

# International Transport Workers' Journal

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in this issue

Volume XXVI No. 2 February 1966

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Trade unionism in East Africa (concluded)

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Austria's Chambers of Labour

Providing for leisure at sea

## International Transport Workers' Journal

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### Monthly Publication of the ITF

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Cover picture: The master of the British tanker, *Zaphon*, Mr. Nelson, with the ship's mascot, Billie.

### Forthcoming meetings:

Hamburg	Seafarers' Section Conference 28-29 March 1966 Dockers' Section Conference 30 March 1966 Joint Dockers' and Seafarers' Conference 31 March 1966
London	Railwaymen's Section Committee 20-21 April 1966
Rome	Railwaymen's Section Conference 23-26 June 1966

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# Thinking aloud—

## Bargaining by injunction

by HANS IMHOF, General Secretary

WITHOUT A DOUBT, the biggest event on the transport trade union scene last month was the 13-day New York transit workers' strike which was called by two of our United States affiliates — the Amalgamated Transit Union and the Transport Workers' Union of America. My object in commenting on it is not to give a detailed account of the strike itself or how it developed (we hope to do this in our next issue), but to draw attention to some rather disturbing features which characterized the authorities' attitude towards the transit workers' claims.

Public transport strikes which cripple whole cities — and particularly cities as large as New York — are comparatively rare happenings. In fact, they are so unusual that a well-known illustrated magazine which recently attempted a feature on comparable transport strikes during the last half century found that stoppages of this magnitude could almost literally be counted on the fingers of one hand. There is, of course, a good reason for this and it is a very simple one. Public transport workers do not just go out looking for an excuse to take strike action. They know that any lengthy dispute in their sector causes hardship both to themselves and their families and to the public which they serve — of which they also form a part. They know, too, that inconveniencing the travelling public on such a scale inevitably colours the attitude of the man in the street towards their own cause and that of the trade unions as a whole.

That is why all public transport union negotiators and the members whom they represent would always prefer to avoid such an open clash and to settle their claims by peaceful means. However, if this aim is to be achieved it implies an equal desire for a peaceful solution on the other side of the negotiating table. In the case of the New York transit strike, it is extremely doubtful whether this desire really existed.

Public transport workers are engaged in one of the most gruelling and nerve-racking jobs which it is possible to imagine. Traffic congestion, noise, irregular hours, and the ever-present awareness of responsibility for the safety of other human lives — these are all factors which take their toll of the urban transport worker's physical and nervous systems, and all too often prematurely shorten his professional life. These factors too are reflected in the claims made on his behalf: for shorter working hours, longer rest and

holiday periods, earlier pension rights, and better pay to compensate for the strain which is an inseparable part of his job.

It was precisely claims of this type which were put forward by our two affiliates in New York and there can be no doubt that they were justified. But how were these claims treated by the public authorities with whom they were negotiating? There can equally be no doubt that the employers' original counter-offer was a derisory one. No-one would, of course, deny that it costs money to ensure that urban transport workers are employed under decent conditions and that the safety of the travelling public is thereby improved and protected. But by any standards it is money well spent. That being so, one would expect that public authorities who are faced with such claims should at least bargain realistically and try to measure up to the problems which have to be solved. An offer which in money terms represented

only a small fraction of what the unions were claiming and no more than a third of the settlement eventually reached can hardly be described as anything but a 'peanut package', to use one union negotiator's terse comment.

In the circumstances of this tiny counter-proposal and the refusal to improve upon it — despite compromises on their own claims by our affiliates — the final breakdown and strike were virtually unavoidable.

There was however, even worse to come. Faced with the threat of a stoppage which was the logical outcome of their own lack of realism and which had the full support of the unions' membership, the New York Transit Authority sought a court injunction under the so-called Condon-Wadlin Act, an Act repeatedly criticized by the American labour movement for its harsh penalties against the use of the strike weapon by New York State public employees. It was this move which resulted in the jailing of nine leaders of both the TWU and the ATU — perhaps one of the greatest acts of folly ever committed by public authorities in an industrial dispute. It achieved precisely nothing and one can only speculate on exactly what its authors thought it *could* achieve. Vindictive legislation of this type has neither place nor purpose in the present-day industrial field and should be relegated to the limbo of history.

The dispute itself is now also a part of labour history and the gains which our affiliates have won represent an impressive improvement in their transit members' conditions. New York is currently counting the cost of the 13-day strike, which has been estimated at something like one billion dollars. Although one sometimes wonders how such figures are arrived at, if the estimate is at all accurate it is perhaps the best comment on the shortsightedness of the New York Transit Authority's initial bargaining policy. It should be compared with the cost of the final settlement — a mere 72 million dollars spread over a period of two years.



## LIMITING THE LOADS

THE PREPARATORY TECHNICAL Conference which is being held this month by the ILO to consider the question of the maximum permissible weight to be carried by one worker is the culmination of ITF effort over a very long period of years to have this subject dealt with realistically at international level.

Our first approach to the ILO goes right back to 1925, when the ITF requested that the International Labour Conference should fix the maximum load to be carried at what was then considered reasonable, namely 75 kilograms. But it was not until 1938 that a resolution was adopted by the International Labour Conference inviting the ILO Governing Body to consider the question as a future agenda item for the Conference. As a result of the Second World War, this request was not followed up and when peace came successive ITF demands for new consideration of problem went virtually unheeded until 1954, when the ILO Inland Transport Committee again requested that it should be placed on the agenda of the International Labour Conference.

Another nine years was to go by, however, before the ILO Governing Body decided to establish a Committee of Experts for the purpose of making the first concrete examination of this very vital question. This committee met in Geneva from 9 to 17 March 1964 and the results of its work form the basis for discussion at the present Preparatory Technical Conference. The Committee itself consisted of four government experts, three each from the workers and employers; and two

medical experts appointed by the Director-General of the ILO.

Although the question of maximum loads is obviously one which affects many groups of workers, even within the transport industry (including dockers, fish lumpers, railway porters, road transport workers and airport loaders and porters), it has been dealt with in the ITF mainly through the Dockers' Section. All three worker members of the 1964 Committee of Experts were from ITF-affiliated

dockers' unions, namely Tim O'Leary (Great Britain), Chairman of the ITF Dockers' Section, D. Dusquet (France) and M. E. Jallow (Gambia).

The Committee, however, was not concerned only with dockers or even only with the transport industry. Both its discussions and conclusions were concerned with goods handling by human beings in the widest sense, and the evidence which it considered ranged over countries and industries in all parts of the world. In defining their task, the experts, although recognizing that the effort needed to carry a load of a given weight would be affected by climatic conditions (temperature and humidity) as well as by ethnic variations in physical weight and constitution, nevertheless felt that the development of international trade made it more realistic to attempt to define standards which would be applicable to the whole world rather than to the workers of individual countries or regions.

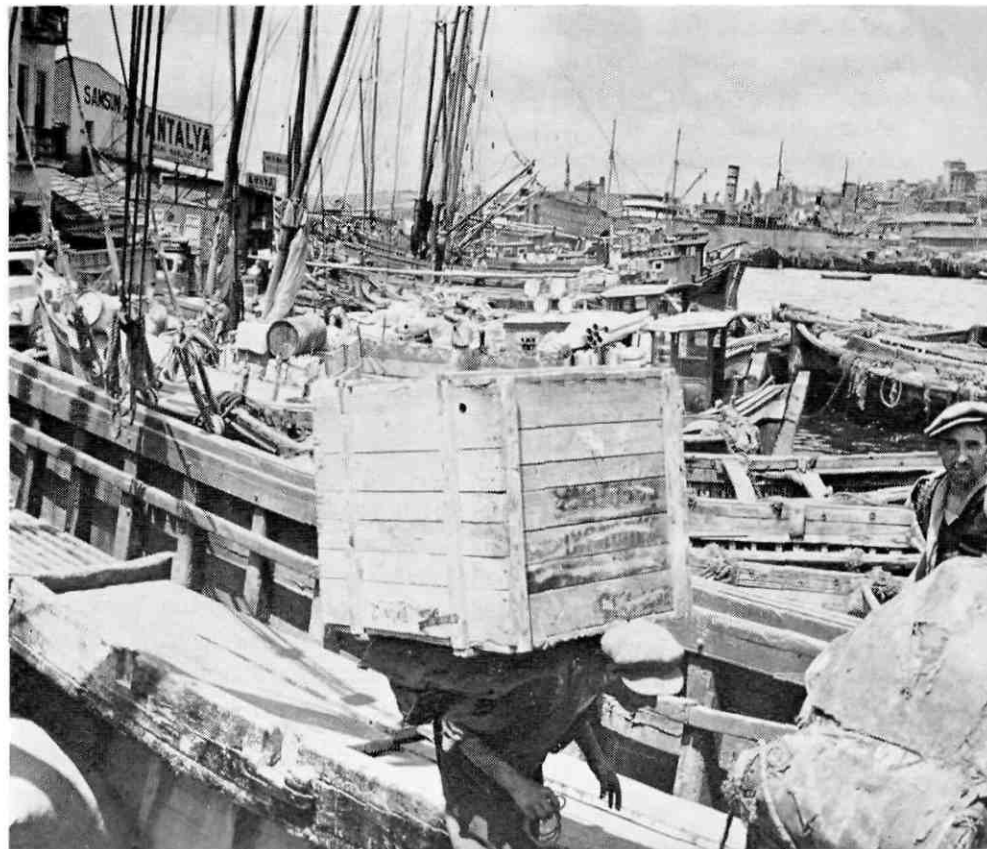
So far as the medical aspect was concerned, the committee noted that

*The most primitive form of transport: a man's back! In the Middle East, where these pictures were taken, mechanical equipment is rarely used for the jobs these men have to do. (Photos: ILO)*

load carrying and lifting (also an important factor) could result in both acute and chronic ill-effects. Accidents involving manual handling can result in injuries to the spine, the muscles of the trunk and limbs, and to the joints. The carrying of loads can also cause intra-abdominal pressure to rise, and this in turn can lead to abdominal hernias, the dropping of abdominal organs, and prolapse of the uterus. Similarly, a sharp elevation in blood pressure can result in brain haemorrhages, especially among older workers.

