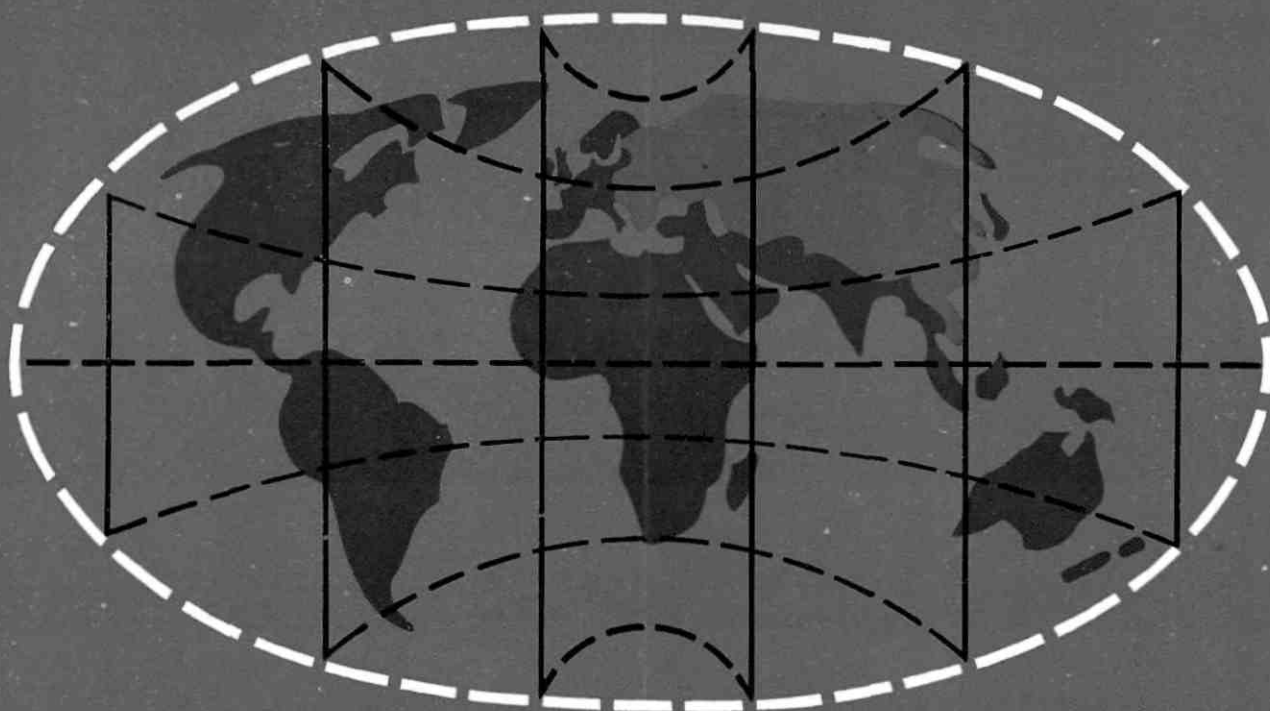


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ITF

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**International
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Union members on the Flying Tiger Line dramatized their dispute with management by recruiting a live tiger for picket duty at one of the company's hangars. The incident received wide publicity in newspapers, newsreels and on television programmes in North America, and helped to bring the strike to the public notice



International solidarity effective ...

by OMER BECU, General Secretary of the ITF

THE ITF CONSTITUTION LISTS THE FOLLOWING AMONGST THE OBJECTS OF OUR FEDERATION:

- a) to support national and international action in the struggle against exploitation, and to make working-class solidarity effective;
- b) to defend and promote, in the international plane, the economic, social, and occupational interests of all transport workers.

These are no empty phrases amongst the affiliated organizations of the ITF and their importance has again been shown in recent months in the civil aviation industry where calls for international collaboration have been nobly answered, and where action taken has secured beneficial results for hard-pressed affiliates – in Germany for flight personnel of the revived Lufthansa, and in America for maintenance members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM). It is particularly true in civil aviation, as in other sectors of transport possessing so deep-rooted an international character, that international action only can bring the desired results; the outcome of both campaigns has conclusively

proved that organized labour is prepared to cooperate in order to establish satisfactory and, as far as possible, uniform working conditions.

The German problem

In the closing months of 1954, our German affiliate, the Union of Public Service and Transport Employees (öTV) commenced negotiations with Deutsche Lufthansa AG on behalf of flight personnel; details of current salaries and service conditions operative in other European airlines were furnished to our affiliate in order that adequate standards could be obtained for its members. By March of this year an impasse had been reached, the company refusing to grant

salary scales commensurate with those prevailing in Europe – indeed the 'final offer' was in the order of only seventy per cent of the average figure. Here was a challenge that could not pass unheeded; whilst no one would wish to prevent Germany from resuming her place in world aviation, it was unthinkable that she should renew activities at the expense of those operating her company's aircraft. Expressing our shock at the extremely low offer, we recommended that our German organization should continue to oppose the rates, and from ITF headquarters we embarked on a Press campaign which was accorded widespread publicity throughout Western Europe and North America. Our immediate objective was to focus world public and aviation opinion on the low wage policy of Deutsche Lufthansa, and to compel the company to have second thoughts; this was accomplished through the medium of our press release, which we quote hereunder:

The pre-war German civil airline, Deutsche Lufthansa AG, after protracted negotiations, is to recommence scheduled services within Europe on 15 May 1955, and on trans-Atlantic routes as from 1 June 1955.

Airline personnel the world over, and especially in Europe, have looked forward to this event, and have awaited with much interest the announcement of salary scales and working conditions of German flying staff. The International Transport Workers' Federation (Civil Aviation Section) now learns on unimpeachable authority that the company seeks to introduce salary scales far below those of other European air transport undertakings; rates offered are only seventy per cent of the average salary paid.

This is undoubtedly unfair competition to which the flying staff of all other airlines will take grave objection; such a low wage policy will endanger the economy of other air operators and the livelihood of flight personnel. It will be understandable if European airline companies register strong protest against the German airline resuming activities on such a basis.

The International Transport Workers' Federation expects that the appropriate German trade union will adopt a firm attitude against such an intolerable policy. It has informed its civil aviation or-

ganizations throughout the world of these conditions, and has pointed out, particularly to its European affiliates, whose personnel will fly in direct competition with the new airline, that they should be prepared to assist by all possible means in the event of action having to be taken to secure social justice for Lufthansa personnel.

The International Transport Workers' Federation has no desire to prevent German civil aviation from regaining its rightful place in the world provided that established social standards are being respected in an industry with such a deep-rooted international character and provided that it does not indulge in a cut-throat competition on the back of its personnel. Civil aviation personnel cannot tolerate that an economically-developed Germany will play such a scandalous role in civil aviation as is the case with Panama in the shipping industry.

The response from affiliated organizations was immediate; not only did they ensure adequate publicity in their national press, but assurances of solidarity were received by the ITF Secretariat to the effect that, should our German friends decide to strike, no flying staff of other countries would operate in their stead. Ground staff organizations were equally adamant that no servicing or refuelling facilities would be granted. Hence all loopholes had been sealed;

German flight personnel were one hundred per cent behind their organization, and the reactions of the company were awaited.

Outcome of struggle

That our publicity campaign had the desired result, namely, to cause Lufthansa management to think again, was fully demonstrated by subsequent events. Our affiliate – which had earlier broken off negotiations on the salary issue – was approached by the company to reconsider its attitude; negotiations were later resumed, resulting in salary scales being awarded on a par with those obtaining in other European air transport lines. The Union of Public Service and Transport Employees has affirmed that such an outcome would have been impossible but for the ITF campaign, and the determination and the sympathetic cooperation of civil aviation organizations. Social justice had resulted from prompt, vigorous, and united action at international level.

The American scene

The American air transport scene has recently been clouded by one of the longest and bitterest struggles in aviation memory, our ground staff affiliate, the International Association of Machinists, one of the largest trade union organizations in the US, having been engaged – though happily, not single-handed – in conflict with Flying Tiger Airlines, Incorporated, an international, non-scheduled carrier. Payment of sub-standard wages, refusal of management to negotiate on increases, and unwillingness of officials to arbitrate except on their own terms provoked a strike of ground maintenance personnel, which lasted from June to October 1955. The airline's failure to agree to any wage improvements in spite of general industry-wide increases forced IAM maintenance men to lay down their tools after our affiliate had spent six months in fruitless negotiations which culminated in a company attempt to force a five-per-cent wage reduction – withdrawn only when it was made clear that the Association would tolerate no such

At London Airport, the sixteen unions constituting the Trade Union Side of the British National Joint Council for Civil Air Transport unanimously decided that no ground facilities of any kind should be granted to Flying Tiger aircraft landing





Scenes like this were common during the strike at Flying Tiger maintenance centres in the United States. Members of the IAM's sister unions refused to cross the US picket lines which had been established, while ITF international boycott action saw to the rest

treatment. The strike eventually came when the IAM did not feel that the company's action in presenting withdrawal of the cut as its final offer represented bargaining in good faith.

Our American friends had, in the spring of 1955, negotiated increases for maintenance members employed by Eastern, Capital, Northwestern, National, Trans World, and United Air Lines; these 'Big Six' rates, the pattern for the industry, now range from \$ 2.01 to \$2.33 hourly plus longevity pay after two years, whereas Flying Tiger rates ran from \$ 1.91 to \$ 2.27 with three years required to reach the top rate before longevity pay started. Principal demands by the IAM were:

- a) a three per cent wage increase;
- b) the union shop;
- c) improved vacation, holiday, and sick-leave provisions.

In addition to the proposed five per cent wage cut, the company countered with a downward revision of benefits. The union called for arbitration as provided for by the Railway Labor Act; the company refused to arbitrate anything but seniority questions. Having thus exhausted all strike-prevention machinery, Flying Tiger mechanics overwhelmingly voted in favour of withdrawing their labour.

International repercussions

The dispute had worldwide repercussions far surpassing the immediate economic issues involved, since it precipi-

tated the first aviation global boycott. The IAM found itself faced with a number of difficulties not normally encountered by striking unions. At American airports it was, of course, able to maintain its picket lines, but the company also plied between points outside the continental limits of the United States as, for example, between the West Indies and London on passenger immigrant operations, and aircraft did not return to America for a considerable period. Additionally, Flying Tigers attempted to continue overseas operations by flying out strike-breakers from America to a number of major international airports, and had no resistance been put up against the company outside America, no satisfactory settlement might yet have been reached with our affiliate. Within the United States, the provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act meant that assistance from any other American civil aviation organization would have been illegal. Alone, the IAM states, they would not have had a chance to win the fight for wage equality with other US airline employees. 'Fortunately, we were not alone. Our cause was supported not only by our own union of nearly 900,000 members and by sister unions in the United States and Canada, but also by the first international aviation boycott ever organized through the ITF.'

Within a very short time we had secured assurances from civil aviation organizations throughout the world that ground staff were refusing to handle the

aircraft, equipment, and cargoes of Flying Tiger Airlines. Whilst it was not possible for a number of reasons to close every gap, and whilst Flying Tigers were able to continue certain operations, they were particularly hard hit at other airports where a total ban was imposed.

