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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

INTERNATIONAL

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New safety and health Code for dockers

Nine Experts met at the ILO headquarters in Geneva from 13 to 21 January and revised the ILO Code of Practice on Safety and Health in Dock Work. The existing Code was published in 1958 and has long stood in need of major revision by virtue of the technological transformation that has taken place in many aspects of cargo handling. The revised Code is to be published shortly by the ILO and, in addition to retaining those features of the old Code which are still valid (a large amount of break-bulk cargo is still handled by conventional methods), it now deals extensively with modern developments such as containers, pallets, LASH and similar systems and roll-on-roll-off operations. The latest advances in the techniques of testing cargo handling equipment have been incorporated in the passages in the Code which cover, for example, safe working loads.

The Experts (three workers, three employers and three government representatives) also unanimously and strongly recommended the revision of ILO Convention no. 32 concerning Protection Against Accidents (Dockers). This Convention is now some forty-four years old and obviously is in many respects irrelevant to modern practice.

The three workers' Experts were Charles Fitzgibbon (General Secretary of the Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia and Chairman of the ITF Dockers' Section), Thomas W. Gleason (International President of the International Longshoremen's Association and Vice Chairman of the ITF Dockers' Section) and Tom Cronin (National Dockers' Secretary of the British Transport and General Workers' Union). Harold Lewis (Assistant General Secretary of the ITF) acted as adviser.

ASIA

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ITF Regional Conference for Railwaymen

The ITF, in cooperation with the US Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks, held a Regional Conference for Railwaymen in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 12 to 16 January 1976. The Conference discussed : Automation on the Railways, including a proposed

study of the human effects of technological change effects of technological change on the railways and the ITF Social Charter on rationalization and modernization; Transport Policy, with particular reference to urban transport and economic self-sufficiency of the railways; Working Conditions; and Trade Union Organization and Collective Bargaining.

Particularly lively discussion took place on automation and transport policy and it was agreed that the ITF Railwaymen's Section as a whole should deal with these matters more intensively.

COLOMBIA
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National Seminar for seamen and dockers

An ITF Seminar was organised in Barranquilla, Colombia, from 1 to 6 December 1975 with the collaboration of the ITF-affiliated National Transport Workers' Federation and the Colombian Merchant Seafarers' Union. Twenty-eight participants from four unions took part in the Seminar, which covered the following subject: trade union education; history of the international trade union movement; technological change in the maritime industry; structure and aims of the ITF; ITF flag-of-convenience campaign; and history of the Colombian trade union movement.

Particular interest was expressed in achieving increased support from port workers' unions for the flag-of-convenience campaign, and it was agreed that a greater degree of publicity should be given to the ITF's action.

PERU
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Peru National Seminar for women transport workers

A national seminar for women transport workers was organised in Lima, Peru, from 24 to 28 November 1975 jointly by the ITF and its affiliate the Braniff International Employees' Union. It was attended by fifteen participants from three unions representing aviation and railway employees. Subjects covered included social problems in the developing countries and the development of Latin America; women's place in the family and the changing structure of society; collective bargaining; employer/employee relations; structure and aims of the ITF; trade union aims in the social, economic and occupational fields.

TRANSPORT

GERMANY

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Union launches "Save the Railways" campaign

The ITF-affiliated German Railwaymen's Union has launched a campaign of public information entitled "Save the Railways" in order to draw to public attention the danger of current plans for drastic reductions in the network. The union points out that not only would a policy of cutback on the railways affect passenger service; it would also have serious consequences for many small and medium-size undertakings which depend upon the railways for the transport of goods. It calls upon the government to redirect its policies in order to encourage more traffic on to the railways; this would relieve the ever-increasing burden on the roads and reduce the railways deficit. Finally, the union stresses that the railways are burdened with track costs to almost twice the extent of road goods transport and eight times the extent of inland navigation.