In addition, the constant carrying of excessive loads may result in distortion of the skeleton — particularly deformities of the vertebral column — to joint changes and the formation of callouses. Pains in the lower back, lumbago and other spinal symptoms are in any case common among workers engaged in heavy physical labour and these symptoms can be much influenced by carrying techniques. This is especially true of unilateral carrying which can result in distortions of the vertebral column, such as scoliosis and kyphosis (forms of curvature of the spine). Direct pressure may lead to muscular pains, bursitis and neuritis. The carrying of heavy weights may also cause injuries to the arch of the foot, and actual fractures of small bones can be found among porters who are continuously engaged in the heavy load carrying.

Women workers, also dealt with under the committee's terms of reference, can be even more affected by heavy load carrying, because their physical constitution is less strong than that of men, while their capacity for sustained physical effort is also less. Disturbances of blood circulation in the pelvis region and lower limbs may appear, for example, in the shape of varicose veins. Disorders in both menstruation and the birth functions may also occur, including excessive bleeding, miscarriages, premature and still births.



Permanent damage may also be caused to the vertebral column, pelvis and thorax of adolescents by heavy load-carrying and lifting. The normal growth of the musculature, heart and circulatory systems may also be affected at this stage.

The committee further noted that heavy muscular work can be performed without undue fatigue if the work is broken up by suitable pauses. Factors such as environmental conditions, climate, the shape and weight of the load, the rate of work, the length of shifts and the frequency of peaks of effort all modify the physiological cost of the work performed. The committee was also agreed on the importance of all factors affecting loss of heat, such as ventilation, air conditioning, working clothes, protection against radiant heat, etc. The value of air-conditioned rest rooms was stressed, as was also the injurious effects of atmospheric pollution.

Factors concerned with the organization of work were also considered. These included the provision of mechanical aids wherever possible, reductions in the extent and frequency of movements, measures to facilitate the grasping and stacking of loads, distances over which loads have to be carried, the nature and condition of the ground, and the need to avoid excessive or irregular working rates.

Also stressed was the need for adequate vocational training designed to make work easier and for medical inspections to be carried out at least once per year.

On the all-important question of the actual maximum weight of loads, the majority of the experts felt that this should be fixed at 40 kilograms for adult male workers, although a few suggested 50 kilograms (at its March 1965 Conference, the ITF Dockers' Section unanimously adopted the lower figure of 40 kilograms as its official policy). In the case of women workers, the Committee recommended that the maximum weight to be carried should be set at between 15 and 20 kilograms but that, so far as pos-

sible, regular load-carrying should not be permitted at all. Adolescents, too, should not be expected to do this job regularly and where they did carry loads these should not exceed the following limitations: 15 to 20 kilograms for boys between 16 and 18, and 12 to 15 kilograms for girls of the same age.

The Preparatory Technical Conference has, therefore, been given a reasonably solid ground-work on which to base itself. The delegates from ITF-affiliated unions attending it will have the task of ensuring that this framework is improved upon wherever necessary and incorporated in Conclusions which will later serve as the model for two international instruments on maximum loads, which will benefit not only many transport workers but many employed in other industries as well.

*Editor's Note:* Since the Conclusions of the Conference were not available in time for our February printing deadline, full details of them will be published in the March issue of the ITF Journal.

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#### Preparing for 'H' Day

SWEDEN IS ONE OF THE FEW countries where traffic uses the left hand side of the road. But not for long. September 3, 1967, has been earmarked as 'H' Day, the day Sweden's traffic switches to keeping right. 'H' stands for the Swedish word 'höger', meaning 'right', and the Swedish Government has set up a special body, the *Högertrafikkommission*, to deal with all preparations and problems connected with the changeover.

Its first task was to determine the technical and economic measures needed to adapt buses and trams to right hand driving. Its conclusions have been used by industry as a guide in the deployment of resources to permit the execution of conversion work in the time allotted. The work is proceeding satisfactorily and at present one third of public transport buses are ready for

right hand traffic. The position is similar in the case of trams, though three cities, including Stockholm, will discontinue their tram services and change over to buses.

Early preparations have also been made for adapting roads, streets and traffic interchanges. Many interchanges have elaborate automatic signalling devices, but all these will have to function for left hand traffic until the moment of the changeover, so there can be no reconstruction or changing of positions in advance. All preparatory work which can be done in advance however is in progress.

At the beginning of 1965 there were 1,700,000 private cars, 150,000 buses and lorries, and 90,000 motor cycles in Sweden. The number of private cars is expected to increase substantially before 'H' Day. In 1963 the total cost of the switch was estimated at 400m Kronor (£27½m or \$77m, approximately) of which 250m Kronor (£17m or \$47m, approximately) would be needed for the conversion of buses and trams.

Every medium of communication is to be used to instruct road users: newspapers, radio, television, brochures, posters, etc. Various organizations have pledged their cooperation in making the changeover as smooth and as safe as possible. Precautions are being taken to avoid sensationalism or the creation of a sense of drama.

No restrictions have been envisaged for the issue of driving licences before 'H' Day, but facilities will be provided for those holding licences already to improve their motoring skills. Driving schools and motorists' organizations will provide many instructors and practice facilities for retraining.

The police will be reinforced by several thousand motor-cyclists from the Army, and military helicopters will help keep traffic under supervision from the air. Members of motoring and other organizations, scouts and older schoolchildren will be trained and equipped for patrol duty at potentially dangerous pedestrian crossings and similar places.



## TRADE UNIONISM IN EAST AFRICA

by REUBEN M. MWILU

(CONTINUED)

Turning to the sociological and institutional viewpoint of trade unionism we find that the functions of a trade union movement can be grouped into four. First, the business of unionism remains as a pressure group concerned with exerting pressure on the leadership to 'deliver the goods' so to say. It works as an influence on wages, working hours and other working conditions by using collective bargaining to achieve these goals. In East Africa, this function will remain as long as private ownership remains. Arguments

are advanced that where there is the so-called 'workers' government' this function can best be carried out by such a government. This argument, of course, fails to observe that no government has been formed without votes being cast by employers, and it is as much the employers' government as it is the workers' government. Thus, if the action of the government is to be claimed by workers it can also be claimed by the employers. Similarly if such a government can be used by workers against the employers, it can

also be used by employers against the workers.

The second function of a trade union movement is that of attempting to elevate the moral and intellectual life of the worker. It stresses cultural education, the importance of leisure, and deplors the vulgar scramble for subsistence in a market economy.

Within East Africa this aspect of trade unionism is specially needed. It is important that all members of our society develop an attitude which accommodates all stations of life and

work as necessary, needed and paying activities of the nation. Colonial education and the privileges accompanying it tended to isolate certain members of society and to create a class of the privileged few. It tended to consider some types of work as drudgery. It assumed that it was not 'genteel' to do manual work.

This approach can be combatted through trade unionism, through cultural improvement, through governmental policy, and through adjustments of the price mechanism. It is for this reason that trade unionists believe that employers and trade unions should be participants in the planning process. Both play important roles in the implementation of such plans. In East Africa there should be a grand opportunity to play in harmony together for the benefit of society.

The third type of trade unionism is the revolutionary one. It is this that should be discouraged in East Africa. It stirs class consciousness and hopes to speed up the pace of activities by provoking strikes, and by agitation and sabotage.

The last type of trade union function is the predatory one subscribing to no economic philosophy except the insatiable thirst for 'more.' Part of the reason for this is the failure of smooth human relations in industry. If the trade union leader is unable to find figures he will use other types of pressure to obtain benefits for his members. This attitude can also be the result of the recalcitrant nature of an unqualified union leader ambitiously trying to show that he is able to play an important role in the movement and failing to see the responsibility he bears to his union and the nation.

In general, the role of trade unionism in East Africa will depend on the attitude and the quality of the trade unionists, and the employers and, even more, on the attitude, quality and broadmindedness of the governments of East Africa, and, finally, on the out-

look of society generally. If trade unionists and employers learn to understand the heavy requirements that fall upon them and learn to serve society in a wide sense, we may still look forward to harmony and prosperity. If the government does not allow the few overambitious ne'er-do-wells to guide policy, and if it retains its well-won dignity, and if it lays responsibility on the men at the workshop level to solve their difficulties by free negotiation under its supervision; if the government continues to realise that it has power to govern and will not be threatened into mechanical legislative action to fight what is harmless, we may still achieve a prosperous, responsible, and purposeful labour organization beneficial to society. If society will learn to regard the manual worker as a necessary part of the national labour force and his organization as an impor-

tant mechanism, we may have a congenial climate within which the workers can see themselves as citizens working for the good of the nation.

In East Africa it is high time to think of workers not simply as mere employees of organizations, government and individuals. Trade unionists ought to look upon themselves as representatives of the whole working force, whether self-employed or otherwise. They could re-examine their relationship with co-operatives so as to work together with them. Their educational activities should cover all members of society — farmers, traders, workers — and such education should aid employees to do their jobs better and improve productivity.

It is important that whatever relations develop between a national trade union organization and other bodies within or outside the nation, African



*Trade union education should also aid employees to do their jobs better and to improve productivity.*



or non-African, communist or capitalist, such relations should not be allowed to hamper the international relations of the country as a whole. In any event they should be decided upon democratically by the organization as a whole. Certain individuals have held a view that such relationships *per se* hamper inter-African trade union unity. It is clear that such an opinion is itself harmful to unity of Africa. If this had been the case, the Organization of African Unity would never have become a reality with a variety of world relations such as those with the Common Market, the Commonwealth, and the like.

