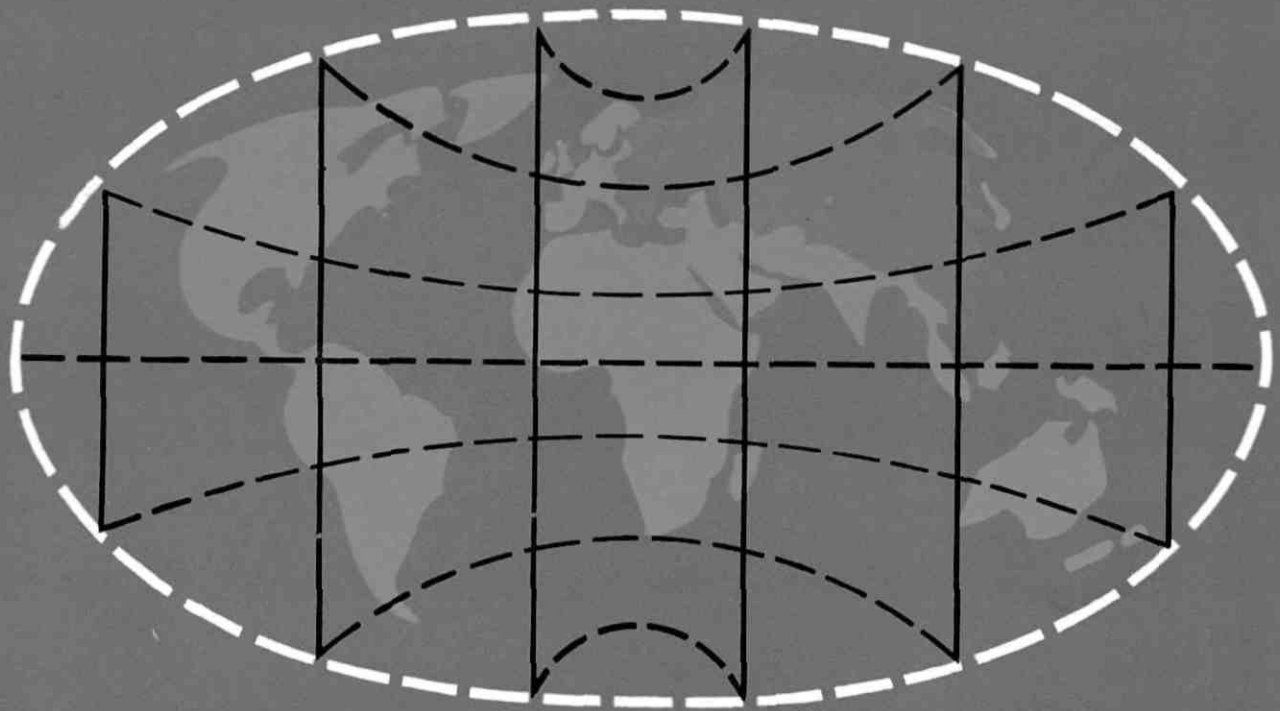


Vol XV No 9 September 1955



ITF

**INTERNATIONAL
TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION**

International Transport Workers' Journal

Monthly Publication of the ITF

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

Telephone: Macaulay 5501-2

Telegraphic Address: INTRANSFE

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

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

MEXICO - Calle Nuevo León
No. 126 Apto 7, México, D.F.

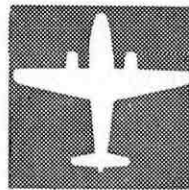
Forthcoming Meetings:

Berne	12-13 September Conference on European transport problems
Berne	14-17 September International Railwaymen's Conference
Ostend	3-4 October Seafarers' Sectional Conference

Contents

	page
'Position reporting' <i>by Omer Becu</i>	161
Organizing India's merchant officers <i>by J. F. Soares</i>	167
United Nations flag at sea.....	171
Study courses popular with Norwegian seamen.....	171
The National Railway Workers' Union of Japan.....	172
Problems of seafarers' organization in Sweden <i>by Georg Uhlin</i>	176
Israel to extend her fishing industry	179
Post Office Savings Bank for Swedish seafarers	180
OEEC studies automation in Europe	180
European transport body proposed by Council of Europe.....	180

It is not customary for the ITF to publish in its Journal extensive reports on its Sectional Conferences, but an exception has been made in this instance in order to draw the attention of all our affiliated organizations in particular, and our readers in general, to the very complicated problems of the civil aviation industry and the difficulties with which we are faced internationally. Doubtless as the Civil Aviation Section develops, it will become part of the very important activities of the ITF, having regard to the international character of the industry



'Position reporting'

by OMER BECU, General Secretary of the ITF

THE MOST REPRESENTATIVE CONFERENCE in the history of the ITF Civil Aviation Section took place, at the invitation of our German friends, in Stuttgart on Monday and Tuesday, 18 and 19 July 1955. It was fitting that Germany should be the scene of the meeting since recent months have witnessed her rebirth as a sovereign state, and, with it, the resurgence of her civil aviation. Students of air history are fully alive to the important role played by the German airline prior to World War II, and there is little doubt that the national characteristics of industry and efficiency will again serve it well.

All flying staff categories from major countries of Western Europe and North America were represented by the nineteen delegates from ten affiliated organizations; they comprised both trade union officials and active airline officers from Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States, thus providing the conference with a wealth of experience and specialist talent. The International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) was represented in observer capacity. The agenda was composed as under: -

- 1) Election of Sectional Vice-Chairman
- 2) ILO 1956 Bipartite Civil Aviation Conference
- 3) Flight Crew Complement
- 4) Crew Fatigue and Flight Time Limitations
- 5) Aircrew Retirement Pensions
- 6) Aircrew Sickness Insurance
- 7) Aircrew Accident Insurance.

Our new Vice-Chairman

Since problems facing flying staff and ground personnel differ in character, it

has been found necessary to divide the Civil Aviation Section into two Sub-Sections, one for flying, the other for ground staff. Because our Sectional Chairman, Bro. Lapeyre, of the French Public Works & Transport Federation, represents an organization of ground staff, it has become customary to elect a Vice-Chairman drawn from a flying staff affiliate who presides at meetings of the Flying Staff Sub-Section.

The election of a new Vice-Chairman had unhappily been rendered necessary by the untimely death, in a flying accident in February 1955, of Captain Stolz

of Belgium, who had occupied the position of Vice-Chairman since June 1953. A number of well-merited tributes were paid to his memory, and the conference stood in silent homage prior to dealing with agenda items.

Our new Vice-Chairman, Captain Verpoorten, also of Belgium, is no stranger to international civil aviation circles; for a number of years he has represented his organization both at ITF and IFALPA gatherings, and has made substantial contributions to the discussions. He is a keen trade unionist interested in all phases of civil aviation social problems; he is moreover an airline captain of proved ability, and our Flying Staff Sub-Section looks forward to a time of increasing progress under his leadership.

ILO 1956 Bipartite Civil Aviation Conference

For the ITF, the International Labour Organization (ILO) is an instrument of



The new Sectional Vice-Chairman, Captain F. Verpoorten (centre), discusses a point with the General Secretary and Brother Horst of the TWU. Captain Verpoorten, who is active in both ITF and IFALPA circles, was unanimously elected to succeed the late Captain Stolz

inestimable value; ever since that body was formed in 1919, we have closely participated in its work, from time to time submitting proposals and supporting material dealing with holidays with pay, social security measures and hours of duty, and even, on occasion, drafting international labour conventions. There is also a wide field of opportunity to cover in this respect on behalf of civil aviation personnel, but the difficulty to date has been the lack of adequate machinery to cope with such problems.

As far back as 1951 representations

will be devoted almost entirely to flying staff problems, will be: -

- 1) Review of Conditions of Employment in Civil Aviation;
- 2) Hours of Work of Flight Personnel;
- 3) Income Security of Flight Personnel on Retirement or Grounding.

As is usual with ILO bipartite conferences on transport subjects, the ILO Workers' Group has turned to the most representative international organization within the industry, namely the ITF, for nomination of employee representatives, and it was the task of our Stutt-

tion within a country to consider, as well as its affiliation with the wider international trade union movement; in order that the Workers' Side at the forthcoming Conference should speak with one voice, it would be wise to select as many countries as possible where the ITF had affiliates; it was equally important that where individuals were nominated from unaffiliated organizations, such individuals should be in ideological agreement with ITF policies. It became apparent, as the question of representation exercised the minds of delegates, that, of necessity, certain countries with legitimate claims would have to be disappointed, since the decision of the ILO Governing Body to limit representation to ten countries was quite final. After an exhaustive exchange of views it was unanimously agreed that representation at the ILO Conference should be as follows: Belgium, Brazil, France, India, Mexico, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States, with the proviso that should any of the aforementioned countries be unable to be represented, or to adhere to ITF policy, Germany should be invited to serve as a substitute.

Turning to the nomination of individuals, the conference was guided by the following considerations: delegates should be such that all flying staff categories were fairly represented; they should also be trade union officials versed in flying staff problems rather than active airline officers since the latter, of necessity, would not be so conversant with conference procedure - the latter could however well serve as technical advisers to their national delegations and could be appointed at a much later date. The list of nominees ultimately agreed was: -

- A. Valkeners (representing all Belgian flight personnel);
 - D. Héricault (representing all French flight personnel);
 - A. Piccardt (representing all Dutch flight personnel);
 - R. Lindfors (representing Swedish cabin personnel);
 - H. Pfeiffer (representing Swiss flight engineers, radio officers and cabin personnel);
 - D. Tennant (representing British navigating and engineer officers);
 - C. Sayen (representing American pilots);
- the ITF Secretariat undertaking to obtain the names of the Brazilian, Indian and Mexican delegates. Bro. J. Steldinger



French delegates Maritaud, Héricault, Dabry, and Grandjean (seated, left to right) made some very effective contributions to the discussions. Captain Dabry is the representative of all flying staff on the board of management of Air France

were made to the ILO for civil aviation personnel; whilst technical problems were dealt with by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), commercial problems by the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the ILO, largely because of its internal machinery, had not been able to devote much attention to the social problems of the industry. Now its Governing Body has reacted to ITF proposals, and will convene a special conference, which will be bipartite, in 1956, at a place and on dates to be announced later. We hope this conference will be the forerunner of a permanent Civil Aviation Commission to function on similar lines to the Joint Maritime Commission for the maritime industry. The ILO 1956 Conference will be the first time in the history of the industry that representatives of civil aviation employers and employees have met internationally, and the agenda, which

gert Conference to select such delegates, having agreed on the countries, which had been previously stipulated by the ILO as ten, to participate in the 1956 discussions.

The selection of countries posed no small problem: all quarters of the world had to be considered; Europe was obviously a 'must', having regard to the move towards the co-ordination and integration of all modes of European transport; the United States, with its pioneering experience and intensive domestic and international aerial network, must be represented; South America, with vast mountainous regions and jungle areas, where, eminently, aviation is the most suitable form of transport, must merit a conference seat; aviation in the Far East was becoming increasingly important; in addition to the geographical spread, there was also the question of civil aviation trade union organiza-



A general view of the ITF Civil Aviation (Flying Staff) Conference held at Stuttgart. The Conference, which discussed a number of vital questions affecting air crew personnel, was attended by representatives of ten affiliated organizations from eight countries

(representing all German flight personnel) to represent his country if necessary.