Action taken at London Airport is particularly worthy of mention. On receipt of a call for assistance, the Secretary of the Trade Union Side of the National Joint Council for Civil Air Transport called together the constituent civil aviation organizations, which unanimously decided that no ground facilities of any type would be granted Flying Tiger aircraft landing in London. British Overseas Airways Corporation, who were under contract with Flying Tigers to afford maintenance, loading, and cleaning services, and who for the past eighteen months had chartered Flying Tiger aircraft for passenger immigrant flights, also agreed that no work should be undertaken on aircraft not carrying BOAC-booked passengers. We are confident that the heavy blow dealt at London Airport was largely instrumental in bringing about an acceptable agreement, and we are most grateful for the spirit of solidarity shown both at London and elsewhere.

Sympathetic support within America also played its part in the successful results obtained. The American Federation of Teachers was one of the first to respond. It announced that it had cancelled a transatlantic charter trip of its



Lufthansa pilots undergoing training. Earlier this year, international solidarity was instrumental in defeating an attempt to employ them at substandard rates

members for which Flying Tiger Airlines was to have supplied transportation. Other groups acted similarly. At New York City, for example, Jacob S. Potofsky, President of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, took quick action when he learned that a group of European refugees, sponsored by his union and other organizations, was being brought to the United States in a chartered Flying Tiger plane. He called on the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration, the agency responsible for the charter, to make other arrangements for the trip.

The incident aroused considerable interest and comment in industrial and aviation circles in a number of countries. In the United States, a columnist, whose articles appear in over two hundred daily newspapers, wrote thus: 'The precedent has been set for world action. This technique of working unity on a world front is a significant sign of things to come. This time it is an airline, but this solidarity of world labour could take on many another corporation in international trade.' Certainly this first aviation boycott on a world basis has been a remarkable demonstration of solidarity, and there should now exist no uncertainty that whenever and wherever necessary, labour, which rightly claims equal partnership within the civil aviation industry, will make its voice effectively heard. Not only has this dispute linked American and European labour more closely than ever before, but

the action taken has proclaimed the fact that bad customs and injustice will not be allowed to flourish.

Results within America

Meanwhile, the mounting pressure being applied began to make itself felt within America, and on 6 October 1955 the IAM was able to announce the successful conclusion of an agreement, and the termination of the strike on the previous day 'thanks to the solidarity of the free labour world and particularly the ITF. Flying Tiger mechanics will be forever grateful to the ITF and its affiliates throughout the free world whose dramatic demonstration of international union solidarity played such an important part in helping them win their fight for justice.' As a result of the agreement reached, the company would:

- a) raise wage rates to the level of those paid by other airlines under contract with the IAM;
- b) restore all striking employees to the same seniority position, classification, shift, and location they occupied when the strike began;
- c) withdraw all court suits and unfair practice charges.

The contract runs to 15 January 1957.

Looking ahead

The ITF is proud to have played its part – in keeping with its Constitution – in bringing about a just settlement in both the German and American disputes. Within the past decade aviation has virtually annihilated distances and has rendered geographical frontiers almost

meaningless; no longer can man live apart in splendid isolation, and whilst customs in one State or region may still well differ from those in another, man's dependence on his neighbour daily becomes more obvious. Particularly is this true in the realm of labour where the concern of one must become the concern of all. Allow poor standards to develop on one continent, and their evil impact will soon be felt upon another. The ITF is thus determined that, in so far as lies within its power, international labour conventions shall govern the standards within the civil aviation industry at the earliest possible moment. In this connection, a start is being made at the ILO 1956 Bipartite Civil Aviation Conference where representatives of employers and employees will meet internationally for the first time in an attempt to resolve a number of important flying staff problems. We hope that this Conference will provide a stepping-stone towards the establishment of regular machinery under the auspices of the ILO for dealing with civil aviation problems. Our ultimate goal is the conclusion of those very necessary international con-

(continued on the next page)

The end of the Flying Tiger story came after fifteen weeks of unremitting struggle. A satisfactory strike settlement was negotiated in October by IAM Vice President Elmer E. Walker (seated) and (left to right) Jack Carter, President of IAM Lodge 1903, and Grand Lodge Representatives C. Z. Lindsey and John Sweeney



Seamen and fishermen in Iceland

by JÓN SIGURDSSON, Secretary of the Reykjavik Seamen's Union



ICELAND WAS SETTLED BY STURDY NORWEGIAN VIKINGS AND SEAFARERS over a thousand years ago, and ever since the Icelanders have been a nation of seamen and fishermen. For centuries the country was isolated, far away from the beaten track, and used to be referred to as the Hermit of the Atlantic. Nowadays, due to rapidly improved air service, the country is right on the northern air lanes. Until the turn of the last century the nation lived under primitive conditions. To-day we have adopted new techniques and up-to-date methods and can with pride call ourselves a modern society.

The first two trade unions in Iceland were established in 1897, but, here as elsewhere, the trade union movement encountered great difficulties in its infancy and one might say that it did not come into its own until 1916 when a national federation was founded.

When constituted, the National Trade

(continued from page 224)

ventions governing social conditions in the industry – similar to what has already been achieved for the maritime field. The road ahead may be long and difficult, but we shall continue consistently with our objective – the establishment of sound and just practices on a global scale.



Union Federation of Iceland consisted of five trade unions with a membership of some 600 workers. Now there are 162 trade unions affiliated with the Federation with a total membership of 27,500 – about eighteen per cent of the country's total population.

The organization of the trade union movement in Iceland is in many respects different from that in other countries. There are very few national unions covering individual trades throughout the country. Instead, individual unions in each locality are directly affiliated with the national organization, and each of these unions negotiates its own agreement on wages and conditions with the employers or the employers association in its area or community. However, of

late, we have seen a number of unions comprised of members who work in the same or similar fields of employment forming a national union, which in turn operates within the framework of the National Federation.

Wages are relatively high in Iceland, while at the same time the cost of living is very high. The purchasing power of a worker's wages in Iceland, however, compares very favourably with most European countries, due to the strength and solidarity of the trade union movement of today.

Communist threat

Simultaneously with the introduction and adoption of new and modern techniques, which have greatly increased

our productivity, many beneficial movements and ideas have come to Iceland from other countries. At the same time, however, some undesirable and highly dangerous movements have been introduced here and been able to take firm root. One of these is Communism, which now has considerable strength in this country, especially within the trade union movement.

In 1944 the Communists succeeded in gaining majority control of the Trade Union Federation and holding it for the next four years. In the Autumn of 1948 the workers of the three democratic parties united in a successful effort to free the Federation of Communist control. During their term of office the Communists had flagrantly abused their position while in control of the Trade Union Federation to further their own political aims.

The new democratic Executive Board was composed of six Social-Democrats, two representatives from the Independence Party (Conservatives) and one from the Progressive (Agrarians). This form of Executive Board continued for three terms, until the Autumn of 1954. (The Trade Union Federation holds a National Convention every other year). The Communists then launched a major propaganda campaign, the main theme of which was a 'united workers' front', and they made many enticing offers of 'unity and co-operation' to us Social-Democrats, and finally succeeded in

gaining the support of the then Chairman of the Social-Democratic Party, followed by twenty-five other prominent Social-Democrats, in the election of representatives to the Federation Convention. The result was that Communists and some of their allies were elected as officers of the new Executive Board by a very slight majority, sometimes by a narrow margin of only one or two votes.

When the Communists had thus once more gained virtual control of the national trade union organization they immediately planned a programme of action, and gained the consent of most of the unions controlled by them to denounce all existing wage agreements, which then terminated on 1 March this year. Generally speaking they demanded a sixty to seventy per cent direct wage increase plus various fringe benefits. A few unions, controlled by Social-Democrats, also denounced existing agreements and decided to enter the dispute from the beginning, but bitter controversies immediately rose between them and the Communists over which course of action to take in order to gain improved terms and conditions. The Social-Democrats wanted to force a reduction in the price of essential commodities, without a reduction in wages, and thus increase the purchasing power of the workers' wages and at the same time prevent further inflation, while the Communists demanded a direct wage increase, and this policy prevailed

throughout this very long dispute.

General strike

On 18 March a strike broke out, involving twenty unions of some 7,000 skilled and unskilled workers. This strike lasted for six weeks, until 28 April, when new agreements were finally reached.

The outcome of the dispute was an increase of ten per cent in basic wages, paid holidays increased from fifteen to eighteen working days, or from five per cent to six per cent of paid wages, a full cost of living bonus on basic wages, computed every three months. It was also agreed that a general unemployment insurance fund be established into which employers would pay a premium of one per cent of all general workers' wages, each municipality one per cent, and the State a premium of two per cent. Workers do not have to contribute to the fund.

When the agreements had been concluded there was considerable dissatisfaction over the results, and particularly over the fact that the course of demanding a direct increase in wages had been chosen, for many realized the danger of a continued race between wages and commodity prices, and it has already appeared that this fear was not unfounded, since the price of all essential consumer goods has risen considerably, especially home-produced consumer goods, such as agricultural produce, etc. It has not been accurately computed what the purchasing power of a worker's wages is right now, but it is maintained by many that it is no greater than before the long and costly dispute. The new contracts for workers other than seamen are for the most part valid until 1 June 1956.

The average basic wage of an unskilled male worker doing general daytime work is now Kronur 10.17*) per hour, plus a cost of living bonus of Kronur 6.51, making a total of Kronur 16.88. Wages for women workers average Kronur 7.70 base, making a total of Kronur 12.63 including the cost of living bonus. The cost of living index on which the total wages are based was 161 points at the time of the new agreements. At the present time, five months later, it is 164 points, and it is expected to rise to 172 or more by 1 December. Many look upon this unfortunate development with fear and anxiety, and not without reason, for inflation is a wicked and insi-

How's this for size? An Icelandic fisherman proudly holds one of the day's catch. He is well dressed to meet the rigours of his calling - one of the world's hardest



*) £1 equals 45.70 Kronur.



Reykjavik, capital of Iceland and site of the headquarters of the Reykjavik Seamen's Union, has a population of just over 60,000

dious economic disease which hits hardest the poorest amongst us.

Seamen's Union of Reykjavik

Although the Icelanders were first of all, and still are, a nation of fishermen, our seamen were not the first to organize a trade union. A few seamen's unions were established soon after 1900, but they were shortlived, and our seamen were virtually unorganized until the Reykjavik Seamen's Union was established in the Autumn of 1915. The union was soon engaged in a hard struggle with shipowners and it was not long before it applied for affiliation with the International Transport Workers' Federation of which it has been a member ever since.

The decision to seek affiliation with the ITF has proved to be one of the most fortunate steps taken by our union, for it has frequently sought support from the Federation at times when much has been at stake, and this has invariably resulted in a successful conclusion of the union's disputes with shipowners. It is worthy of special mention how quickly and whole-heartedly the ITF has res-

ponded when we have sought its assistance, and the writer, as the secretary of the Reykjavik Seamen's Union, hereby expresses special gratitude and appreciation for the invaluable help and support which the ITF has extended to our union in years gone by.