Nevertheless, this opinion has been allowed to cause dissension in the labour movement. It, therefore, merits a short comment. The real quarrel is whether or not trade unions can function as democratically organized bodies of the workers, organized by the workers alone for their benefit and for the benefit of the society. The link with other bodies is in itself unimportant. It can be decided democratically by the workers. If national policy is clear the rest will fit in accordingly. The main difficulty is that the national policy is often nominally said to be that of non-alignment, which allows contacts and links with all sorts of blocs and organizations, and the trade union movement gets attacked regularly for having similar links with one or other of the same or similar bodies or countries.

The other point which causes confusion is the meaning attached to the policy of non-alignment and/or neutrality. When this policy started in India its meaning was clear. It meant freedom for India to vote in the UN according to the merits of the subject before the UN. It meant having relations with the rest of the world without allowing anyone to guide or influence Indian decision on any given issue. It meant having trade relations with other nations without favouring one against another, large or small.

In Africa this same policy has become hazy and misguided. Within the

trade union movement it has tended to mean having fewer or no relations with the Western world and having more and more relations with the Eastern parts of the world. It would therefore be useful to re-adjust this thinking to allow more relations with all parts of the world. It is not likely that within the foreseeable future we shall cut off all external relations when everything we do is of consequence to the world at large. We are not self-sufficient, isolated and insulated against the world around us.

(Concluded)

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### **FAO fisheries work to be extended**

RESULTING FROM DECISIONS taken by its biennial conference held in November/December of last year, the United Nations Food & Agriculture Organization is to enlarge its work in the field of fisheries. As from 1 January, the former FAO Fisheries Division was given the status of a full department, which will consist of two divisions. One of these will specialize in fishery resources and exploitation, while the other will be responsible for fishery economics and products.

The decision to create the two new divisions is only the first stage in the expansion of FAO fisheries activities. Between 1966 and 1972, it is anticipated that the department will grow to four divisions. The FAO Conference also approved the creation of a permanent 30-nation committee on fisheries, whose main tasks will be to review and propose solutions for conservation problems of an international character, and to advise the FAO on its fisheries programmes and policies.

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### **IMCO publishes dangerous goods code**

ONE OF THE CHAPTERS of the 1960 Safety of Life at Sea Convention, which came into force in May this year, deals with the carriage of dangerous goods. These are divided into nine classes in accordance with the UN system:

Class 1: Explosives; Class 2: Gases, compressed, liquefied and dissolved; Class 3: Inflammable liquids; Class

4: Inflammable solids, spontaneously combustible substances, and substances emitting inflammable gases when wet; Class 5: Oxidizing agents and organic peroxides; Class 6: Poisons; Class 7: Radioactive substances; Class 8: Corrosive substances; and Class 9: Miscellaneous dangerous substances.

To implement the provisions of this chapter in the Convention, the Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization has prepared an international code to guide governments in providing for the carriage of dangerous goods by sea. The code, based on the UN classification, labelling and listing of dangerous goods, and approved by the fourth IMCO Assembly in September 1965, has now been published.

Copies of the code are now available in English and French from IMCO Headquarters, 22 Berners Street, London W.1., England.

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### **UN Convention on measurement of inland vessels open for signing**

AT ITS 25TH SESSION, which ended on 20 January, the Inland Transport Committee of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe decided to open for signature a Convention on the Measurement of Inland Navigation Vessels, to replace that concluded in 1925 by the League of Nations.

The measurement of a vessel in inland navigation is designed to determine its maximum permissible displacement and where necessary its displacement corresponding to given water lines. The measurement of vessels intended for the carriage of goods may also have the purpose of enabling the weight of the cargo to be determined from the vessel's draught. The Convention is designed to give international value to the measurement made in any country which is a party to the Convention.

The Committee also adopted a resolution stressing the need of harmonization between various national and international regulations relating to the transport of dangerous goods.

# Ship automation and manning



## A Norwegian experiment has resulted in reduced manning on board rationalized ships and higher wages for the crews

MOST TECHNICAL INNOVATIONS which become standard equipment on new ships bring about some change in work load or routines of work on board. In the past decade the increasing number of automatic devices incorporated in the design of new tonnage has suggested a wholly different approach to the question of manning. Traditional manning scales are based mainly on tonnage and horsepower. But the number of men required to operate vessels built to present-day technical standards, carrying a large amount of labour-saving equipment, depends less on the size and power of the ship than formerly. An extensively automated vessel of 60,000 dwt hardly needs a larger basic crew than a similarly equipped vessel of 15,000 dwt.

Standards of ship design today also make possible a more efficient use of labour on board, if strict adherence to departmental divisions can be abandoned and the work organized on a rational basis. The need for rationalization of work on board has made itself felt particularly acutely in the Norwegian merchant navy. Norway, with one of the largest merchant shipping fleets in the world, is, like many other maritime nations, suffering from a shortage of seafaring personnel. In addition her ships are forced to compete with an increasing amount of tonnage from new shipping nations, with tonnage which is subsidized and protected by national legislation and with large fleets now registered under flags of convenience. Rationalization has become more than a way to greater productivity and higher profits. Norwegian shipping must rationalize in order to survive.

### **Rationalization today**

There is nothing new in the concept. Every technological advance in shipping—the changeover from sails to steam, from steam to diesel engines, from all-round to specialized vessels—

has been a measure of rationalization. What is new about the rationalization work which has been in progress in recent years is the greater coordination, intensification and systematization of efforts to achieve maximum competi-

tive efficiency in our merchant shipping fleets.

The objective is to increase competitive capacity with the help of technical improvements and a more efficient use of labour.

On the purely technical side, innovations, such as hydraulic hatch covers, alarm systems, modern tank cleaning equipment, mooring winches, telephone switchboards, automatic steering, fully- or semi-automatic firing equipment, paint sprays or rollers instead of brushes, labour-saving tools such as pneumatic spanners and valve grinding machines, all contribute towards lessening labour requirements on board.

Rationalization has also entailed the use of more and more specialized ships for the carriage of cargoes of a single type.

If Norwegian vessels were to take advantage of the money-saving equipment which modern shipbuilding technology makes available and achieve effective rationalization it was clear that the manning scales, which shipowners were obliged to adhere to, had to be revised. The seafarers' organizations were well aware of the need to help their industry operate on a more competitive footing and knew that their members had little to fear from reductions in employment opportunities, in view of the serious shortage of manpower in the Norwegian merchant fleet. One of the questions which most concerned the seafarers was that of safety. There is a limit below which manning should not be reduced, in order that the safety of the ship may be ensured at all times.

Before any change could be made in the official manning scales, so that recently built ships equipped with a large number of automatic devices and systems could make the most effective use of their modern installations, the minimum crew needed to operate such ships efficiently and safely had to be established.

#### **Manning studies**

This was the first task of the shipboard Rationalization Committee, formed in 1961 and consisting of representatives of the seafarers' and shipowners' organizations, and of the Shipping Directorate (the Government depart-

ment responsible for shipping policy in Norway).

In order to have a concrete basis on which to make manning recommendations, the Committee enlisted the services of IRAS (Industriforbundets Rationaliseringskontor A/S), a Norwegian firm of industrial rationalization consultants, to carry out work studies on board certain selected vessels, to discover ways in which the work could be rationalized, and to determine on the basis of such rationalization measures the manning which would be necessary to ensure the ship's safe operation in all circumstances and the safety and comfort of the crew.

The manning which these studies showed to be desirable called for a change in the organization of work on board, requiring some interchange of personnel between deck and engine room. The next step was to try out the suggested crew complement and the new pattern of work routines.

A representative selection of ships of different types and sizes was put into service in January 1963 manned by the new experimental crew complements working on the alternation principle proposed in the reports of the IRAS studies. The catering department was excluded from these first trials, since its complement depended to a large extent on the final size of the operational crew. But later studies showed that there are rationalization possibilities in this department too.

The trials went very well and justified the recommendations made as a result of the work studies. The crew reduction produced no safety problems and crew members themselves said that they could cope perfectly well with the work and were not overloaded. The crews were also able to carry out a considerable amount of economic maintenance work, such as cleaning, rust removing and painting.

Many factors played a part in the extent to which the trials were successful. Results varied to some degree. But one thing is certain: good work planning and organization and an active

interest in these things are of the utmost importance.

#### **Complements adopted**

The Rationalization Committee decided to deal first with bulk carriers, since these vessels presented the problems in their simplest form and because the need for a revision of the manning scales seemed particularly urgent in their case. The IRAS report showed that on average a crew of 20 men was necessary for operation and operational maintenance. But at times, particularly during mooring, operational crew requirements amounted to 23 and occasionally, owing to a simultaneous combination of different kinds of work, to more than this, though the report pointed out that this could have been avoided by a different arrangement of the work. However the Committee thought that a reserve margin should be added to the recommended complement of 23 to cover all safety contingencies and to enable a certain amount of non-operational maintenance (cleaning, rust removing, etc.) to be done, including various jobs to improve and maintain crew comfort.

The final complement decided upon, for bulk carriers of between 15,000 dwt and 35,000 dwt, was 26 with the addition of one man for vessels in the 35,000—45,000 dwt range and two men for those between 45,000 and 60,000 dwt. The new 26-man crew consists of:

Master, 3 mates, radio officer, bosun, carpenter, 4 able seamen, 1 ordinary seaman, 2 junior seamen, 1 deck-boy (trained), 3 engineers, 1 electrician, 1 assistant engineer, 1 repairman, 3 motormen, 2 greasers.

An extra AB or motorman is carried on ships in the medium tonnage range, and on those of the 45,000-60,000 dwt group an extra AB or motorman plus an additional OS or greaser.

These reduced manning scales for bulkships were put into effect in November 1964, but only for those vessels built to certain minimum technical standards.

### Special rates

Special bonus rates were simultaneously negotiated for crews serving aboard them. All officers and men with more than 6 months service get an additional 75 Kroner (about £3.15s. or \$11) per month, with the exception of those earning less than the AB rate, who get an additional 50 Kroner.

