must be a servant and not a usufructuary of the national economy.
- 2) The aim of the authorities organizing and supervising transport should be solely to serve the public interest.
- 3) Demand and supply of transport means and services should be in equilibrium and different means of transport should complement one another.
- 4) All transport undertakings should fulfil their tasks in accordance with rules applicable to a public service.
- 5) All means of transport and all transport undertakings should accept equal or equivalent obligations towards their own employees, the State, users of transport and third parties.
- 6) Each means of transport should meet its full share of the costs occasioned by its traffic or made on its behalf.

The following article, for which responsibility must be assumed by the author alone, is a commentary on this statement.

Principles of transport policy

by Paul Tofahrn, Asst. General Secretary of the ITF

Authority, equity, stability

On the problem of transport coordination so much has been written by so many that probably everything has been said. The problem remains unsolved not owing to a lack of ideas but because conflicts of interests prevent agreement between the parties concerned. Any effective coordination measure must of necessity result in some transport undertakings becoming partly or wholly redundant. Consequently, whatever the measures contemplated or applied, they provoke resistance. The resisters always find political spokesmen willing to defend interests by identifying them more or less skilfully with the public interest even when there is no such identity.

All attempts at coordinating transport must, therefore, start from the realization that there is no possibility of securing the concurrence by *all* the interests vested in transport to any set of coordination measures, and that the idea of voluntary coordination by the

transport industry itself must be ruled out as impracticable. Coordination can come about only by an act of authority.

The definitions of coordination are numerous but have one generally acceptable point in common: *all* means of transport should be used in the manner most favourable to the public good. The coordinating authority must, therefore, be impartial vis-à-vis the different means of transport and the interests vested in each. A system of coordination biased in favour of one branch of transport, one set of interests being crushed to the advantage of rival interests, is not likely to last in a democracy. Sooner or later the parties victimized by such a policy will get their chance and obtain a new coordination that is just as unstable – and unjust – as the first. Periodical reversals of policy undo what coordination may have been achieved and re-create chaos to the great damage of the

A recent photograph of Brother Tofahrn taken at the Congress of the ITF-affiliated Finnish Locomotivemen's Union

public interest. Equitable treatment of all branches of transport is a condition of lasting coordination.

Of course, even when the contest, instead of being one between private interests vested in transport, is one between private interests and the public interest, the private interests may get the upper hand. That has happened recently in Switzerland and Great Britain. When that happens the chances are that those who suffer from such a policy, that is to say the users of transport, will in time wake up and enable the defenders of the public interest to assert themselves in a decisive manner and enforce a system of coordination that may undergo modification according to the swingings of the political pendulum but may not be capable of wholesale reversal.

But even in the defence of the public interest there is need for a high sense of justice. Crushing respectable private interests more for the sake of a doctrine than for the purpose of serving the public interest is not justifiable. It is, moreover, conducive to instability in policy and thus self-defeating. Considerations of equity in the clash between private and public interests are thus a condition of a lasting solution of the conflict.

Coordination = Planning

If coordination means anything it must mean planning. Planning in transport



does not mean putting an end to the application of the principles of economic liberalism, for the simple reason that these have never been applied to the whole field of transport. The birth of the railways marked the beginning of modern transport legislation. In no European country does railway legislation bear the hallmark of economic liberalism. Its purpose was to regulate a monopoly or near-monopoly. Only in inland navigation, coastwise shipping and road transport have liberal principles been applied to some extent. It is precisely this disparity of treatment in dealing with competing industries which causes difficulties and chaos in the field of transport. No European government, however, no matter what its political complexion, envisages extending to the railways all the liberties that go with liberal economic doctrines. Therefore, another way to abolish the disparity of treatment must be found.

The alternative is not the application to non-railway transport, especially road transport, of the rules established for railways but the adoption of a set of entirely new rules for all transport. What is good in the old railway legislation ought to be preserved in the new rules and, as far as is practicable, applied to all transport. New rules are required to take account of the new element of coordination, that is to say the principle of planning. In addition the new rules must meet the further new requirement of compliance with the dictates of social justice.

For the purpose of planning, transport must be organized into a coherent whole. The planners must aim at a transport system adequate in size and quality, capable of meeting all requirements. They must ensure that transport performs its function as a community builder and provides the services necessary to a civilized way of life also in those areas in which transport is an unremunerative proposition by reason of their geographic position or demographic or economic situation.

In a coherent system the different means of transport are welded together so that they are complementary and ensure that each transport task is carried out as a single operation with the minimum of interruption and delay at changeover points. Cohesion is at its best when several means of transport can be combined within a single undertaking, e.g. road services operated by

railway and shipping undertakings. Where one means of transport can adequately perform the service required, duplication by a second is wasteful and to be avoided. Where within the same branch of transport several undertakings cater for the same traffic, empty running must be eliminated as far as possible and competition be restricted to what is useful for ensuring maintenance of good standards of service and improvement. In short, the planners must aim at establishing and maintaining an equilibrium between the demand for and the supply of transport services as well as at a fully integrated system.

Planning = Control

When the transport system is composed of a few large state-owned undertakings and numerous small private undertakings, planning entails of necessity the subjection of the private undertakings to control by a transport authority. In order to ensure division of traffic between the different means of transport it is indispensable to control all undertakings with regard to their number and size and to the kind and volume of the operations they are required or allowed to perform. In many cases, if not in all, the instrument of control will be a licensing system, licences being refused or granted according to the ability or inability of the existing undertakings to meet the requirements.

Requirements may, of course, vary not only in quantity but also in quality. Technical progress may increase the advantages or inconvenience offered to the users and cause a shift in the demand. Economic and social progress may enable a number of users to prefer the more expensive means of transport to the cheaper one. The system of dividing the traffic between the different means of transport must therefore be so flexible that expansion of one means of transport at the cost of another may take place in accordance with changes in the demand. Equilibrium between the demand and the supply of means and services of transport should not be static or obstruct natural evolution.

There is one kind of private undertaking that deserves special attention if control is not to be nullified, namely the industrial and commercial establishments which effect transport for their own account. When this transport is a technical necessity, that is to say when it cannot be undertaken

on reasonable conditions by public carriers, there is no problem. Public carriers cannot engage in the transport work performed, for example, by milk, vegetable, and grocery retailers. But where transport for own account is resorted to for non-technical reasons, there is a problem, namely, the undermining of the economic and financial basis of the transport undertakings open to the public at large. Transport for own account must therefore be subject to control and the licensing authority has the duty to ensure that the interest of the public and of the undertakings at its service have precedence over those of the operators of transport for own account.

Equity = Public Service and Equality

Transport, whether operated by public bodies or by private undertakings, is a public service. It must offer its services to all users for all operations the undertaking concerned is equipped to carry out at rates and conditions known to all and fixed or approved by the controlling authority. The services offered by each means of transport must be equivalent to those offered by another, the inequalities in speed, reliability, comfort, etc. being balanced out by differences in price and conditions of carriage. There must be equality in the obligations towards third parties with regard to safety and compensation for damages resulting from accidents.

The obligations towards the State, notably in respect of contributions to the general budget, should be the same for all. In some countries the State imposes on certain transport undertakings, especially railways, obligations that may be termed political, e.g., reduced or special rates for certain persons, goods, services, areas or users. Where that is done equivalent obligations should be imposed on all undertakings or, better still, the political services performed by one or some should be remunerated by the political user, i.e. the State.

Last but not least there are the conditions of employment offered in each branch of transport. In this field, too, all undertakings should assume equal or equivalent obligations. Social justice is indivisible.

The financing of transport

For planning and coordinating transport there is need to see clear in the business.

The only true X-ray device is a flawless accountancy. The books must show *all* costs occasioned by transport. Some items such as track and equipment, fuel and materials, wages and social charges are obvious, but account must also be taken of items which at present do not appear in the expense account of transport undertakings, such as traffic police, road signalling and lighting, navigational aid, the administration of transport control, etc.

There are vehement controversies about road costs and the yield of taxes paid by motor vehicle owners. Roads are used for multiple purposes and should be paid for by all their users: commercial carriers, owners of private vehicles, pedestrians, water suppliers, sewerage establishments, telephone and telegraph undertakings, agriculture, etc. It is, however, not possible to calculate to the last shilling and penny what each user or beneficiary should pay. The best that can be done is to adopt a formula fixing the share of each category of users as equitably as human judgment allows. The formula must be such as to convince the vast majority of the citizens that transport and private vehicle owners are charged each with their fair and full share.

When the expense account for the whole of transport is thus made up, it becomes possible to decide in full knowledge of all the relevant facts how to meet the cost. The most equitable and probably also the most rational procedure is to oblige transport to cover all its costs, and each means of transport its own full share. It is, of course, possible to charge to public funds a part of the costs but, apart from the problems such a procedure sets to the ministers of finance, it has the drawback of creating difficulties for the transport authority which must see to it that all means of transport are kept on a footing of equality. If, for example, it were decided that the track costs for all means of transport are to be charged partly or wholly to public funds, there would be endless arguments about what must be considered as track costs and what not. Do the railway signalling installations, for instance, fall within or outside the track cost account? If yes, what about the cost of operating them? Such arguments cause friction and create a risk of instability in policy. To make each means of transport pay all the costs occasioned by its operation, whether

the expense is made by the undertakings themselves or by public authorities on their behalf, may turn out to be not only the easiest but also the most expeditious procedure of financing transport.

Here, then, is also the basis of the rates policy. The rates must be fixed at such levels that the totality of the receipts covers the whole of the costs, including, as a rule, the losses caused by unprofitable but necessary operations. On this basis there is no room for deficits. Rates may never be insufficient. If, however, rates are being fixed at too low a level, the authority or undertaking responsible for the voluntary or involuntary mistake must also be responsible for the financial loss. Debit balances due to loss of traffic, inefficient operation and bad management must always be borne by the undertakings concerned. There is no valid reason to protect transport undertakings against the risk of bankruptcy.

Nationalization

A priori private ownership and management of transport undertakings is no obstacle to planning and coordinating control. Much depends, however, on the willingness and ability of privately-owned undertakings to cooperate in the implementation of the policy pursued by the national transport authority. Take the case of unprofitable but necessary transport to and from certain

Shipping pool for the Eastern bloc

Moscow is reported as making efforts at unifying the shipping and shipbuilding industries of the Eastern bloc. Uniform methods of construction are to be introduced covering all the satellite countries forming the bloc and standardization is to be observed to the extent that vessels belonging to any of the States can be repaired or fitted out without much delay at any port in the bloc.

In the Soviet-occupied zone of Germany there are seventeen major shipbuilding concerns employing some 54,000 workers. Poland, which has the second largest merchant fleet of the Eastern bloc has lately been making considerable efforts to increase its shipbuilding programme. One of the reasons for this is that Polish vessels are to be used where Soviet ships are not operating (i.e. to certain ports in

areas. The public service principle requires 'internal compensation', that is to say the areas concerned must be provided with the necessary services at the same rates and conditions as other parts of the country, the loss thus incurred being a charge to the industry. Private enterprise can practise internal compensation by establishing freight chartering pools and passenger traffic receipts pools. Will the private undertakings agree among themselves to place public service before profit?

Planning requires discipline, preferably self-discipline. The prompter and fuller the responsiveness of the transport operators to the action of the controllers, the smoother the working of the entire apparatus of transport and the less the need for costly and retarding supervision and checks, administrative intervention and litigation. Can the necessary discipline be achieved while a substantial part of transport is in the hands of many thousands of private undertakings?

Whilst nationalization is not a *sine qua non* for planning and coordinating transport, there is every likelihood that in some cases and circumstances it will become a necessity. Therefore, it will be wise to empower the national transport authority to resort to nationalization when and to the extent that private ownership in transport forms an obstacle to a rational transport policy.

Eastern Asia) and, in particular, to maintain regular services to the United States and the Near East.

Growing German fleet

IN THE FIRST SEVEN MONTHS of this year 93 vessels, of 327,626 tons gross, were added to the German merchant fleet, including 80 new vessels, of 278,787 tons, and 13 secondhand vessels, of 48,839 tons, bought from abroad; 42 German vessels, of 53,059 tons, were sold for breaking up or to foreign owners, and the fleet on 1 August consisted of 2,109 vessels, of 2,196,000 tons gross. The new vessels added to the fleet included 62 cargo vessels, of 231,949 tons; eight tankers, of 43,686 tons; nine motor coasters, of 2,589 tons, and a passenger vessel, of 563 tons. On 1 August there were 51 vessels, of 188,700 tons gross, under construction for German owners, including 39 cargo vessels, of 156,750 tons, three tankers, of 29,250 tons, and nine motor coasters, of 2,700 tons.