The Seamen's Union of Reykjavik is composed of seamen on both fishing ships and cargo and passenger vessels, and it is safe to say that due to the energetic leadership of their union they now enjoy wages and working conditions that are fully comparable with the best anywhere in the world, and I should like to describe these somewhat further.

Wages and conditions on board trawlers

Icelanders now own more than forty trawlers, all of which are large and new and good diesel ships, fitted with the most up-to-date equipment. Last Autumn the Seamen's Union terminated existing contracts with shipowners and announced a strike and a stand-still of the fishing fleet if new agreements had not been reached before a specified date. The evening before the strike was to

start, negotiations resulted in a new agreement, which brought every deck hand, cook and stoker on a trawler with an average catch of fish an average wage increase of thirty-one per cent or Kr. 1,400 (£ 31-0-0) per month. Wages and conditions are now as follows:

1) *Permanent monthly wages (incl. cost of living bonus, 164 points)*

Deck hands, stokers and 2nd cooks . . .	Icel.	kr. 2,132.00
Net repairers . . .	„	„ 2,427.20
Boatswains and 1st cooks	„	„ 2,960.20

2) All hands have free victualling

3) *Share of catch when fishing in ice:* When fishing in ice for sale on a foreign market the crew receives seventeen per cent of the total sales value of the catch minus eighteen per cent. The bonus thus received is divided evenly among all hands, but never by more than thirty-three. If a fishing vessel sells its catch for an amount exceeding £ 9,000 each crew member receives an additional bonus of 0.3 per cent of the amount in excess of £ 9,000.

4) *Share of catch when fishing in ice for the domestic market:*

Seventeen per cent of the total value of the catch is equally divided between all crew members, but never by more than thirty-one.

The price of cod, cleaned with the head on, is fixed by contract at Icel. Kr. 1.00 (5d.) per kilo (2.2 lb), and proportionately the same for other fish.

5) *Share of catch when fishing in salt:* When fishing in salt every crew member receives Icel. Kr. 10 (4s. 5d.) for each ton of salted fish landed at an Icelandic port. If the catch is sold in a foreign port the crew receives nineteen per cent of the total sales value of the catch, minus eighteen per cent for costs. This nineteen per cent of eighty-two per cent of total sales value is divided equally among all crew members, but never by more than thirty-eight.

6) The bonus from fish liver-oil is Icel. Kr. 40.00 (17s. 6d.) per ton for each crew member.

7) At the completion of each fishing trip vessels stop in the home port for at least twenty-four hours during which time all crew members have shore leave. This leave may not exceed forty-eight hours even if the vessel stops in port for a longer period.

8) On all fishing trips each deck hand

is guaranteed a twelve-hour rest during a twenty-four-hour period, while stokers work eight hours in every twenty four.

9) When a vessel sails overseas with its catch two-thirds of the deck hands have the right to remain at home with full pay plus a payment of Icel. Kr. 29.52 per day for board. They also receive a share of the sales price of the catch, as mentioned above.

10) Each seaman receives an annual holiday of eighteen working days at full pay or six per cent of his wages, plus all bonus from the catch.

In addition the new agreement contains various other provisions relating to bonuses from fish meal, fish quick-frozen on board ship, further shore-leave rights, etc. With the above listed wages and conditions, a deck hand on a ship with an average sized catch should have an annual wage of Icel. Kronur 60,000 (£ 1,310) based on a fishing season of ten months.

New demands

The seamen have now asked for certain adjustments of these terms, without denouncing the agreement, in view of the increased cost of living; for as the permanent wage is only one-third of the total wages received by trawler seamen, and they receive a cost of living bonus only on this part, an increase in the cost of living is bound to hit them rather hard. The shipowners have replied that they do not find it possible to make any adjustment of these terms, except to a very small extent, and notice of termination of the existing agreement as of 1 December this year is likely.

During the last two negotiations on trawler wages we sought the assistance of the ITF, which made widespread preparations to help us by imposing a service ban on Icelandic trawlers in foreign ports. This action, beyond the slightest doubt, was a major factor in the disputes' successful conclusion without an actual strike having to be called.

Wages and terms on motor vessels (drifters)

There is a great number of smaller fishing boats in Iceland, from thirty to one hundred tons in size. In Reykjavik alone

Homeward bound with a full catch on board the trawler lurches in heavy seas. Icelanders have been a nation of fishermen for over a thousand years and possess a modern well-organized fishing industry

about forty such vessels are fitted out regularly, and in some fishing towns many more, such as for example in the Westman Islands off the south coast of Iceland. The usual terms of employment on these boats is that the catch is shared equally by the owners of the boats and the crew. The crew then divides its share equally between all members while the owners pay an extra bonus to officers from their share. The crew shares in the cost of fitting and operating the boats on a basis and in proportions negotiated and agreed upon before the season starts. Members of the crew provide their own board. As a minimum guaranteed monthly wage each crew member receives a basic payment of Icel. Kr. 1,941 (£42-8-0), or a total of Icel. Kr. 3,183.24 (£ 69-0-0) at the present cost of living index. In most cases the share of each seaman is higher than the guaranteed monthly wage, but this is still necessary in order to guarantee the sailors a minimum wage and as a safeguard against a poor catch and other misfortunes.

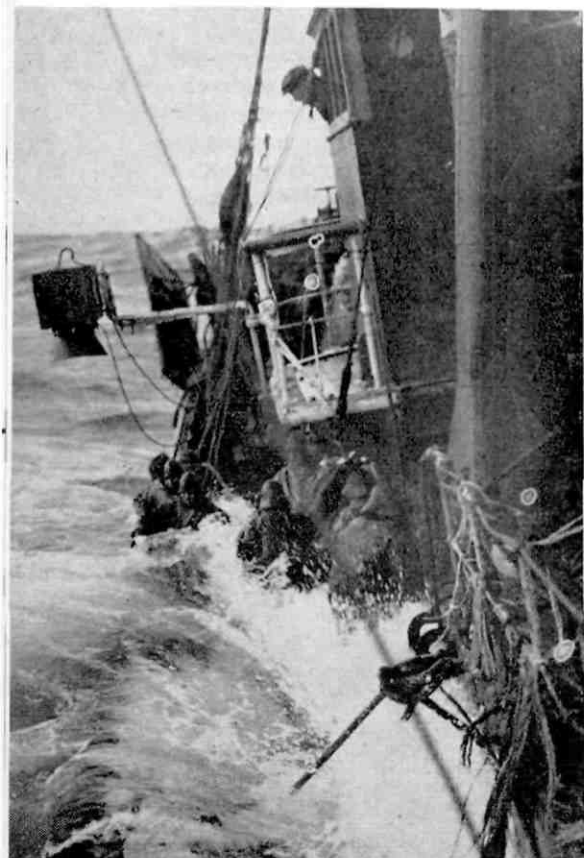
It has been decided to call for a new agreement covering the motor boats as of 31 December this year, and to demand a higher guaranteed wage and adjustment of the wages of motor vessel seamen corresponding with the increase in wages of workers ashore.

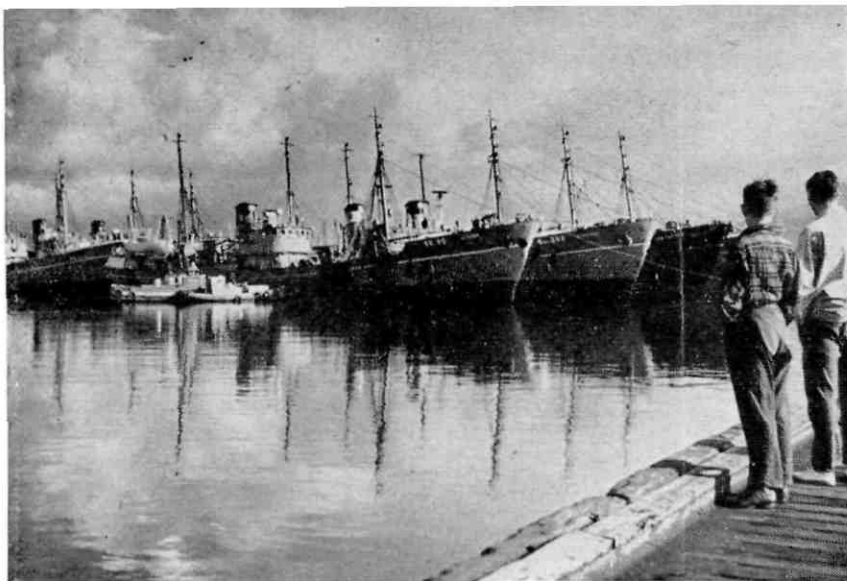
Wages and terms on merchant vessels

For a long time we Icelanders owned no ships carrying cargo and passengers overseas, and had to depend entirely on others in this respect. To-day we own thirty cargo and passenger vessels in addition to a number of smaller transport ships, and the Seamen's Union of Reykjavik negotiates the wages and conditions of the seamen on all these ships.

On 1 June this year existing agreements had run out. A strike had been called for 8 June if new agreements had not been concluded by that time. Work went forward relentlessly on the negotiation of new agreements. These were finally signed on 12 June with only one ship having been held up for one day. A considerable increase in the guaranteed monthly wage for deck hands and others was the result of this new agreement which provided a guaranteed monthly wage approximately twenty-eight per cent higher than before, plus various improvements in fringe benefits.

In general outline the wages and terms on merchant ships are now as follows:





1) Permanent monthly wage (including cost of living bonus, 164 points)

- a) Carpenter, boatswain or leading deck hand. Kr. 3,522.72
- b) Fully qualified deck hand ,, 3,198.00
- c) Apprentice ,, 2,228.76
- d) Chief stoker, engineer assistant (greaser of diesel engines) ,, 3,655.56
- e) Stoker and cleaner ,, 3,468.60

On oil tankers the monthly wage is five per cent higher.

If there are two watches in a twenty-four hour period, the basic monthly wage is higher by Kr. 128.

2) Overtime:

- a) When watches are kept the amount paid for each half hour or fraction is Kr. 8.86. Should the number of overtime hours worked according to this paragraph exceed twenty, the time over and above this number of hours is paid for in accordance with para b.
- b) When watches have been completed the amount paid for each half hour or fraction between the hours of 5 p.m. and 7.30 a.m., and during holidays, is Kr. 13.04.

(3) Working hours ashore, when a vessel has anchored or tied up alongside and watches have been completed is, from 7.30 a.m. to 5 p.m. From this are deducted twenty minutes for breakfast, from 9 to 9.20 a.m., one hour for lunch, from 12 o'clock noon to 1 p.m., and twenty minutes for an afternoon coffee

Iceland's latest passenger vessel, the 'Gullfoss' leaving Reykjavik harbour on its bi-weekly trip to Leith and Copenhagen. The Seamen's Union of Reykjavik negotiates wages and conditions aboard all Icelandic cargo and passenger vessels

break, from 3 to 3.20 p.m.