The same provisions were agreed for tanker crews when the Rationalization Committee's new manning scale proposals for tankers were adopted at the beginning of this year. The new operational crew for motor tankers of between 15,000 dwt and 45,000 dwt, built since 1959, consists of 27 men:

Master, 3 mates, radio officer, bosun,  
1 able seaman, carpenter, 4 able  
seamen, 1 deck-boy (trained), 1  
pumpman, 3 engineers, 1 electrician,  
1 assistant engineer, 1 repairman, 2  
motormen, 1 donkeyman/motorman,  
2 greasers.

On vessels in the 45,000-60,000 dwt range an extra greaser is carried. The manning is the same for turbine tankers (27 and 28 respectively), with the exception that 3 firemen replace the two motormen and one of the greasers.

The new manning regulations have been approved on the understanding that the reductions in crew will not entail a heavier work load for the new crews, and that no more overtime should be necessary than under the previous regulations. They have been formulated to ensure safe and efficient operation under all conditions with regard at the same time for the safety and comfort of the crew. It is up to the owners to decide how non-operational maintenance is to be ensured: whether extra labour-saving equipment should be installed or extra personnel taken on over and above that provided in the new manning scales; whether the work should be done while the ship is in the repair yard.

### Planning and alternation

But the new manning regulations have been based on certain conditions being fulfilled. One of these is the alternation

principle. It has been agreed that deck and engine room ratings should perform duties in both departments, if qualified to do so, under the direction of a work leader or organizer. In practice this means that the daymen on deck and in the engine room are combined into an interchange group whose work is chiefly maintenance of the entire ship, though they may also be called upon to keep watch. And watchkeeping personnel may also be called upon to work in the interchange group performing maintenance work. The work leader, whose job may be done by anyone on board who possesses the necessary qualifications, gets a special new wage rate of 1291 Kroner (about £64.10s. or \$186) per month. A short shore course is to be offered to train ratings with the necessary ability for the job of work organizer.

Interchange of personnel can be of particular advantage in mooring operations, cleaning tanks and machinery, etc. It also means that greater consideration can be given to weather and temperature in choosing the time for carrying out jobs. For example the alternation group can be set to work on deck in tropical waters, and in the engine room during winter in the Atlantic.

Another very important prerequisite for the efficiency of the new reduced crew complements is work planning. In an agreement between the seamen's and officers' organizations and the shipowners, provision has been made for machinery on board every ship manned according to the new regulations, to assess in advance the work to be done and the most economic use of manpower from the interchange group in carrying out the various jobs. Each ship will have its planning committee, which will consist of the master, the department chiefs (chief mate, chief engineer, chief steward) and the work leader. On the trial ships the system used was based on regular inspections of the vessel by the planning committee (about every month) to determine what needed to be done. As a result of this

inspection a master plan was worked out.

### Work leader's job

On the basis of this the planning committee worked out short-term work programmes which specified in detail what jobs were to be done, when and by whom. It was the work leader's job to ensure the carrying out of this programme. But before the three department chiefs came to the meeting at which the work programme was decided, they had to work out their departmental plans, in which they specified the work for which they needed the services of the interchange group.

The catering department, about which little has been said so far, will have a wider field of responsibility according to the new manning provisions. Its duties will include cleaning and upkeep of all accommodation and catering equipment—duties of this kind will no longer be assigned to ratings as previously—and catering personnel will be called upon to do various kinds of work within the department instead of being engaged permanently on a single job.

The new Norwegian manning regulations have been carefully worked out on the basis of extensive trials, carried out on a number of different vessels of various sizes and in various trades. They have thus been established on a realistic basis. They have also been the subject of full consultation with the seafarers' organizations. The crews of the ships covered by them have been able to benefit financially before any increase in profits could be recorded as a result of the labour reductions.

The Rationalization Committee's work is by no means finished. Only bulk carriers and tankers have so far been dealt with. But work is proceeding on general cargo, vessels, liners and trampships. Further technical developments may call for greater crew reductions, but provision has been made for these in the new regulations to deal with vessels equipped to higher technical standards in each individual case.



Above: Ordinary seaman Harold Hansen and able seaman Harry Ruud, sweeping up on deck aboard the m/s Fernplant. Below left: Repairman Trygve Torseth aboard the m/s Bandeirante. Below right: Girls are often employed in the catering department on Norwegian ships. They enjoy the same pay and conditions as their male colleagues. Reduced manning for these crew members means more pay without extra work. (Photos: Norwegian Seamen's Union)



# New French report on shipboard rationalization

DETAILS HAVE RECENTLY been given of a report on shipboard rationalization which was drawn up towards the end of last year by a special four-man committee of inquiry established by the Committee on Maritime Vocational Training of the General Secretariat of the French Merchant Marine. The committee's terms of reference were "to study the effects of technical progress on the organization of work on board cargo vessels and its consequences for vocational training". Its report has already been criticized in France by seafarers' organizations and the shipping Press for its lack of both realism and objectivity. In view of the great interest shown by ITF-affiliated seafarers' unions in proposals and developments in this field, we feel that it might be useful to summarize the committee's proposals together with some of the comments which have been made on them.

On the general question of work organization on board and vocational training, the committee's authors reached the following preliminary conclusions:

- (a) that the division between the deck and engine departments should be abolished;
- (b) that not all officers trained for the deck department should be *a priori* destined to become captains. There should be different levels within the training system, depending on the type of job to be done;
- (c) at the highest level, however, all officers should receive the same basic training, with a single certificate, thus resolving any command problem.

Even more controversial than these general conclusions, however, is the proposed basic crew of 23 which has been put forward by the committee. This is intended to apply to a highly automated vessel, but the authors of the report have been strongly criticized by the influential *Journal de la Marine Marchande* for not having given any indication of the type or size of ship which is meant. The detailed breakdown of this so-called basic crew would be as follows:

The complement would be divided into four distinct groups, viz.

#### Group 1

One director of operations (equivalent of present master);\* one chief of commercial service; one chief of technical service (total 3);

\*He would preside over a planning committee consisting of the two Chiefs of Service and any other persons thought necessary to its proper functioning.

#### Group 2

Two officers of the watch; one marine electro-mechanical technician; one electronics/instrumentation technician (total 4);

#### Group 3

One head of section — quartermaster/radio; one chief steward/pantryman; one head of section — storekeeper/mechanic; three quartermaster/radio operators; one cook/baker; three mechanics (total 10);

#### Group 4

Three catering ratings; three seamen (non-specialized) (total 6).

So far as Group 1 is concerned, the authors of the report imply that the positions of chief of service would be considered as no more than a temporary stepping-stone on the way to promotion to director of operations, who, as the equivalent of the present



Modern cargo handling control equipment aboard the French tanker, Roger Gasquet.

master, would have overall responsibility for running the ship. A period of two years as chief of service would be envisaged, after which those holding the position would be trained for duties as director of operations.

In the case of Group 2, all personnel would be considered as technicians and would be trained in national merchant marine schools either for duties as officer of the watch, or as technicians specialized in either electro-mechanics or electronics and instrumentation. At sea, the officers of the watch would be responsible for look-out and supervisory duties on the bridge, including the utilization of electrical and electronic devices such as radar, the gyro-compass, echo-sounder, plotter etc.; the operation of radio equipment, remote controls and checks. In port, they would be responsible for the safety of the ship, except in so far as commercial operations were concerned.

The electro-mechanical technicians, who would be day-men, would be responsible for those operations whose intermittent character did not make them suited to automation. In emergency situations, they would be fully responsible for the mechanical and electrical side of the equipment on board and would also take charge of one of the watches in the event of a return to manual operation of the propulsive machinery.

The electronic/instrumentation technicians, also day-men, would be responsible for periodical tests and monitoring of transmissions, of the presentation of information and data, and of the giving of orders, whether these are assured by electronic, pneumatic, hydraulic, electrical or similar means. The authors of the report do not envisage that such technicians should have officer status. On this point, some commentators have already posed the question of how this could be reconciled with ILO Convention No. 53 on Officers' Competency Certificates if such technicians were expected to take over a watch in the

*Above: Officers and watchkeeper in the control room of the (opposite) 92,000-ton Roger Gasquet. (Photos: Compagnie Française des Pétroles)*

engine-room when manual operation became necessary.

A point of interest so far as Group 3 is concerned arises in connection with the 'quartermaster/radio operators'. These would be expected to be able to keep a look-out, to take over radar surveillance from the officer of the watch when required, and to maintain

a radio watch. A working group appointed by the French Council on Vocational Training to look into the report's recommendations has already unanimously rejected the whole concept of the 'quartermaster/radio operator' and has instead proposed that the pupils of technical colleges specializing  
*(Continued on page 44)*



# AUSTRIA'S CHAMBERS OF LABOUR



*The new headquarters building of the Vienna Chamber of Labour. (Photos: Austrian Federation of Labour)*

MOST TRADE UNIONISTS have heard of the Austrian Chambers of Labour as somewhat shadowy institutions which exist side by side with the trade unions — not so many really understand what they are and do, how they developed, how they operate and what their powers are.

To understand how the Chambers of Labour came into being we have to go back to the days of the Industrial Revolution, when rulers all over Europe were beginning to realize the political as well as economic advantages to be derived from rapid industrialization. The result was active encouragement of industry, not least by the passage of legislation conferring privileges on industry and organizations of industrialists.

In Austria, the government issued a decree in March 1850 setting up 'Chambers of Commerce and Industry' in all parts of the Austro-Hungarian empire. This basic law, which has been amended several times, most recently in 1946, declares that the purpose of the Chambers is to represent the joint interests of all persons and companies in business in the fields of crafts, industry, commerce, banking and insurance, transport, communications and tourism. Membership is compulsory for all companies as well as independent businessmen.