Flight crew complement

Across the years the Civil Aviation Section has devoted considerable attention to this fundamental problem, and organizations have been also pressing nationally for its solution. ITF activities over the past few months have been aimed primarily at securing an agreement with IFALPA for the crew complements of four-engined, long-distance aircraft, thereby carrying out the mandate of our Paris Civil Aviation (Flying Staff) Conference of 1953, which rightly contended that the flight crew complement problem was of vital import to all flying staff organizations, and which appointed a sub-committee to carry out discussions with IFALPA.

The Joint Statement, which had already been approved by IFALPA's Gov-

erning Body, at its Annual Conference, in Montreal, April 1955, was presented to the Stuttgart Conference for ITF ratification. It is reproduced hereunder:

Joint statement on crew complement by IFALPA and the ITF

'The International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations and the Civil Aviation Section of the International Transport Workers' Federation

'Prompted by the desire to maintain at all times the highest possible safety standards in civil aviation, and bearing in mind the technical development which is rapidly taking place and the constant adoption of new types of aircraft for commercial operation;

'Note with concern that the crew complement regulations in force in various countries are of an unsatisfactory na-

ture, and that practices widely differ;

'Having regard to the fact that national regulations of various countries are in many respects based on the recommendations of ICAO, and that these recommendations are capable of a wide range of interpretation;

'Decide to bring their united views on crew complement requirements for long-distance air transportation to the attention of all interested national and international bodies in order that safer and more uniform standards may be established, and to take such other action as may be deemed necessary to achieve this end;

'Consider that the minimum flight crew complement requirements shall be as follows:

PILOTS

That all four-engined aircraft shall carry a minimum of two properly qualified

and certificated pilots at all times, and such additional flight crew members as may be required by the subsequent paragraphs.

NAVIGATORS

That a flight crew member holding the appropriate flight navigator's licence shall be carried, except where, after consultation between the appropriate authorities and interested bona fide organizations representative of the flying staff concerned, it is established that adequate ground aids do not necessitate the carriage of such a member.

FLIGHT ENGINEERS

That a flight crew member holding the appropriate flight engineer's licence for the aircraft concerned shall be carried. He shall act in the sole capacity of flight engineer and shall be provided with a separate station and suitable instruments and control apparatus.

Except where, after consultation between the appropriate authorities and interested bona fide organizations representative of the flying staff concerned, it is established that the aircraft design or type of operation does not necessitate the carriage of such a member.

RADIO OFFICERS

That a flight crew member holding a radio officer's licence and acting in the sole capacity of radio officer shall be carried, except where, after consultation between the appropriate authorities and interested bona fide organizations representative of the flying staff concerned, it is established that the carriage of such a member is not necessary.'

Prior to formally approving the Joint Statement on behalf of the ITF, a full and frank discussion took place on the flight crew complement problem. Certain delegates, notably those of British and American non-pilot organizations, expressed considerable misgivings at recent trends within their countries. They felt that pilots were too willing to assume non-pilot duties aboard aircraft, and were becoming so overloaded that there was a danger of safety being imperilled. Britain and America would remain the major aircraft constructional countries for some years, and what was established there would inevitably serve as a guide to other countries. There was an urgent need for flying staff organizations to be consulted in the blue-print stage of aircraft design in order to ensure the adequate manning of aircraft in the dual interests of safety and operational efficiency. In Great Britain, the Britannia aircraft, a turbopropeller machine of all-up weight of 164,000 lbs., had been constructed with no station for a flight engineer; in France, the Caravelle, a twin-engined turbojet, had been built for two-pilot operation, and these practices could only be severely condemned. There was no desire on the part of non-pilot delegates to set themselves against technological progress, but they sincerely believed that faster and more complex aircraft warranted the use of specialist personnel engaged only on their own duties.

Dealing with the need for consultation in the early stage of aircraft design, the Conference unanimously passed the following resolution:

'This Flying Staff Conference of the

ITF Civil Aviation Section;

'Meeting in Stuttgart 18 and 19 July 1955;

'Notes with concern the increasing practice of aircraft designers and airline operators to predetermine the flight crew complements of new aircraft types by providing crew accommodation which is found to be insufficient, and which cannot be modified at a later stage except at considerable expense and crew efficiency;

'Asserts the right of organizations representative of the flying staff concerned to be consulted in the blue-print stage of aircraft design with reference to crew accommodation and rest facilities.'

The question of flight crew complement cannot be divorced from that of pilot-operated radiotelephony, and a number of delegates expressed concern at the increasing practice of dual-capacity working in this regard. Captain Jean Dabry, of the French delegation, and representative of all flying staff on the Board of Management of Air France – whose experience of air operations extends over twenty-eight years – expressed the wholehearted opposition of French flyers to pilot-radio duties. It was his considered view that four-engined transports required a fully specialized minimum five-man crew; although reduced crews might be able to operate in good weather, in bad conditions, both from a communications and meteorological aspect, reduced crews could not expect to perform safely and efficiently the onerous tasks demanded of them. Aircraft were for long periods out of communications contact over the North Atlantic; aural strain in maintaining a permanent listening-watch on radio-telephony not only caused fatigue but led to diminution of hearing capacity, and some pilots had failed their physical examinations, and thus lost their licences, due to a deterioration in hearing powers.

Admittedly, the problem of flight crew complement – by 'flight crew complement' we exclude cabin personnel, for

Two United States representatives at the Conference were Captain Clausen (centre) of our old-established American aviation affiliate, ALPA, and Brother J. Horst (right) of the TWU Air Transport Division, latest US union to join the section. On the left can be seen Mr D. S. Follows, Secretary of IFALPA, who the Conference attended as an observer



whom separate provision must be made – is both basic and urgent; basic, since, until it is resolved, there are certain social problems that cannot receive adequate attention; urgent, since once bad practices are allowed to grow within this youthful industry, it will take years to eradicate them. The ITF, notwithstanding technical advances, sees no reason to modify its earlier attitude, that, in principle, a five-man minimum specialist crew is needed for long-distance operations; it is however sufficiently realistic to concede that an analysis of aircraft types and routes flown – the latter with reference to radionavigational aids available – may well be necessary in order to pass judgment on the sufficiency, or otherwise, of crew complements carried. It is obviously impossible in an international declaration such as the ITF/IFALPA Statement to lay down minute details, but the Statement – which is the result of mature thinking and expert advice – goes to the core of the matter by placing repeated emphasis on the need for consultation between affiliates of the two Federations and between them and the appropriate authorities, be they governmental or operating, before any reductions are made in crew complements carried; implicit in the Statement, provision is equally made for such consultation in respect of the crew complements of entirely new aircraft types. We feel that it may be years before ICAO deals constructively with this problem; to date it has conveniently passed it on to Contracting States, who, in many instances have passed it on to airline operators. We also feel that if the Joint Statement is implemented, both in spirit and in letter, then world employee organizations may well be on the way to solving what has hitherto appeared an intractable problem. The matter of consultation cannot be too strongly stressed, since this is the foundation stone on which all else is built; it is the function of no one aircrew category to seek to impose its will upon another – all organizations are equally concerned in the solution of this problem and, by acting in unison now, sound customs may be established and safety to the travelling public assured. The need for consultation will be felt in the measure in which each affiliate of the two Federations recognizes the moral obligation attaching to it to observe the Statement. This may well require an educational process to convince the many national organi-

zations, who, not unnaturally, are primarily concerned with their own membership, that the problem extends far beyond the confines of any one particular group, and that 'injury to one is injury to all'. It is in that spirit of solidarity and good faith that objectives will be achieved, both nationally and internationally.

The adoption of the Joint Statement, which was formally moved by the dele-

gate of the American Air Line Pilots' Association, and seconded by the delegate of the British Radio Officers' Union, was carried unanimously.

the solution of this problem – although the subject will be dealt with at the ILO 1956 Conference – and such attempts as have been made have largely been on the initiative of national flying staff organizations. ICAO has postponed further consideration of crew fatigue until the studies being undertaken by Contracting States are complete; IATA is on record as saying that 'under existing regulations and modern operational procedure with



Host to the Stuttgart Conference was the German Transport and Public Service Workers' Union (ÖTV), two of whose representatives, Brother J. Steldinger, head of the ÖTV Civil Aviation Section (behind flag), and Captain K. Nonnenburg, a Deutsche Lufthansa Flight Captain, (extreme right, facing camera) are shown here

gate of the American Air Line Pilots' Association, and seconded by the delegate of the British Radio Officers' Union, was carried unanimously.

Crew fatigue and flight time limitations

The need for effective and realistic international and/or national legislation on this score is long overdue; whilst crew fatigue is a difficult subject to study objectively, it actually exists as a serious operational hazard, and it is no exaggeration to say that in certain countries there is considerable public disquiet at the excessive flight and duty hours of aircrew personnel, and at the number of fatal air accidents that have recently occurred in which fatigue has been the prime, or a contributory, cause. Internationally, little or no progress has been made over the past few years towards

present-day aircraft, fatigue was rarely encountered in aircrew to a degree that interfered with the proper performance of their duties'. Yet the duty and flight hours of aircrew personnel in the following recital of air accidents speak eloquently of the need for legislation to lessen or eradicate this evil: –

1) *Orient Airways' Convair AP-AEG, 13 March 1953*

Loss of eleven passengers and five crew; flight crew on duty 22½ hours, and had aircraft reached destination, period would have been in excess of twenty-four hours.

2) *Skyways York G-AHFA, Atlantic, 2 February 1953*

Loss of thirty-three passengers and six crew; flight crew on continuous duty over nineteen hours, and had aircraft reached Gander, period would have been in excess of twenty-three hours.

3) *BOAC Constellation G-ALAM, Kallang, 13 March 1954*

Loss of thirty-one passengers and two crew; captain had been on duty over 21½ hours.

4) *Air France Constellation, Connecticut, 3 August 1954*

Miraculously no casualties; flight crew at controls over fifteen hours and on duty in excess of eighteen hours.

5) *Trans Canada Air Lines Super-Constellation CF-TGG, Brampton, Ontario, 17 December 1954*

Captain on duty in excess of sixteen hours.

Our Stuttgart Conference had before it the following set of figures representing ITF policy regarding flight and duty hours:

	SHORT HAUL		LONG HAUL	
	Flight Time	Duty Time	Flight Time	Duty Time
Week	32	40	60	80
Month	90	150	100	150
Quarter	255	—	255	—
Year	900	—	900	—

Although no final decision was arrived at, it devoted much time and thought to the feasibility and desirability of inserting a *daily duty time limitation for short hauls*. All delegates were convinced of the need to have such a limitation, although the actual number of hours to form such limitation was referred back to the Secretariat for further study. The conference was unanimous that both flight and duty time limitations must be negotiated with governmental licensing authorities, and that it was not the province of airline operators to dictate what limitations should apply.