4) There are three watches for each twenty-four hour period. It is permissible, however, to have two watches on board ships under 500 tons.

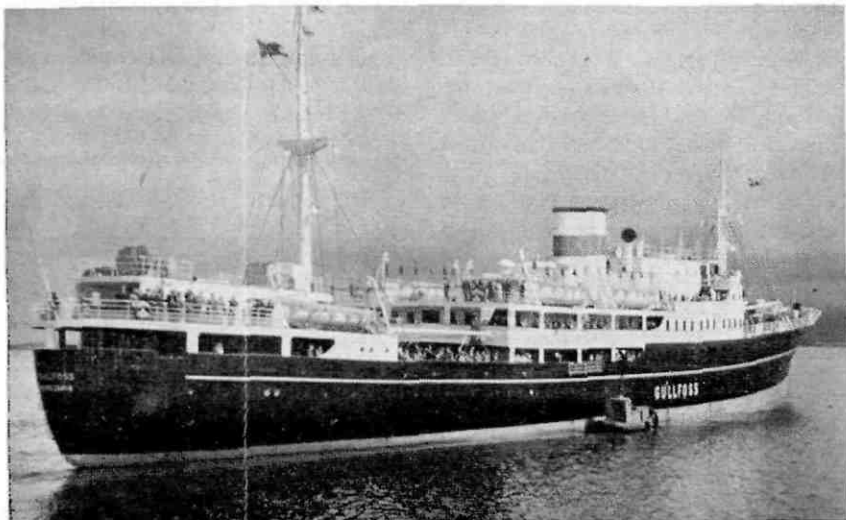
5) Should a deck hand, who has been employed by the same shipowner for a period of one year or longer, sustain injuries in the line of duty, or fall ill, necessitating his leaving the ship in a foreign port, he is paid his full wages until he is again employed, or again reaches his home port, which should be as soon as his health and available transportation permit. These wages are paid for a maximum of two weeks in the case of a deck hand who has been in the employment of the shipowner for one year, and one month in the case of a deck hand who has been employed by the same shipowner for two years or longer. The daily allowance paid by the State Social Insurance Administration goes to the shipowner. If the seamen himself is responsible for the accident or the illness,

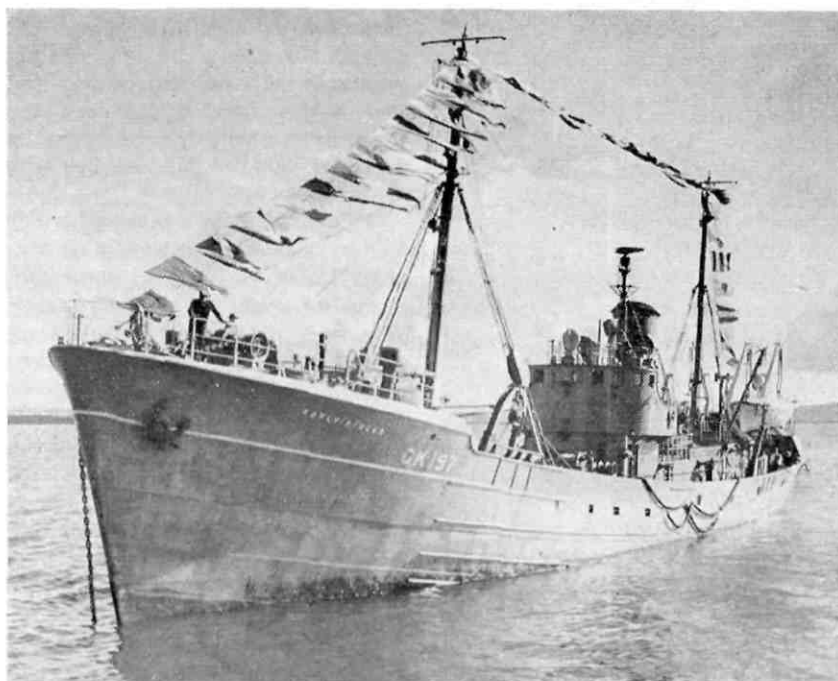
Strikebound Icelandic trawlers. The strength and solidarity of the Icelandic trade union movement have ensured Icelandic workers relatively high wage rates

the case is handled in accordance with maritime law.

6) Deckhands have every other day off duty while a ship is lying in the port of Reykjavik, or any other home port, as well as in Hafnarfjordur, if watches have been completed. The days off granted in this way may not, however, exceed a total of four a month for each deck hand (including Sundays but excluding church or contractual holidays). If it is not possible to grant the full number of days off duty during the year or the period of employment, the days due are paid for, at the end of the year or on discharge, at the rate of 1/30th of the man's monthly wage, in accordance with Art. 1, para 1, and Art. 3. In addition a deck hand receives two half days or one whole day off per month at a foreign port of call. Should unforeseen circumstances make it impossible to grant these days off duty, compensation is paid in accordance with Art. 2, para b. On Saturdays, if watches have been completed and the ship is not leaving port, deck hands' shore leave is granted as follows: if the ship is in a foreign port, at twelve o'clock noon; if the ship is in a homeland port during the period 1 May to 30 September, at twelve o'clock noon.

If the departure of a vessel from home port or from a foreign port falls upon a Saturday, deck hands are granted shore-leave from twelve o'clock noon, unless weather or other special circumstances prevent this. Crew members, however, may be recalled from shore leave to





Icelandic trawler at anchor. Iceland's trawler fleet consists of some forty vessels of recent construction and fitted out with the most up-to-date equipment

make ready for sea, the work thus performed being paid for in accordance with Art. 2, para b. Deck hands may not be kept on board ship to do painting or cleaning or other similar work, depriving them of their shore leave.

7) Annual vacation is eighteen working days, or six per cent of total wages.

8) On board ships of 100-500 tons there must be at least two fully qualified deck hands and two beginners; on board ships of 500-2000 tons, there must be six fully qualified deck hands; and on board passenger vessels over 3000 tons, eight fully qualified deck hands. Boatwain and carpenter count as deck hands.

This covers all the principal points concerning wages and working hours. The new agreement of course contains many other provisions relating to further leave and rights; what duties are to be performed while on watch; what special jobs are paid for at overtime rates; a payment of Kr. 29.52 for board, while on leave; etc., etc.

All living conditions on board ship, whether on fishing vessels or merchant ships, have greatly improved over the last few years, especially in the comparatively large number of new ships which have been added to the Icelandic fishing and sailing fleet. Good and reasonable hours for rest and sleep have been ensured aboard most ships, and every endeavour has been made to improve the standard of safety on board ship and at sea.

National economy

In the last fifteen years there has been hardly any unemployment to speak of, except seasonal unemployment in certain parts of the country, especially in towns and villages on the east, north and west coasts. In the south and south-west part of Iceland there has been such a demand for labour, however, that workers from those parts that suffer from seasonal unemployment have been able to go south for work. It has proved increasingly difficult to get enough men to go to sea, and it has consequently been necessary to import seamen from abroad. During last winter's fishing season for example there were 500 seamen from the Faroe Islands on Icelandic fishing ships.

For centuries we Icelanders lived entirely from agriculture and fisheries, but during the last fifty years there has been

a rapid and most remarkable change in the division of national occupations. The table at the foot of this page, gives some idea of this development of our national economy.

This table shows the remarkable change that has taken place over a period of fifty years. To-day more people are listed under 'manufacturing and other crafts' than under agriculture and fisheries combined. Despite the large decrease in the number of people engaged in these two basic industries, however, the overall yield has grown to such an extent that it has never been larger than at the present time. Several important factors are responsible for this, the main ones being the vastly increased use of good and modern machinery and implements in our agriculture; an extension of the area of cultivated land; and large and new fishing vessels equipped with the best and most up-to-date machinery and gear.

The total quantity of fish landed in Iceland as of 1 September 1955, (i.e. during the first eight months of this year), reached 313,541 tons, which must be considered a sizeable quantity considering the fact that Iceland is a nation of only 156,000 inhabitants.

Iceland is a good country, and its people energetic and ambitious. If it is possible to stop the wave of extremes which invariably follows the influence of totalitarian and dictatorial political doctrines, if national affairs are conducted with firmness and with a view to serving the interest of the people as one economic whole, the Icelanders have every reason to look forward to a good and reasonably prosperous future.

Percentage of population

Engaged in:	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950
Agriculture	51.0	42.9	35.8	30.6	19.9
Fisheries	18.0	18.9	16.7	15.9	10.8
Manufacturing and other crafts	8.2	11.3	18.9	21.3	32.5
Other occupations	22.8	26.9	28.6	32.2	36.8
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Twenty years of the US Railroad Retirement Act



AUGUST 29 MARKED A MOST SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE for the men and women who work in the US railroad industry. On that date in 1935, the railroad retirement system came into existence. In the twenty years since the Railroad Retirement Act became law, railroad workers have broadened and improved their social insurance plan so that they and their families can better cope with the economic problems which arise in their daily lives.

From small beginnings, when there was only a retirement system, the plan for railroaders gradually blossomed forth into a comprehensive system of social insurance protection against all the major economic hazards which can harass the working man. Thus, today, railroaders enjoy the protection of four integrated programmes – a retirement system for aged and disabled employees; a survivor benefit system for the families of deceased employees; an unemployment insurance system for employees who become unemployed through no fault of their own; and a sickness insurance system for those who are temporarily unable to work because of sickness or injury.

Figures tell story

The important role that the retirement, survivor, unemployment, and sickness benefit programmes have come to play in the lives of the nation's railroad workers and their families can be illustrated in cold figures. Since benefit operations began in July 1936, five billion dollars* has been paid out under all four programmes; \$ 3.7 billion in retirement, \$ 663 million in survivor, \$ 654 million in unemployment, and \$ 280 million in sickness benefits. The annual amounts paid in retirement and survivor benefits have increased steadily from the beginning – only \$ 4 million in the fiscal year 1936-7 – until they now have reached a rate of about \$ 575 million a year. More than 1,400,000 persons have drawn benefits under the Railroad Retirement Act alone, and, at the present time, 616,000 men, women, and children are on the Board's monthly annuity rolls. In 1936-7, only 7,000 persons received retirement benefits; but in the following year, the

number of beneficiaries jumped to 117,000 – including 3,000 survivors – and benefits rose to \$83 million.

Aware of need

The legislative history of the railroad social insurance plan goes back to the early 1930's. Actually, however, the movement got under way much earlier, when the railroads, in trying to solve the problems of caring for the older or disabled workers, put their own pension plans into operation.

Early in the depression days of the 1930's, US railway labour leaders took advantage of the general awareness of the serious need for legislation protecting workers against financial dependency. They began their campaign to provide, through legislation, a social insurance programme on a national scale for all railroad workers. These early efforts culminated in the passage, on 27 June 1934, of the first Railroad Retirement Act. This law, however, was never put into operation, because it was declared unconstitutional by the US Supreme Court in May 1935.