Seafarers escape to Freedom

THE NUMBER OF CASES IN WHICH POLISH SEAMEN HAVE LEFT THEIR VESSELS to seek refuge in other countries was increased by seven in September last when Polish trawlermen fishing in the North Sea off Whitby locked up their captain, political officer, and six of the crew, hoisted distress signals and were taken to the nearest port where they asked for political asylum. The day before, an assistant steward from the liner 'Batory' had walked into a London police station claiming refuge on the same grounds.

The 'Batory', by the way, is fast achieving notoriety as an 'escape ship'. Five weeks before, as she was leaving Copenhagen, a member of the crew jumped overboard and was picked up by a tug which took him ashore. His

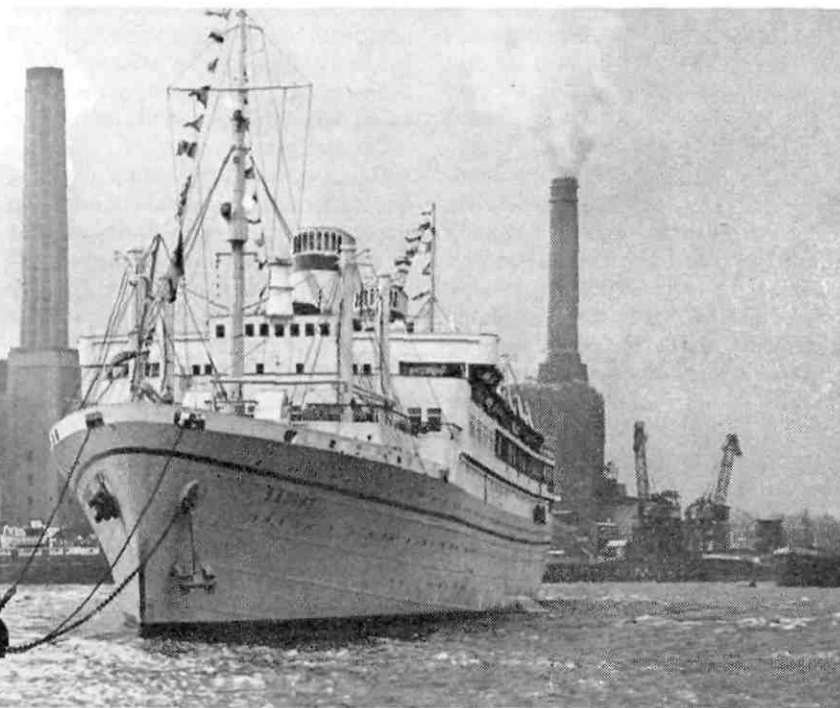
number of other cases, and reports continue to come in at intervals from European and United States ports giving details of seamen, not only from Poland but from other Communist-dominated countries, jumping ship to

romantic if you like – to seek wider horizons, to try their luck in a new land offering them, as they saw it, fuller opportunities than their homeland. With some, it was purely 'wanderlust' which impelled them to take this step into the new and the unknown. They were not, however, irrevocably cutting themselves off from their homeland. They could always return – and many of them did – some with, and others without, the hoped-for fortune.

Any lingering doubts as to the motives which impel Polish seamen to leave their ships and seek asylum in other countries were dispelled as the result of an interview at the headquarters of the ITF with three Polish trawlermen who recently sought refuge in Great Britain.

The very manner of their coming ashore left no doubt as to their determination to escape at the earliest favourable opportunity. That they are effectively under almost constant supervision, and consequently are able to make their escape only under exceptional conditions, was borne out by the time, place, and circumstance of their flight – in the early hours of the morning during a storm while their trawler was lying about a mile off the English coast. Their means of escape was a primitive raft hastily rigged up from wood torn from a hatch cover.

Men who come ashore in that fashion at the risk of their lives are quite obviously not just romantic fortune seekers or urged by 'wanderlust'. And in fact these men made it quite clear that they were fleeing from life in present-day Poland, which they described as a 'spy State'. This spy system, they said, permeates the entire life of the country. They had certainly not escaped from it by going to sea – for nearly every vessel has its so-called 'welfare officer', responsible for Communist indoctrination, who sees to it that any unguarded remarks unfavourable to the present regime in Poland are reported. Even if there were no 'welfare officer' on board, it could be taken for granted that the crew included at least one Communist Party member, able and willing to do the job. Asked how, in spite of this sense of being constantly watched and spied upon, which could only result in no one trusting his



The Polish ship Batory at anchor in the Port of London. During the last three years, twelve members of her crew have successfully sought asylum in Gt. Britain

reason for leaving the vessel was to claim political asylum. When she was in Sunderland last year for repairs an assistant steward left the vessel and was granted political asylum. Again, last year, it was the skipper who left the ship and was granted permission to remain in Britain. With him went the ship's doctor who was also granted asylum. In all, in the last three years, twelve members of the crew have left this vessel while she has been in British ports. Nor is this the complete story. There have been a

ask for political asylum.

Cases of seamen leaving their vessels in a foreign port to seek a new life in another country do not in themselves call for any particular comment. The practice is very rare now, it is true, owing to better social conditions ashore and on board and also to more stringent immigration laws, but in the past it was fairly common for seamen to 'jump ship' to seek their fortunes abroad, or merely for the sake of adventure. Such men were obeying an urge – call it

neighbour, they had been able to get together and work out a plan of escape, the trawlermen smiled and admitted that they had been a little incautious over a glass of beer one day. One thing had led to another, and soon plans were being laid for getting away to one of the free countries.

Next morning, however, not one of them dared to return to the subject or even pretend he had had such thoughts in his mind. It was not until weeks afterwards, when nothing had happened, that one of the men plucked up courage to mention their plans for escape. Details were discussed. It would have to be a decision at a moment's notice when the opportunity came, with no chance of elaborate preparations – that would introduce too big a risk of detection. They were not forgetting that the master of their vessel – incidentally a Russian – had threatened to shoot at anyone trying to jump ship. And so it came about that, one stormy night, when one of them was alone on watch, the bid for freedom was made.

We hinted at the hard struggle that lay ahead for them in fitting themselves into the pattern of life of the country with which they had decided to tie their fate and received the answer that they hoped to be able to continue at sea. In any case, life in a free country, however hard, was preferable to life in present-day Poland. They were young and had grown up in the atmosphere of Communist indoctrination but were not fools enough to believe all that was pumped into them. For one thing, they listened clandestinely to the radio and one of them had been ashore in Scotland and had had an opportunity of looking round and seeing things for himself. He compared, for example, the cost of a suit of clothes in Aberdeen with what it would cost him in Poland – his entire earnings for a month if the catch had been particularly good. Last May, they had been lucky and their takings amounted to 3,800 zloties. For the month of June, however, it was a different story, and their earnings had been only 600 zloties. With a suit of clothes at 3,500 zloties, and a pair of shoes costing 850 zloties, it was clear that they were not exaggerating

Seafarers escaping from the Communist countries are inevitably regarded as a bad advertisement for the regime for they are able to give those in the West uncensored accounts of conditions in their own lands

when they described the 800 to 1,200 zloties a month of a skilled worker as 'a bare living'. At 500 zloties a month for unskilled workers, a married man was not earning enough to live on. As fishermen they were getting a basic wage of 320 zloties a month plus a share of the catch, but over a period, taking the good with the bad, their earnings were not enough to enable them to marry and run a home decently.

Nor was any sort of a career to be made out of fishing under present conditions in Poland. The authorities saw to that. It was their deliberate policy not to allow men to remain at sea for any length of time and it was quite on the cards that, on return from a trip, they would be directed to work somewhere well inland. The result was that there was a chronic shortage of fishermen and the Government held out fantastic promises of what could be earned at the calling in order to attract men to the service. In actual fact, wages fell far short of these rosy promises. As to the vessels themselves, here again there was a wide gap between promise and performance. Although new, the motor-trawlers, built in Poland, were proving unsatisfactory. Their 300-HP engines made in Eastern Germany were not adequate to the tasks they were called upon to perform. They worked satisfactorily for a time – until they had undergone their first overhaul. Quality and reliability, it would appear, were sacrificed to speed of production.

It was just this speed of production – the 'fulfilment of the plan' – which made a mockery of the working conditions

and standards of the Polish fishermen. On returning from a trip, sometimes lasting up to as much as three months, the first thing that greeted them would be the news that they were expected to put to sea again after two or three days off. 'The plan had to be fulfilled'. Such treatment made nonsense of the fishermen's theoretical right to fourteen days holiday after a year's service and twenty-eight days after three years.

Meanwhile, always present in their minds was the thought that in due course they would be called up for two to three years' military service during which time they would be subjected to Communist indoctrination. They regarded the 'Polish' army, with all its officers above the rank of Captain Russians, as nothing more than a Russian instrument for the subjugation of their country.

For these reasons they had chosen to escape.

These three Polish trawlermen, and the many other Polish seafarers, who have escaped from Communist domination in this fashion and for reasons similar to those given by the trawlermen during our interview, are inevitably regarded by the Communists as a bad advertisement for the present regime in Poland – as indeed they are. It is not surprising, therefore, that determined efforts are made to secure their return, usually on the grounds that they are criminals. We doubt this for the simple reason that, if they were genuine criminals wanted by the Communist police in their homeland, they would not be on board. As we see it, their only 'crime'



— for it is a crime in the eyes of the Communists — is a refusal to accept the domination of their country by a foreign power determined to impose a political and economic system which they, and probably the vast majority of their countrymen, detest.

If, on the other hand, it can be shown that any of these men are guilty of crimes in the generally accepted sense of the word, then in some countries the machinery of extradition can be set in motion, and the men sent back to receive what punishment the laws of their country provide for the particular crime.

Britain, for example, has a treaty on this subject with Poland. The crimes covered, however, do not include hatred of Communism. Furthermore, some countries have a tradition of granting political asylum to those who have fled their country to avoid political persecution. *Lenin, himself, for some time enjoyed political asylum in Britain. He, however, later returned to his homeland to help establish a tyranny as great as, if not greater than, the one from which he had sought and found refuge.*

The present practice of the democratic countries regarding political refugees from Communist countries is well exemplified by Britain. Political asylum is usually granted unless the authorities of the country from which the persons concerned have escaped can prove some criminal act justifying extradition. At the same time, the applicant for asylum must satisfy the authorities that his life or liberty would be in danger on account of race, religion, nationality, or political opinion.

In a recent case discussed in the British House of Commons, that of Dr. Cort, an American lecturer at a British University, who had strong objections to some features of American political life and had refused to answer an official call to return to the United States, the British authorities decided that he could not be considered a political refugee. They did not however force him to return to America. Instead, he was allowed to go to Czechoslovakia.

There have been other cases, although the circumstances have been different, of people preferring to leave their own country for one under a Communist regime. Britain has had its Burgess and Maclean, whilst the recent case of Otto John received considerable publicity in the German Press and elsewhere. But these are exceptional cases of men in

prominent positions or responsible posts who have special reasons for repudiating the 'West' and making common cause with the Soviets. Their number has been more than balanced by those persons prominent in the Soviet world who, on the basis of inside knowledge, preferred the uncertainties of exile in the West to life under the Soviets.

What can never be balanced, however, is the figure of many thousands who week by week are still risking their lives to escape from beyond the Iron Curtain. That traffic is entirely one-way. We have yet to hear, for example, of any seamen jumping their ships in a Communist port in order to escape the rigours of a democratic regime. The events, and the figures, are eloquent.

The Communists have had something like thirty-six years to build a society in which the workers' aspirations towards a fuller and richer life, free from exploitation, persecution and tyranny,

could find expression. Those thousands of ordinary working people who have escaped from countries behind the Iron Curtain bear witness that the Communists have failed in their task. A society which, thirty-six years after its foundation, still needs secret police, labour camps and 'political officers' to bolster it up, is a society which is doomed. The regime may go on expanding for a long time to come, conquering new territory by force of arms — and force of ignorance — but on the spiritual plane it has already been tried and found wanting. The Communist society, like any other society, must ultimately stand or fall by its power to satisfy the greatest needs, spiritual as well as economic, of the greatest number. Measured by that standard, Communism has failed and is doomed. Its collapse will not come tomorrow — or the day after — or even the day after that. *But history has many yesterdays — and many tomorrows.*

Modernization of Israeli Merchant Navy

A PLAN TO REJUVENATE ISRAEL'S MERCHANT FLEET envisages a modernized and efficient fleet of 22 ships, totalling 95,513 tons deadweight, by 1957.