A delegate outlined the present position within his country which may be said to be similar to that prevailing in a number of other European countries. The smaller national airline operators would never have been able to commence services in the 1946/47 period had not flight personnel responded to the call to work and fly excessively. That position, which the companies found most agreeable, and which flight personnel imagined would last only a few years, was still normally accepted; there was the added complication that the system of remuneration included 'hourly flying pay', and certain pilots, particularly the younger element, were prepared to fly the maximum possible number of hours in order to earn more pay – they might

thereby unwittingly contribute to accident risks and shorten their working lives. The conference was therefore firm in its intention that sooner or later, a daily limitation must apply.

The problem was to agree on an acceptable definition of 'duty time': some felt it should be the total of flying time plus ground duty time; others contended that all time spent away from home base should comprise 'duty time'. Some felt that the normal industrial limit of eight hours' duty time should apply also to civil aviation; others felt that the figure should be in excess of eight, and to save making exceptions, suggested that the limit should be ten. It was finally agreed that the ITF Secretariat should continue its research into the question, producing definitions of 'duty time', 'short hauls' and 'long hauls' and bringing the recommendations arising from such study to the next ITF Civil Aviation (Flying Staff) Conference, in order that a final policy can be agreed and can be implemented at the ILO 1956 Civil Aviation Conference.

Arising out of the general discussion on crew fatigue, several delegates informed the conference that certain airlines still refused a regular reserved seat for its cabin staff, and it was frequent practice for stewardesses to have to sit in the toilet during take-off and landing. The conference unanimously condemned such a practice in the following resolution:

'This Flying Staff Conference of the ITF Civil Aviation Section:

'Meeting in Stuttgart 18 and 19 July 1955;

'Having received reports that certain airline operators fail to provide adequate aircraft seating arrangements for cabin personnel;

'Having further noted the fact that working conditions of such staff, particularly on long-distance schedules, are more physically demanding than those of operating crew members;

'Protests against such conditions which cannot but harm labour relations and which present intolerable strain on staff concerned;

'Calls upon the appropriate airlines to provide a regular reserved adequate seat for each cabin staff member in order to minimize fatigue and thus increase efficiency.'

Social security provisions

The reports of the Secretariat on Air-

crew Retirement Pensions, Aircrew Sickness Insurance and Aircrew Accident Insurance were noted by delegates, but were referred back for further study by the Secretariat which was instructed, with the assistance of affiliated organizations, to bring its research up to date, with a view fully to considering these subjects at the next ITF Civil Aviation Conference, and to planning the policy to be followed at the ILO 1956 Conference when the agenda item 'Income Security of Flight Personnel on Retirement or Grounding' is under discussion.

Future aims

The Section looks forward to the ILO 1956 Conference, and, as indicated in the foregoing paragraphs, has a number of studies to undertake in order that the next ITF Conference – which must take place in the first half of next year – may finally agree on the policy to be followed by the Workers' Side on hours of work and income security of flight personnel. Additionally, there must be a meeting of the ten employee representatives to decide on the tactics to be adopted at the Conference.

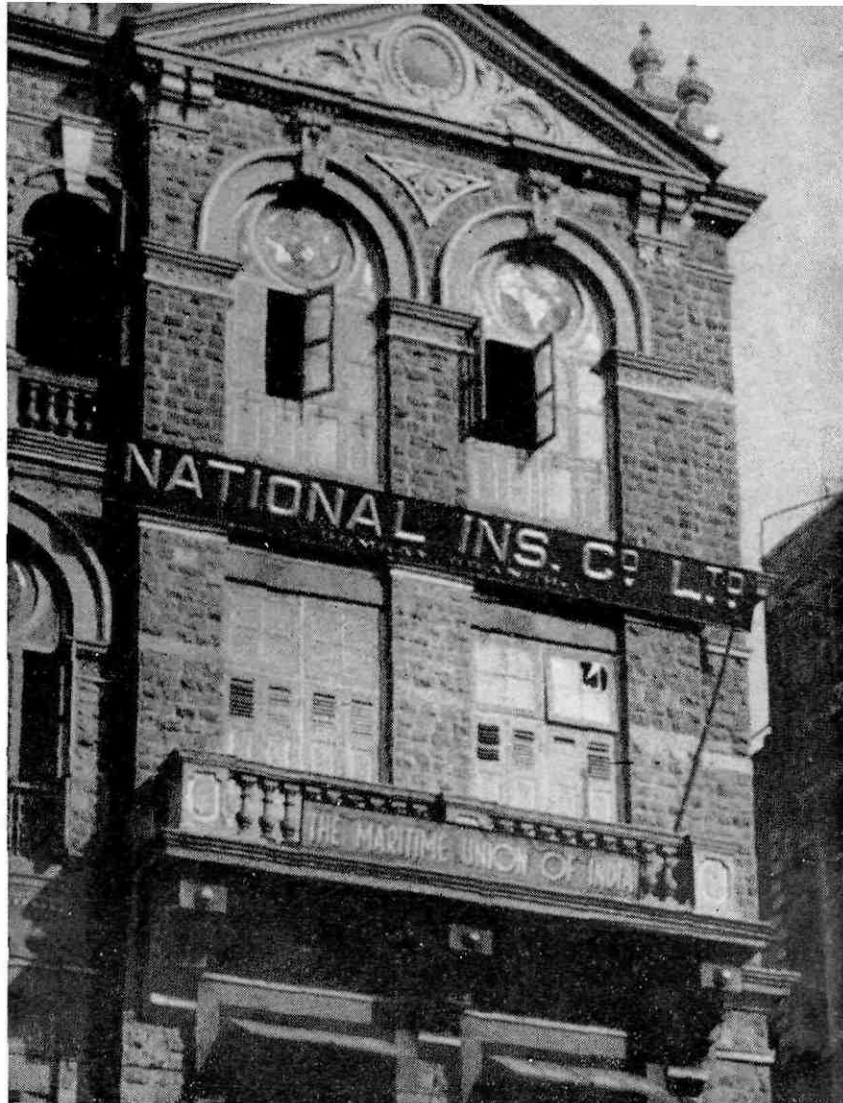
Without doubt, our Stuttgart meeting marked a step forward in the life of the Section; it was good to see a number of new faces, particularly amongst serving airline officers who, by the very nature of their duties, are unable to maintain continuous contact with international conference procedure, but who can, and doubtless will, publicize our work amongst the aircrews of the world. The Section continues to grow, both numerically and in prestige; these words are written in no mood of complacency – the pressing problems that beset us permit of no such attitude – but at the conclusion of such a meeting as our Stuttgart Flying Staff Conference, it is helpful to take stock of our position in order to see where we stand and whither we tend.

We can rightly claim to be the promoters of the ILO 1956 Conference; we now represent one third of the total world civil aviation employee strength; we have recently established a relationship with ICAO whereby we are invited, as observers, to attend its meetings. With these important international contacts, the Section, with the loyal support of its affiliates, will continue to work for effective aviation legislation, and, with it, the social and economic betterment of its members.

The headquarters of the Maritime Union of India are situated in the same building as an insurance company. For nearly four years, the union, then the Indian Merchant Navy Officers' Association, possessed no central offices of its own

Organizing India's Merchant Officers

*by J. F. SOARES, Hon. Secretary,
ITF Indian Regional Information Office*



ORGANIZING LABOUR IN INDIA is usually beset with difficulties not encountered in the more advanced and literate countries of the West – where traditions of trade unionism have lain long and strong. Organizing middle-class (white-collar) labour, such as Merchant Marine Officers, presents difficulties of a more peculiar kind. These are characterized by apathy, fear-complex and, to a certain extent, class-consciousness.

Of the more than 900 unions registered in Bombay State – and of the hundreds of others in the country – few, if any, it can be truly said, have a more deservedly higher reputation than that enjoyed by the ITF-affiliated Maritime Union of India, Bombay.

Much constructive work, the signing of collective agreements, an effective grievance machinery and last, but not least, a thoroughly business-like administration have made possible the earning of that reputation.

The Maritime Union of India – an organization of officers serving in India's Merchant Marine – is young as unions

go and small in membership terms, but quite a giant in terms of achievements. These latter, however, have not been easily come by; rather have they been the results of painstaking and continued efforts on the part of its executives.

With that tribute as a background, I may perhaps be permitted to sketch for the benefit of our readers a profile of this Union: a profile which carries the characteristics of faith in a cause, determination, and pride in the accomplishment of work well done.

The beginnings of the Maritime Union of India go back to October 1938, when, around a dinner table at Calcutta, three

Cadets in the employ of the Scindia Steam Navigation Company of Bombay nursed the idea of forming a seamen's union to combat 'the unfairness of conditions offered Indian officers'. The idea, germinating in the mind of Brother B. Mani (since deceased), found fruitful soil in his two companions, one of them being Brother D. S. Mungat, later to become the General Secretary of the Union and presently the ICFTU's Asian Regional Secretary.

The three pioneers then proceeded to sell their idea to their colleagues in the Scindia Company, but, it must be recorded, not with any pronounced success. Many of the latter scoffed at the idea of a 'union for officers', others were very frankly antagonistic, and still others dismally pessimistic of success. However, the three brothers were not greatly disheartened at the lack of enthusiasm shown for their idea but persisted in

their efforts to evoke the interests of their friends and colleagues, all in the employ of the same Scindia Company.

Persistence however has its own reward and it was not long – a matter of six months or so – before the idea began to catch on: that an association or union was necessary to defend and promote the interests of the floating staff of the Scindia Company.

The seeds of unionism sown in 1938 and so carefully nurtured fructified a year later. In Bombay's Servants of India Society's Hall on 3 December, 1939, a meeting was held. This meeting, attended by twenty-seven Navigating, Engineer and Radio Officers, and presided over by the recently deceased Brother N. M. Joshi, founded the *Indian Merchant Navy Officers' Association*. Brother Joshi, then a member of the Central Legislative Assembly, was elected its first president, with Brother V. B. Karnik, a leading trade unionist of the city, as the first General Secretary. Brother Jamnadas Mehta M.L.A., and an equally well known labour leader, was the Association's first treasurer. The Executive Committee of fifteen members included two of the pioneers: Brothers D. S. Mungat and C. Sankunni.

Following the formation of the Association, a vigorous organizing drive was launched – mostly through the appointment of shipboard representatives. Such representatives – non-paid union-enthusiasts – were 'to carry on propaganda for the Association, enrol new members, collect subscriptions and remit them to the office, and keep the Association informed about the needs and grievances of members on board his ship'. These nameless representatives fulfilled their assignments well; for, as the Association later recorded, 'membership and funds

have increased and it becomes necessary to enrol as members of the Association officers from other companies also'.

The Scindia Company, a pioneer in the field of marine transport in India, granted 'informal' recognition to the Association soon after its formation and readily accepted representations made by the Association on behalf of its members in their employ.