A second Railroad Retirement Act was passed on 29 August 1935, but its legality was also challenged. However, before the issue was settled in the courts, railroad management and labour sat down together and agreed upon a mutually-satisfactory plan, which became the Railroad Retirement Act of 1937.

The system of old-age and disability retirement benefits and nominal survivor benefits which was set up in the 1935 Act was carried over, for the most part, in the 1937 law. In addition, the Railroad Retirement Board was authorized to take over from the railroads the payment of pensions to employees whom they had already retired under their own private plans.

Help for unemployed

While protection for aged railroad employees was becoming a reality, a movement to protect employees who become unemployed was developing. In January 1933, the Railway Labour Executives' Association adopted, as part of its legislative programme, a proposal to enact a federal law requiring the railroads to create payroll reserves for the purpose of stabilizing employment and for making payments to unemployed workers. The movement was given considerable encouragement by the findings of the Federal Coordinator of Transportation, recommending the establishment of a nationally-administered system of unemployment compensation for transportation workers. A bill was drafted by the Association and was adopted by Congress in June 1938, to become effective 1 July 1939.

With the passage of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act, the railroad insurance programme was well on its way; but there was still much to be done. However, it was not until 1946 that any major legislation designed to strengthen the programme was put through. Amendments to the retirement system, passed on 31 July of that year, greatly liberalized disability annuities, increased retirement benefits in the lower brackets, and established a system of monthly and lump-sum survivor benefits.

In 1948, retirement benefits were raised substantially, and in 1951, both retirement and survivor payments were increased. Also, in 1951, other important changes were made in the retirement act. These amendments provided for annuities for the wives of retired employees, and allowed retirement credit for service after age sixty-five. They also established a ten-year service requirement for all benefits and provided for transferring to the social security system the railroad credits of employees who retire or die with less than ten years of service.

Equality guaranteed

A provision was enacted which guarantees that the benefits for railroad employees and their families shall be at least as much under the Railroad Retirement Act as they would be if railroad employment were covered by the Social Security Act. Finally, the amendments provided for reinsuring part of the railroad retirement benefits with the social

* The US billion is a thousand millions.

security system. This was done for the purpose of crediting the railroad retirement system with certain savings which accrue to the social security system because of not covering railroad employees.

Further changes were made in the Railroad Retirement Act on 31 August 1954. One of them made it possible for widows without dependent children to draw annuities at age sixty, instead of age sixty-five. Another granted annuities to disabled children past age eighteen and to their widowed mothers. Furthermore, the maximum earnings creditable to railroad employees were raised from \$ 300 to \$ 350 a month. At the same time, the Railroad Retirement Tax Act was amended to make a similar change in the maximum monthly earnings on which employees and employers pay taxes.

The most recent changes in the retirement act came on 13 August 1955. Of the two important changes made, one raised the maximum annuity that can be paid to the wife of a retired railroad employee from \$ 40 to \$ 54.30 a month. The other revision was to permit, widows, widowers, children, and parents to receive a railroad survivor annuity and a social security benefit at the same time without any reduction in the railroad annuity. Of course, a survivor cannot receive two benefits on the basis of the same person's employment.

The first major amendment in the

Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act came in 1946. At that time unemployment benefits were increased, and the law was extended to include payments to employees who were unable to work because of sickness.


Benefits increased

Amendments in 1952 and 1954 raised both unemployment and sickness benefit amounts very substantially. Also, the amendment in the latter year changed the maximum taxable and creditable earnings from \$ 300 to \$ 350 a month, the same as under the railroad retirement system.

Today, after twenty years of operation under the railroad social insurance programme, it is clear that a hope of many years standing has in large part been fulfilled. Since employment is the basic means of economic security for workers and their families, the need for protection against the hazards which stand in the way of continuing employment is of vital importance to all workers. For those in the railroad industry, this protection has been provided by the programmes established under the Railroad Retirement and Railroad Unemployment Insurance Acts.

Looking ahead to the next twenty years, US railroad workers can be certain that the plan of social insurance which they have built up is strong enough to meet any demands which the future may place upon it.

World is catching more fish

 FISH PRODUCTION in most parts of the world has increased substantially since 1939, a fact which is revealed in the statistical tables in the 'Historical Section' of the latest edition of the FAO Yearbook of Fishery Statistics published by the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization in Rome.

Some idea of the increases which have taken place can be gained from the following figures:

Immediately before the second world war, yearly fish production by African countries is estimated to have been about 470,000 metric tons; in 1953 it had reached an estimated 1,540,000 tons - an increase of more than 220 per cent.

In South America the figures show 240,000 metric tons in 1938 and 590,000

tons in 1953 - an increase of more than 140 per cent.


In North America, fish production was estimated to be about 3,150,000 metric tons in 1938; in 1953 it was about 3,450,000 tons - an increase of nearly 10 per cent.

In Europe the fish catch was about 5,470,000 metric tons in 1939; by 1953 the figure had grown to an estimated 7,160,000 tons - a huge increase in live weight approaching 2,000,000 tons.

Australia and New Zealand have also substantially increased their production.

The figures available for Asia, however, do not show such remarkable increases, although it is significant that Japan, one of the world's greatest fishing countries, has not only recovered the loss in production sustained between 1944 and 1949 as a result of the war but is now catching more fish than ever before - 4,577,000 metric tons in 1953 compared with 3,562,000 in 1939.

A warning to taxi-users

 DANGER to vehicle drivers and the general public, resulting from exhaustion due to overlong hours at the wheel is a problem throughout the world. A disquieting example of the danger which taxi-passengers, for example, may unwittingly run, was instanced recently by the Belgian Transport Workers' Union (an ITRF affiliate).

A driver, newly engaged by a garage hire-company*, one of many operating in and around Antwerp, reported to the Union that he had been required to work an excessive number of hours. The actual number of hours worked during the first eleven days of his employment totalled 138¾ hours for a mere 1,025 francs (about £7.8s. 0d.) an average of 7.40 frs (approx. 1/-) per hour. His refusal to work further under such conditions was met by the garage proprietor with a demand for a fortnight's notice.


Details of his schedule for the period show that for the first week (Monday to Saturday inclusive) he worked a daily turn of 11½ hours - from 5.30 a.m. to 5 p.m. - a weekly total of sixty-nine hours well in excess of general industrial hours of work stipulations, but one allowing him a rest period of 12½ hours between turns. In the second week, however, he worked a total of 69¾ hours from Sunday to Thursday inclusive, this time without adequate rest periods, as is shown by the following schedule:

<i>Sunday</i>	5 p.m. to 4 a.m. (11 hours)
<i>Monday</i>	5 p.m. to 4 a.m. (11 hours)
<i>Tuesday</i>	8.30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 4 a.m. (17½ hours with rest periods of 4½ and 2 hours between turns)
<i>Wednesday</i>	1 p.m. to 3 a.m. - a fourteen hour stretch, followed by a rest period of barely 5 hours.
<i>Thursday</i>	Two turns from 8.45 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 4 a.m., respectively.

The Union has reported the case to the Belgian Labour Inspectorate as an infringement of working hours legislation, in continuance of its campaign for the introduction of uniformity in hours and wage rates for employees engaged in the taxi-cab industry.

* Two types of taxi service operate in Belgian towns; companies operating licensed taxis with ranks in various parts of the town, and garage hire-services taking bookings by phone. A considerable variance both in wages and hours of work results from the existence of these two systems.

Working conditions in truck transportation in Canada

 A SURVEY WAS MADE by the Canadian Department of Labour in April 1954 of the conditions of work of non-office employees of truck transportation firms in Canada.

The survey covered nearly 8,900 non-office employees in 247 firms throughout Canada. Of these firms, 117 with 4,286 employees were in the province of Ontario, thirty-nine firms with 1,087 employees in British Columbia, thirty-eight firms with 1,839 employees in Quebec and the remainder in seven other provinces.

Normal weekly hours of work

At the date of the survey nearly eight per cent of the employees worked for firms reporting a standard working week of forty hours and nearly fifty per cent were on standard schedules of over forty and up to forty-eight hours a week, while for approximately forty-three per cent of the employees the standard week was more than forty-eight hours. The incidence of these various work weeks was as follows:

Normal weekly hours	Establishments	Non-office employees
40	19	703
42½	5	310
44	53	1,355
45	17	577
over 45 and under 48	15	575
48	52	1,532
over 48	86	3,841
Total	247	8,893

Nearly 3,700 employees in 104 firms, mostly in the province of Ontario, were on a five-day week schedule.

Paid statutory holidays

Of the 247 firms concerned in the survey, eleven (274 employees) gave no information on statutory holiday provisions and fifteen (408 employees) reported that none were granted. In the province of Ontario, where nearly half of all the firms and employees were located, the number of such holidays most commonly granted was seven, while in British Columbia and Quebec (the provinces containing the highest number of firms and employees) the most frequently en-

countered were seven and six respectively. In Manitoba, where there were seventeen firms with 730 employees, the granting of nine paid holidays was the common practice. The number of paid statutory holidays in relation to the number of firms and employees affected are set out in the following table:

Number of days	Establishments	Non-office employees
1 to 4	8	113
5	11	454
6	27	1,179
7	40	1,255
8	111	4,524
9	17	493
10 to 11	7	193
Total	221	8,211

Annual vacations with pay

One week of annual vacation with pay was granted in 216 firms to 7,688 employees after one year of service (and sometimes a shorter period). Two weeks with pay were granted in 212 firms with 8,077 employees – in fifty-four of them after one or two years of service, in 102 after three years and in fifty-six after five years or other periods. In forty firms three weeks after twenty years or similar long periods of service.

Daily rest periods

A common practice reported by 117 of the firms in respect of 3,911 employees, was to grant two daily rest periods of ten or fifteen minutes per day.

Merchant fleets of Europe

 A TOTAL OF 4,196,000 TONS OF SHIPPING, comprising 3,394,000 tons of new vessels and 802,000 tons of second-hand tonnage acquired abroad was added last year to the merchant fleets of countries which are members of the Organization for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC). These figures are shown in a study prepared by the Maritime Transport Committee of the organization.

During the year, the amount of merchant shipping lost (108,000 gross tons), broken up (668,000 tons) and sold abroad (1,483,000 tons) totalled 2,259,000 tons, but the report states the net increase was probably slightly less through international ship sales among the OEEC countries.

The amount of new and secondhand tanker tonnage commissioned in the period was 1,370,000 tons and 180,000


tons, respectively, while 77,000 tons of tankers were broken up and 333,000 tons sold abroad by member countries during the year.

Largest increment to national merchant fleets was in the United Kingdom, which added 1,087,000 tons of new shipping, and 225,000 tons of second-hand vessels. Disposals by UK shipping companies included 403,000 tons broken up and 513,000 tons sold abroad.

Both these figures, it is stated, were substantially greater than in 1953, when new and second-hand tonnage commissioned in Britain amounted to less than one mn. tons, and the losses by scrapping and sales to just over 600,000 tons.

A number of the statistical tables given in the OEEC supplement to its annual report for 1954 have been compiled from figures already published by Lloyd's Register of Shipping and supplemented by Government returns.