## **Privileges for industry**

Among the many privileges vested in the Chambers, the most important is the right to see draft legislation before it is introduced in the national or local assemblies, to pass expert opinion on it and to suggest amendments.

Meanwhile changes were taking

place on the other side of industry too.

During the second half of the 19th century the working people of Austro-Hungary began to form workers' associations, a development on which the authorities and the police did not look kindly, to say the least. Often these associations were dissolved and

their leaders punished. But in 1870 the workers' right to strive collectively for better wages and conditions was finally recognized and the formation of trade unions permitted. In 1893 the first federation of Austrian trade unions was formed.

## **Workers seek same privileges**

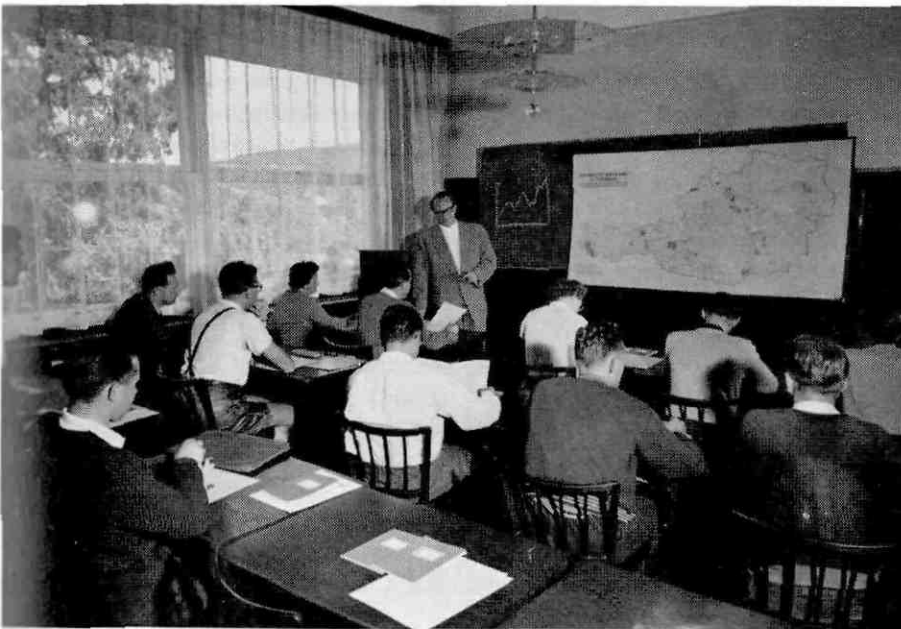
From the beginning Austrian trade unionists looked with envy at the powerful employers' organizations and the privileges they enjoyed, especially the right to comment on legislation before it was introduced. This often enabled the Chambers of Commerce and Industry to modify proposed legislation in their favour — and sometimes to the detriment of wage and salary earners.

Very early on then, the trade unions began to press for a 'Chambers of Labour Act', first and foremost because they too, wanted to have a say on new economic and social legislation before it was enacted, like the em-





Left: *Officials of the Vienna Chamber of Labour give advice to a woman worker.*  
Below: *The Karl-Weigl residential school of the Vienna Chamber, which gives trade union training courses.*



employers' organizations, but also because they resented and rejected the employers' smug conviction that they alone constituted 'the economy' of the country, quite oblivious of the fact that not a wheel would turn without the honest toil and skill of ordinary workers.

During the decades before and after 1900 it was not possible to muster a parliamentary majority in favour of a Chambers of Labour Act.

After the first world war, however, the government of the new Austrian Republic — the German speaking core of the now disintegrated empire — was receptive to new ideas and even included people with working class backgrounds. And so in February 1920 the long cherished wish of Austrian workers was realised with the passage of the first Chambers of Labour Act.

The Chambers of Labour existed until 1934, and continued in a some-

what modified form until 1938, when Hitler's troops occupied Austria and the Chambers were dissolved. Immediately after the second world war the Chambers of Labour were revived and on 19 May 1954 the Austrian parliament passed the latest version of the Chambers of Labour Act (*Arbeiterkammergesetz*).

#### **Rights and duties of the Chambers**

The purpose of the Chambers of Labour as laid down in the Act is to represent and promote the social, economic, professional and cultural interests of all workers and employees in Austria. More specifically their tasks include expressing opinions and making proposals to the legislative bodies on all matters in the fields of mining, industry, commerce, transport and communications, banking, tourism, agriculture and forestry, the liberal professions, etc., as well as in the fields of nutrition, housing, public health, education, leisure activities, labour relations and welfare, social insurance and the labour market. The Chambers are also called upon to nominate representatives to sit on public boards and committees, to participate in any action aiming at the improvement of the economic and social conditions of wage earners, and to assist in the compilation of statistics on economic and social matters.

Other rights and duties of the Chambers of Labour include proposing that the official factory inspectors examine particular workshops and plants, or factory workers' housing, and establishing special offices for the protection of young workers in respect of health and working conditions. They are also entitled to assist the elected shop stewards in the performance of their duties.

Each of the nine provinces (*Länder*) of Austria has its own Chamber of Labour. The Vienna Chamber of Labour — being the largest and at the seat of the Austrian government —

Right: *The Annental vacation home, near Hainfeld, open to manual and non-manual workers at low charges. Below: The Anna Boschek Hostel for girl apprentices.*

speaks for all Chambers on matters of general interest and acts as the secretariat of the 'Congress of Chambers of Labour'.

Who do the Chambers of Labour represent? All wage and salary earners with the following exceptions: administrative civil servants employed by national or provincial governments; senior salaried employees who exert a real influence on the operation of their company or business; priests; agricultural and forestry workers (these have their own Chamber).

#### **Finance, elections, administration**

The Chambers are financed by dues from their members, which are collected together with social insurance contributions and transferred by the social insurance institutions to the Chambers. Dues amount to half of one per cent of earnings, up to a ceiling of 2,400 Austrian schillings (£33 or \$92) a month.

The highest authority of a Chamber is the General Assembly, elected every five years in a free and secret ballot by all the wage earners of the province. The lists of candidates are drawn up by the political groupings within the trade unions, which receive a certain number of seats in the General Assembly, according to their success at the polls.

#### **Election of officers**

The Assembly, which usually meets two to four times a year, elects a president and an executive committee of between six and twelve persons from among its own members. The executive committee elects two or three vice-presidents and nominates a full-time director to conduct the Chamber's administrative work and supervise its staff. The Vienna Chamber has a General Assembly of 180 members; the provincial Chambers have smaller Assemblies related to the number of registered voters.

The post of president may be either a full-time or an honorary one. In



practice all the candidates are active trade unionists, and therefore the officers are too. For example the president of the Vienna Chamber of Labour is also the chairman of the Austrian Chemical Workers' Union.

#### **The Chambers of Labour and the unions**

The trade unions are — by their nature — militant organizations whose main task is the struggle for higher wages and better working conditions. For this reason, and because membership is voluntary, they have no special privileges in law.

The Chambers of Labour, on the other hand, with their compulsory

membership and semi-public status — they were set up by act of parliament — enjoy, as we explained, several prerogatives which have proved very valuable in representing the workers' interests.

In practice, the two bodies complement each other very satisfactorily. The large staff of university graduates employed by the Chambers of Labour collects information, compiles statistics, scrutinizes new draft laws, etc. and prepares expert opinions and proposals for the legislative bodies — activities which have proved of immense value to the trade unions. The existence of the Chambers of Labour has made it



possible for the trade unions to maintain very small staffs of experts, because the experts employed by the Chambers of Labour are always freely available to the unions.

#### Sound financial position

Being in a very sound financial position, the Chambers of Labour are also able to contribute in many ways to the educational, social and recreational work of the trade unions. The Chambers maintain a residential college near Vienna, where each year 35 promising young trade unionists and works councillors, selected by the unions, follow a nine-month course in trade unionism, economics, law and rhetoric to equip them to fill leading positions in the trade unions and social organisms. The Chambers also run rest and holiday homes for workers, apprentices' homes, evening vocational classes for aspiring foremen, and special libraries for the social sciences; they assist factory libraries, they have nominated dozens of workers' representatives to various state boards and economic committees, and during the last few years they have also given modest loans to young couples setting up home.

That there should be such good cooperation between the unions and the Chambers of Labour is hardly surprising since all the leading officials of the Chambers are recruited from the ranks of active trade unionists.

To complete the picture we should mention that there are also two organizations on the employers' side: the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, membership of which is compulsory, and the Association of Austrian Industrialists with voluntary membership.

The Chambers of Commerce and Industry are divided into two large groups: industrial federations, e.g. for textiles and the metal industry; and guilds (Innungen) for the different crafts, e.g. bakers and tailors.

Collective agreements are usually concluded between the competent trade union on the workers' side, and the competent industrial federation or guild on the employers' side.



## MICHAEL QUILL



AS NEW YORK STRODE into 1966, among the names that claimed the biggest headlines was that of Michael Quill, who helped lead one of the most spectacular strikes in recent history. In the eyes of the world he was the spokesman for 30,000 New York subway and bus workers, whose fight for better pay and conditions paralyzed the city for 13 days. But these were not by any means the only workers whose interests he defended. Quill was at the head of a labour organization spanning a continent and grouping several categories of transport workers among its members. And it is with good reason that they chose him as their leader. He was a courageous fighter all his life. Now they have lost their leader, and American labour has lost a great champion, Michael Quill died on 28 January 1966.

Born in Kilgarven, County Kerry, Ireland, on 18 September 1905, he first went to America in 1926. He already knew what it was to fight, for he had seen his native land gripped in a cruel struggle for independence, and had played his own part in it.

His first job in New York was in a pick and shovel gang on the Independent Subway, which was then under construction. After a spell in the Pennsylvania coal areas, where the poverty of workers and their helplessness in the face of social forces over which they had no control left a deep impression on him, he returned to New York to work in various jobs on the urban and underground railways.