TRADE UNIONS

JAPAN

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Punitive action against railwaymen evokes further industrial action

Following the eight day strike of Japanese railway workers in support of their campaign for the right to strike (see Newsletter No. 12, 1975, page 109), we have learned that disciplinary action has been taken by the Japan National Railway Management against 5246 trade union members, of whom 15 have been dismissed, 245 suspended, and 1434 had their pay cut. In addition the two ITF-affiliated railway unions have been sued for compensation. The ITF has cabled a very strong protest to the Japanese government and the railway management protesting vigorously against these measures and supporting its affiliates, action in calling a work-to-rule in freight traffic.

NORWAY
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Seamen's union obtains agreement for oil rig crews

The ITF-affiliated Norwegian Seamen's Union has reached agreement with Morco, the company exploiting the Ekofisk oil field, which provides that Morco employees have a contract on conditions of service covering pay and other terms, notably those relating to dismissals.

SPAIN
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ITF protests at mobilisation of railway workers

The Spanish government mobilised the country's 70,000 railway workers on 19 January 1976 in order to forestall a threatened stoppage, and is prepared to take the same action in the case of the Madrid underground workers if negotiations on their pay claims do not produce agreement - the underground workers struck in December but returned to work on promises that their claims would be considered.-

The ITF has informed its affiliate, the railway and transport workers' section of the UGT in Toulouse, of its disgust at this action, which is condemned as anti-union and undemocratic. The Federation will be keeping a close watch on the situation of the Spanish railwaymen in the light of this provocative act, which does nothing to increase the optimism of the free world that the new Spanish regime will be an improvement on that of Franco.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

INTERNATIONAL
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EEC Directive on equal treatment adopted

The EEC Council of Ministers of Social Affairs has adopted a Directive implementing the principle of equal treatment for men and women workers as regards access to employment, advancement, vocational training and working conditions. Provisions designed to implement the principle of equal treatment in matters of social security are to be adopted later.

The new Directive abolishes formal discrimination such as that embodied in collective agreements, individual contracts of employment, staff regulations or rules governing independent occupations and professions and also provides that people who consider that they have been discriminated against may pursue their claim in law.

AUSTRIA

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New agreement for goods drivers

The ITF-affiliated Austrian Transport and Commercial Workers' Union has succeeded in negotiating a new agreement for its members engaged in road transport. They receive a pay increase of 11% on basic rates with effect from 12 January 1976, together with other improvements in conditions.

FRANCE

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Paris public transport strikes

Employees of the Paris underground railway and bus services belonging to unions including the ITF-affiliated FO Transport Workers' Federation staged a 24-hour strike on 13 January in support of their claims for improved rest-day provisions; they are seeking agreement on 104 rest days annually, against the current 91. Talks with the management, RATP, broke down on 6 January on this issue, but are continuing separately on the question of pay increases to keep in line with rises in the cost of living.

GERMANY

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Railwaymen submit pay claim

The main pay policy committee of the ITF-affiliated German Railwaymen's Union has agreed to submit a claim for a flat rate increase for all manual and clerical employees (totalling 180,000 workers) of 135 DM per month. This should apply from 1 February 1976 for 12 months.

The reason for choosing a flat-rate figure rather than a percentage is the union's concern to protect the standards of the lower-paid workers at a time of economic hardship. The union intends to prepare an analogous claim for senior railway officials in consultation with other affected groups under the aegis of the German trade union centre DGB.

Seafarers obtain 5% increase

Seamen and officers of the German merchant navy represented by the ITF-affiliated German Union of Transport and Public Service Workers have won a 5% pay increase plus a flat-rate 20 DM per month applied to basic pay rates, effective from 1 January 1976. Other monetary benefits are also increased by 5%, and certain improvements in pay structures have been agreed. Further structural improvements are to be discussed by a special Committee during the course of 1976.