Rubber - road material of the future?

 A REPORT issued by the British Rubber Development Board shows that increasing use is being made, in a number of countries, of natural rubber for road construction purposes. In 1954, a total of 108 stretches of rubberized road was laid in Australia, Great Britain, Malaya, New Zealand, South Africa, and the United States of America, and the report indicates that, as a result of the more favourable attitude now adopted by road engineers, rubber roads are likely to be used to an even greater extent in the future.

The Board further reports that considerable advances have been made, as a result of laboratory tests, in solving the technical problems of incorporating rubber into bitumen, thus facilitating road construction in those parts of the world, such as the Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent, where considerable variations of temperature occur between the seasons.

Rubber is also being used to a greater extent in railway construction work. Following successful trials, British Railways have introduced rubber pads for use on the permanent way. These pads, inserted between rail and sleeper, reduce vibration and have consequently resulted in a considerable reduction in track maintenance costs. Experiments are also being carried out in the use of rubber in the manufacture of ferrules, clip fastenings, and other devices used on the permanent way.

The free trade unions of Japan - Democracy's bulwark



by Y. HARAGUCHI, Director, ICFTU Office in Japan

WHEN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN JAPAN WAS AT ITS PEAK in the postwar years, during 1948 and 1949, its total membership amounted to 6,700,000. By mid-June, 1954, this figure had decreased by about three-quarters of a million to 5,986,000, according to the Japanese Ministry of Labour. This is 39.6 per cent of the total number of employed workers. Such a percentage is not altogether unsatisfactory for a movement which hardly existed before the war, and the figure also compares favourably with those of more industrially advanced countries.

The movement at present suffers from several defects and weaknesses. There is a serious lack of unity among the truly democratic forces; in some important industries the percentage of organized workers is often very low or divided between several different unions; the internal structure of industrial unions tends to be on a company basis.

Four national centres

There are at present four national centres. The largest is the General Council of Trade Unions, Sohyo, which comprises thirty-seven industrial unions having about three million members. Next in size comes the Japanese Trade Union Congress, Zenro, comprising four industrial unions and one national centre, with about 800,000 members. Then there is the Federation of Industrial Organizations, Shin Sanbetsu, with four unions and about 40,000 members. And last is the All-Japan Congress of Industrial Unions, Sanbetsu, with two unions and 12,000 members. Sanbetsu is Communist-controlled.

There are also a little more than thirty national unions which do not belong to any of these national centres. Their membership amounts to 750,000. And local and company-based unions, likewise not belonging to any of these national centres, organize approximately a further 1,400,000 workers.

The immediate task of the Japanese trade union movement is obviously to unite workers into national industrial unions capable of becoming a firm foundation for a strong national centre.

It is somewhat misleading, perhaps, to have spoken of 39.6 per cent of Japa-

With the exception of a very few organizations - including those catering for railwaymen - most of the major industrial unions are federations of unions which are organized on a company basis

nese workers as organized, for in some of the most important industries the degree of organization is extremely low, and also it happens that where organi-

zation has taken place, it has resulted in several different unions instead of one union.

Examples of this weakness occur in many industries. Construction workers number approximately 1,700,000: of these, only 270,000 are organized and those 270,000 are divided between four different unions. The total number of harbour workers is estimated to be about 80,000: only 20,000 are organized. Very low percentages are found also in ship-building, the metal industry (except steel), and white-collar workers (except teachers and public employees). Shop, restaurant and hotel employees are not organized at all. In construction and



Japanese trade unionists meet in conference. Since the war, the Japanese movement has grown into a numerically strong organization with a membership 15 times that of the highest pre-war figure

harbour work and in the metal industry there is a considerable number of small and medium-sized private firms. These enterprises are financially weak; and since, in Japan, the main function of trade unions is to improve wages and working conditions, unions cannot effectively exercise that function on behalf of workers in such firms. Their labour relations are governed by very deep-rooted feudalism and paternalism, which also have prevented the growth of trade unionism.

Many temporary workers

An additional obstacle to trade unionism is the large proportion of temporary workers – Japanese unions, as a principle, organize only regular employees. Temporaries are found especially in construction and harbour work.

The internal structure of the so-called industrial unions constitutes another weakness of the movement. With the exception of a few, such as the National Railway Workers' Union and the Japanese Seamen's Union, most of the major industrial unions are federations of unions organized on a company basis. These company-basis unions have a top-heavy executive, big enough for a national union. In most cases, every member of the executive is a full-time and paid officer: rank-and-file members very rarely volunteer to do union work.

Many national unions have a check-off arrangement with their firms. A Ministry of Labour survey shows that, over the last five years, ninety-five out of every one hundred union members paid their dues. In one month in 1954 the total amount of dues paid was over 900 million Yen – nearly £ 900,000 or about 2,500,000 US dollars. More than twenty-seven per cent of a union's income is spent on personnel. The survey we have mentioned stated that 3,741 unions, with a membership of three millions, had over 20,000 full-time employees. In other words, there is one full-time paid employee for every 150 trade union members. The result is financial weakness and a lack of enthusiasm among the rank and file.

National unions to which company-basis unions are federated receive a part



of these latter's dues. As members are not directly affiliated to national unions, their interest remains rather local: and their officials are more anxious to strengthen their own unions than the national federation. The inevitable result is that the national union's control over its affiliates is weakened. The first step to strengthen the trade union movement in Japan is to reorganize its structure and strengthen the national unions.

Immediately after World War I, the trade union movement spread rapidly in Japan and reached its peak in 1935, when membership was more than 400,000. This, however, was not an organized movement based on genuine trade union principles as now established in Western countries. Only since World War II has trade unionism in Japan been based on freedom of association and speech and intended to improve conditions generally through collective bargaining and under guarantee of law.

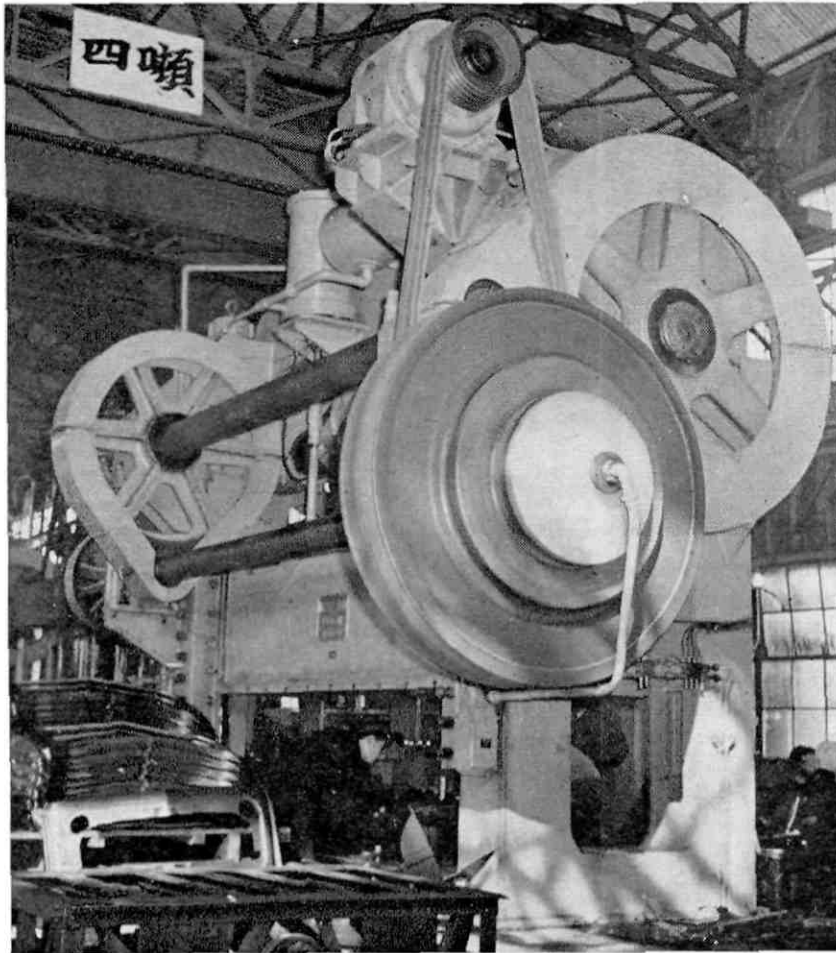
Dominated by Feudalism

Before World War II, the political system of Japan was dominated by feudalistic ideas deliberately fostered by the ruling class to safeguard their own position of power. As a result, democratic movements such as trade unionism concentrated their efforts on attempting to get political and social freedom. Such tendencies were common in various Asian countries, the movements' main purpose being generally to fight against colonialism: in Japan, however, the first aim was to overthrow the militaristic dictatorship. When this was finally defeated in Japan, the foreign military occupation introduced a democratic legal

basis, on which the trade union movement has grown into a numerically strong organization. Even now, however, the tradition of political revolutionism caused by militaristic oppression is still deeply rooted in the thinking of many trade unionists. This is why the movement has an appearance of being a political struggle and an outlook which is a mixture of trade unionism and 'syndicalism'. Syndicalism, in Japan, means a workers' mass movement to break down the existing political system.

This strong political element means that political differences are militating against the unity of the trade union movement. Only a few openly Communist Party unions are completely dominated by political revolutionism, the Sanbetsu unions. Other unions in general support either the Right-wing or the Left-wing Socialist Party. The Labour and Farmer Party, which can be placed between the Communist and the two Socialist Parties, is only small and has little influence on trade unions, with the exception of one or two.

The majority of the unions belonging to Sohyo (the largest centre) tend to support the Left-wing Socialist Party, while the majority in Zenro tend to support the Right-wing Socialist Party. Individual members, of course, are quite free to choose their allegiance. Practically all unions are in favour of a reunification of the two Socialist Parties. Talks on this subject have been held during the past few months by both parties, and if amalgamation is accomplished the present conflict between Sohyo and Zenro would be at least partly relieved and the ultimate possibility of



their unification increased. To a large extent this will depend on whether elements in Sohyo whose sympathies seem to lie more with the Labour and Farm and Communist Parties rather than with the Socialist Parties, can be brought under control.

Liaison between free unions

The free trade unions in Japan maintain a loose liaison among themselves through affiliation with the ICFTU. At present the International has eleven affiliates: the five unions affiliated to Zenro, with a total membership of 800,000, and six of the unions affiliated to Sohyo, with a

Japanese trade unions are now closely associated with the international movement, both through the ICFTU and the ITS. Here Japanese transport union officials K. Suzuki, I. Nonoyama, C. Oba and K. Hihara are seen discussing the Public Corporations Labour Relations Law with the Assistant General Secretary, Paul Tofahrn, before meeting the Minister of Labour for talks on this subject

total membership of 937,000.