Until 1934 every effort of the New York subway workers to organize had been beaten back, but in that year Quill and six of his workmates laid plans for a democratic trade union for the underground railmen. They worked patiently and with little payment, and within a year it was clear that the new union had come to stay. In the ensuing years the TWU won its first contracts with

the New York subway and bus companies. The union spread throughout the country, locals being established in centres as far apart as Philadelphia, Houston and San Francisco. From coast to coast the TWU's members improved their conditions under the leadership of Michael Quill, whom they had elected President in 1936.

Quill was one of the more colourful personalities in the American labour scene. In all the years he lived in America he lost neither his Kerry lilt nor his loyalty to the land of his birth. His ebullient Irish nature pervaded all his activities. He was a rebel at heart, courageous and forthright, with a habit of speaking his mind. Above all, given to cutting through red tape and breaking down official barriers, he was no respecter of ceremony and formality. He threw all his energy into the tasks that fell to him. The heart attack he suffered during the recent New York strike was to cost him his life, but not before he saw the transit workers bear away the fruits of victory.

# Round the world of labour

## ILA helps smooth port operations in Vietnam and Kenya

THE INTERNATIONAL Longshoremen's Association of America has provided expertise from amongst its members to improve port working methods in Vietnam and to train dockers in East Africa.

It became clear last year that something had to be done to thin out the huge pile-up of shipping which was jamming the port of Saigon in Vietnam. American officials, anxious that supplies should get through the port smoothly, called upon ILA President, Thomas W. Gleason, to help Vietnamese dockers modernize and speed up their working methods. Gleason went out to Saigon to find out what could be done. Having sized up the situation he returned but paid a second visit to Saigon, taking with him four experienced US stevedores, who were to help install a new cargo handling system designed to cut down ship turn-round time from weeks to days or even hours. The ILA men are on a six-month assignment at the union's expense. The ILA has also agreed to pay the cost of bringing a party of Vietnamese dockers to the US for on-the-job training.

Saigon is an old port and the same working methods have been used for a thousand years. Gleason, on his return from Vietnam, made a series of written recommendations on improvements in loading and unloading operations, on the need for more dock space, on the degree of supervision and type of machinery needed and on the need for a port register and for a hiring hall with food and sanitary facilities. Among the equipment necessary for efficient port working he mentioned: 15 tractors and 300 flat-bed trucks to pull out cargoes; 20 flat-topped wooden lighters, and 10,000 wooden pallets for unloading cargo.

The ILA has also agreed to send nine of its members to Mombasa, Kenya, to help train East African longshoremen. The request for this assistance came from the Agency for International Development. The AID had been approached for helping in easing a port pile-up by the Governments of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, which all use Mombasa for imports and exports. The salaries of the ILA members will be paid by the East African Governments. Gleason said that the intention of the project was to reduce the turn-round time to less than a week, instead of the present three weeks.

## Railmen hardest hit by technological change in Canada

A SURVEY UNDERTAKEN by the Canadian Department of Labor on manpower trends shows that railwaymen have been affected more than any other group of workers by rationalization and technological change in industry. The figures established relate to the 10 year period ending in 1961. During that time the number of mechanics and repairmen in Canadian railway workshops fell by 23 per cent to about 7,100.

The declines registered for other crafts were as follows: telegraph operators — by 35 per cent to 4,500;

## NMU gift to Nigerian union

At the ITF Congress last year Joe Curran, President of the National Maritime Union of America, learned that the Nigerian Floating Staff Union was having some difficulty in organizing Nigerian maritime workers. Curran promised his union's help, and, when he returned to the US, a station wagon was purchased and shipped straight to Lagos. There it was collected by NMU National Representative, Robert Nesbitt, and handed over to the Floating Staff Union with a cheque for \$2,500 from the NMU good causes fund. The picture shows President Curran with Bayo Akinyemi (left), Nigerian Vice Consul in New York, and National Representative, Robert Nesbitt.



baggage-expressmen — by 22 per cent to 1,900; engine drivers — by 19 per cent to 7,700; conductors — by 10 per cent to 5,800; brakemen and switchmen by 26 per cent to 12,000; and permanent way men by 23 per cent to 23,000.

Over the same 10-year period the revenues of the main railway companies, the Canadian Pacific and the Canadian National, increased by about one fifth.

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#### **ITF donation for Okinawa seamen's centre**

THE ITF HAS made a contribution to the cost of seamen's welfare centre to be built in Okinawa. Construction work has already begun on the project, which is being sponsored by the Okinawa branch of the All-Japan Seamen's Union. An important feature of the new centre will be a clinic, which will make good the lack of medical facilities for seafarers on the island. The building will also house a restaurant, union offices and meeting rooms.

\* \* \* \*

#### **US Commission reports on automation and job security**

A PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION reporting in the United States on the social effects of technological change in industry, which can be expected in the future, foresees no real threats to employment, which cannot be met by vigorous fiscal policies designed to stimulate economic growth.

The Report of the 14-man Commission on Technology, Automation and Economic Progress, which includes trade union representatives, set up by Congress 17 months ago to study the impact of technological change and assess means of channeling it in promising directions, recommends amongst other things a substantial increase in Government spending on public aid for the unemployed, Government employment for all those unable to find jobs, and cuts in tax rates. It advocates some kind of income maintenance device for the unemployable. It also proposes 14 years free public schooling and an undertaking to provide every qualified individual with a college education.



(ILO Photo)

*Ceylon: the old and the new in transport, side by side*

#### **Bus workers strike in Thailand**

DRIVERS AND CONDUCTORS of the Sri Nakorn Bus Company in Bangkok struck twice last year, on 7 and 13 December, against attempts by their employer to enforce cuts in wages. The second strike resulted in a promise that they would be consulted in the drafting of the new pay system.

The 500 bus workers involved acted spontaneously since they have no trade union to look after their interests. Labour organizations are banned in Thailand, and several trade unionists have been imprisoned and held without charge for years. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions has repeatedly called upon the Government of Thailand to restore trade union rights and has filed complaints on the situation with the International Labour Organization.

\* \* \* \*

#### **US unions launch joint training project for marine engineers**

TWO ITF AMERICAN seafarers' affiliates, the Seafarers' International Union and the Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association, have established a jointly operated training school for marine engineers. The two

unions decided to set up the school because of a growing shortage of engineroom personnel on US merchant ships. It aims to produce 250 more engineers per year. Classes at the school, operated by MEBA's District 2 in Brooklyn, New York, and staffed by a team of professional instructors, began on 1 February, with courses lasting between 30 and 90 days. Students include engineers who wish to upgrade their current licences and unlicensed personnel who want to obtain licences.

\* \* \* \*

#### **Denmark's level crossing keepers**

LEVEL CROSSINGS with manually operated barriers are a feature of the last century's railways, which has survived for a remarkably long time into the twentieth century. They are gradually being swept away with many other relics of the steam age by the tide of modern technology. Electronic techniques now enable such operations to be carried out automatically, although, wherever possible, level crossings are being replaced by bridges. In Denmark there are still some level crossings left on busy lines, and, according to an article which recently

appeared in the Danish daily, *Aktuelt*, the job of the crossing keepers is an exacting one providing little financial reward for the heavy responsibility it entails.

One crossing keeper to whom the *Aktuelt* reporters spoke said that his period of duty varied between six and twelve hours. But he has a real job of work to do: he has no time to sit down and read a book or even eat sandwiches. Some 150 trains a day use the line, which means a train every four or five minutes in one direction or the other. At 1.15 in the morning he should, strictly speaking, finish work, but there are often delays and special trains frequently have to use the line after this hour. In such cases the keeper is obliged to remain at his post often long hours after he should, according to the timetable, have gone off duty.

Just before Christmas 1965, at a level crossing in Jutland, two men were injured by a passing express, because the lady in charge of the crossing had overslept. For eleven years she had done her job conscientiously and satisfactorily. As a result of this incident however she was suspended — with less than a year to go before she was to retire due to the conversion of the barriers to automatic operation.

\* \* \* \*

#### **Underpaid Czech railmen under fire**

THE CZECHOSLOVAK Communist Party has admitted that state railwaymen are underpaid. It did this in answer to public allegations that the railmen were not doing a satisfactory job and that many of them were only interested in the amount of overtime they could do to step up their earnings. The Party countered that the rail employees earned far less than workers in other industries, and that in the transport sector alone they were at ninth place in comparative earnings. They were among the lowest paid workers in Czechoslovakia.

Even in the 'people's democracies', it seems, railwaymen have to put in long hours of overtime to scrape together a living wage!

#### **Scandinavia to revise seamen's laws**

THE QUESTION OF a revision of the seamen's laws has been taken up in all four Scandinavian countries. Finland and Sweden have already begun revising their seafaring legislation and committees have been set up in Denmark and Norway to study the matter and work out proposals. The laws governing merchant seafarers and seafaring employment in Scandinavia were last revised in 1953, and before that in 1923. Each time the revisions were carried out simultaneously in all four countries and the same procedure is envisaged on this occasion. The work will take some time however, and concrete proposals are not expected to be ready this year.

\* \* \* \*

#### **German railwaymen elect staff delegates**

FROM 14 TO 16 FEBRUARY German railwaymen will elect their staff representatives. 18,500 delegates are to be chosen, who will represent the Federal Railways' 465,000 employees at depot, works regional and central office level. Last time elections were held more than 14,000 of the elected candidates were union men. Among the 25 delegates representing personnel at executive and central office level were 19 union representatives.