The scheme for the replacement of old ships is being carried out by Zim, Israel's semi-national shipping company, controlled by the Jewish Agency for Palestine and the Israel Federation of Labour. Zim are virtually the sole shipowners in Israel. The present tonnage totals 21 ships of 121,744 tons deadweight.

Ten of them, comprising more than 60 per cent of the total tonnage, are over 20 years of age. Only five ships, totalling 18,003 tons, are under five years old.

The need for early replacement of the ageing ships has become more apparent as competition in world shipping has increased considerably since the end of the Korean war.

For the Israel merchant fleet the recent phase of rejuvenation is not the first of its kind. In 1947 and 1948, just before the State of Israel was established, the Jewish authorities in Palestine acquired a 'ghost fleet' of ships to run the British blockade with illegal Jewish immigrants.

This consisted of 20 ships, whose combined age exceeded a thousand

years. After the establishment of the State of Israel most of these ships were gradually replaced and a merchant fleet came into being.

Seamen at play

SEAMEN OF ALL NATIONS visiting Rotterdam will soon be able to indulge in sports and physical recreation under ideal conditions at a modern sports centre located at no great distance from their ships. At the end of September, work was started on a group of buildings specially reserved for visiting seamen at the Rotterdam Sports Centre for Sailors situated at Schulpweg in the Waalhaven district. There will be a large reception hall, grounds for various games and sports and dressing rooms with showers.

The approximately 300,000 seamen who visit this port every year are indebted for these amenities to the initiative of a group of Rotterdam's citizens who, anxious to ensure that the town should be able to offer something more than the usual facilities, succeeded in interesting a number of parties in an ambitious scheme for a sports ground. The response was immediate and generous and the necessary capital of 118,000 guilders was soon accumulated, the Rotterdam Council contributing 40,000 guilders to the total.

The sports centre is expected to be ready by March 1955.

During the year 1952, some 200,000 seamen took part in the various forms

TOTAL TONNAGE OF GOODS

**Traffic
on
the Rhine
1953-54**

Country:	Quarter and year:	Loaded:	Unloaded:
France	I 1953	797 534	675 291
	IV 1953	540 614	473 305
	I 1954	415 214	344 813
Germany	I 1953	7 325 900	9 355 100
	IV 1953	8 378 400	9 319 200
	I 1954	7 254 700	7 273 500
Switzerland	I 1953	77 718	719 753
	IV 1953	46 907	641 494
	I 1954	45 613	491 373

of recreational activity offered them by the existing societies and seamen's clubs. In the first nine months of 1954, 110 football matches had been played compared with 139 for the whole of 1953. The majority of seamen who had taken part in those 139 matches were British (68 per cent), Swedes (17 per cent), Dutch (10 per cent), and Norwegians (3 per cent). Other nationalities were Icelanders, Argentinians, and Brazilians.

Japan catching more fish

THE RESULT of Japan's second fishing census, carried out on 1 January, 1954, have been published by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

These show that the annual catch has increased by seventy-three per cent compared with the first census on 1 March, 1949, but the number of fishing enterprises increased only by 13.4 per cent to 251,700.

The corporate enterprises have re-equipped their fleets since 1949 with modern tackle, and followed more up-to-date fishing methods. The result of this reorganization is reflected by the

improved yields noted. Moreover, these corporate enterprises now total 25.2 per cent of all enterprises.

Despite increased productivity, a barrier to greater effort exists in the restrictions concerning the Aleutian Waters, the Rhee Line and the Bikini H-Bomb tests. On account of these, the larger concerns have put economic pressure on smaller enterprises. The independent operators contributed 19.8 per cent of the value of all catches.

Some 2,916,766 people are deployed in the fishing industry and the boats total 332,166, of which 110,963 are motor-propelled.

A merchant marine for Ceylon?

THE GOVERNMENT OF CEYLON has approved a plan to set up a Cingalese shipping line in which the Government would hold a quarter of the shares. Under the scheme, recommended by a special committee set up to study the question, the government of Ceylon would vote a credit of a million rupees towards a working capital of four million, and

appoint a quarter of the administrative staff. A Norwegian concern is expected to provide a further million rupees, whilst the remainder would be obtained through a public loan. If this is not fully taken up, the scheme provides for the Government of the Norwegian company, or both, to subscribe the balance. The Committee also recommended that government freight should be carried at competitive rates without any form of rebate for a period of five years.

St. Lawrence seaway by 1958

ACCORDING TO A JOINT CANADIAN-UNITED STATES STATEMENT, the St. Lawrence seaway and power project is expected to be completed by 1958. As the result of talks during August on various factors involved in modifying the 1952 agreement between the two countries, a number of proposals have been referred to the two Governments for consideration.

The 1952 agreement provided for the construction of the International Rapids canal on the Canadian side of the St. Lawrence.



The author of this article, Brother Gregory, is National Industrial Officer and Secretary of the Air Section of the ITF-affiliated Navigators & Engineer Officers' Union

The Navigating and Engineer Officers of British Aviation

by **J. G. K. Gregory**, Air Section, Navigators' and Engineer Officers Union

THE SECOND WORLD WAR brought about inevitable changes in the crew composition of multi-engined aircraft; formerly, pilots had been able to fly leisurely, and wandering a few degrees off course was of little concern, but the demands of war necessitated accurate timing, close adherence to flight plan, navigation by non-visual reference, and attention to the critical fuel factor. Thus two new specialist categories, the Navigating Officer and the Engineer Officer, came into being, and their usefulness, both from the aspect of safety and efficiency, was proved times without number. With the post-war resurgence of civil aviation, operators were quick to realize – though their views have subsequently been modified by the dictates of economy – that Navigating and Engineer Officers were vital for scheduled services, and on certain long hauls they have been retained as essential members of the flight crew.

Development of organization

In the immediate post-war years there was no trade union organization for Navigating and Engineer Officers engaged in civil aviation, and although certain of the former were in associate membership with the British Air Line Pilots' Association, they were not catered for industrially by that body. Logically, the two groups turned to the Navigators' and Engineer Officers' Union (NEOU), an ITF affiliate, which had been in existence since 1936 but which had been exclusively concerned with maritime activities. It is a tribute to the farsightedness and fraternity of the NEOU Council that the door of membership was opened to the Navigating and Engineer Officers of aviation, and 1947 saw the setting up of an Air Section within the organization.

Today the Air Section comprises some five hundred personnel, the Engineer Officers being in ratio to the Navigating Officers of approximately three to two. Most are employed by British Overseas Airways Corporation, but since the current policy of the Brit-

ish Government is increasingly to permit independent companies to undertake troop and freight operations, the number is steadily expanding and applications for membership are being received almost daily.

Achievement in industrial field

The Air Section has justifiable cause for pride in the achievements of recent years, and whilst a resumé of past activity is in no way a cause for complacency, results to date indicate that we have kept faith with our membership.

Our Union Rules list among the objects of our organization:

- 1) the regulation of relations between Officers and their Employers;
- 2) the regulation and control of conditions of contract under which members serve.

How far have these aims been realized? We have been considerably aided in our industrial negotiations by the establishment in Great Britain of a National Joint Council for Civil Air Transport. This Council has an 'Employers' Side' composed of representatives of British Overseas Airways Cor-

poration, British European Airways Corporation and other air transport undertakings, and a 'Trade Union Side' catering for all grades within the industry. The Council is divided into eleven Sectional Joint Panels, each attempting to resolve the problems of its constituent members, and shortly after the formation of our Air Section, a 'Navigating and Engineer Officers' Panel' was set up. Each Panel is given plenary powers to negotiate and settle terms and conditions of employment of peculiar interest to the group of employees covered by the Panel, and it is true to say that the existence of such a central national machinery has been beneficial to the entire industry.

It would of course be idle to pretend that the mere existence of adequate machinery has solved all our problems. Machinery without goodwill is of little avail. I do not imply that goodwill has been lacking, but machinery is obviously not an end in itself, but merely a means to an end. Every negotiator can recall those hours of thorny discussion, of heated debate, and at times open disagreement; and our experience in this connection has been no exception. Indeed, on occasion our area of disagreement with the employers has been so wide that our Panel has been unable by direct negotiation to solve our problems, and we have been compelled to take the employers through the Industrial Court in order to secure a measure of success for our members.

Glancing back across the years we can, however, claim that headway has been made. On the formation of the Air Section, Navigating and Engineer

officers were serving under individual contracts with the employers, and commencing salaries were as low as £300-£400 per annum. A collective agreement has now been in force for some years, and recent negotiations resulted in salary increases. The new salaries will range from £805 minimum to £1,345 maximum. In the autumn of 1953 we were able, in conjunction with the Radio Officers' Union, to negotiate the Airways Corporations Radio, Navigating and Engineer Officers' Pensions Scheme. This provides for a pension of £312 per annum at the normal retirement age of 50, and we are currently seeking to secure substantial improvements to the scheme.

Technical problems

The organization firmly believes that the functions of a trade union should not solely revolve around wage negotiations and kindred objectives, but that it should be the strong and constructive spokesman on all issues of concern to its members. Hence much of our activity is centred around the technical problems of the industry as they affect Navigating and Engineer Officers and the safety and efficiency of British civil aviation.

For years we have been battling with the British Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation and the Air Registration Board in an attempt to resolve the complex question of flight crew complement. We fully subscribe to the I.T.F. policy of a minimum five-man crew on all long-distance operations, each crew member fulfilling his specialist task aboard the aircraft. Aircraft are becoming increasingly complex and we contend that in the interests of safety and operational efficiency, the use of specialist ability is absolutely vital. Since Great Britain was the first nation to operate both turbojet and turbopropeller aircraft on commercial airlines, we are conscious that much of our work on the crew complement issue is of a pioneer nature, and it may well be that in solving the problem on a national level we are assisting the international adoption of satisfactory standards. Unfortunately, neither the Ministry nor the Corporation has to date fully implemented our proposals, and the following extract from a speech by Douglas Tennant, C.B.E., our General Secretary, delivered on the occasion of our Annual General Meeting in October 1953 indicates our feelings on the matter:

'I have decided, after long thought, to refer to our concern about the manning of aircraft by BOAC and the statutory regulations dealing with this important matter. It is the declared policy of BOAC on their long-distance multi-engine aircraft to dispense with the person solely responsible for the navigation, provided of course that one of the pilots had the necessary qualifications to satisfy the regulations. As the result of our endeavours the Corporation fortunately has not accelerated their policy, but have agreed that, whilst the present navigators would not be made redundant, there would be no further recruitment. The NEOU warned the Corporation over three years ago that if the policy of dispensing with navigators was pursued, they would eventually run into serious difficulties.'

Mr Tennant cited the loss of the *Hermes* aircraft in French West Africa in May, 1952, stressing that there had been no navigator on board as such, nor was there a first-class navigator's licence carried on the aircraft.

'At the present time the Comets, flying up to speeds of 500 miles per hour, are being operated without a person whose sole concern is that of navigation. These aircraft carry two pilots, but in addition to their duties as such they are required, between them, to undertake the navigation of the aircraft. Fuel is a critical factor with jet air liners, and small errors in navigation could have fatal consequences.'

'On the engineering side, the Corporation would appear to be embarking on a dangerous policy. On certain lines at present no Engineer Officers are carried, and whilst the union has been unable to ascertain the real facts, it is believed that the cost of maintenance and repairs of aircraft operated without engineers exceeds the cost of carrying a highly-specialized Engineer Officer. Furthermore, Comets would not have operated with their regularity and efficiency had it not been for the high degree of competency of the Engineer Officers attached to this line, although before the Comets came into service it was the declared policy of the Corporation to fly these aircraft without engineers. According to present regulations, the operator can in fact predetermine in the blueprint stage whether an Engineer Officer is to be carried or not by the simple means of not providing a station for the Engineer Officer in the cockpit. Occa-

sions have in fact arisen where the Certificate of Airworthiness has called for an Engineer Officer irrespective of whether an appropriate station has been provided.'

Mr Tennant emphasized that, in all the representations made by the organization, they had been concerned with the paramount question of safety, and not necessarily with maintaining their members in employment.