GREAT BRITAIN

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London dockers win £6 per week rise

Pay rises of £6 per week, in line with the government's pay restraint policy agreed with the trade unions, have been agreed for 10,000 dockers in the port of London in unions including the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union. The dockers who benefit are those in both the enclosed and riverside docks, as well as tally clerks, wharfingers and lighterage men. The £6 will not be incorporated into basic rates for the purpose of calculating overtime and shift bonuses.

MEXICO

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Cabin attendants' dispute with Mexican Canadian Pacific Air

The ITF-affiliated Mexican Cabin Attendants' Association has notified a dispute with the Mexican management of Canadian Pacific Airlines. The latter are refusing to negotiate a collective agreement with the union, which has organised the cabin attendants flying the routes to Peru, Chile and Argentina, and have even gone so far as to threaten the employment of cabin staff on the grounds of their union membership.

NETHERLANDS

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New pay rates for road transport workers

In accordance with rises in the cost of living index, pay rates, bonuses and subsistence allowances for Netherlands road transport workers have been increased with effect from 1 January, 1976. Monthly pay rates for operating and non-operating personnel now range from 1441.32 Guilders to 1635.02 Guilders; for personnel with specialist qualifications 1803.25 Guilders at age 23 and above; for technical personnel age 22 and over, 1512.89 Guilders to 1684.15 Guilders.

NORWAY

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Working hours to be reduced

The Norwegian government has introduced legislation providing for a general reduction in weekly working hours from 42½ to 40, to take effect from 1 April 1976. For continuous shift work (day and night all week long) hours will be reduced from 38 to 36 per week, and for day and night shift work, excluding weekends, it is proposed to reduce working hours from 40 and 40½ to 38 a week.

UNITED STATES

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Grain tankers agreement

The ITF-affiliated National Maritime Union has negotiated a revised agreement for its members employed aboard grain carriers. New pay rates become effective from 16 June 1975, with further increases on 16 June 1976 and 16 June 1977. Current rates range from \$999.39 basic monthly pay for a boatswain down to \$680.14 for third cook.

In addition various adjustments in wages structure have been made and hours of work have been improved.

Dispatchers get new pay agreement

The ITF-affiliated Transport Workers' Union has reached agreement with National Airlines on behalf of its members employed as dispatchers and assistants; with effect from 1 September 1975, pay was increased by 7% to \$2,140 for dispatchers and \$1,213 for assistants. These rates will be increased further on 1 September 1976, 1977 and 1978 to final rates of \$2,550 and \$1,445, representing an overall rise of 27.5%. Fringe benefits are also improved, notably medical and dental insurance and retirement benefits, and working hours are reduced.

(The cabin staff strike which brought National Airlines to a standstill on 1 September last year was settled on 4 January.)

Agreement reached for shopcraft unions

A strike by 70,000 members of four railway workshop unions was averted in December when last minute agreement was reached with the railway companies. The unions involved are the Boilermakers-Blacksmiths, the Carmen, the Electrical Workers and the Firemen-Oilers. The agreement provides for overall increases - including cost-of-living adjustments - totalling 36.4%: 10% from 1 January 1975; 5% from 1 October 1975; 3% on 1 April 1976; 4% on 1 July 1977.

Further improvements include better health and welfare provisions, holidays and dental insurance.

The Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees has also reached agreement on similar terms for its members.

PERSONALIA

John M. Bonfield, President of the International Graphical Federation since 1967, died on 9 January, aged 70.

Robert Bratschi, former President of the ITF and of the Swiss Railwaymen's Union, celebrated his 85th birthday on 6 February. Another former ITF President and Swiss Railwaymen's leader, Hans Düby, celebrated his 70th birthday on 30 January.

Théo Grinevald, a senior member of the Workers' Relations Branch of the International Labour Organization, died recently.

Börje Heggstad has been elected President and Lars Hellman has been elected Secretary of the Swedish Commercial Employees' Union.

Hermann Leuenberger, former President of the Swiss Transport and Commercial Workers' Union, died on 30 December 1975, aged 75.