\* \* \* \*

#### **Computer link-up eases transport operations**

A BRITISH TRANSPORT firm operating one of the country's largest unit load systems — containers, flats and semi-trailers — for the through movement of goods between Britain and all parts of Europe is progressively putting its entire transportation system under computer-control. This will involve an entirely new system of communication, in which several computers will be linked together to enable consignments to be kept under constant supervision wherever they may be in Europe, on land or sea. Computer bureaux at main centres, initially Birmingham, London, Antwerp, Frankfurt, Düsseldorf, Copenhagen and Gothenburg, linked to a central computer bureau in Rotter-

dam which in turn will be linked to an operations control centre in England, will enable all necessary instructions, reports and details of consignments to be transmitted automatically with great speed. This new computer network is a great advance in the field of data processing. The secret of the system — known as Internal Integration — lies in the use of a common code or language which can be used by computers of different makes and working to different programmes. It enables different firms or associated companies to integrate their activities externally while not interfering with internal programming arrangements.

The installation of the new system has responded to an increasingly urgent demand. The movement of goods by container has speeded up so much in recent years that consignments can often be moved faster than the relevant documents and instructions.

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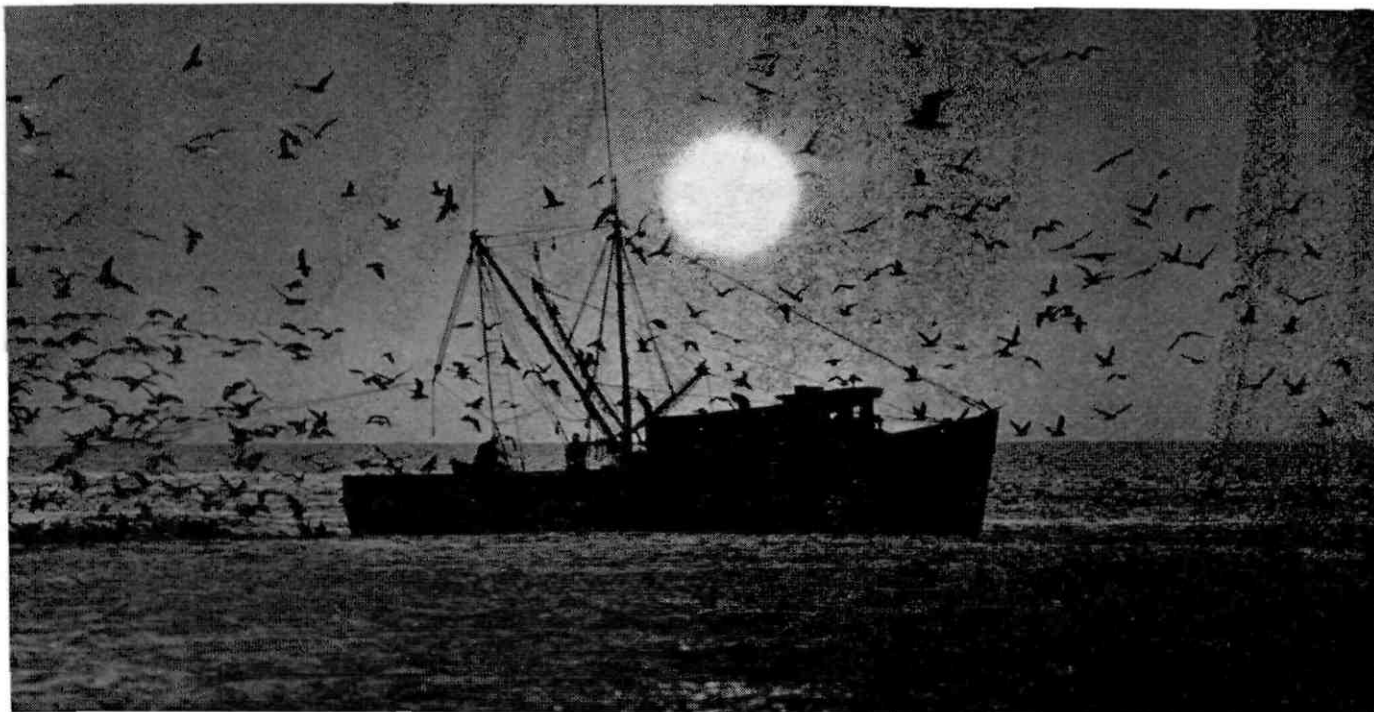
#### **World Bank loan for Sudanese transport**

THE WORLD BANK is to make a \$30 million loan to the Sudanese Government for the development of its railways. The railway authority, which also operates inland waterway and port services, is to launch a programme to increase the capacity and efficiency of these services so that they may meet the needs of the Sudan's fast expanding economy. The railways programme, which the World Bank Loan will help finance, is part of the Sudanese Government's 10-year development plan, and accounts for two thirds of investments earmarked for transport.

(Continued from page 37)

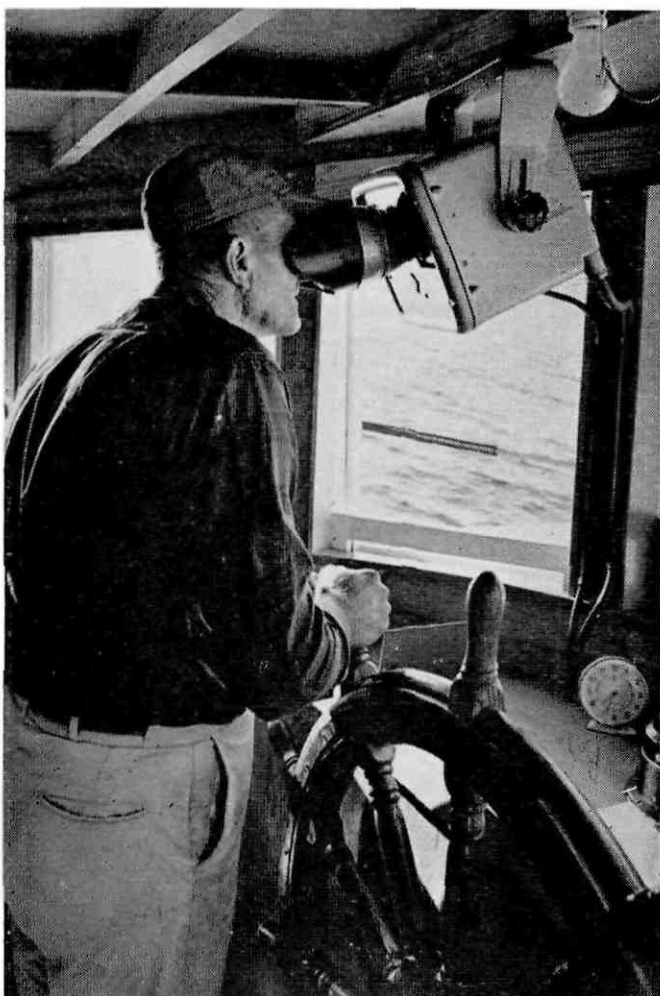
in marine navigation should also be trained as quartermasters, complemented by a qualification as radar operator and training in certain clerical duties.

Finally, the personnel falling under Group 4 would be unskilled workers who could be used for multiple duties in both the traditional deck and engine-room departments, utilizing the principle of interchangeability



#### Easy fish

The American trawler, *Ken Pat*, sets out under a full moon and an escort of gulls, sure of returning home in the morning with a plentiful catch. The *Ken Pat* is equipped with a fish-scope, a television-like device which transmits a picture of the water beneath the vessel to a screen in the wheelhouse, where the skipper can watch for shoals of fish. Fish down to 50 feet below the surface can be recorded on the scope by a series of dark horizontal lines. The net, towed along the sea bed, about 30 to 40 feet down, may be raised according to what the skipper sees on the fish-scope. It is left in the water for 10 minutes to an hour—or more—until a pull on the net indicates that a catch has been made.



THE CUSTOMS COOPERATION COUNCIL'S Convention on Welfare Material for Seafarers, adopted two years ago in Brussels, will soon come into force. Once the necessary number of contracting states have ratified it and enacted the necessary legislation, many obstacles to the free circulation of seafarers' welfare and recreational material will be removed. The Convention requires the customs administrations of the Cooperation Council's members-states to relieve such material of import duties and taxes and of formalities which are likely to delay its transit through customs.

The term 'welfare material' covers 'material for the pursuit of cultural educational, recreational, religious or sporting activities'. Some of the items listed in an annex to the Convention are: books, newspapers, periodicals, correspondence courses, tape recorders,

never completely away from the sight and sound of his work, while at sea. His spare-time activities are also subject to the limitations of life on board.

Time off in port does not necessarily offer the hoped-for opportunity of worthwhile recreation. The language problem and differing social customs are often a real obstacle to the seafarer's enjoyment of time off in a foreign port. Often with the use today of highly mechanized methods of cargo handling, ships do not stay in port long enough to allow seafarers much time ashore, if any at all. This is especially so in the case of tankers and bulk carriers, which frequently handle cargo while at anchor or at industrial terminals far from centres of population.

#### **Special facilities**

Many maritime countries provide special facilities for the supply of wel-

ledge and qualify for promotion.

Books, newspapers and periodicals are often supplied by voluntary bodies or by the shipowners themselves.

Entertainment is an important feature of life on board ship. Regular socials are held, with amateur dramatics, music, games and the like. Evenings of entertainment help to create a friendly atmosphere and to vary the routine.

A number of countries broadcast special programmes for merchant seamen. These help the men, when several thousands of miles away from home, to keep in touch with events in their home countries and to keep contact with family and friends. Tape recording services operated by many broadcasting authorities enable them to enjoy domestic radio programmes, which they would not otherwise be able to hear.

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## PROVIDING FOR LEISURE AT SEA

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radio and television sets, film projectors, tape recordings (language courses, radio programmes, greetings, music and entertainment), films and slides, sports wear and equipment, indoor games, musical instruments and materials for hobbies, such as painting, sculpture, woodwork, metalwork, carpet-making.

The importance to seafarers of these recreational facilities is considerable. Although immense improvements have taken place in living conditions on board, the seafarer's job is still one in which the individual is deprived of the comforts of his own home for long periods. He has to do without many of the social advantages which workers ashore enjoy. He is confined to the same surroundings and restricted to the same social circles day after day. He is

fare material to their ships. Some of the most common arrangements are lending libraries which circulate from ship to ship, book purchase by mail-order, organized hobbies and competitions for short stories, photographs, essays, articles, poems, crossword puzzles, models and paintings.