Formal recognition of the Association as the sole bargaining agent for its membership, membership which in the years 1939–41 was made up largely of employees of the Scindia Company, however came the hard way; a story which is worth the telling.

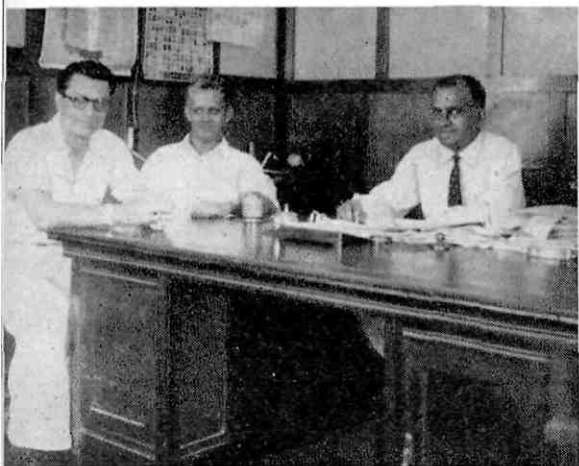
Soon after the outbreak of World War II the Scindia and other Companies proposed the granting of a 'War Risk Bonus'. The Scindia Company suggested that this be of the order of twenty per cent for seamen ratings and fifteen per cent for officers. This proposed differentiation in rates was naturally resented and formed the main 'grouse' of every ship's officer. However, matters were not left at the stage of grousing alone but were carried a stage further when ship-board meetings were called by the officer-personnel of two ships then in the port of Rangoon. At this meeting, the decision was taken to refuse to renew 'Articles of Agreement', which in the case of the two ships were due to expire shortly. The officer-personnel of a third ship, coming into port a few days later, reinforced the decision taken by their fellow-officers and went a step further by serving notice on the Company that they would refuse to sail out of port unless their demands, as set forth by the meeting, were conceded. As was to be expected, this threat of a 'sit-down' strike caused quite a stir in the Company's offices at Bombay, which were not slow in issuing the usual threats and warnings. These, however, went unheeded and only helped to make the membership more resolute – a fact which, a few days later, resulted in formal recognition being granted to the Association. A signal victory was thereby won by the Union, demonstrating once again that to them, as to others, union security is the foundation upon which all other securities rest.

J. D. Randevi, General Secretary of the Maritime Union of India, seated at his desk. To his right: Brothers K. D. Pradhan and K. P. Kolah, joint secretaries

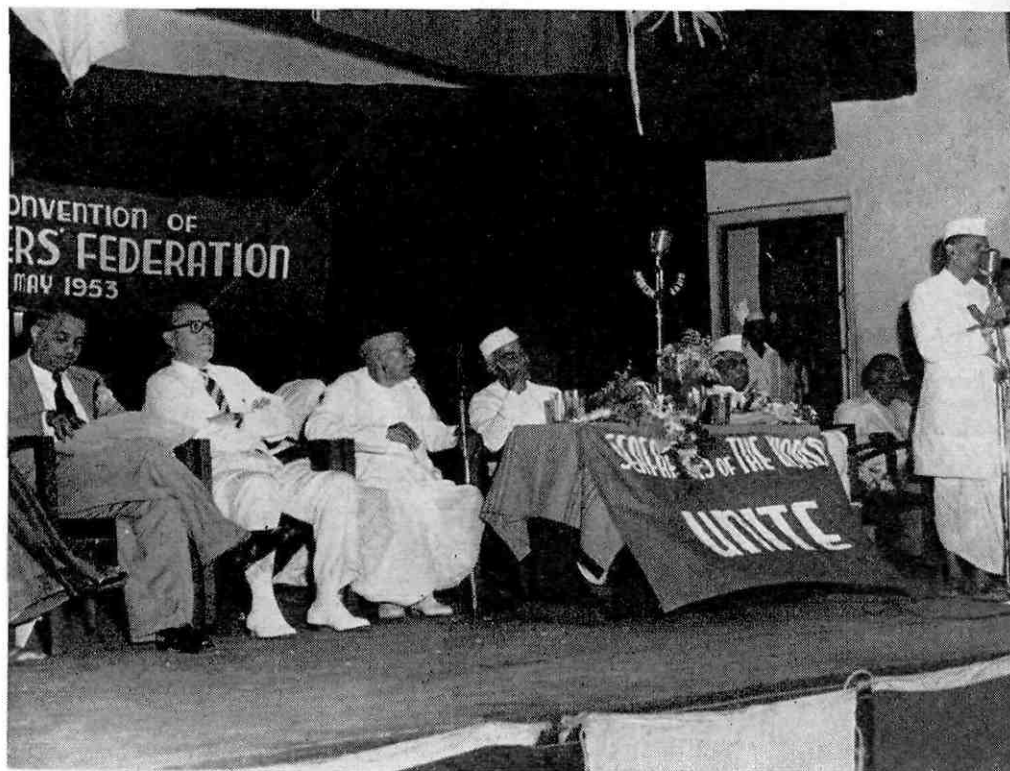
On formal recognition being granted the Association, a 'negotiating committee' was set up to place before the company certain issues which were then sources of concern to the membership. These referred to the non-promotion of Indian officers to senior ranks, inadequacy or absence of seniority rules, the payment of a special war-risk allowance, catering arrangements aboard ship and the sub-normal wages of Radio Officers. The growing strength and importance of Association as a bargaining unit for the employees of the Scindia company was evident when all the issues cited above were successfully settled to the material and moral advantage of its membership. Among the immediate gains to the membership were: (a) a twenty per cent wage increase retrospective to September 1, 1939; (b) introduction of a provident fund system for floating-staff employees; (c) extra-leave privileges for convenanted (European) officers; (d) increase in family allotment rates; and (e) full-pay for stand-by duties.

For nearly four years after its inauguration the Association had no central offices of its own, sharing offices in Bombay City with the Indian Federation of Labour, to which it was then affiliated. It was not until 1943 that the Association's headquarters were established in spacious premises on the second floor of a Bombay building which it still occupies. With the acquisition of new premises and the appointment of additional secretarial staff and full-time officials, the Association set about preparing itself to negotiate for a collective agreement with Scindias. Simultaneously, a vigorous membership drive was launched to organize the unorganized, particularly the officer-personnel employed in the coastal services and in other companies trading from bases in India. This organizing drive was taken up with zest and before long – by mid 1943 – the Association was able to announce good progress in its efforts to bring into its fold officer-personnel of not only the Bombay Steam Navigation Company, but the British India, Mogul Line and Asiatic companies as well.

Whilst this organizational drive was in progress, the step was taken of changing the name of the Association from the Indian Merchant Navy Officers' Association to the *Maritime Union of India*. This decision was given effect to on 23 December, 1943, and the Union was formally registered under that name on



May 1953 saw the inauguration of the Indian Seafarers' Federation of which the Maritime Union of India is a constituent. From left to right: Dinkar Desai, Omer Becu (General Secretary of the ITF), the late N. M. Joshi (first President of the MUI), I. G. Desai, M. V. Nuri, and the Hon. S. Shah, Minister for Labour, Bombay. At the microphone, M. E. Serang



13 March, 1944.

At the Association's third annual convention held in October 1941, the membership, which was then still largely made up of employees of the Scindia company, adopted a charter of demands for submission to the company. In December, negotiations for a memorandum of agreement – not a collective agreement, as we understand it – were initiated and speedily concluded. This agreement, coming into force in February 1942, resulted in greatly improved conditions for the Union's membership. What these improved conditions meant in terms of monetary gains were illustrated in the Union's brochure, 'A ten-year record of progress' – but more of that brochure later.

In April 1944, during a visit to the United Kingdom of the Union's vice-president, talks were held with Brother J. H. Oldenbroek, then the General Secretary of the ITF, to have the Union affiliated to the International. The affiliation was considered by the Management Committee at its meeting held in September 1944 and the Union was admitted to membership as of 1 October, 1944. Brother Oldenbroek, in conveying to the Union the decision of the Management Committee, wrote: '...There is a lot of organizing work to be done in India and we feel sure that after the war when the political independence of your country has been realized there will be an ever greater opportunity of developing a powerful trade union movement. In those efforts the ITF will be prepared to give you active assistance, so we hope you will not hesitate to call on us when you are in need of advice and help. You may be assured that such help will be forthcoming to the extent of our ability'.

The Maritime Union of India had indeed need only a few years later to invoke that help so generously proffered and it came not so much in the form of advice but in the actual shape and physical presence in Bombay of Brother Omer Becu, then the ITF's General Secretary.

That was in August 1952, when during a bargaining crisis between the Union and the Scindia Company, Brother Becu intervened successfully to avert an imminent strike.

However, to return to our story. The years 1944 and 1945 saw the Union concentrate on its organizational drives, resulting in an increase in membership, which by early 1946 totalled 720 – accounting practically for over ninety per cent of the officer-personnel employed in the Indian Merchant Marine. The Union had by now also increased the scope of its activities; it was granted recognition by most of the shipping companies and by the Government and soon earned for itself the reputation of being the best conducted union in the country – a reputation which it continues to maintain, safeguard and advance.

The Maritime Union of India, as befits an organization of seamen – traditionally international in outlook – has not been content to rest on its laurels and devote itself exclusively to the economic needs of its membership. Down the years since its foundation it has raised its voice in support of the International Seafarers' Charter, the ratification of ILO Conventions, and the proper training of officers and ratings.

Space does not permit of my telling of the Union's many and diverse activities;

mention can therefore be made of only a few.

The Maritime Union of India cognizant, as always, of their obligations to help their less fortunate brethren – the seamen-ratings – set out in 1944 to organize seamen. They sponsored the formation of the Indian Seafarers' Union and despite difficulties entailed were able to enroll a satisfactory number of seamen from Bombay City. The Union had subsequently to be wound up on becoming part of the All-India Seafarers' Federation.

In 1946 the Maritime Union helped found the All-India Seafarers' Federation, with Brother Aftab Ali, long a leader of Calcutta's seamen, as President. The Federation was soon recognized as the representative organization of India's seamen and, as such, took part in the Seattle Conference later in the year – the Maritime Union being represented by Brother Mungat as member of the workers' delegation. Whilst in England, en route to India, Brother Mungat successfully concluded negotiations for affiliating the Union to the Officers' (Merchant Navy) Federation, affiliation being made effective as of December 1946. The Officers' (Merchant Navy) Federation, it may be mentioned, is a 32,000-strong organization embracing officers' unions of the British Commonwealth. It has



Former Union Labour Minister, the Hon. V. V. Giri, visits the MUI's offices. He is seen chatting with Miss M. Kara, with W. Dorchain, ITF representative in New York, on his right. Miss Kara is flanked by J. F. Soares, author of this article and ITF Indian representative, and D. S. Mungat, ICFTU Asian Regional Secretary

affiliates in Canada, New Zealand, Malaya, Hongkong, Australia, Pakistan and India.