Members decide policy

No record of the history and aims of our Air Section would be complete without a tribute to the sterling services rendered the organization by our members. Although Navigating and Engineer Officers have problems that differ in character, there are nevertheless a number of common interests; and relations between the two sides are most cordial. As in all democratic institutions, we can claim that our members decide our policy; each group has its Technical and General Committees and in addition to these sectional activities, joint meetings are frequently held. Elected representatives sit on the Navigating and Engineer Officers' Panel of the National Joint Council, and there is thus a wealth of airline experience on which the Air Section can draw in its contacts with the employers.

It is always hazardous to forecast developments; nevertheless, the organization will continue to pursue its energetic policy - the use of specialist personnel with resultant safety for the air-travelling public and increased operational efficiency for the air line operator.

Air transport in Brazil

THE RATE OF TRAVEL IN BRAZIL is exceptionally high. Each year, forty-four out of every 1,000 Brazilians travel somewhere by air, compared with an average of twenty-seven per 1,000 for Latin America as a whole and twelve for each 1,000 in Europe. The total number of passengers flown annually in Brazil represents half the total carried by all air lines in the whole of Western Europe.

Last year, Brazil's air lines flew 57,480,000 miles (95,800,000 km.), a slight drop of about one per cent on the 1952 total of 57,960,000 miles. A number of factors were responsible for this decrease, including very heavy road competition. However, the Brazilian

Civil Aeronautics Directorate is of the opinion that this was a 'healthy levelling-off process'. A better use of equipment was recorded last year and about the same number of passengers were carried, despite the drop in air miles.

Comparative figures for the last ten years are as follows:

Commercial air traffic in Brazil

Description	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953*)
Distance flown (millions of km)	20.8	23.5	40.0	54.6	69.7	72.0	82.2	96.6	96.1	95.8
Passengers (millions)	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.8	1.1	1.3	1.7	2.2	2.2	2.3
Freight (thous. of tons)	3.5	4.8	7.2	12.3	23.4	33.5	39.5	51.0	49.1	51.6

*) Estimate based on first quarter.

Source: D.A.C.

These figures give totals for all operations, including long hauls to the United States and Europe, but even these long hauls contribute a surprisingly small amount to the total of purely domestic operations. Regular air lines in Brazil itself cover an area bigger than Western Europe and the United States together.

Brazil provides about fifty-five per cent of all Latin-American air travel to Europe. If suburban passengers are not counted, her domestic air lines carry twenty-five per cent of all passengers moved by rail and air, probably the highest percentage in the world. The aeroplane is in many cases the only means of reaching remote areas of the interior. As the table above shows, the air movement of freight is constantly increasing. Mixed passenger and cargo flights are routine, the cargo on some lines to the interior sometimes crowding

off passengers because of its priority.

There are 450 airports in Brazil, nineteen of which are paved and capable of handling big passenger air liners. More than 34,000 landings are made annually at Sao Paulo (Congonhas Airport), 31,000 at Rio de Janeiro's two airports of Santos Dumont and Galeao,

11,000 at Belo Horizonte, about 10,000 each at Porto Alegre and Curitiba, 8,000 at Bahia, 5,000 at Recife, and 3,000 at Belém.

Air transport is vitally important to Brazil because of her geography. This year, the Air Ministry is subsidizing pioneer domestic lines as well as international lines maintained by Brazilian companies. These subsidies will amount to Cr.\$31.2 and Cr.\$68.2 million respectively (£1 equals fifty-two cruzeiros).

Federal appropriations for expansion and improvement of airport installations during 1954 will total Cr.\$463.7 million, of which Cr.\$36.6 million will be spent in the Amazon area. In the future, this type of development will be projected on a five-year basis, the first of which, known as Plan 1/53, is already in process of approval.

Public service vehicle accidents in Great Britain

THERE ARE NOW 83,000 PUBLIC SERVICE VEHICLES operating in Great Britain - 76,000 buses and coaches; 4,000 trolleybuses; and 3,000 trams. They travel some 2,500 million vehicle miles and make more than 16,000 million passenger-journeys every year, equivalent to 350 journeys for every man, woman, and child in the country. On an average, each vehicle travel 30,000 miles, carries 200,000 passengers, and takes £2,900 in fares per annum.

Approximately 27,000 such vehicles are involved in personal injury road accidents reported to the police each year. This represents one in every three licensed, compared with about one in every 30 cars, one in every 20 goods vehicles, and one in every 19 motor cycles. This high accident rate is largely explained by their exceptionally high annual mileage.

Per mile travelled, a public service vehicle is involved in a personal injury road accident twice as often as a car or goods vehicle, equally as often as a pedal cycle, and half as often as a motor cycle.

However, one half of all the accidents involving public service vehicles are 'no collision' accidents, such as boarding or alighting mishaps. If these are excluded, the personal injury accident rate is about the same as for cars and goods vehicles, and much lower than for motor cycles or pedal cycles.

Accident records indicate that buses are the safest, and trams the least safe, from the passengers' point of view, with trolleybuses intermediate. On routes in London where buses have replaced trams the number of accidents have been reduced by thirty per cent.

Accidents involving public service vehicles result in 30,000-35,000 casualties a year, or one-seventh of the entire road casualty total in Great Britain. Approximately 50 per cent of all the casualties are sustained by passengers, two per cent by public service drivers, 20 per cent by pedestrians, and the remainder by the riders, drivers and passengers of other vehicles in collision with public service vehicles.

The total number of people in Great Britain licensed to drive public service vehicles is nearly a quarter of a million. According to the experience of London Transport, the number of accidents incurred by public service drivers is inversely related to their length of service. The accident rate is almost three times as high among drivers with less than one year's service as it is among those with fifteen or more years' service.

Not fit for the road

DURING 1953, certifying officers and vehicle examiners of the British Ministry of Transport cooperated with the police in comprehensive road checks in various parts of the country. The number of vehicles examined was 7,298. Of these, an exceptionally large number (2,214) were found to be defective in some way necessitating their withdrawal until repairs had been carried out. The standard of maintenance was found to be particularly low in the case of small vehicles used for retail deliveries. The principle reasons for this are thought to be the continuous use of the vehicles, inadequate servicing, the rough-and-ready manner in which the vehicles are driven, and the high cost of repairs. Defects mainly responsible for the issue of prohibition notices suspending the use of the vehicle are grouped under steering, bodywork, brakes, suspension and transmission.

Swedish legislation on working hours at sea

by Georg Uhlin

WORKING HOURS ON BOARD MERCHANT VESSELS are not regulated by the general legislation on working time applying to other groups of Swedish workers. There is, in fact, a separate law on working hours at sea, the original version of which was issued on 24 October 1919. Amended legislation on the subject came into force in 1926, 1938, and 1948, the last-mentioned being still in effect.

The term 'shipboard duty' has been the subject of a number of definitions, in order to clarify the dividing line between the general legislation on working time and the law on working hours at sea. If, for example, a tug is engaged in towing a vessel undergoing repairs, then its crew members are considered as performing shipboard duty, even though they are employed by a firm of ship repairers and are organized in the Metal Trades Union. A dredger is not generally considered as a vessel in the normal sense of that word. However, if the dredger is so constructed that its crew live on board, then the latter perform shipboard duty and their working hours are regulated accordingly. At least, that is what the Labour Council (Arbetsrådet*) once decided in its wisdom. Whether its judgment is still in fact applied is a matter on which we have not bothered to check.

Early maritime legislation

The first Swedish maritime legislation is to be found in the Bjärköa Law, which dates from the thirteenth century. This differed from other maritime laws in that it did not place the seaman on a lower level than working people generally. All earlier laws known to us, and even most of those of a much later date, considered the seaman not only devoid of rights but even as a virtual slave. The master was all-powerful on board and could, if he wished, have seamen punished for alleged offences.

Of course, none of the laws just referred to regulated working hours. In this field, the shipowner or the shipmaster was completely free to issue his own stipulations and apply his own decisions. In the maritime law of 1864, revised in 1891, there were a few stipulations concerning seamen's duties, but nothing about working hours. In any case, even where the seaman was assured of certain rights, he was completely helpless. The man who went to sea seldom had any opportunity of gaining knowledge of the laws' provisions, and there was no authority available to him

which either could or would take up the injustices under which he suffered. So-

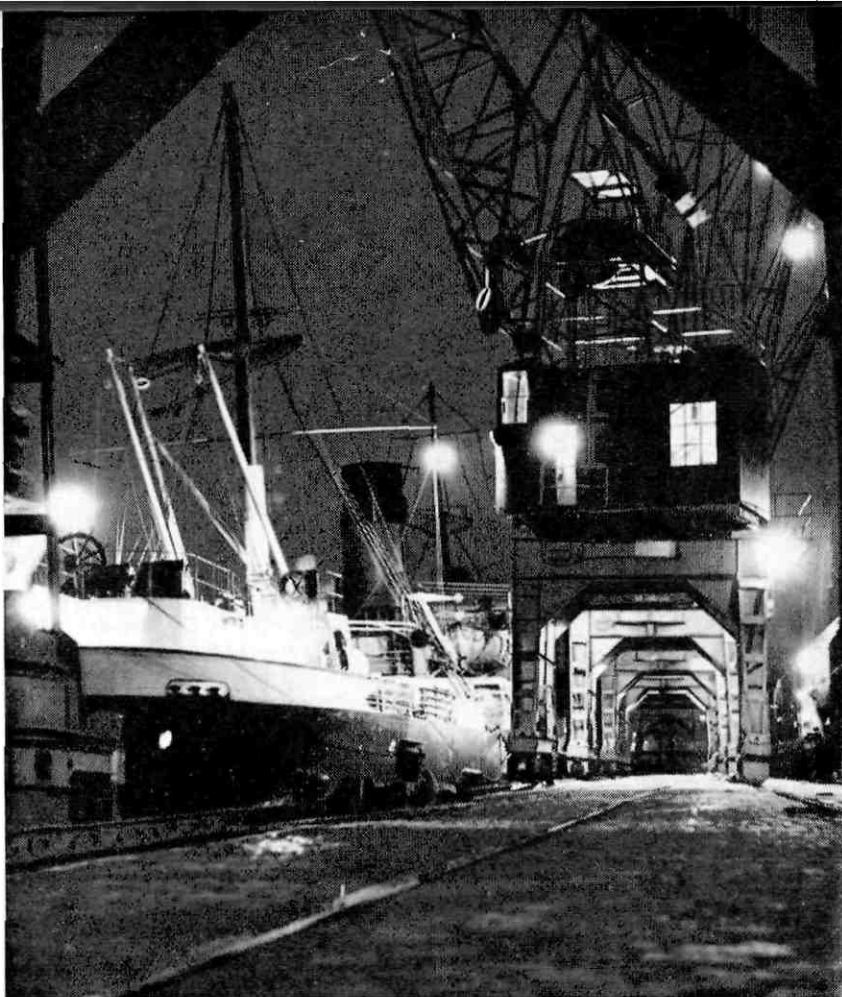
called Seamen's Houses were to be found in the larger seaports from the middle of the seventeenth century onwards, but they seem to have been mainly concerned with helping the shipowners to keep wages down. When the seafarers protested, the Seamen's Houses threatened to take away their means of livelihood. The name was, therefore, completely misleading. In fact, they should have been called Shipowners' Houses.

Support from reactionary laws

When the Labour Movement emerged and began to win ground in Sweden, it naturally tried to humanize and improve the conditions of seamen. But progress was considerably slower than in the case of other groups of workers. In no other industry or trade was the bondage system so firmly in the saddle. The shipmaster, who was often also the owner of the vessel or possessed a considerable interest in it, was traditionally both king and God on board. And, of course, he was extremely unwilling to give up any of his ancient privileges. He received unreserved support from the old reactionary laws – in fact, to a large extent, he still does until this day. The average



*) The Labour Council was set up in 1919 to deal with matters concerning the implementation of legislation on working hours.



In port, the working hours of Swedish seafarers in all three departments have now been fixed at eight on weekdays, six on Saturdays, and five on Sundays
Photograph by O. Lundquist, Gothenburg

landsman's opinion of seamen was also extremely one-sided. The seamen could not be considered as a 'real' worker. Seen from a distance, he became a romanticized adventurer, who loved and killed with the same fierce intensity. Closer contact, however, turned him into a rather suspicious character, who was best confined to the brothels and drinking dens of the port area.

Because of the character of their calling, the trade union movement, too, had difficulty in making headway among seafarers. There were, of course, unions of seamen and firemen in both Gothenburg and Malmö in the years 1885 and 1892, but they very soon died natural deaths. In 1895, Charles Lindley founded a seafarers' association in Stockholm and his union set up a section which was known as the Seamen's and Firemen's Union. But this section worked under great difficulties and finally disappeared during the wave of large-scale strikes in 1909. It was not until 1914, immediately before the outbreak of war, that healthy unions were established among the seafarers. They were known as the Seamen's and Firemen's Associations, and

after an amalgamation in 1932 they formed the present ITF-affiliated Swedish Seamen's Union.