In 1953 ICFTU affiliates suffered a certain set-back. The main factor in this was the political over-sensitiveness of the unions, which were too much concerned with state diplomatic policy and were led to misunderstand the policies of the ICFTU in relation to world politics. For example, it was frequently charged that the ICFTU was openly sup-



Nearly 40 per cent of Japan's employed workers are organized in trade unions. In some of the most important industries, the degree of organization is extremely low

porting the rearmament of Japan against the wishes of the Japanese trade unions. Such misunderstandings or false accusations have been systematically and intentionally spread by the Communists. In this case, the effective publicity and activities of the ICFTU in Japan helped to clarify the position.

Recently, however, certain anti-ICFTU elements have been spreading a new false accusation. The ICFTU takes a strong stand on refusing cooperation of the free trade union movement with the enemy which seeks to destroy it. The Communists are twisting this by saying that the ICFTU is opposed to Japanese trade with Communist countries and the reopening of diplomatic relations with them. They are also spreading the reverse of this propaganda: that it is necessary for the Japanese trade union movement to maintain friendly relations with unions in Communist China and the Soviet Union because trade must be resumed with these countries and diplomatic relations with them reopened. Such propaganda, spread by WFTU unions, is swallowed by naive young trade union members. Slogans like 'peaceful co-existence', 'unity of international labour fronts' and 'united action' have a strong appeal to many Japanese unions.

Natural to obey orders

Propaganda of this nature is specially effective among Japanese unions for several reasons. First, the genuinely free trade union movement in Japan is only ten years old. It is traditional and characteristic of the Japanese people to obey

Japanese industry employs a high proportion of women. Some of the worst cases of industrial exploitation—of which the OMI spinning dispute was one example — have involved female workers

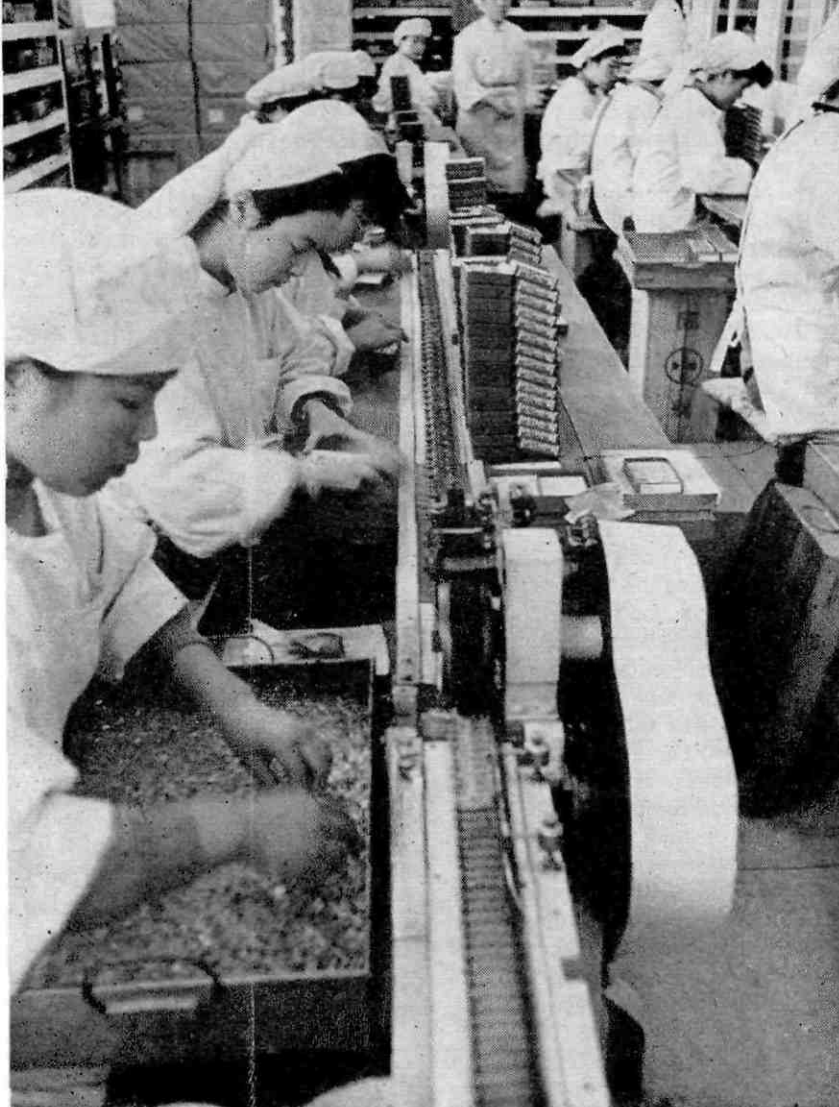
orders: this makes it easy for them to accept the theory that 'in "socialist" countries even a trade union can become a part of the state organization.' It does not occur to them to analyse the actual political, economic and social system in the present-day Soviet Union or Communist China to find out whether it really is socialism in action.

Secondly, there is the profound psychological effect on the people of Japan in general of their miserable defeat in World War II, caused through Japanese imperialist aggression, and by the subsequent post-war difficulties. After defeat came seven years of foreign military occupation; for a few years many people lived on the edge of starvation; the repatriation of former soldiers and civilians from Manchuria, the Chinese mainland, Korea and South-east Asia meant a rapid increase in the population; industry was too devastated to absorb these repatriates and the national economy was severely affected by the loss of these former colonies. All this has caused the people as a whole to renounce war unconditionally. Economic difficulties have led to a desire to make approaches to the Soviet Union and China in the economic sphere and a blank refusal to pay increased taxation. Rearmament is always most expensive.

Such feelings make them an easy prey to international Communist slogans like 'peaceful co-existence' and 'unarmed neutrality'. Hence the danger that the Communist policy of arming 'socialist' countries to the teeth while demanding peace, neutrality and disarmament in 'capitalist' countries, and of promoting productivity in 'socialist' countries while sabotaging productivity in 'capitalist' countries may infiltrate into the Japanese trade union movement, abusing some members' naivety and good intentions.


Movement must be united

The ICFTU has placed its hopes of preserving and promoting democracy in Japan on the Japanese trade union movement. It believes that this movement can, and must, become an ever stronger bulwark against totalitarianism whether Communist or reactionary. But to be-



come an effective force against all forms of totalitarian threats, the Japanese trade union movement must be united in democratic and free unionism. With this aim in view, the ICFTU has worked in Japan with great patience and understanding to achieve the maximum unity possible among the trade unions and to enlighten the workers and their leaders on international matters so as to help them to unite the free world trade union movement.

Technical training for young inland waterway workers in France

 NEW DEMANDS in professional and technical knowledge likely to be made on France's future inland boatmen as a result of the development of the French inland waterway industry, both technically — in, for example, the increasing changeover from wooden to

iron boat building and the use of self-propelled vessels — and as a part of the European economic structure, were discussed at a recent meeting of the Management Board of the Lille Inland Waterway Schools. As a result, a proposal has now been put forward to the French education authorities for the setting up in Lille of a regional, or national, technical training centre for young boatmen which they may attend, optionally, from the age of fifteen years on termination of their compulsory schooling.

Lille already possesses a well-equipped elementary boarding school for French boatmen's children of from seven to fourteen, and a Technical Training Centre for Boatmen established in 1944. The latter, through lack of funds, possesses no boarding accommodation, however, and has therefore concentrated on correspondence courses for young boatmen in passage through Lille. Since its inception it has catered for more than


1,000 pupils. The Centre already possesses a considerable amount of equipment and is situated conveniently close to the port of Lille.

The proposals now being put forward by the Lille School administration supplement proposals presented in September 1954 by the Inland Waterway Inter-Union Committee for consideration by the French Education Minister, recommending the granting of funds and land expropriation authority for the transformation of the Centre into a boarding school. On the financial side, recommendations include the provision of State funds, under the Apprentice Training Centres Construction Law of 21 February 1949, the virtual subsidization of the Centre during the first two years of its new existence, the payment of scholarships or maintenance allowances, according to family circumstances, by the technical education authorities, and school attendance allowances by the Inland Waterway Family Allowance Fund. On the equipment side the Lille school administration recommends the installation of a floating school, perhaps a self-propelled vessel with its hold fitted up in the form of workshops, to be attached to the shore establishment, but sufficiently mobile to be taken to other parts of the waterways network to provide instruction for other young boatmen temporarily stationed there.

The draft educational programme drawn up by the Lille school authorities envisages a two-year shore training period at the Centre, after which pupils would take an examination for an apprenticeship certificate; then an eighteen months period of practical training on board ship (including at least six months on a self-propelled vessel), prior to examination for a certificate of navigational and technical proficiency. During the eighteen months' practical training, the Centre would continue to assist the trainees by providing correspondence courses. The training syllabus would include general educational subjects (mathematics, physics, first aid, general and inland waterway legislation, geography, specialized articles in the French language concerning waterway development and travel, and the German language) together with training in all branches of technology affecting the inland waterway industry; the latter to be supplemented by visits to port installations, river shipyards, engine factories and modern lock constructions.

Book reviews

DOUBLE TALK: THE LANGUAGE OF COMMUNISM by Harry Hodgkinson
George Allen & Unwin; 149 pp.; price 16s.

 IN HIS PREFACE to this guide to the language of Communism, Mr. Hodgkinson points out that, to the Communists, words are fashioned for a precise function. The language of Communism is 'an armoury of weapons and tools intended to produce support or dissolve opposition to them. The meaning of a Communist word is not what you think it says but what effect it is intended to produce.' Most of us tend to accept words at their face value and the Communists trade on this fact. It is therefore advisable to find out beforehand exactly what they mean by such words as 'freedom', 'democracy', and 'peace'. The author of 'Double Talk' has tried to help us to do so by providing us with a glossary of words in modern Communist usage, showing by means of copious illustrations not only what they meant to Marx and Lenin but what they mean today to Stalin's successors.

LO FACIT 1954
Swedish Trade Union Federation, Stockholm; 48 pp.; 50 öre


A TASTEFULLY PRODUCED AND WELL ILLUSTRATED GUIDE to the activities of the Swedish Trade Union Federation during the year 1954. A summary of the organization's annual report on activities, it consists of a number of short sections, each giving a clear and concise account of one aspect of the Federation's work. Subjects dealt with range from a report on the work of Swedish joint industrial committees to a review of the Federation's activities in the fields of publicity and education. Reports on the work of the ICFTU and the ILO are also included.

ANOTHER HOAX
International Confederation of Free Trade Unions; 35 pp.; 1s.0d. or 15 US cents

A TELLING EXPOSURE of the Communist WFTU's much-publicized 'Charter of trade union rights'. Examining the latter document section by section in the light of evidence from Communist sources, it demonstrates that none of the principal rights that the WFTU now proclaim are enjoyed by workers behind the

Iron Curtain or in Communist China. Since ninety per cent of the WFTU's membership is to be found in the Communist areas, the Charter is revealed for what it really is - another hoax.

An itinerant schoolmaster

 AS AN AFTERMATH to the diesel-electric revolution on railroads, the itinerant schoolmaster is again making an appearance on the American scene.

Five or six times a year, depending on the railroad demand, the General Electric Company sends out from its central maintenance school in Erie, Pennsylvania, a travelling 'teacher' to aid roads requesting instruction on operating and maintaining GE diesel-electric locomotives.