The year 1946 saw the Union lay the foundation for the many collective-bargaining agreements it subsequently negotiated. The first of these, with the Scindia Company of Bombay, came into effect April 1, 1947, and for the first time provided for benefits till then unknown in this country. Modelled on the lines of a many-provisions type agreement and based on the proposals embodied in the International Seafarers' Charter, the new agreement provided for, among other things: union recognition; minimum wages; hours of work and overtime; privilege, examination and medical leave; dirty cargo, overseas, victualing and travelling allowances; death and disability benefits; provident fund and bonus rights; payment for stand-by duties; and compensation for loss of personal effects.

This first standard collective agreement, subsequently renewed, was later to form the basis of agreements with other shipping companies, which now total six, covering personnel employed by all major Indian shipping companies.

During the currency of this agreement – two years – the Union increased the scope of its activities – all conditioned by the needs to increase benefits and services to its membership. As a first step, the Union set up a well-stocked library of technical books on navigation, seamanship, marine engineering, radio telegraphy and allied subjects. Early in

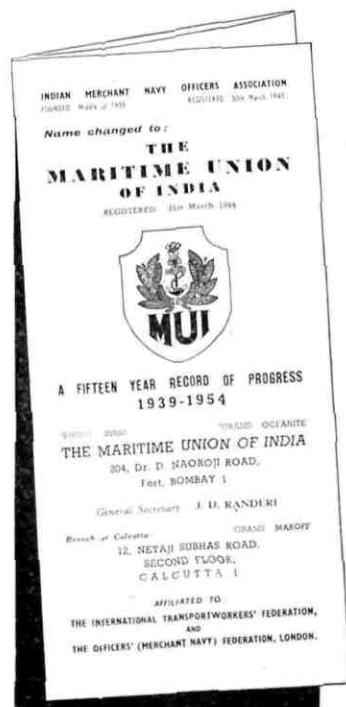
1946, the Union, as an additional service to its membership, started a Nautical School. This school, staffed entirely by executives of the Union, met a long-felt want, for it provided the much-needed and eagerly sought preparatory instruction for certificates of competency as Navigators and Engineers – and no such school or Institution previously existed. It is gratifying to record that this pioneering effort of the Union was given due recognition when, later in 1948, the school was taken over by the Government to form the nucleus of the Ministry of Transport's Nautical and Engineering College. It may be mentioned in passing that all the present teaching staff of the college have been members of the Union many having been members of its Working Committee.

The increasing need to serve the membership more fully necessitated the Union's opening a branch office at Calcutta, this being accomplished in October 1947. With the opening of this branch, an effective organizational drive was started among the personnel employed in the Harbour Masters' Department of the Calcutta Port Commissioners, nearly all of whom were very soon enrolled as members of the Union.

The year 1948 was a particularly notable one for the Union, for it was in October of that year that the Union was honoured to be called upon by the International Transport Workers' Federation to set up on its behalf a Regional Information Office at Bombay. Brother D.S. Mungat, the then General Secre-

tary of the Union, as the ITF representative in India operated from offices of the Union. He continued to hold his appointment till his taking up in November 1950 the Asian Regional Secretaryship of the ICFTU. On the inauguration of the Indian Seafarers' Federation in May 1953, of which the Maritime Union of India is a constituent, the ITF's Regional Information Office was transferred to the new premises of the Federation from which it presently operates.

In 1949, as part of its campaign against 'freeriders' (non-members, who, it must be stated, did not exceed ten per cent of the potential membership), the Union brought out a beautifully illustrated four-colour brochure: 'A ten-year record of progress'. The handiwork of Brother L. C. Ghatak, Staff-artist of 'Oceanite', quarterly journal of the Union, the brochure – since brought up to date as a black and white reprint – showed in arresting form the progress of the Union since its inception, demonstrating to the sceptical and freeriders alike that in unity lies strength. Strikingly



A view of part of the offices of the MUI showing some of the staff at their desks

featured therein were the numerous gains to the membership in terms of wages and service conditions. Comparative tables, featured in boxed panels, showed that the Union had, in its first decade of existence, brought about benefits such as examination leave, overtime payments, overseas and passenger ship allowances. Membership then stood at 1,200, later to be reduced as a result of a decision taken to withhold union membership from officers employed in the Pilotage and Berthing services of the various ports.

Down the years since its formation the Union has abided by certain basic principles, principles so sound that today they remain unchanged: discipline, knowledge of the job, peaceful methods for settlement of disputes, direction of the Union by men from the industry itself, and active and enlightened interest in all things maritime.

The MUI is unique in that of all the unions in the country, the Executive of the MUI is made up – with one single exception – of persons and members from the industry itself, all serving Merchant Marine Officers – a factor possibly directly responsible for the excellence of the organization.

In this brief portrayal of the Maritime Union of India – more familiarly known




as the MUI – it is impossible to detail all the fields in which the Union has made valuable contributions. These contributions have ranged all the way from participation at meetings of the Joint Maritime Commission of the ILO to setting up a Cooperative Society and Stores.

The MUI has received both national and international recognition, as evidenced by the many distinguished labour and political leaders who have visited its offices and commented on the excellence

of its administrative and industrial set-up. It has consistently provided for its membership every possible benefit within the principles of free labour operating in a free democratic world.

The Maritime Union of India has not yet come of age; it has nevertheless achieved maturity and is respected in the councils of seamen in India and abroad as an organization, free and democratic, pledged to the service of *all* those who go down to the sea in ships.

United Nations flag at sea

 IN AN EARLIER ISSUE of the ITF Journal we reported on the fact that ten deep-sea fishing trawlers supplied to South Korea by the United Nations Korea Reconstruction Agency had sailed from Hong Kong for Pusan flying the flag of the United Nations. This novel development has since had a sequel at a session of the International Law Commission, when the whole question of the right of the United Nations to register ships and fly them under its own flag was raised.


The matter came up when the Commission was discussing the revised articles on the regime of the high seas. The Commission had before it a letter from Mr. Constantin Stavropoulos, Legal Counsel to the United Nations, in which he called attention to the 'interesting precedent' of the ten motor trawlers

built at Hong Kong and destined to help in the rehabilitation of the fishing industry of South Korea. As British registry was unavailable, they were registered by the United Nations and navigated to Pusan under its own flag. The letter asked that the Commission's articles on the high seas should not imply that the right to register vessels is necessarily confined to States.

The Cuban representative also asked the Commission not to exclude the right of the United Nations and other international bodies possessing juridical capacity to register ships. He was strongly supported in this by Professor Scelle of France who, invoking the crusades in defence of Christianity and the usage of the Hanseatic League, said that the United Nations was in fact a juridical order with the right to own and sail ships. To those who counselled prudence in approaching the question, Professor Scelle remarked: 'Prudence, yes, but do not let

prudence become pusillanimity'. The upshot of the Commission's discussions was that it rejected the proposal by the Cuban representative but approved the suggestion of Greece that the Commission should take note of the letter and consider the matter at a later date.

Study courses popular with Norwegian seaman

 EVERY MONTH between 100 and 150 Norwegian seamen sign up for correspondence courses organized by the State Seamen's Welfare Office. To meet the demand for reading matter, the Office bought £ 2,000 worth of new books last year for its world-wide library service. Welfare Office Director Frederick Haslund also reports that about 260 Norwegian merchant vessels are now equipped with film projectors and that some 540 complete film shows are now in constant circulation among ships all over the world.

The National Railway Workers' Union of Japan



A large modern marshalling yard on the Japanese State Railways network. Average period spent by trucks in yards is stated to be between six and eight hours

nizing a national federation of their unions. This memorable day was marked by a 'go-slow' strike on local train services in Tokyo, coupled with a demand for a living wage. Thus, the General Federation of State Railway Workers' Unions formally started at the inauguration meeting in Tokyo on March 15, 1946.

Strike movements were spreading all over the country and the first May Day celebration after the war was attended by several hundred thousand workers in Tokyo alone.

Meanwhile the railway authorities were planning personnel retrenchment as a step in their 'rationalization program' and on 24 July 1946 announced the dismissal of 75,000 employees. The Federation of Railway Workers held an extraordinary convention in August in Uji-Yamada city to strengthen the unity of railway workers in a struggle against this mass dismissal. The railway workers, with Mr. Seiichi Suzuki as the president of their organization, launched a vigorous campaign against the employers which lasted more than fifty days, and issued a nation-wide strike warning, to take effect on 15 September. Faced with this evidence of unity, the railway authorities were obliged to accede to the demands of the employees and withdrew their dismissal notices on 14 September. As a result the Federation called off the general strike slated for 15 September.

In spite of the brilliant victory of the railwaymen in their fight against dismissal, their living conditions were getting worse because of a vicious inflation which was accelerating day by day. The railway workers therefore demanded a wage increase, and a joint strike committee of all the government and public employee's organizations was established in which the railwaymen's federation played a leading part. A joint state-

THE NATIONAL RAILWAY WORKERS' UNION is one of the largest trade unions in Japan, comprising 380,000 railwaymen of the 440,000 employees of the National Railway Corporation, a government-controlled public corporation operating the State-owned railways throughout the country.

The trade union movement of Japan, unable to develop freely in pre-war days because of the prevailing feudal and militarist conditions, has made remarkable progress since the end of World War II. Organized labour has increased more than twelve times as compared with the largest number recorded in the pre-war period. The working population (excluding peasants and fishermen) totals about 13,000,000, of which forty per cent (i.e. some 5,500,000) are organized in 580 individual trade unions. The National Railway Workers' Union was amongst those unions which came into being amid the upsurging democratization movements after the war.

With the defeat in World War II, the whole country was thrown into complete confusion. The nation's economy was on the brink of ruin. Prices were soaring, due to the extreme shortage of food and all daily necessities.

In such a confused situation, railway workers started to organize in local trade unions in defence of their living conditions. Representatives of these local unions met at Katayamatsu in February 1946 for the purpose of orga-

ment in the name of 2,600,000 government and public employees was issued calling for a nationwide strike on 1st February, 1947. However, General Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander of the Occupation Forces, issued an order on 31 January banning the strike.

At the national convention held in Iizuka city in March 1947, the strategy and tactics of the February 1st strike were sharply criticized and a motion to oust communists from the central and local committees was proposed, giving rise to a heated debate between the pro-communist and anti-communist groups.

Meanwhile the railwaymen's Federation got four railwaymen's representatives returned to the Lower and Upper Houses.

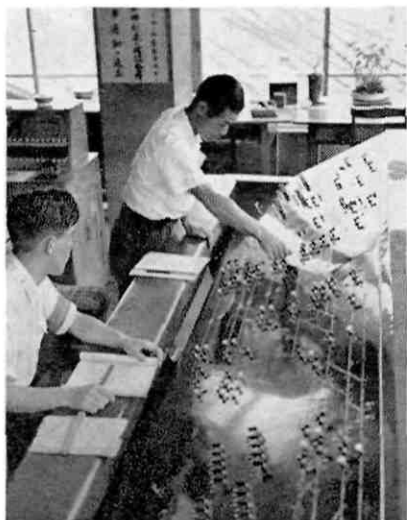
On 4 June 1947, at the national convention in Izu-Nagaoka city, the General Federation of the State Railway Workers' Unions was formally dissolved and reorganized into a centralized national union named 'National Railway Workers' Union' (KOKUTETSU RODO-KUMIAI).