There was also another factor which must be taken into account: the emergence at an early date of a strong shipowners' organization – the Swedish Shipowners' Association. As may be guessed, it did not easily agree to improvements and reforms. If one excepts the results of negotiations during the past fifteen to eighteen years, then it can be said that the shipowners' organ has never yielded an inch, never accepted an improvement, without a struggle. Of course, it can be claimed that, so long as Swedish shipping was weak and still in the development stage, they were unable to do so. However, that argument does not apply, for example, to the boom period which they enjoyed during the first world war. But, of course, at that time the shipowners were strong and the seafarers' organizations weak. The logical result of that situation was that no gains were made by the seafarers.

Firemen simply collapsed

However, the development of the ship-

ping industry was proceeding at a much speedier pace than both the will to reform and the legislative process. Vessels became both larger and faster, work on board both harder and heavier. Soon a position was reached where no ship's fireman, however tough and brawny he might be, could stand up to a 12-hour working day in the tropics. Those who tried simply collapsed, with the result that the shipowners were unable to sign on fireman and were finally forced to cut down working hours. A three-watch system was introduced in the stokeholds, with six 4-hour spells being worked per period of 24 hours and each man taking a day and a night watch. This system was applied long before the 1919 law on working hours at sea came into force. When legislation on working hours did finally become effective, the war was already over and a large proportion of the seafarers were redundant. The draft on which the 1919 law was based was so bad to begin with and was so watered down during its passage through Parliament, that its final provisions were worse than existing practice. It confirmed the three-watch system for firemen aboard larger vessels, but allowed for 16 hours to be worked per period of 48 hours instead of 8 hours per 24 hours.

Other crew members could work up to 24 hours per two days, even on board vessels of less than 250 h.p. in the North Sea trade and of less than 600 h.p. in minor trades. Sundays at sea were, of course, working days, making the normal working week 56 and 82 to 86 hours respectively. For day men working hours were 9 per day, and for catering personnel 12 hours. In port, both deck and engine room personnel could be made to work 51 hours per week, whilst catering personnel had the same hours as at sea, namely 84. In addition, seafarers in the first category could be called upon to perform light cleaning duties for one hour on Sunday when in port, providing that such work formed part of their normal daily duty. Thus, if a youth was employed every morning on cleaning out the officers' toilets, then he could be turned out of bed at

6 a.m. on Sunday morning to do the same job. And you can be sure that that was what did happen.

Low overtime pay

At sea, watches consisted of 4, 5, and 6 hours (4, 4, 5, 6, 5 per 24-hour period), with seafarers working alternate watches. That meant that 14 hours were worked during the first 24-hour period and 10 during the next. In addition, there were no limitations on the amount of overtime and it could happen that those off duty between 1 p.m. and 7 p.m. could be called on to work two or three hours' overtime, i.e. after they had already worked from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. and were on duty again from 7 p.m. to midnight.

Overtime rates were terribly low. As is still the case, they were fixed at 1/150th of the monthly wage on weekdays and at 1/75th for Sunday work. But a youth or a mess-boy, for example, had a monthly wage of only 33 kronor, which meant that they were paid 22 or 44 öre per hour for overtime. In general, it can be said that the lowest paid ratings had to do the most overtime. It was, for instance, not at all unusual for a 15-year old boy to work 70 to 80 hours a week in port, and to receive 6 to 7 kronor as his total overtime pay. At sea, of course, he worked anything up to 86 hours a week without any additional compensation.

With very minor amendments, these stipulations remained in force until 31 December 1938. It is true that the seafarers' organizations managed to have some small improvements – principally for catering personnel – written into collective agreements, but the opposition was so stiff and economic conditions so unfavourable that there was little chance of securing any far-reaching revision of working hours. During the thirties, however, the workers' political organizations began to increase their influence in the maritime countries, and the question of shorter working hours for seafarers was taken up at international level.

Following the adoption, at the Fourth International Maritime Labour Conference of 1936, of the Hours of Work and Manning (Sea) Convention, the Swedish Parliament decided, on 16 September 1938, to draw up a new Law on Working Hours at Sea which was to take effect from 1 January 1939. As can be seen from its official title, the ILO Convention, which was adopted in

Sweden in December 1938, also dealt with manning, but it never came into force because the outbreak of the second world war prevented it from being ratified by a sufficient number of important maritime countries. Manning regulations for Swedish deck personnel are at present laid down by collective agreement, but are lacking for engine room and catering personnel. The question is still being discussed by the Seamen's Committee of 1946.

A considerable advance

Until December 1938, all watch-keeping personnel except firemen and coal trimmers aboard larger vessels were obliged to work up to 86 hours a week whilst at sea without any claim to overtime compensation. Catering personnel, whose duty hours are less often divided up into watches, had to work almost the same number of hours per week.

In the light of these conditions, the 1938 Law on Working Hours at Sea represented a considerable advance, although it was still a long way from the application of the 8-hour day to all seafarers. The latter did, however, apply (even at sea) to deck personnel aboard vessels of over 2,000 tons and to engine-room personnel serving on ships of over 700 tons. In fact, even firemen aboard smaller vessels who were engaged on coal firing were limited to eight hours work per day, providing that the vessel was under way for at least 24 continuous hours and was of a certain indicated horse-power.

In the case of non-watch-keeping deck and engine-room personnel, hours of work at sea were reduced from 9 to 8 per day, whilst those of catering personnel were cut from 12 to 10. In addition, the 48-hour week was made statutory for the former group. Up to that time, these personnel had a normal working week of 54 hours plus one hour's cleaning duty on Sundays. They are still required to perform such duties on Sunday, but working hours during the week are reduced accordingly.

A strange eight-hour day

The Law of 1938 also provided that

'What would the seafarer do with increased time off', ask the shipowners. They apparently expect him to work for nothing when other Swedish workers are able to seek rest and recreation

working hours in port should not exceed 8 per day. However, in the case of catering personnel a remarkable exception was made. It was provided that 'in order to ensure the proper working of other departments or necessary attendance on passengers' the shipowner could increase the working day by two hours in the case of passenger vessels and by one hour on other vessels. In other words, a cook or a steward officially had an eight-hour day, but 'in order to ensure the proper working of other departments' he had to work a ninth hour for nothing. On a passenger vessel he 'donated' two hours' work for 'necessary attendance on passengers'. A strange eight-hour day indeed! Added to that was the fact that they were expected to work on Sundays and holidays without additional pay. In the best case, the 1938 Law reduced the working hours of catering personnel from 84 to 63 per week. They are, incidentally, still waiting for a 48-hour week.

At this point, it might be interesting to quote some of the arguments put forward by the shipowners whenever the question of shortening seafarers' hours of work has come up. We can, of course, ignore the predictions of economic ruin which have been made. The fact that the shipping industry is stronger and more powerful than ever before is the best answer to them.

'Watch-keeping at sea cannot be compared with normal work', is a very common argument. Shipboard duty is simpler, less exhausting, and better. All you have to do is to watch the steering, keep a look-out, see that the engines are greased, etc. The fact that the watchkeepers' working time is carefully utilized for all kinds of maintenance work, preparing for the loading or discharge of cargo, cleaning duties, and



a lot more besides, is conveniently forgotten. But even if it were only a question of different forms of this type of work, it is doubtful whether the argument would be worth very much. It is, for instance, never proposed that machineminders, certain railway or tramway workers, telephonists and wireless operators – all of whose work consists either wholly or partly in watch and ward duties – should work longer hours than other workers. For seafarers, however, it apparently seems reasonable – at least so far as the ship-owners are concerned.

Expected to work for nothing

The shipowners also ask: 'What would the seafarer do with his increased free time?' They claim, for instance, that the seaman cannot put his free time to some use as can other workers. In other words, the seaman should give up his free time, without compensation, for the benefit of the shipowner. The other discomforts of life at sea are apparently not enough; the seaman is also supposed to work for nothing when other workers can seek recreation and rest.

These and similar arguments have been – and still are – put forward by the shipowners. There are, of course, a few gratifying exceptions to the rule and, what is more gratifying, their number is increasing. But progress in this respect is slow and lags far behind that in shore industries.

If one can say that the 1938 Law on Working Hours at Sea represented half a step forward, then one can certainly claim that the Law of 1948 was a whole step. It meant that the overwhelming majority of seafarers were given a 48-hour week both at sea and in port. Those still excepted are the crews of smaller vessels, catering personnel, and, to a certain extent, watch-keeping personnel at sea.

The term 'smaller vessels' now covers vessels of up to 500 tons. On board such ships, men can still be required to work for 24 hours per period of two days. There is, however, a new upper limit, namely that no more than 112 hours may be worked in a period of two weeks. In addition, the union's collective agreement provides for a supplement to be paid on all vessels where the two-watch system is not operated.

Catering personnel are still required to work nine hours per day whilst at sea. Actually, the law provides for ten hours

to be worked on passenger vessels, but this extra hour has been lopped off by means of the collective agreement. In port, working hours for all departments have been fixed at eight hours on weekdays, six hours on Saturdays and five hours on Sundays. Maximum hours per week are therefore now 63 at sea and 51 in port.

The question of overtime compensation

Watch-keeping personnel have to work eight hours per day and 48 hours per week, but for work performed on Sundays there is no overtime payment. Instead, compensation is made in the form of time off. The law states that rules for the implementation of such compensation shall be written into the collective contract or some other form of agreement. All the existing agreements for seafarers do in fact contain a section dealing with compensatory time off, but this section is unsatisfactory in that such compensation is limited to three days per month. Incidentally, the three days include a free half-day to which all seafarers are entitled by virtue of the Seamen's Law. In practice, that means, to take an extreme case, that a seaman could be required to work on five Sundays in the same month – for which he would receive only three days off in compensation! In addition to which he would lose the time off to which he would otherwise be entitled under the Seamen's Law. It is true that such an example rarely occurs, but it has nevertheless been known.

Another weakness is that neither monetary compensation nor time off in lieu has to be granted in the case of watch-keeping duties which fall on a holiday other than a Sunday. Things may, in fact, reach such a point that a public holiday in port may be paid for by a Sunday spent at sea during the same week. The section dealing with compensatory time off takes into account only time actually worked, a watch-going seaman having to work 48 hours during any one week in order to qualify for time off in lieu of Sunday, so that if, for example, a ship is in port on Good Friday but puts out to sea on Easter Eve, then he has to work during the remainder of the Easter holiday without compensation. The seafarers' organizations have not yet been able to secure a more favourable interpretation of this stipulation – which applies also

to officers serving aboard Swedish ships.