Mick Martin has been appointed National Secretary of the Public Services Group of the British Transport and General Workers' Union, and

Les Shorter has been appointed its Civil Air Transport Officer, London Region, with national responsibility for Civil Air Transport membership.

Lars Sandberg will retire this year from the Presidency of the Swedish State Employees' Union. His successor will be elected at the union's annual meeting in May 1976.

Lars Skytøen has replaced Leif Skau, who retired on 20 January 1976, as President of the Norwegian Metalworkers' Union.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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- ITF Road Transport Workers' Section Conference - Vienna, 16-18 March 1976
- Meeting of ITF European affiliates - Vienna, 19-20 March 1976
- Preparatory meeting on Training and Qualifications of Seafarers - Baltimore, 22-23 April 1976
- Seafarers' Section Manning Committee - Baltimore, 26-27 April 1976
- Railwaymen's Section Subcommittee on Transport Policy - Netherlands, 11-12 May 1976
- Conference on Cooperation and Resource Utilization in Connection with Welfare Programmes for Seafarers - London, 18-19 May 1976
(provisional)
- Fishermen's Section Conference - 4th week in May 1976
(provisional)
- Working Group "Rhine/Main/Danube" - Basle, end June 1976
- Seafarers' Section Conference - Geneva, 10-11 October 1976
(provisional)

AFFILIATED UNIONS REQUIRING
FURTHER INFORMATION ON ANY ITEM
IN THIS NEWSLETTER MAY OBTAIN IT
ON REQUEST FROM THE SECRETARIAT
OF THE ITF

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THE RIGHTS OF WORKING WOMEN - Charter adopted by the 11th World Congress of the ICFTU, Mexico City, 17-25 October 1975

The following Charter was adopted by the ICFTU World Congress, with aim of achieving the objectives of:

- eliminating discrimination based on sex or marital status;
- eradicating prejudice as to the role of women and their employment;
- creating equal conditions of access to employment.

An action programme was also agreed, setting out the practical steps to be taken by the trade unions in implementation of the Charter.

C H A R T E R

I. RIGHT TO EDUCATION

1. Girls and boys should have the same education opportunities. Co-education will be encouraged. Lifelong education will be based on the same principles of equality. A particular effort is necessary in the developing countries, where the educational gap between the sexes is widest.

II. RIGHT TO EMPLOYMENT

2. The right of women to employment should be recognised in all countries. They should have full access to economic life, and all efforts should be made in compliance with ILO Convention No. 111 to eliminate any discrimination based on sex regarding access to employment and jobs, education, vocational training, promotion and job security. The arbitrary division of labour between men and women should disappear.

Every effort should be made to achieve and maintain full employment. Women should benefit from these efforts on the same footing as men.

Vocational training

3. Women and girls should have access to vocational guidance and training on the same terms and conditions as men and boys.
4. Special measures should be taken to foster equality of opportunity and treatment for women and girls in employment and occupation and also to give a vocational training to women who seek to enter or re-enter into employment after a relatively lengthy absence from the labour market.

Promotion on the job

5. Access to higher posts should be open to both men and women in all fields and under the same conditions.

Remuneration

6. The implementation of the principle of equal remuneration for work of equal value is an essential aspect of equal rights as between men and women and a priority aim of the international free trade union movement. The remuneration includes not only the ordinary or minimum basic salary, but also any additional emoluments either in cash or in kind. However, maternity allowance or any other special benefits for the working mother should not be considered as an argument against equal pay.

7. The ILO Convention No. 100 should be ratified in all countries and implemented without delay. No departure from the principle of equal pay for work of equal value will be allowed in collective agreements.

Social Security

8. All discrimination against women in social security schemes must be abolished. Equal entitlement should derive from the same obligations.

Social and health protection

9. The international labour standards relating to social and health protection applicable to women (for example, relating to night work, underground work, heavy or unhealthy work) should be complied with. With a view to improving the quality of life and in the light of recent technical developments and trends in working conditions, the extension of these standards to all workers should be sought.