The Union had to continue its hard struggle in defence of the railwaymen's living standard in the face of soaring prices. In April 1949, in an attempt to emasculate the Railway Workers' Union, the Government enacted the Public Corporation Labor Relations Law designed to deprive the workers on the State-owned railways of the right to strike. The National Railway Workers' Union held its Sixth National Convention in April, 1949 in Kotohira city at which a programme for a joint campaign was adopted to reinforce unity of action with all the government and public employees with a view to breaking down the offensive launched by the ruling circles.

Immediately after the Convention, the National Railway Corporation (State-owned railways) issued a notice of dismissal to 95,000 employees. The Central Committee of the Railway Workers' Union which met at Atami on 23 June decided to resort to all sorts of tactics, including strike action, in its fight against these mass dismissals. It was in this acute situation that a number of railway accidents occurred - the

Operating a rail replacement machine. Maintenance of overburdened tracks on Japanese railways has become a serious problem for the men who are employed in the permanent way department





The safety of Japan's major lines, stations and yards is guaranteed by automatic block signals controlled by electric relay

death of the Director-General of the National Railways SHIMOYAMA, run over by a train, a case of automatic starting and crashing of a driverless train with no passengers aboard at Mitaka Station in Tokyo, and the case of derailment and turning over of a train near Matsukawa Station in Fukushima Prefecture. Government officials commented on these accidents even before an actual investigation was started, suggesting they were the work of certain militant unionists. The Government and railway authorities exploited these accidents to break the solidarity of railway workers and succeeded in carrying out the dismissal of 100,000 employees, including fourteen top leaders of the Union.

The National Railway workers found it very difficult to carry out their plans for improving their living and working conditions because their actions were restricted by the Public Corporations Labour Relations Act. This is a special law governing the industrial relations of the employees (900,000 in all) of eight public corporations having independent accounting and controlled by the Government, including the Communications Agency, the Tobacco Monopoly Corporation, the Mint, and the Railway Corporation. Article 28 of the Japanese Constitution guarantees the right of workers to organize and to bargain and act collectively. Of these three fundamental rights of workers, the last one, i.e. the right to act collectively



The policy of the Japanese railways is to replace steam trains by electric and diesel equipment wherever possible. Several hundred diesel rail-cars, consisting of ten or more cars, have come into service on branch lines and operate at up to 95 km. per hour

(meaning the right to strike) is denied to public corporation employees under the Act, which substitutes a system of arbitration – the right to strike being denied because of the importance of these industries to public life. This category of workers had the right to strike till 1949, when the government deprived them of this right as a step in carrying out its reactionary programme. This is obviously contradictory to the Constitution which guarantees the right of workers to act collectively. Moreover, the arbitration system which should be a substitute for the right to strike has always been disregarded by the Government and railway authorities. A study of the Public Corporations Labour Relations Act shows it to be unjust and full of contradictions. Article thirty-five for example stipulates that the arbitration award shall be binding upon both the public corporation and the employees. This is nullified by Article sixteen, however, which lays down that 'any agreement involving the expenditure of funds not available from the appropriate corporation budget or available corporation funds shall not be binding upon the Japanese Government and no funds shall be disbursed pursuant thereto until appropriate action has been taken by the Diet.' In point of fact, neither the railway management nor the Government has so far accepted the ruling of the arbitrators in any case involving a wage dispute dealt with by the Commission. The Union is consequent-

ly obliged to adopt various tactics in defence of the living standards of the railwaymen.

In the year-end disputes of 1952 and 1953, characterized by demands for higher wages and a year-end bonus, the railway workers resorted to such tactics as refusing over-time duty, working to rule and mass taking of leave. The Railway management dismissed a number of Union leaders as responsible for the mass leave-taking tactics, which the employer construed as contravening Article seventeen of the Public Corporations Labour Relations Act. In the present state of railway equipment, strict working to rule would cause considerable delay in train operations.

In 1954, the National Railway workers were again demanding higher wages and in support of later claims the Union initiated a work to rule movement early in November, which caused some delay in train schedules. Shortly before this the Minister of Labour had told newsmen that it was illegal for strikers to form picket lines, and the Deputy Minister of Labour issued a notice of similar import. Since the issue of this official notice the police force has increasingly intervened in strike actions, arresting militant members of the unions. The National Railway Workers' Union was not exempted from this type of oppression by the official powers. During the course of November, more than forty members of the Union were arrested for alleged interference with the execution of offi-

cial duties or in the conduct of another person's business or on other grounds. The railway workers, however, continued their work to rule and mass leave-taking tactics till the middle of December. The railway management took steps to penalize 135 active union members by means of temporary suspension from office or wage cut for their active part in this struggle. The Union made a vigorous protest against these high-handed methods of the management.

The National Railway Workers' Union has so far had a very hard struggle to improve the railwaymen's living and working conditions which are truly wretched. The average wage of an employee of the National Railway is only 15,650 yen a month (£15.10s.) This is the wage of an employee of thirty-two years of age with twelve years' service and having two dependents. It is composed of a basic wage of 13,000 yen, local allowance 1,450 yen and dependents' allowance 1,200 yen.

As a rule 8 hours per day are worked not including the rest time for lunch. In some special kinds of service (certain station duties for example) a turn of duty can be anything up to twenty-four consecutive hours. The rate for overtime is time and a quarter.

The National Railway Workers' Union with the solid support of its members is firmly determined to continue its efforts for improving the living and working conditions of Japanese railway workers. It is making efforts to strengthen the international unity of the working people of the world, especially of those of Asia, to increase the well-being of all peoples and to secure world peace.



Top:
Japanese railwaymen watch the progress of a freight truck as it is handled by an up-to-date truck retarder in one of the country's big rail marshalling yards

Centre:
Efficient operation by use of up-to-date loading and unloading equipment in freight terminals contributes to a good turnround of cars on the Japanese State Railways

Bottom:
The Japanese State Railways have developed a bus and road haulage network to serve remoter areas and to expedite their services in heavy traffic zones. Some 1,500 buses are currently being operated

In a recent issue of our contemporary *Sjömannen*, published by the Swedish Seamen's Union, Brother Gunnar Carlsson has drawn attention to the fact that, despite an increase in the size of the Swedish merchant marine, the membership of the union fell last year. He estimates that there are at present some 2,000 unorganized seafarers, many of them foreign nationals, aboard Swedish vessels – particularly those based exclusively on foreign ports. In the following article, Brother Uhlin*) deals with some of the problems involved in organizing Swedish seafarers and the steps which the union is at present taking to overcome them



Problems of Seafarers' Organization in Sweden

by GEORG UHLIN, Swedish Seamen's Union

IN A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT RESPECTS, the Swedish Seamen's Union is faced with problems both more intractable than, and different from, those affecting other unions affiliated with the Swedish TUC. Its members, or those who should be members, are spread over the whole of the globe, in all ports which can be trafficked by merchant ships. For this reason, the structure of the organization differs considerably from that of ordinary unions. There are, for instance, no proper branches, each seaman being a direct member of the organization, and there are consequently no local registers of members. The nearest equivalent to the local branches set up by shore unions is the union representative: an official employed and paid by the national organization, who is entrusted with the job of watching over and defending the interests of both the union and its members in a particular locality.

In the larger ports, the union representatives have the help of assistants, whilst in the smaller ports one finds local officials employed on a commission basis. Outside Sweden, the union has full-time

representatives at Narvik, Antwerp, New York and San Francisco. In the three latter ports, their general activities are combined with responsibility for hiring.



Union goes to the members

The member can pay his dues and receive help in dealing with his problems in every port in which the union maintains a representative – irrespective of where he is domiciled. As a rule, however, it is the union which goes to the members, in that union representatives visit the vessels on which they are serving. Conditions in shipping generally present special problems here: most vessels spend only short periods in port and the local offices of the union may perhaps be situated in the centre of the city, over a mile or more from the docks. The work of organization is thus made both difficult and costly, but at present it is not possible to do it in any other way.

The work of negotiation too is difficult and complicated. There are no 'local' conflicts, that is unless one counts those affecting the crews of tugs, watermen, lock-keepers and a few other groups of 'non-mobile' members. Most other differences are settled by negotiations with the officers aboard ship or with the owners by letter and telephone. The union representative in Gothenburg can thus be negotiating with a shipping company in Stockholm, whilst his opposite number in Stockholm is carrying on talks with shipping companies whose headquarters are in Gothenburg. A number of disputes must, of course, also be dealt with by national officials or must form the subject of central negotiations with the Swedish Shipowners' Association.

High cost of administration

In order to carry on all these activities efficiently, the Seamen's Union must

*) Since this article was written, Bro. Uhlin has been appointed as liaison officer between the union and its representatives aboard ship.

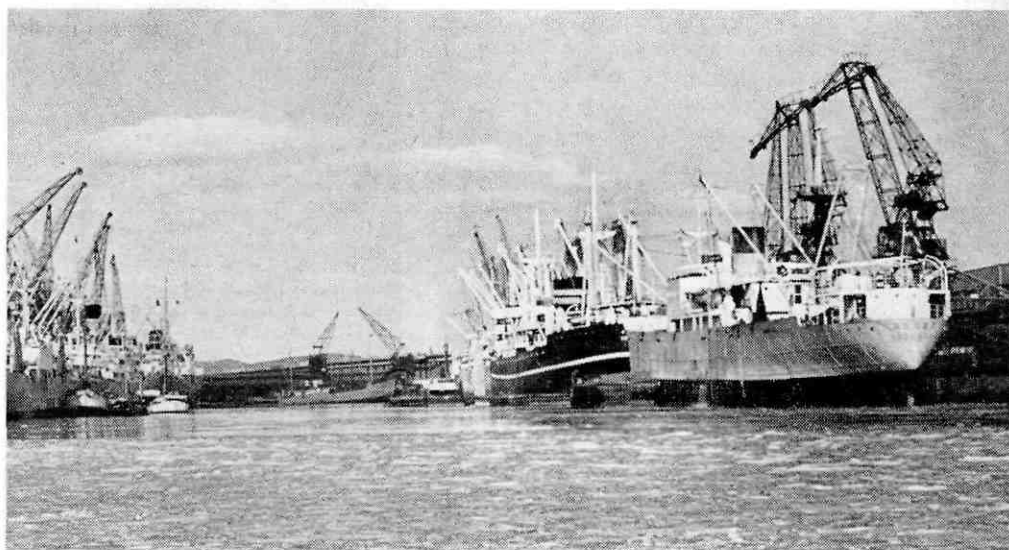
employ an unusually large number of officials in relation to its membership. Since all the expenses involved are a direct charge on the union's funds, the cost of administering the organization, considered in per capita terms, is also unusually high. The cost of postage alone is probably about twenty times as great as in other unions, since much of what is despatched must be sent by air mail to distant ports. A parcel weighing one kilogram (2½ pounds) sent by air mail to Australia or the China coast, for instance, costs about 100 kronor (about £7 or 19 dollars). If it were sent by sea mail, it would probably arrive about a month after the ship to which it was addressed had left.