No happy end

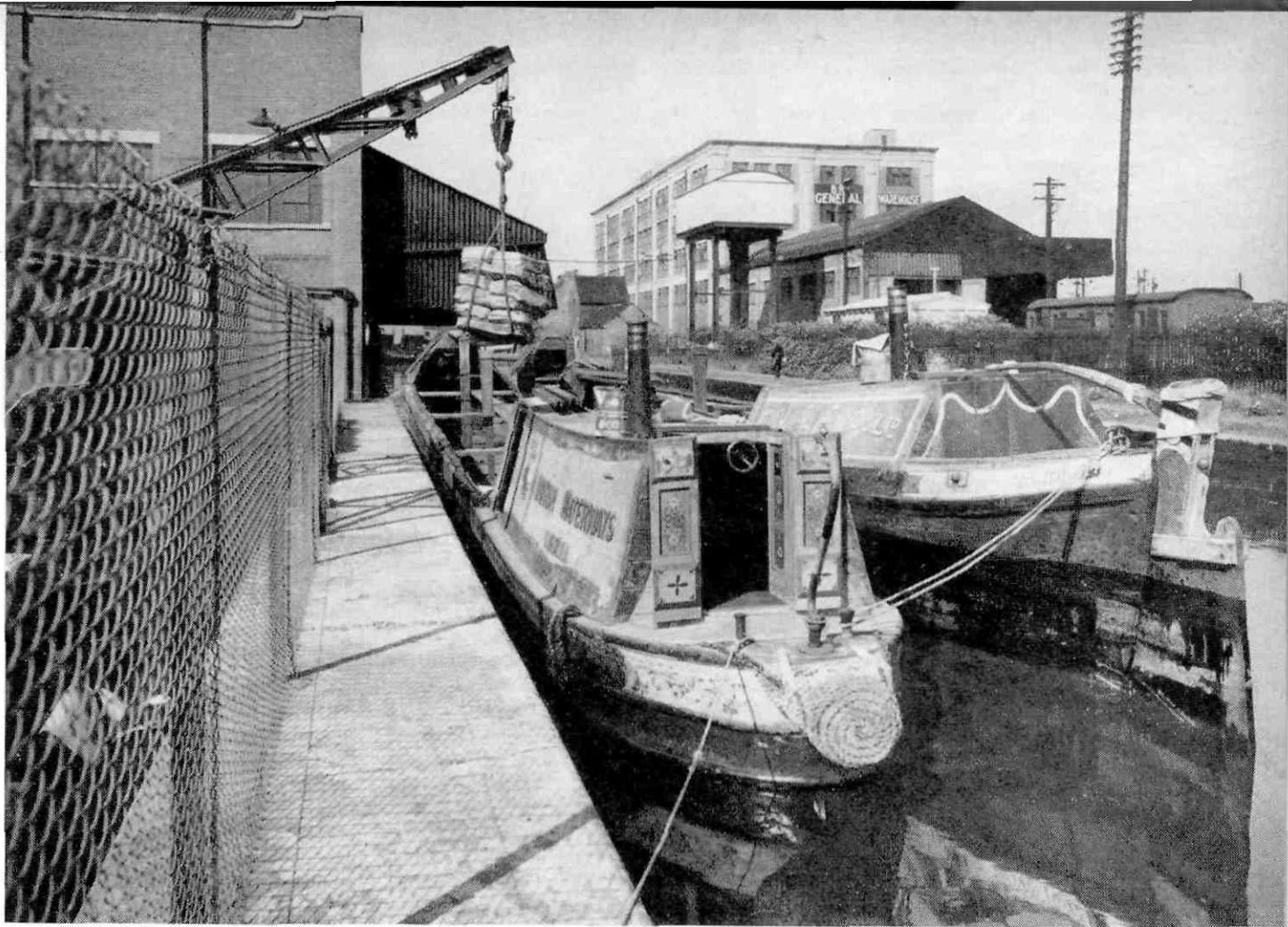
If this article concludes with some remarks concerning overtime duties and the so-called 'safety watch', that does not mean that it has a 'happy end', for here too the seafarer is way behind his fellow-workers ashore.

Safety duty covers such work as must be carried out when there is a danger to the vessel, to life, or to its cargo, or when it is necessary to aid other vessels in difficulties or those aboard them. The English expression 'emergency duty' probably describes it better.

That one has both an obligation and a duty to perform such work even if one has already done a full normal day's work must, of course, be accepted on board ship. And, in fact, even most collective agreements dealing with shore workers make mention of a similar obligation. The building worker, for instance, must stand by his employer and those living in the danger area if a building threatens to collapse. The metal worker is under the same obligation if his workshop is on fire, or the Water Board employee if the drains burst and flooding threatens. The big difference is that these workers are paid for such work whilst the seaman has to do it without compensation. We are, of course, not referring here to the saving of human life, but it should be remembered that the seaman also has to work without pay when it is merely a question of safeguarding the property of the employer or goods which have been entrusted to him.

Again, in the case of the shore worker the obligation to work overtime is limited to 200 hours per annum, which can be increased to 350 if specially sanctioned. The seaman, on the other hand, is obliged by existing legislation to work up to 24 hours per week or 1,248 hours per annum. He cannot refuse overtime until he has worked 16 hours in a 24-hour period.

That, in brief, is one side of the seaman's 'happy and carefree' life – the question of working hours. It may perhaps appear from the above that there is still a lot remaining to be done, and a fair amount which must be done again and done better. The principal object of this article, however, has been that of contributing towards a better understanding of the Swedish seafarers' professional aspirations.



Narrow boats and barges

by **T. Birkett**, Transport and General Workers' Union

Britain's inland canals are the country's oldest means of bulk transport; the industries that raised Britain to commercial supremacy were developed with the aid of the canal system, which is still an important – indeed, an essential – component of the complicated transport machine on which the life of the country depends.

The folk who live and work on the inland waterways are, in some respects, a race apart; their homes are their boats, their friends and neighbours are the families on other boats, they have but few contacts with the people of the big cities. But they are kindly, hospitable folk upon whose skill, integrity and pride of craft the success of their own industry and the prosperity of many others depend. They are of the great brotherhood of transport workers.

Many work people engaged in other industries have little conception of the type of work involved and the complex nature of the various occupations within the Inland Waterway Industry. Those people who have some knowledge of

inland waterways very often consider that work people in the industry operate gaily painted and decorated craft up and down very pleasant waterways and canals and at times their job is considered a holiday by other workers.

However, there is far more to the job than this and the problems confronting the industry are many.

Continued to play a useful part

The canals in Britain were principally constructed in the last half of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century and during most of that period, with the navigable rivers, constituted the principal means for commercial transport. With the development of railway traffic the canals suffered severely from the competition and many of them fell into disuse and were abandoned, whilst others lost much of their traffic. Nevertheless, the canals of Britain have continued to play a useful part in the country's transport services, and they are now carrying about 12½ million tons per year, of which approximately half has been coal. Other principal traffics include oil (in tank barges), grain, timber, metals, foodstuffs, wool, minerals, and building materials.

The inland waterways of Britain can be divided into two main classes:

1) The narrow canals – boats on these canals usually operate in pairs carrying 50 to 60 tons the pair.

2) Wide or barge canals – the craft navigating these canals vary greatly and carry anything up to 100 tons on a maximum draft.

The difficulties which have confronted inland waterways in the past is that they were split up into a number of relatively small and uncoordinated units. Some cooperation, it is true, had been secured under the stress of war by the establishment of the Central and Regional Canal Committees by the Ministry of Transport, but this, though valuable, was of little scope.

The 'battle of the gauge' which in the case of railways was fought out by parliamentary Committees and settled about 100 years ago, had no counterpart



On board a narrow boat. In the centre can be seen the traditional can with its brilliant decoration of scarlet, pink and yellow roses against a background of dark green

as far as the inland waterways were concerned, with the result that interchange of craft is very limited and

restricted.

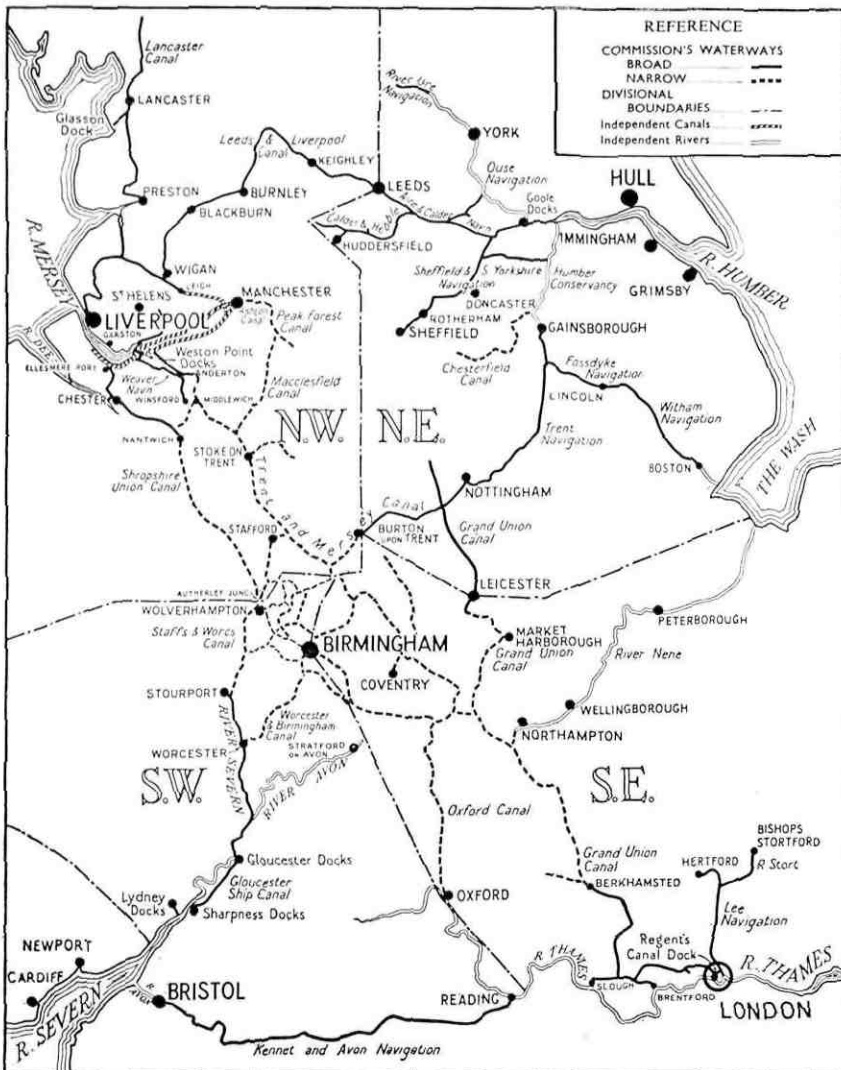
The wide or barge canals consist largely of canalized rivers and link the ports on the estuarial waterways with inland towns as against the narrow canals in the interior of the country which can generally be used by boats of about seven foot beam. The much larger unit loads possible on the broad waterways enable goods to be off-loaded overseas direct from sea-going ships to lighters or barges which can proceed direct to inland destinations.

The effect of rail and road competition led to a general decline of traffic which could only have been arrested by improved standards of service to provide which the necessary financial resources were, in most cases, lacking. As a consequence considerable lengths of waterway ceased to be used and at this time 700 miles of 2,600 miles of recognized canals are no longer used for commercial traffic, although by statute they must be maintained.

The cost of this maintenance with no income from these stretches of canals is one of the difficulties facing the industry at the present time. Even in those canals which are still a commercial proposition 1,200 miles of the 2,000 miles carry 98 per cent of the traffic.

Nationalization of the industry

Under the Transport Act, 1947, seventeen separately and independently owned undertakings, two State-owned and some thirty owned by the Railway Companies were transferred to the British Transport Commission and practically all of these comprising the 2,000 miles of waterways previously



mentioned have since been unified. They are controlled through a Docks and Inland Waterways Board of Management.

Recently the British Transport Commission set up a Committee of Inquire to investigate the Commission's own canal system.

The purpose of the inquiry is to survey the use at present being made of the Commission's own inland waterways and to report to the Chairman of the British Transport Commission, who is ultimately responsible to the Minister of Transport, on:

a) whether all possible steps are being taken to ensure that the maximum economic advantage is being derived from the canal system under the Commission's control; and

b) as to the steps to be taken in regard to such of the Commission's inland waterways which can no longer be put to an economic commercial use.

Obviously an efficient canal system is to the benefit of the work people employed in the Industry. The canal system of Britain is suffering today not from any acts of omission by the Docks and Inland Waterways Authority of the British Transport Commission, but rather from the neglect they have suffered over many, many years prior to the unification of control. Had it not been for the work performed by the Commission since vesting date, the plight of the waterways would have been much worse.

Legacy of past neglect

When the waterways were taken over many were found to be suffering from serious arrears of maintenance and past neglect. Through an extensive programme of dredging and bank protection on the main traffic routes, a notable improvement has since been effected.

The canals still make a substantial contribution to the transport system of the country; the following figures show the traffic carried on the publicly-owned inland waterways of recent years:

Year	Coal, coke, etc.	Liquids in bulk	Other commodities	Total
1949	5,566,000	1,745,000	4,014,000	11,325,000
1950	5,791,000	1,836,000	4,175,000	11,802,000
1951	5,844,000	2,036,000	4,356,000	12,236,000
1952	6,322,000	2,021,000	4,099,000	12,442,000
1953	6,930,000	1,920,000	3,897,000	12,747,000

The carrying craft on inland waterways number about 7,000 of which there are 3,200 narrow boats, 3,100 barges, and 650 compartments designed for carrying coal. The majority of these are owned by private carriers but there is a fleet operated by the Docks and Inland Waterways Board comprising about 390 narrow boats, 110 barges, and 650 coal compartments.

A great use of the canal system in the country would not only assist the work people engaged on the canals, but would do much to relieve the congestion on the roads.

At the moment the non-commercial sections are a burden on the workers engaged on the commercial sections by virtue of the fact that the financial position reacts unfavourably against them during negotiations.