Actual classroom sessions are set up on railroad property and everyone, particularly shopmen, who has anything to do with locomotives is invited to attend. 'Texts' consist of instruction books explaining the hows and whys of operating, maintaining and overhauling equipment.

A locomotive school semester, on the average, is one week.

GE's travelling school is an extension of its regular maintenance course held several times a year at the company Locomotive and Car Equipment Department in Erie, Pennsylvania. Subject and frequency of these schools are also determined by customer demand.

In 1953 there were two schools on industrial haulage equipment and two on medium-sized switching locomotives. A special school was set up for one railroad that sent all of its shop personnel to Erie.

Railroad personnel come from halfway around the world to attend the Erie school, often on very short notice. The training given is usually in a specialized subject, although on certain occasions the entire field of locomotive and car equipment is included in the same course.

Students came from the Indonesia State Railways, Chilean State Railway, Argentina State Railways, and General Electric overseas affiliates in 1953, and one student in 1954 came all the way from Thailand.

Schools on locomotive and car equipment have been conducted by GE in every part of the United States since World War II, when the diesel-electric first began taking over from steam.

Building railways - the hard way



JUDGING BY A REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FIRST CHINESE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS by the Minister for Railways, Teng Tai-Yuan, the Chinese Communists are making heavy going in the railway construction programme under their first Five Year Plan. Describing the technical equipment of the existing railways as very backward, (only six per cent of the total length consisting of double tracks, for example), the Minister explained that over half the investment in the railways was to be devoted to strengthening and improving existing lines. Confessing that the new lines which were to be built during the first Five Year Period could not meet the needs of the various fields of industry, the speaker nevertheless described them 'as fundamentally compatible with the overall economic construction'. He looks to be doing a bit of face-saving here, however, as the amount of construction, on his admission, is dependent on 'the current capability of training designing and construction personnel'. Just how well this branch of the service is doing may be judged by the fact that, 'in the building of the Fengtai-Shacheng railway, which is about one hundred km long, the surveying and designing work alone took the equivalent of one whole year of work by 460 technicians'.

Noting that the first half of the Five Year Period had passed with forty per cent of the construction plan fulfilled, the Minister went on to say that they had acquired some experience and trained a number of cadres, all of which provided a specific guarantee for the realization of the five year plan. For the sake of the Minister's head, if for no other reason, we hope his prediction proves correct. As for the 'experience' to which he refers, this presumably includes the illuminating discovery during the past few years that 'railway building is an arduous task requiring not only a large amount of capital but, what is more important, a large amount of technical facilities'. The 'decadent' democracies could have told him that, but then the Communists like to learn the hard way apparently, preferring to do it wrongly their own way rather than correctly in the manner of the 'effete capitalist systems'.

No record of progress, or lack of it, of a construction programme in a Communist state is complete without a recital of sins, coupled with exhortations to everyone to do better than the obvious inefficiency of the system can possibly allow him to do, finishing up with threats against 'saboteurs', 'enemies of the State', etc., etc. It's an old record, and the needle is worn, but it is about the only one the Communists have to meet the occasion.

We learn that the major sin committed by those responsible for railway construction during the first part of the Five Year Plan was extravagance and waste. There were also serious sins of

omission. In fact, the impression conveyed by a perusal of the long list of their 'crimes' is that whatever they did was wrong, and whatever they did not do ought to have been done. 'Waste', we are told, 'was found in the blind increase of standards, particularly in non-productive construction projects: those which should have been small were expanded, those which should have been limited were increased, those which should have been inexpensive were made costly, and even those which were unnecessary were built'. The Minister went on to give examples of the 'reckless raising of standards in construction projects'. His long list includes the use of five pairs of copper cables instead of one on the Chengtu-Chungking railway; the laying of 1,800 sleepers per km on trunk lines where '600 would have been adequate'; and the opening of 'unnecessary' stations. Presumably among the 'unnecessary' stations are to be numbered some of those lucky ones which were given 'several hundred metres of oil-painted railings and cement platforms'. These embellishments struck the Minister as being particularly wasteful.

He was also moved to criticize the designing personnel sharply for their stubborn insistence on 'erecting a building on the same level, for the sake of beauty, (thus entailing unnecessary filling in and digging) instead of following the natural contours'. The Chinese architects, doubtless imagining they were dutifully following the Party Line by first flattening everything, have now learned the lesson that, in the Communist State, not only does Truth flee when

Communist ideology comes in by the door, but Beauty too must hide her head.

We are not certain whether some of the construction engineers and architects responsible for these errors are not also busy hiding their heads - if they are still wearing them. They have a lot to answer for - 'mistakes in designing; poor organization of construction; failure to give attention to procuring construction material locally; low labour productivity; poor handling of machinery; confusion in the control of materials and poor quality work'.

Communists would not be Communists if they did not try to put the blame fairly and squarely where it does not belong. The Minister runs true to type. He thus ascribes the waste to 'the lack of the economy viewpoint on the part of our leading cadres and engineering technicians and to their inadequate understanding of the significance of the programme of the Central Government regarding vigorous economy practices and priority construction'. This, we feel, is being a bit rough on the engineers. It is almost like expecting them to be clairvoyants as well as railway engineers. Apparently they are required to interpret the long-term economic policies of the Central Government at a time when an impartial judge might incline to the view that the Communist Central Government does not seem to know what these are itself.

The Minister himself showed signs of trying to do some tricky footwork on two stools. Taking up a stance on one stool, he said: 'The State has devoted a comparatively large proportion of its investment in capital construction to the railways'. Then, nimbly jumping on to the other, he went on to say: 'It is therefore of great importance for the railways to carry out strict economies'. That does not sound a very logical inference to us, and we suspect the Chinese railway engineers themselves did not draw this apparently, to a Party man, obvious conclusion. On being given sixpence to spend on sweets they naturally thought they were allowed to spend it on sweets. We have a strong suspicion that the Central Government, consisting doubtless of good Communists but few, if any, good railway engineers, is itself contributing in no small measure to the waste and

extravagance of which the Minister complained by sending out useless directives.

In order to implement one of these, on the reduction of construction costs, the Minister sent out teams to inspect the work of building new railway lines in North-West and South-West China. They 'discovered that the phenomenon of waste was serious in capital construction projects'. Part of this waste would seem to be organizing teams in compliance with Central Government directives to inspect work being done. The Central Government would have been more helpful if it had sent out directives clearly laying down what could and what could not be done.

In fact, taking a leaf from the Minister's book, we might say that the Communist Central Government is issuing directives when it should not and failing to issue them when it should. The Minister, being part of the Government and therefore a good Party man, obviously could not say this himself. He therefore put the blame on the railway staff. This, of course, is good Communist Party politics but a little hard on the staff.

This note of 'heads I'm right, tails you're wrong' was maintained by the Minister throughout his address on the shortcomings of the railway staff. He accused the engineering technicians of failure to differentiate between immediate and future needs and the construction personnel of mechanically following the blueprints (we are not quite certain whether he has made a point here or not); of failing to argue vigorously when waste had been discovered, letting the errors be borne by the designing personnel. These, in turn, 'fearing responsibility, unlimitedly raised the standards of designing and blindly raised the safety co-efficient'. The result, the Minister informed his listeners, was losses for the State.

When the Minister said 'losses for the State,' he was of course referring to financial losses. If we did not know just how low the Communists rate human life, particularly when considerations of humanity are liable to interfere with Communist economic theory, we should have been a little surprised at the Minister's greater concern for money than for safety of life on the railways. Rating money higher than human safety, if we are to believe Communist propaganda, is a monopoly of the 'capitalist' States. It is gratifying to have it confirmed by the Minister for Railways of Commu-

nist China that it is also a 'sin' in that country to raise the safety coefficient and thus run the State into unwarranted expense.

In thus addressing the National People's Congress, Teng Tai-Yuan doubtless had good reasons, not unconnected with his continued existence as a Minister in a Communist government, for slating the workers in this fashion. We have searched his speech high and low for anything which might be construed as faintly approaching a word of praise for their endeavours in the past or as giving some encouragement for the future. Not a word is to be found. The only reference to past achievements is an oblique one used as a stick to beat them further. 'The achievements produced in railway work during the past few years; he said, 'have encouraged the growth of arrogance and complacency among our leading cadres. The existence of such an attitude will certainly lead to blind conservatism, stubbornness and subjectivism, and will also create the aimless pursuit of formality, the raising of standards, and impractical work styles'. So now they know!

Public travel in London



NEW FIGURES FOR RUSH-HOUR TRAVEL in the Central London area have recently been issued by the London Transport Executive. The figures, compiled after special tests were made, show that during the morning and evening peak periods over a million people travel in and out of London's West End and the City by buses, tubes, and main line trains.

The heaviest quarter-hour of the day is between 5.30 and 5.45 p.m. During this period, no fewer than 180,000 people are leaving the Central Area - 33,000 more than during the next busiest period of the evening rush, which is 5.45 to six p.m. In the morning, the heaviest quarter-hour is between 8.45 and 9 a.m., when 170,000 people enter the West End and City.

For the complete hour of eight to nine a.m., the number of passengers entering the Central Area is 477,000, showing an increase of 12,700 over a year previously. Between five and six p.m., the number of people leaving is 606,000, a slight decline of 6,100 as compared with the previous period, evidence of a trend for some Central London workers to go home later.

The figures show, it is stated, that the general intensity of peak-hour traffic remains as great as ever, despite the fact that some reduction has taken place in the volume of London Transport traffic as a whole.

It has also been shown that there has been some drop in passengers travelling to and from work in the peaks by bus with a more than corresponding increase in the number travelling by rail.

The main reasons for this are the shortage of staff on the road services, which has caused some service mileage to be lost, and the effects of increasing road congestion.

Of the 1,048,500 workers who leave Central London each evening, 447,900 travel by underground railway, 234,600 by bus and trolleybus, and 366,000 by the suburban lines of British Railways. Checks at fifty Central London Underground stations showed that between 5.30 and 5.45 p.m. passengers are pouring into them at the rate of 6,000 every minute.

To ease the intense pressure during the rush-hours on the transport services and to give Londoners more comfortable journeys to and from work, efforts are now being made to have the working hours of Central London's shops and offices staggered. On the proposal of the Minister of Transport, the Transport Users' Consultative Committee for London Transport, is now negotiating with employers in three main Central London business areas - Whitehall, Holborn, and Oxford Street - to see if starting and finishing times can be altered so as to spread the traffic more evenly in each quarter of an hour and so ease the rush-hour problem.

The Swiss merchant fleet today



SWITZERLAND had an ocean-going merchant fleet of thirty-one ships, totalling 165,000 tons, at the end of last year, according to the annual report of the Swiss Political Department. During the year, four vessels aggregating 33,600 tons, were sold.

Of the 702 seamen in Swiss vessels, 287 were Swiss, or forty per cent, compared with only seven per cent in the year 1947.

The increase is stated to be primarily due to the development and improvement in the training facilities for Swiss seamen. There is, however, still a shortage of trained officers.

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
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