At the present time, however, even local union offices and visits to ships are not sufficient to maintain the continuity of organizational work. There are difficulties in the recruitment of new members and the collection of dues; there are difficulties in maintaining adequate contact with the membership. During the last twenty years the character of the Swedish shipping industry has changed: it now 'exports itself'. Swedish ships do not return to Swedish ports and the maintenance of proper union representation abroad runs away with a lot of money. Vessels now remain away from Sweden, operating between far-distant ports, for two and even five years at a stretch! On some of them, the crew members are all Asian personnel, others do not even have Swedish officers. The remainder are Germans, Spaniards, Britons and people of other nationalities. Who is to organize these crews, to collect their union dues, and look after their interests? Particularly when the ships on which they serve do not even come near a European continental port for years on end.

In the face of this situation, the union first began to make use of a kind of check-off system, i.e. the members on board sent home a certain monthly amount, sufficient to cover their dues, through the appropriate shipping company. The seaman's right to send home money in this way, limited to three authorizations per month, is, by the way, laid down in the Swedish Seamen's Law.

High turn-over of membership

However, there still remained at least two important problems to be solved:



The character of Swedish shipping has very largely changed: it now 'exports itself'. This has increased the need for expensive union representation in foreign ports

first and foremost the satisfaction of the membership's demand for more or less continuous contact with their union and, in addition, the achievement of continuity in organizational activities – in other words, the problem of organizing those seafarers who sign on Swedish vessels outside Sweden. To a very large extent too, the maritime industry is an industry of young men and women and the annual turn-over is as much as one-third of the total membership. In addition, new vessels are constantly being added to our merchant fleet. Since the end of the war, for instance, its tonnage has increased from 1,600,000 to 2,720,000 gross registered tons. This development, incidentally, is likely to continue at approximately the same pace. The process of organization – winning new members and arranging for the collection of union dues – is therefore likely to remain a continuous one.

A number of suggestions for solving these problems were, in fact, discussed. In the end, it was decided to opt for something like the British shop steward system. A decision to this effect was taken at the 1945 Annual Congress and the following year an agreement was reached with the Shipowners' Association, giving a ship's crew the right to elect a trade union representative from among themselves. Under the agreement, the representative must possess certain qualifications with regard to sea experience, details of which need not detain us here. He must also be provid-

ed by the union with some form of legitimation which can be shown to the officers on board. The agreement also laid down stipulations on the competencies and powers of shipboard representatives, which have been supplemented on various occasions since.

When this activity, which fairly soon aroused the interest of members, had been in progress for a few years, a special official was appointed at head office to maintain contact with shipboard representatives. It was also his task to distribute working material and to give the shipboard representatives both advice and aid. The union also issued a correspondence course, known as the 'Seafarers' Course', and it became one of the ship's representatives' jobs to arrange for study-circle activity built around this. This succeeded very well and resulted in a notable increase in educational work.

Difficulties of shipboard representatives

The number of shipboard representatives also rose to a very marked degree, reaching 350, which is about the maximum figure to date. However, even this accounts for only approximately one-third of the vessels in the Swedish merchant fleet. On the remainder, there were and still are no union representatives. Since we now seem to have reached saturation point under the present system, this type of activity has tended to stagnate. There are a number of

As a general rule, it is the Swedish Seamen's Union which goes to its members and not the other way round, in that union representatives in the port visit the ships on which members are serving

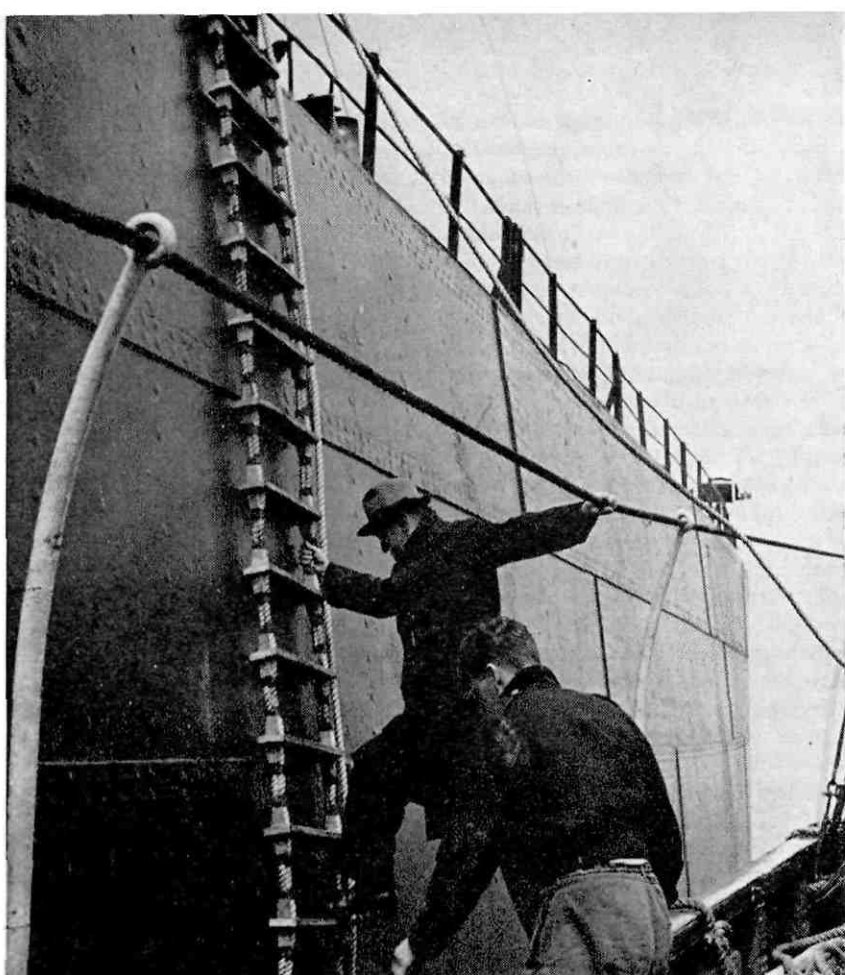
reasons for this. One of them is the fact that the more conservative and anti-trade-union officers (read shipmasters!) are strongly opposed to the seafarers' new trade union policy and are reluctant to accept it.

Shipboard representatives who were active on behalf of their union and their colleagues on board were not looked on with particular favour, and on vessels which spent long periods trading between distant ports, thus making it difficult for the union to give proper support to its representatives, officers of the type mentioned above were in a very strong position. The union representative found himself in an unenviable situation; he was directly in the line of fire and it was not difficult to pick him off. He became a kind of outcast; his life was made unpleasant; and he himself made fun of. He did not even receive wholehearted support from his shipmates. Trade unionism and trade union activities are not among the most popular subjects at sea and when the union representative, due to the reasons already detailed, was unable immediately to achieve the settlement of disputes or approval of claims, his members began to drift away. The crews of such vessels might also include foreigners, for instance Balts, Germans and others, who had never previously been familiar with the idea of trade unions and trade union activity. In the end, with the die cast against him and pressure becoming unbearable, the representative either gave up his office or left the ship.

The ones who never give up

However, there is always a solid core of members who never give up the struggle, but take on the task of organizing and negotiating in ship after ship. They are doing admirable work, but in spite of this the total number of shipboard representatives never seems to rise above that magic figure of 350. It has, therefore, become clear that other methods must be employed.

Something over a year ago, the union's Executive Committee decided that some kind of payment should be made to ship's representatives who were re-



sponsible for enrolling new members and despatching union dues to head office. The percentage of organized seafarers was falling at the time and this was one of the measures taken to reverse the trend. In addition, the union's propaganda activities were concentrated on that very important sector of trade union work: recruitment and dues collection.

The response was not long in forthcoming. At the present time, the ship's representatives are responsible for approximately twenty per cent of all new recruitment, and despatch or check dues cards which presumably represent a similar percentage.

The problem of increasing the number of ship's representatives so that it is something closer to the number of Swedish merchant ships is, however, still unsolved. In addition, opposition from the type of officer already mentioned seems to be stiffening. Capable, qualified members are there, but the problem is how to get them into action. That problem cannot be dealt with by publicity alone – a new policy and new tactics are necessary. The undersigned has both written and spoken in support

of a proposal that can be summed up in a very short slogan: 'The union must be on board every ship'. It is no longer enough to have ship's representatives: an organization which often has to weather storms needs something a little more stable in its distant outposts. In the case of a trade union organization there is no better method of achieving such stability than by ensuring that it is firmly based upon its rank-and-file members. In the case of seamen, the basic unit could be the equivalent of a trade union branch ashore, a membership group, or a ship's club. However, to play its role as an executive organ properly, such a unit would have to have a committee of capable and responsible members who know how to deal with essentials rather than with grouches for their own sake.

New obligations for members

To carry the idea into practice involves a lot of work and considerable difficulties, the former particularly in the educational field. The important thing is to get the members themselves to accept obligations and responsibilities which they formerly did not need to accept.

Fortunately, there is already a fairly large group of members who are definitely organizationally-minded. There are, for instance, the present ship's representatives, who have long had to put up with snubs and unpleasantness because of their trade union activities; there are former representatives who have resigned their posts at one time or another; and those who have previously had experience of trade union work ashore. There are certainly enough capable people among them to fill 2-3,000 committee seats, at least as a start.

At the union's last Congress there were a number of resolutions calling for a constitutional amendment which would provide for the creation of membership groups or ship's clubs on board. In one of these it was even proposed that the amendment should be made compulsory and that the ship's group should become the basic unit of the union. However, the Congress decided - on the advice of the Executive Committee - to adopt a wait-and-see attitude on this point. There is nevertheless no veto on the creation of such clubs in order to stabilize and increase union activity on board ship. Developments in this field during the five-year period preceding the next Congress will presumably have a decisive effect on the treatment of this question in the future.

Close to a solution

In respect of educational work too, the Congress took a decision which will certainly bring us closer to a solution of the organizational problem. Five öre of weekly dues will be set aside for an educational fund, which will mainly be used for the training of those members interested in taking up trade union and industrial safety work. In addition, a special official is to be appointed to act as Educational Secretary and to assist crew members in their leisure-time pursuits.


The main tasks - at least during the first few years - will, however, probably be to push forward with the work of organizing, to produce chairmen (ship's representatives) who are capable of negotiating, and to train corresponding secretaries. The important thing now is to secure widespread interest in an activity which has, up to now, only concerned a minority of our members. On land, the member who is interested learns the ABC of trade unionism in the local branch; at sea there have never

been branches where he could do so. This is an obvious handicap which must now be made good by the membership of the Swedish Seamen's Union with as little delay as possible.