III. MATERNITY PROTECTION

10. Women must have the right and the opportunity to plan their families and to choose motherhood freely.

11. Maternity protection must be considered a duty of society. The aim of maternity protection is to safeguard the health and welfare of mother and child and prevent women workers from being economically penalised on account of their giving birth to children. It should not be a cause of discrimination in any field.

12. The minimum standards of maternity protection laid down in ILO Convention No. 103 and Recommendation No. 95 should be implemented. Appropriate steps should be taken to ensure that legislation and collective agreements guarantee the application of these standards to all working women, including those employed in industrial homework, part-time work, in agriculture and in domestic service.

13. The working women who give birth to a child should be granted sufficient compensation for loss of earnings during the compulsory leave period, which should be at least 12 weeks.

14. Women should not be employed in any work which might endanger their maternal functions. Studies should be made on the dangers which may arise from new substances and techniques.

IV. FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

15. It is a duty of society to place at the disposal of working parents the social infrastructures necessary for them to harmonise their occupational and private lives. They would be aided by certain general measures such as an all-round reduction in working hours, flexible working hours and better adjusted school hours.

The mother or the father should be allowed, after the maternity leave of the working women, to take leave for a period of up to one year, and the rights linked to their employment should not be forfeited, particularly as far as employment security, promotion rights and social benefits such as health, insurance, pensions and other rights are concerned.

Social welfare services such as crèches, child-care services, children's health services, family aid, transport, housing and other community facilities to meet the requirements of families should be provided, and in any event placed under the supervision of the public authorities. They should be run on the principle of public service and not of profit.

V. RIGHT OF ASSOCIATION

16. ILO Convention No. 87 lays down that all workers have the right to form and join the trade union of their choice. Women workers ought to be able to enjoy this right and to derive from it the same protection and benefits as men.

VI. INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN THE TRADE UNIONS

Organisation

17. The importance for women of being organised within the trade unions must be recognised by women themselves as well as by the community as a whole.

The organisation of women workers must be one of the permanent objectives of the trade union movement in both industrialised and developing countries.

Trade union training

18. In order to enable women trade unionists to assume offices at all levels of the trade union organisations, it is necessary to ensure equal access to trade union training. Care must be taken to plan the courses so that women can attend. Where necessary, special courses should be organised for women.

Problems of women workers must be included in general trade union educational programmes at all levels.

Access to decision-making levels

19. There must be adequate representation of women at the executive level of the trade union organisations. Access to higher offices in the trade unions must be open to women on the same terms and conditions as to men. Where necessary, special women officers should be appointed.

20. The knowledge and experience of women trade unionists must be fully utilised. They must be encouraged to assume responsibilities and to act as spokesmen of the trade union movement at all levels and not be confined simply to dealing with women workers' issues. The influence and role of women's committees should, however, be recognised and the setting-up of committees wherever it is useful should be encouraged.

21. Delegations to trade union congresses, national or international, as well as to conferences of the United Nations, its specialised agencies and other organisations, must also include women.

CONCLUSION

The ICFTU recognises the extensive and valuable contribution made towards the improvement of the status of women by the United Nations Organisations and its Specialised Agencies, particularly the International Labour Organisation, and by the trade unions.

It is also aware of the great deal that still remains to be done and of the many problems arising from the changing conditions of women's employment.

The ICFTU THEREFORE APPEALS to governments, the United Nations Organisation, its Specialised Agencies and particularly the International Labour Organisation, the trade unions and all other progressive forces to do their utmost to implement and further the principles set out in this Charter.