Many of the waterways of Britain run through very pleasant scenery and there is a school of thought which considers the canals should be maintained for pleasure boating and/or the setting up of lidos for recreational purposes. These are very worthwhile and legitimate objects, particularly having regard to the beautiful country through which some of the canals are cut, but we would maintain that the canals required for other than commercial transport should be the functional and financial responsibility of authorities other than the British Transport Commission. This would have the effect of ridding canal transport users of the cost of maintaining hundreds of miles of obsolete waterways.

There are two main factors governing the cost of canal transport – speed and capital expenditure. The question for inland waterways is not what speed can be obtained in a channel of indefinite length, but what form of channel is suitable having regard to the capital outlay necessary for its construction.

The form and size of craft navigating the inland waterways of this country have not materially altered since the canals were constructed, although there

has been a considerable change in the motive power. At one time horses were used to pull the narrow boats along the canals but since the introduction of the internal combustion engine practically one hundred per cent of the long-distance traffic is now carried in self-propelled craft. All-steel craft, too, are making their appearance and the old wood-built craft will no doubt eventually disappear.

Family life on the canals

One of the traditions of inland waterways is in the family boats – husband, wife, and children operating a pair of boats between them. The family boat is becoming a gradually diminishing influence and the alteration in design of boats can also be foreseen by virtue of the fact that at some future date the craft navigating the canals will no longer act as homes for the canal boatmen's families. Children are now required to have regular school attendance and in order to cater for this requirement there has been opened under the auspices of the Birmingham Education Authority a hostel where the children of canal boatmen can live while they attend schools in the neighbourhood. Despite the tradition on the waterways of children not attending school regularly, this



Polishing the brass aboard a narrow boat. British canal folk take great pride in their brilliantly decorated boats. The roses and landscapes with their Carpathian castles are traditional, although the origin of this art form is now rather obscure



Inside the cabin of a narrow boat. The boat cabins measure about 7 ft. wide by 10 ft. long and all have a standard and highly functional lay-out. Decoration consists of lacework, brasses, lace-edge plates, and rose and castle paintings

venture started promisingly and there are now a number of children happily settled in their new environment. The success of this venture is encouraging and the best adverts for the hostel are the children themselves who are attending. The trade unions have for years urged that the canal boatmen's children should have the same opportunities of educational advancement as have the children of work people in other industries and the type of hostel started at Wood End Hall, Erdington, Birmingham, is bringing that wish to fruition.

As a consequence of these changes the future may well see homes being found on shore for boatmen's wives and families and the possibility that the boatmen will work in relays between two points on the canal, rather than operate the craft from the beginning to the end of the journey as is now the case. Full living accommodation aboard the vessel not being required, the result will be more space left for cargo and no doubt planning of new craft will be devised to promote the most efficient and economic operation possible.

Despite the competition from road and rail there is still wide scope for the use of canals in the distribution of goods in this country. The cost of transport can be less on water than on road and rail. It has been estimated that the cost

Wood End Hall hostel managed by the Birmingham Education Authority. Here the children of canal boatmen can live while they attend schools in the neighbourhood and receive a proper education

of maintaining the track, works and vehicles is four-and-a-half-times more on railways than on waterways. Compared with lorries, boats cost less to build and last longer. In theory, road and rail are far speedier than water transport, but for certain types of non-perishable goods such as coal, sand, concrete, petroleum products, bricks, timber, grain, and flour, etc. where there is a steady replenishment of standard stocks, speed is less essential than a steady flow. In practice, delivery by boat is often more rapid than rail owing to congestion at railway depots but the neglect of the last hundred years cannot be made good at once on the canals.

Conditions of employment

At the same time as the unification of control of canals was being brought into being the negotiating machinery for the industry was also reviewed and reconstructed and at the present time there is a National Joint Council operating in the industry which is composed of representatives of the Docks and Inland Waterways of the British Transport Commission, the Independent Carriers and the Transport and General Workers' Union. The Constitution also provides for a District Joint Council for each of the following districts:

- 1 - London
- 2 - Liverpool and Manchester
- 3 - Leeds, Hull, and Nottingham

4 - Birmingham

5 - Gloucester

and the negotiating machinery functions reasonably well.

In view of the scattered nature of the industry and the fact that negotiations have in the past years been conducted in the different districts, there has developed a hotch-potch of different conditions of employment and it has been the endeavour of the union for some considerable time to obtain some degree of uniformity.

As a result of the trade unions' effort a 44-hour week is in operation for maintenance men, warehousemen, and other shore workers, but excluding lock-keepers, who by the nature of their employment work irregular hours and in respect of whom arrangements are made in each district. Uniform overtime payments now obtain of time-and-one-quarter for the first two hours, time-and-a-half thereafter Monday to Friday; time-and-a-half for Saturday; and double-time for Sunday. Six statutory holidays are paid for with provision for extra payment when worked and a fortnight's annual holiday with pay now obtains throughout the industry.

Boatmen are paid on a trip and/or tonnage basis and because of the different trips and the different types of boats operating, these rates are negotiated in the locality according to the circumstances obtaining. As a rule boatmen's trip and/or tonnage rates are increased pro rata with any adjustments made in the rates of maintenance workers.

Provision has also been made for the setting up of Joint Consultative Committees, the objects of which are:

- 1) to provide a channel of communica-





A compartment tug with a full train of nineteen compartment boats in tow carrying 760 tons of West Yorkshire coal to Goole for shipment. British Docks and Inland Waterways' Executive photo taken on a section of the Knottingley & Goole Canal

on matters affecting the interests of management and staff;

II) to improve the efficiency of the undertaking;

III) to promote a spirit of cooperation and to secure to the undertaking the benefit of the experience of all grades of staff; and

IV) to give the employees the opportunity to take an active interest in and a

greater responsibility for the conditions under which their work is performed.

It will be seen from the foregoing that the canals; the working operations; types of crafts; etc. are at present in a transitional stage through which with the retention of that part of tradition which has proved its worth and the adaptation of technological progress to the needs of inland waterways, along

with the better facilities now available for the workers to be consulted on matters affecting their welfare, it is possible for the industry to once again emerge as an efficient and prosperous section of the country's transport system.

(Photographs illustrating this article reproduced by kind permission of the Transport & General Workers' Union and the Docks and Inland Waterways' Executive of the British Transport Commission)

National merchant fleet for Panama?

THE NEW YORK TIMES REPORTS that the Republic of Panama is considering a plan to set up her own merchant marine because, although she has the fourth largest merchant registry in the world, she has no ships to carry on her own foreign trade.

This paradoxical situation, writes the *New York Times*, has been brought about by the fact that non-Panamanian owners, mainly Greek and United States, have registered 540 ships of 5,931,000 deadweight tons under the Panamanian flag to avoid restrictions to which they would be subject if they operated under their own flags. These vessels rarely touch at Panamanian ports and carry Panamanian seamen only by chance. Only a few small, old

vessels are actually engaged in the Panamanian coastal trade.

For this reason, Panama is considering the establishment of her own Government-owned fleet. This plan is similar to that used successfully by a number of small nations since the war to cut shipping costs. Negotiations have been in progress for several months between shipping interests in the USA and the Panamanian Government on the possibility of organizing a state-owned line operating between the Republic and the United States. Nothing definite has been arranged, states the *New York Times*, but news from Panama indicates that a wealthy Panamanian business group is interested. Ships in the service, if it becomes a reality, would be of 3,000 to 4,000 tons, a type profitable in Caribbean service.

The Panamanian Government hopes

that use of a Government-backed fleet will aid the country's economy by cutting costs to consumers of its exports. Panamanian seamen will also be trained to man the vessels. There is said to be no shortage of manpower except in certain officer categories, such as radio officers, for whom a training school is being planned in Panama.

World maritime problems

World maritime problems to be discussed by the Transport and Communications Commission of the UN during its 7th session next February include the situation in respect of the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization and particularly the Scandinavian opposition to the proposed convention. The Commission will also consider the unification of tonnage measurement and oil pollution.



Foot troubles among tram workers

by Dr. Herbert Schmidt-Lamberg

COMPELLED BY THE NATURE OF THEIR WORK to stand for long periods, many tramwaymen develop foot troubles at a comparatively young age, and those engaged in this type of work would be well advised to consider preventive measures before the onset of more serious complaints. Such measures are all the more to be recommended in that they do not make any great demands on the person or take up much time. The main thing is that they should be begun early enough.

Medical statistics derived from hospitals, medical journals and other sources, indicate that not only are foot troubles increasing among tram-drivers, but also that they tend to appear at an earlier age and consequently have more serious effects on the subsequent career. It should be stressed that the development of foot troubles among tram-drivers is not necessarily confined to those countries where nutritional and other factors operating during the war might be considered conducive to such complaints. The same phenomenon is observable in countries which were neutral.

Preliminary warnings

The first signs of coming trouble are tiredness and sharp, darting pains in the feet and the region of the calf. These are symptomatic of a collapse of the metatarsus (the bones forming the middle part of the foot). As a result of the collapse of these bones, the small blood vessels associated with the nerves in the foot and the periosteum (the membrane enveloping the bones) are prevented from performing their double function of supplying oxygen and carrying away waste products. It is therefore clear that, at this stage, it is not so much the 'flat foot' itself which constitutes the danger – unpleasant though that may be – as the formation and increasing accumulation of waste products. When the sufferer only undergoes orthopaedic treatment for fallen arches at this stage he is still not removing the actual source of troubles which may develop later, namely the accretion of impurities in every 'nook and cranny', of which there are so many in the foot by reason of the large number of joints.

Tram drivers suffering from this condition should endeavour to stimulate

the circulation of blood by natural means as far as possible so that these impurities are carried off. This should be started as soon as there is an improvement in the fallen arches themselves. In this connection, the value of a course of treatment designed to purify the blood should not be overlooked. Such treatment should best be undertaken twice a year – in Spring and again in the Autumn – and be alternated with other forms of treatment. It is important as regards the latter to make use of as wide a range as possible as, generally speaking, each remedy attacks a different source of accretion of these body poisons.

Preventing serious consequences

By treating the first signs of trouble in this way, the sufferer will arrest the development of more serious complaints. These are likely to occur, however, if no preventive measures or treatment are undertaken at the first signs of discomfort in foot or leg. If this is overlooked, trouble is likely to develop in the veins and arteries of the leg, as a result of the strain and constriction associated with foot trouble.

This continuous strain on the veins of the leg prevents the proper purification of the blood vessels, the joints and the nerve ducts, with the result that the blood vessels carrying blood back to the heart finally become choked with poisons, cease to perform their proper functions, and, in the last stages, atrophy. Here we have the explanation why phlebitis – the inflammation of the veins – can assume such dangerous forms. Poisons are slowly gathering in the veins, and, if the sufferer continues to stand for long periods, these poisons will be discharged into the bloodstream when the vein finally bursts. Preventive action should immediately be taken by bandaging the calf, alternating periods of rest with exercises in the open air in the prone position, etc. combined with other measures designed to purify the blood and counteract the varicose condition. It should be stressed, however, that treatment should be carried out only under the instructions of a qualified medical practitioner.

Tramwaymen suffering from the effects of long periods of standing should, in the first place, strive to counteract these effects themselves. It has been noticed, for example, that they tend to adopt certain positions automatically when carrying out their everyday tasks. They should try to break their habits and endeavour to change these positions as frequently as possible. An occasional day or so on other work would also be of advantage, and ought to be laid down in their working conditions. Such a provision would be of considerable advantage when treatment was being given for foot trouble. It might save much time being lost at a later date.

The pressure and strain on feet and

legs to which tramwaymen are subjected by the nature of their work can also lead to other troubles, such as bladder and bowel disorders. Tramwaymen suffering from such ailments do not at first connect them with their long periods of standing. Here again, however, they are at least partially attributable to interference with the normal functioning of the blood vessels.

No need to fear the worst

Naturally, no tramwayman, on reading this description of the possible troubles which may develop as a result of foot-strain, should immediately begin by fearing the worst. Such developments can be avoided if he pays attention to his condition from the very start. He will be making a grave mistake, however, if he refuses to 'see the red light'. Few people, whose work requires them to remain for long periods in a standing

Not only are foot troubles increasing among tramwaymen, but they now tend to appear at a much earlier age

position can expect to avoid some sort of foot trouble developing sooner or later. The important thing is to adopt preventive and counteracting measures in good time. Although these include the occasional adoption of rest in the prone position, this is not regarded as the only way in which a cure can be effected. Sporting activities should also be carried on, as they stimulate the circulation. Nicotine, however, tends to contract the vascular system and smoking should be avoided. Alcohol has a similar effect, and the tramwayman suffering from troubles of the kind described would do well to observe restraint in his drinking.