The task is a difficult but completely practicable one. Crews in distant trades and on board vessels operating under longterm foreign charters must themselves create the anchorage and shelter which are essential if their working conditions are to be protected and improved. The important thing is to strengthen the union's financial position and enlarge its fighting fund by means of active organizational effort. The union, for its part, must back up the ship's clubs and give them all the support that is both reasonable and possible. Suitable members must be trained for work on the executives and first-class study material must be made available for educational work on board. The union must also see that there are no delays in the supply of information to those working on board. In addition, ways and means will be have to be found of giving the ship's representatives compensation for their extra work and expense.

All this costs money, but the outlay involved is absolutely essential if the seafarers' trade union organization is to maintain and increase its strength. A large number of seamen, mainly foreign but also some Swedish, are at present unorganized on board ships

Israel to extend her fishing industry

 THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT is actively engaged on plans which will ultimately result in the realization of a national fishing programme integrated with the country's food and agriculture policy.

Work is now in hand on a fishing port which, when complete, will be one of the most up-to-date of its kind in the world. The site chosen is empty land due for industrial development, bordering the Kishon River, which flows into the Bay of Haifa, a short distance from the entrance to the port.

Few fishing harbours of any importance have been planned as complete new entities within at least the last fifty years. The opportunities to combine all the latest techniques and rapid fish-handling ex-trawler to cold storage and subsequent marketing for distribution throughout the countries are enormous

based on distant foreign ports. This means that there is a considerable loss of income for the union. The problem of securing 100 per cent effective organization must be solved, however much work and expense it may involve.

(with acknowledgments to *Fackföreningsrörelsen*)



On the whole, the Swedish maritime labour force is a youthful one. One result of this is that annual membership turnover is as much as one-third of the total

and a new fleet of specially-designed trawlers is being constructed in Germany under a reparation agreement to operate from the base.

As at April 1955 Israel possessed thirty trawlers of varying sizes, the largest being about seventy feet in length. A preliminary new building programme of five trawlers is in hand in the shipyard near Haifa, whilst a further three are under construction in Germany, in addition to which a special ship for training fishermen is at present on the drawing board.

The technique of fishing is a young one as far as Israel is concerned and the people in that country are anxious to obtain all technical assistance possible. With this in mind, the Government of Israel has recently approached the International Cargo Handling Coordination Association with the request that it should appoint an expert who is capable of planning the port and laying it out for most fishing operations.



Post Office Savings Bank for Swedish seafarers

AN INTERESTING SIDELIGHT on the special facilities which are available to seafarers in Sweden is provided by the news that this year marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the establishment by the Swedish Post Office Savings Bank of a special department for the exclusive use of seamen.


The seamen's Post Office Savings Bank, which is situated in Stockholm, has its own account code reference SJX and is used by some 5,500 seafarers. The total amount of savings at present stands at 4,500,000 kr. (about £300,000). The fact of its existence has encouraged many seafarers who would not otherwise have done so to bank at least part of their earnings against a rainy day.

It would, however, be a mistake to think of the bank as a mere collector of money. It also provides a number of valuable services to its customers scattered all over the world. Seafarers, like their fellow workers on land, have many responsibilities which make necessary the payment of money both in their home country and abroad and it is here that the Seamen's Savings Bank can be of particular assistance. Some seafarers, for instance, request the bank to make arrangements for their rent to be paid regularly; others ask that periodical payments should be made to their dependents or to cover hire purchase obligations; still others write in to the bank to ask that fees in respect of correspondence courses, etc. should be met by it.

Some of the services provided by the bank are of a more personal nature. Many seafarers like to send flowers to their wives and sweethearts and, here again, the bank will make the necessary arrangements. Recently, one seaman wrote in and asked that a money order – a birthday gift – should be sent to his aged mother. At the same time he said that he would like a few lines of verse in honour of the occasion to accompany the order. Although it does not employ any poets the bank not only sent the money but saw to it that a suitable message was written and enclosed.

The young ladies who are responsible for most of the work at the Seamen's Savings Bank say that their job is a pleasant one. They report that seamen make good customers, that they are friendly and understanding, and that the feeling of personal contact makes the work extremely satisfying. That the seafarers for their part appreciate the services provided is testified to by the many letters of thanks which are received and by the flowers and other similar presents which are from time to time sent to the staff.

OEEC studies automation in Europe

 THE USE OF AUTOMATIC PRODUCTION CONTROL PROCESSES and the progress made in the manufacture of electronic computers have been investigated under the auspices of the


OEEC European Productivity Agency by a group of European technicians, sociologists, and trade unionists. The group decided to undertake an enquiry on these problems among member-countries of the Organization.

During the next few months, these countries will report on conditions with

regard to automatic techniques in their industries and on the prospects which these techniques seem to open up. On the basis of this information, the group will fix the date of an international symposium, to be attended by experts from member-countries engaged upon the technical, economic, and social problems resulting from automation.

The results of the survey to be made in member-countries will enable the European Productivity Agency to gauge the scope of the problems raised by the introduction of automatic processes and discuss them at international level. It will then be able to provide those in responsible positions with full information on the subject.

European transport body proposed by Council of Europe

 THE CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE has put forward proposals for the creation of a European Transport Union, which are to be laid before the seven governments which took part in the Messina Conference earlier this year.

A permanent European Transport Committee is envisaged under the plan. Members of the committee are to be few in number and limited to experts who may be expected to work on a European basis rather than represent national views. The organization would be comparable with the High Authority of the European Steel and Coal Community but for the present lacking its supranational powers. The recommendations of the permanent European Transport Committee would be subject to approval by a permanent conference of European transport ministers before having the force of law.

The Netherlands delegate emphasized that the permanent Conference of European Transport Ministers had failed to achieve real progress in the matter of integration of European transport inasmuch as the Ministers represented the views of their various national governments. An independent transport committee, it was urged, might well prove a way out of the impasse. Such a committee would reach its decisions on a purely factual basis and pass on its proposals to the Ministers for approval. In this way, competing rail networks, many of them operating at a loss, as well as road and air transport, could be rationalized.

International Transport Workers' Federation

Acting President: H. JAHN

General Secretary: O. BECU

Asst. General Secretary: P. TOFAHRN

7 industrial sections catering for

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

- Founded in London in 1896
- Reconstituted at Amsterdam in 1919
- Headquarters in London since the outbreak of the Second World War
- 160 affiliated organizations in 54 countries
- Total membership: 6,000,000

The aims of the ITF are

to support national and international action in the struggle against economic exploitation and political oppression and to make international working class solidarity effective;

to cooperate in the establishment of a world order based on the association of all peoples in freedom and equality for the promotion of their welfare by the common use of the world's resources;

to seek universal recognition and enforcement of the right of trade union organization;

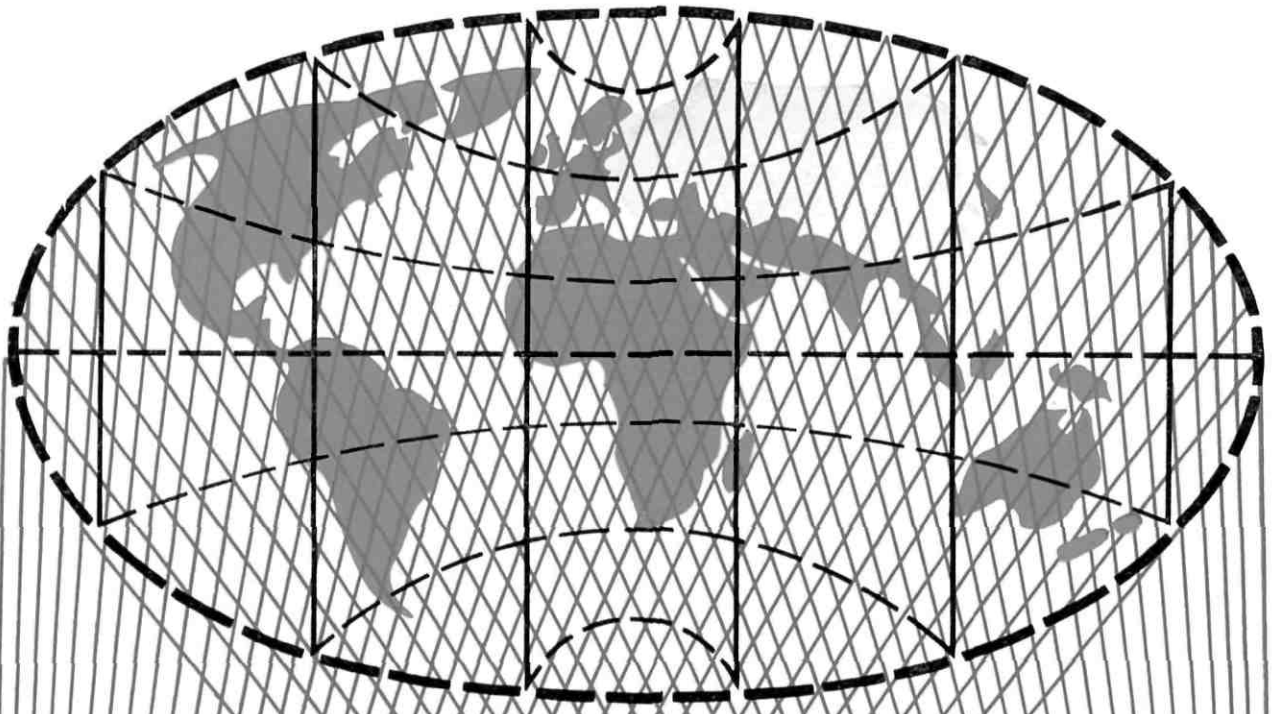
to defend and promote, on the international plane, the economic, social and occupational interests of all transport workers;

to represent the transport workers in international agencies performing functions which affect their social, economic and occupational conditions;

to furnish its affiliated organizations with information about the wages and working conditions of transport workers in different parts of the world, legislation affecting them, the development and activities of their trade unions, and other kindred matters.

Affiliated unions in

Argentina (Illegal) • Australia • Austria
Belgium • British Guiana • Canada
Chile • Colombia • Cuba • Denmark
Ecuador • Egypt • Estonia (Exile) • Finland
France • Germany • Great Britain
Greece • Grenada • Hong Kong • Iceland
India • Israel • Italy • Jamaica
Japan • Kenya • Lebanon • Luxembourg
Mexico • The Netherlands
New Zealand • Nigeria • Norway
Nyasaland • Pakistan • Poland (Exile)
Republic of Ireland • Rhodesia
Saar • St. Lucia • South Africa
Spain (Illegal Underground Movement)
Surinam • Sweden • Switzerland
Syria • Trieste • Trinidad • Tunisia • Uruguay
United States of America



EDITIONS OF JOURNAL

**INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT
WORKERS' JOURNAL**

**INTERNATIONALE TRANSPORT-
ARBEITER-ZEITUNG
TRANSPORTE**

EDITIONS OF PRESS REPORT
PRESS REPORT Two separate
editions in English issued in
London and Bombay
PRESSEBERICHT
PRESSMEDDELANDEN
COMMUNICATIONS DE PRESSE
COMUNICADO DE PRENSA