Educational opportunities are provided with the help of organizations in the home country which offer correspondence courses. Enrolment for such courses have increased considerably in recent years. The subjects covered are wide and varied. Languages and mathematics are among the most popular. Some of the courses prepare seamen for entrance examinations to merchant navy officer training establishments, or help students in other ways to extend their seafaring know-

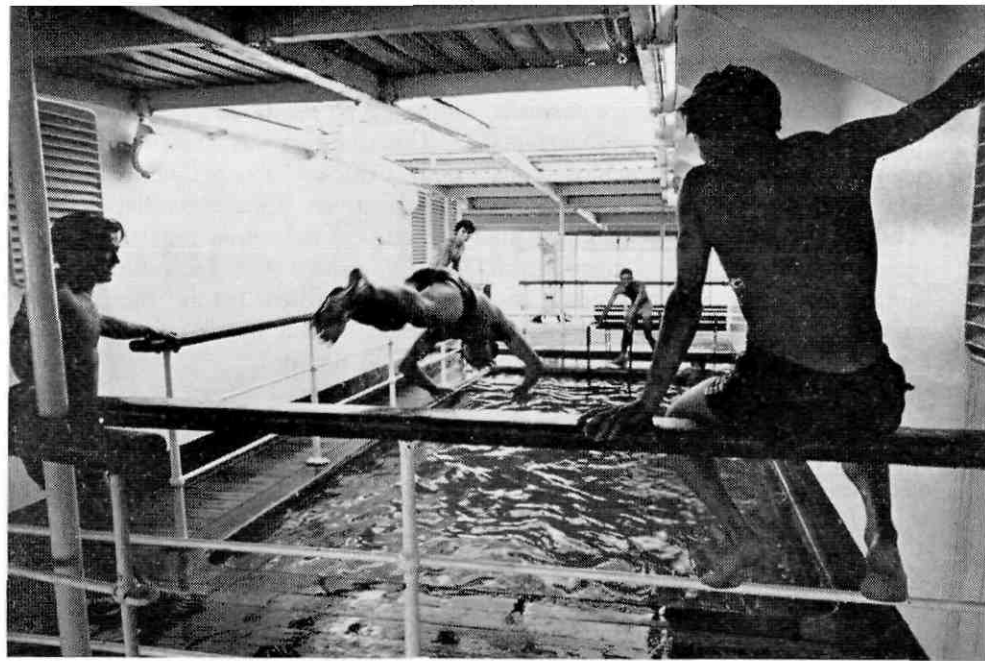
Films are a popular form of entertainment at sea, and most ships carry projecting and sound reproduction equipment. Films for seafarers are in constant circulation round the world.

Sport plays a large part in seafarers' lives and regular competitions and matches are organized ashore, for which in many countries there are grounds and equipment specially provided. There are limits to the kinds and amount of sport which can be pursued on board ship, but a good deal of training may take place during a voyage. Devices have been tried out for the theoretical study of football, for example. Most ships carry training equipment of some kind.

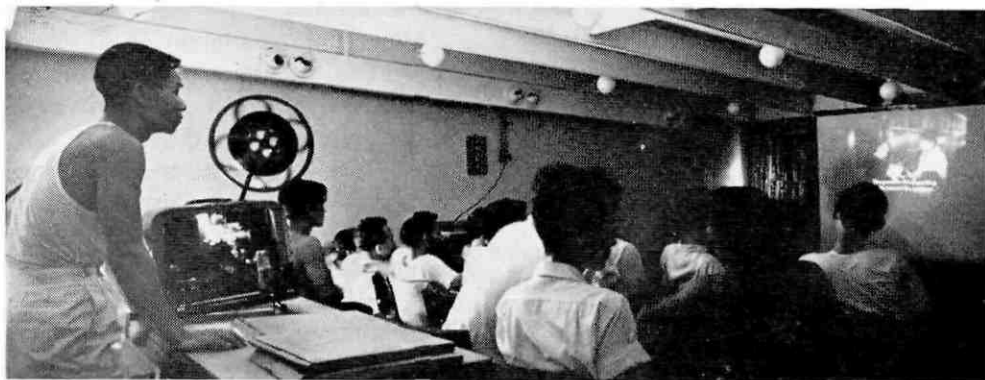
#### **Distribution arrangements**

Elaborate arrangements for distribution of welfare material to ships and





*These pictures, supplied by the ILO, were taken aboard the British tanker, Zaphon, (38,735 tons), which has a complement of 10 officers and 38 men. They illustrate the ways in which seafarers can spend their leisure on board ship. It is easy to see the importance to them of being able to obtain the goods and equipment necessary to ensure that their time off duty may be spent profitably and pleasantly. In the past customs restrictions were a big obstacle to the free circulation of such material.*



administration of distribution channels have to be made. Such arrangements must provide for the dispatch of goods from the home country to ships or to distributing centres abroad and for their circulation between distribution centres and ships. Sorting, repair and maintenance may also be necessary before the material can be passed on to another ship. Welfare material for seafarers may have to be cleared by the customs authorities of many different countries both at ports and at inland frontier posts. It is easy to imagine the difficulties that will arise if these authorities impose the duties, taxes and formalities normally applied to commercial imports and exports.

It had long been evident, before the Customs Cooperation Council began work on its Convention, that enormous difficulties prevented the smooth distribution of welfare material in many ports. In 1956, for example, the Director of the Royal Norwegian Welfare Council for the Merchant Navy drew attention to the experience of a service which distributed films to Norwegian vessels:

'Customs barriers, import and export regulations, red tape, and lack of comprehension are sometimes such that an attempt to exchange films between two ships simply has to be abandoned. There is no general international system in this field; arrangements have to be made with the authorities at each place, according to the prevailing conditions, which is

often by no means easy.'

This situation was confirmed by ILO and Customs Cooperation Council investigations. It was clear that customs formalities, inspection regulations and the like caused such delays that a ship frequently sailed before the welfare material needed by its crew could be taken on board.

#### **ILO initiative**

In 1961 the Tripartite Subcommittee on Seafarers' Welfare of the ILO Joint Maritime Commission adopted a resolution drawing attention to the importance of a free exchange of welfare material between ships and urging governments to eliminate existing charges and restrictions and to expedite formalities.

After this resolution had been brought to the notice of the Customs Cooperation Council in 1962 and certain preliminary discussion had taken place, work began on the drafting of an international instrument to achieve the conditions urged in the ILO resolution. The ITF as well as the ILO assisted the Council in this work. The result was the Convention which is now to come into force.

The question of welfare facilities is one which has concerned the seafarers' organizations at international level for a number of years. This concern has also made itself felt in the wider sphere of the ILO, certainly since the adoption of its Welfare in Ports Recommendation (No. 48) in

1936, the provisions of which covered amongst other matters, health safeguards, arrangements for adequate accommodation and recreational facilities for seamen while in port, a system of saving and remittance of wages, and the supply of information to seamen. The principles laid down by Recommendation No. 48 were reaffirmed by the Subcommittee on Seafarers' Welfare at its first meeting in 1959. The declaration which emerged from this meeting also laid down important guiding lines for international action in the field of seafarers' welfare.

#### **International interest**

There is growing interest in the possibilities of international cooperation in this field. It is increasingly felt that, though voluntary organizations do very valuable work, welfare activities on behalf of seafarers should depend less on charity, but should in preference be organized on a permanent basis, possibly through fixed contributions from governments, shipowners and the seafarers themselves. The ITF, for its part, has contributed to a number of welfare projects of international importance from its Seafarers' Welfare Fund.

It is certainly to be hoped that international consultation and cooperation in the creation and development of seafarers' welfare projects will increase in the years to come, and, against the background of the work being done by the ILO Subcommittee on Seafarers' Welfare, there is every reason to believe that this will occur.



# International Transport Workers' Federation

General Secretary: HANS IMHOF

President: HANS DÜBY

**7** industrial sections catering for

RAILWAYMEN  
ROAD TRANSPORT WORKERS  
INLAND WATERWAY WORKERS  
PORT WORKERS  
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
- 330 affiliated organizations in 83 countries
- Total membership: 6,500,000

## *The aims of the ITF are*

to support the national and international action of workers in the struggle against economic exploitation and political oppression and to make international trade union 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 to organize in trade unions;

to defend and promote, internationally, the economic, social and occupational interests of all transport workers;

to represent 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*

Aden \* Argentina \* Australia \* Austria \* Barbados \* Belgium  
Bermuda \* Bolivia \* Brazil \* British Guiana \* British Honduras  
Burma \* Canada \* Chile \* Colombia \* Congo \* Costa Rica  
Curaçao \* Cyprus \* Denmark \* Dominican Republic  
Ecuador \* Estonia (Exile) \* Faroe Islands \* Finland \* France  
Gambia \* Germany \* Great Britain \* Greece \* Grenada  
Guatemala \* Honduras \* Hong Kong \* Iceland \* India  
Indonesia \* Israel \* Italy \* Jamaica \* Japan \* Kenya  
Lebanon \* Liberia \* Libya \* Luxembourg \* Madagascar  
Malawi \* Malaya \* Malta \* Mauritius \* Mexico \* The  
Netherlands \* New Zealand \* Nicaragua \* Nigeria \* Norway  
Pakistan \* Panama \* Paraguay \* Peru \* Philippines \* Poland  
(Exile) \* Republic of Ireland \* Republic of Korea \* Rhodesia  
St. Lucia \* Senegal \* Sierra Leone \* South Africa \* South  
Vietnam \* Spain (Illegal Underground Movement) \* Sweden  
Switzerland \* Taiwan \* Trinidad \* Tunisia \* Turkey \* Uganda  
United Arab Republic \* United States of America \* Uruguay  
Venezuela \* Zambia

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