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80,000,000,000 passengers

LONDON TRANSPORT, which came into operation as a public authority on 1 July 1933, is the world's largest urban passenger transport system. It coordinates into one integrated network under common management all passenger services, except the main railway lines, covering the whole Greater London area of 2,000 square miles.

Among the services which it brought together were the buses of the London General Omnibus Company, the London Underground system, the electric and steam services of the Metropolitan Railway, seventeen different tramway systems, and some 140 other road transport operators. More than 70,000 staff from these various undertakings joined the new Board.

A financial link to enable large capital expenditures necessary in the Greater London area to be carried out was also provided with the four main-line companies through a pooling scheme of suburban receipts and expenditures.

During its twenty-one years' existence London Transport bus and tube men have carried a total of nearly 80,000,000,000 passengers who have made journeys totalling more than 200,000,000,000 miles in London Transport vehicles. The vehicles themselves have run in the twenty-one years 11,500,000,000 miles - equal to approximately 460,000 times round

the earth.

London Transport began in 1933 with 11,800 vehicles, road and rail, but this number has since increased with the growth of services and traffic to nearly 14,000. The annual mileage run by its vehicles started at 537,000,000 in 1933. Today, with six main Underground lines and 579 bus, trolleybus and coach routes, the mileage is 634,000,000.

London Transport's daily passengers now total 12,000,000. While this is below what it was for a time during the post-war travel boom, it is still much higher than in 1933, when passengers totalled 10,000,000 a day. In addition, individual passenger journeys are longer and rush-hour traffic has become far more intense because it is crammed into shorter peak hours.

In 1948, with the coming into operation of the Transport Act, London Transport, with its title officially changed from the London Passenger Transport Board to the London Transport Executive, became part of the British Transport Commission.

Two driving mirrors for British vehicles?

THE BRITISH MINISTER OF TRANSPORT & CIVIL AVIATION has circulated to interested organizations a proposal that motor vehicles generally should be required to have two driving mirrors. One mirror would be fitted externally on the off-side and the other

either internally or on the near-side.

The proposal follows recommendations made by the Committee on Road Safety, the Road Research Laboratory, and other bodies. At the present time, one mirror is compulsory in Britain but it is claimed that a second mirror should reduce a driver's blind spots to a reasonable minimum.

Motor cycles and certain other classes of vehicles, which are not at present required to have a mirror, would still be exempt, but three-wheeled cars and vans, although legally classified as motor cycles, would have to be fitted with two mirrors.

The Minister also proposes to make it compulsory if a pillion passenger is carried on a motor cycles for suitable foot-rests to be fitted.

US railwaymen's pensions and sickness benefit

THE US RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD recently released a report on its activities under the Railroad Retirement and Railroad Unemployment Insurance Acts during the fiscal year which ended on 30 June, 1954. The following are the highlights of the report:

A total of 36,300 railroad employees were awarded retirement annuities, which averaged \$104 a month. One out of four retired before age 65 on account of disability.

A total of 19,000 wives of retired
(continued on the next page)

Road Transport in the Soviet Zone of Germany

ACCORDING TO A STUDY undertaken by the German Institute for Industrial Research, road transport service in the Soviet-controlled zone of Germany has steadily grown worse in the last few years. This is particularly noticeable in the case of goods transport by road.

Before the war, in what is now known as the Eastern Zone of Germany, there were some 80,000 motor vehicles employed in the transport of goods. Today the figure has sunk to approximately 65,000. The decline has been steady since 1949 and also affects the roadworthiness of the existing pool of motor vehicles, which is characterized by a high degree of obsolescence. Some forty per cent of the vehicles operating before the war were more than five years old, so that the major part of the road transport fleet in service in the Eastern Zone must now be something like twenty years old. The negligible additions to the fleet have made little difference. No lorries with a load capacity greater than three tons are being constructed. The only replacements are in the light lorry classes — one, one and a half, and three tons. About nine-tenths of the vehicles engaged in road haulage are in the under three-ton class. In Western Germany, on the other hand, heavy vehicles have increased sixfold since the pre-war period.

The total load capacity of all vehicles engaged in road haulage is given as 100,000 tons compared with 135,000 in 1936. The present load capacity in the

Federal Republic is in the region of one million tons. The average capacity of a goods vehicle is about one-third lower in the Soviet-run Zone than in Western Germany. This fact, together with the shortage of motor fuels and accessories, has led to the full exploitation of all available trailers, which today number about 30,000 with a capacity of 70,000 tons. This is less than one-tenth of the trailer capacity in Western Germany.

Just what an insignificant role road haulage plays in the Soviet-run economy of the Eastern Zone can be gathered from the following transport programme: railways 21.3 milliard ton/kms, inland waterways 1.8 milliard ton/kms, road transport 1.2 milliard ton/kms. The transport of goods in the Soviet Zone thus shows a line of development diametrically opposed to that in the German Federal Republic and other western European States. Long distance road haulage is almost non-existent and road transport concerns are mainly engaged in short-haul traffic. The entire effort of the road transport industry in the Eastern Zone is directed towards maintaining short-haul, local and feeder services; during peak periods it cannot even adequately cope with these.

(continued from page 215)

employees were awarded annuities averaging \$35 a month.

Monthly benefits were awarded to 22,300 survivors of railroad employees. This number included some 17,200 widows, 4,900 children and 100 parents.

In addition to the monthly benefits awarded during the year, 20,800 insurance lump sums, averaging \$434, and 8,700 residual payments, averaging \$1,075 were paid to survivors of deceased railroad workers.

At the year's end, well over half a million monthly benefits were being paid under the Railroad Retirement Act: 294,000 to retired employees;

99,000 to wives; and 169,000 to survivors.

Railroad employees and their employers paid a combined total of \$602 million in retirement taxes in the 1953-54 fiscal year. In addition, \$99 million was earned in interest on the system's reserve.

During the same period, \$512 million was paid in retirement and survivor benefits and \$6 million was used to defray operating costs. The amount in the retirement reserve at the end of the year was \$3.4 billion. This amount, however, was more than offset by liabilities accrued with respect to service already performed by railroad employ-

ees, the RRB said.

A total of 400,000 railroad employees were paid unemployment or sickness during the year, 265,000 were paid \$96 million for periods of unemployment and 164,000 were paid \$45 million for periods of sickness; 19,000 drew both types of benefits.

Unemployment insurance contributions, which are collected only from employers, totalled \$24 million for the year, and interest earned on the unemployment insurance fund was \$16 million.

Combined unemployment and sickness benefits paid were over \$140 million, while operating expenses were \$7 million. The balance in the unemployment insurance account at the end of June was \$590 million.

An RRB report on sickness benefits for the financial year 1952-53 showed that railroad workers in the US lost more time from work in that year than in any previous period since the payment of sickness benefits under the Railway Unemployment Insurance Act began in 1947.

However, only eight in every 100 qualified employees drew benefits and well under one in 100 had more than one period of illness during the year.

The report showed further that 147,000 persons received benefits amounting to an average of \$295 each. Arthritis and rheumatism are the most common ailments for which benefits are paid, the report said.

Bone fractures held second place and next in order were diseases of the heart and arteries, influenza, nervous disorders, ulcers and hernia.

Women workers, on an average, had more illnesses than men. However, illness rates of young women were considerably higher than those of young men, while in the upper age groups illness rates were greater among men.

The report also made distinctions between ailments common to different age groups. Arthritis, heart and nerve disorders were common among older groups, while mumps, tonsillitis and appendicitis occurred mostly among the young.

Cancer and nervous ailments seemed to be more common among women, while men were more subject to heart disease, pneumonia and ulcers. The report explained that some of these differences may be due to the fact that the average age of men in the industry was greater than that of women workers.

INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION

President : A. DEAKIN General Secretary : O. BECU Asst. Gen. Secretary : P. TOFAHRN

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

Seven industrial sections catering for

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

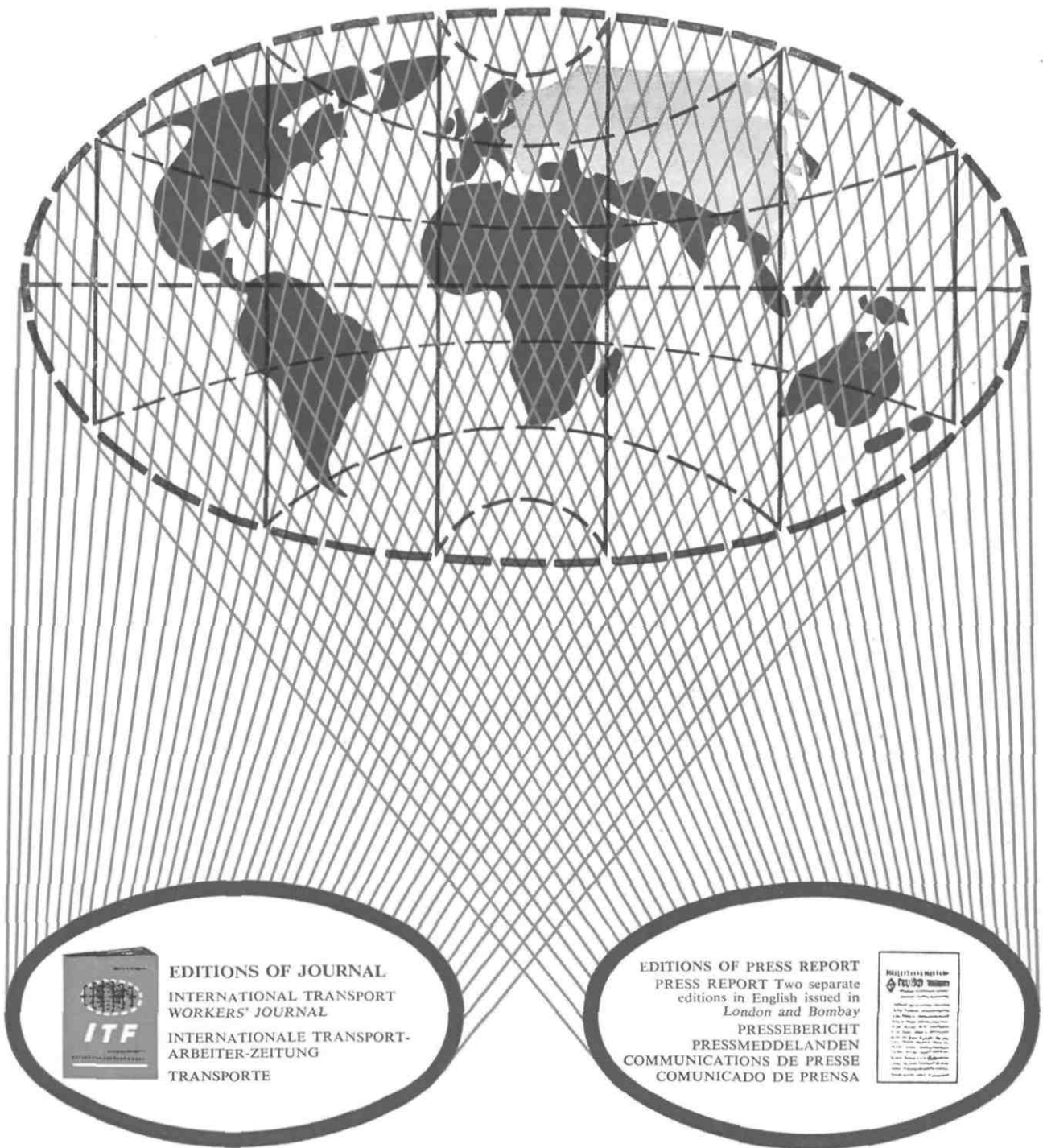
The aims of the ITF are

to support national and international action in the struggle against economic exploitation and political oppression and to make international working class solidarity effective;
to cooperate in the establishment of a world order based on the association of all peoples in freedom and equality for the promotion of their welfare by the common use of the world's resources;
to seek universal recognition and enforcement of the right of trade union organization;
to defend and promote, on the international plane, the econ-

omic, social and occupational interests of all transport workers;
to represent the transport workers in international agencies performing functions which affect their social, economic and occupational conditions;
to furnish its affiliated organizations with information about the wages and working conditions of transport workers in different parts of the world, legislation affecting them, the development and activities of their trade unions, and other kindred matters.

Affiliated unions in

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



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