ITF FLAG OF CONVENIENCE CAMPAIGN
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ITF Upheld by English courts on flag-of-convenience action

The ITF and its ship inspector John Nelson of the ITF-affiliated British National Union of Seamen have been successful in a legal case brought against them in England by the owners of the Panamanian flag "Camellia", managed by Wing-On-Enterprises Corporation of Hong Kong. The "Camellia" has been held up in the Manchester Ship Canal since it finished discharging in Eastham on 23 January, as the result of boycott action taken against it by members of the ITF-affiliated Transport & General Workers' Union within the framework of the Federation's campaign to ensure safety at sea and win standard agreements for the crews of runaway-flag ships.

The Indian, Pakistani, Filipino and Chinese crew members had put their claims for improved conditions through the ITF. These included wage and working conditions in conformity with ITF agreements; back payment of wages underpaid; the repayment of £200 each which some crew members had given to the owners' crewing agents as a condition of employment when signing on in Piraeus; and payment by the owners of subscription and membership dues on their behalf as members of the ITF Special Seafarers' Section. After the men had submitted their claims through Nelson, tugboat crews and dockers took sympathetic action with them, thus effectively immobilizing the "Camellia".

The owners then sought an injunction in the English High Court against the ITF and John Nelson which would have enabled the vessel to leave the Manchester Ship Canal. They also alleged that the conduct of the ITF and Nelson amounted to the crime of blackmail and were breaches of statutory duties and that Nelson had been responsible for the crew's mutineering and refusing to move the tanker from its berth. The injunction was, however, refused by the Judge, who stated in his decision that the demands made by the crew were in furtherance of a genuine trade dispute and merely sought to make the owners conform with ITF policy towards flag-of-convenience ships. The policy, he said, had been adopted in the interests of trade unionists and seamen generally to eliminate poorly paid and exploited labour. As a result both the ITF and Nelson were protected from legal action by the provisions of the 1974 Trade Union and Labour Relations Act.

Having been refused their injunction, the owners went immediately to the Court of Appeal to challenge the ruling. After considering their submissions, however, during a hearing lasting almost 4 days, the Court decided on the facts to uphold the Judge's findings and to dismiss the appeal with costs.

The decisions of the two Courts undoubtedly represent a very important victory in the ITF's campaign against sub-standard wages and conditions on shipboard, particularly as they involved a vessel which had so far managed to evade compliance with ITF agreements, despite a five week action taken against it in Haifa, Israel, last May and June, coordinated by Adam Chisik of the Israeli Sea Officers Union, the ITF Inspector for that port.

Scandinavian unions to boycott all flag-of-convenience ships without ITF agreements

At a conference recently held in Copenhagen, the Scandinavian Transport Workers' Federation - which represents nearly a quarter of a million Swedish, Norwegian, Danish and Finnish workers employed in land, sea and air transport - set the date of 1 May for the beginning of its all-embracing boycott of flag-of-convenience vessels. The boycott will be directed at all such vessels trading to and from Nordic ports which are not covered by agreements acceptable to the ITF. The meeting which took the decision was presided over by Hans Ericson, Chairman of the Federation and a member of the ITF Executive Board. In addition to representatives of all member-unions, the meeting was attended by Brian Laughton, the ITF's Administrative Secretary, together with ITF ship inspectors from the Nordic countries, including Svend Fónskov of the Danish Engine-room Crew Union, and Øystein Ringvold, Norwegian Seamen's Union, who were recently appointed ITF inspectors for Denmark and Norway respectively.

Of the 6,200 vessels currently sailing under runaway flags, it is estimated that at least fifteen per cent regularly traffic Nordic ports, while as many as 60 per cent of the total call at West European ports. In this connection, the ITF's Administrative Secretary reported to the conference on discussions being carried on with maritime unions in other European countries concerning ways in which they can cooperate in the all-Scandinavian boycott. It is also calculated by the Scandinavian unions that something like 80 per cent of all oil transports to and from the Nordic countries could be affected by the boycott, which is the biggest single action against runaway flag ships since the ITF world-wide boycott of 1958/9.

ITF Fair Practices Committee meets in London

The ITF Fair Practices Committee met in London on 27 and 28 January 1976. The meeting, which was attended by 50 delegates from ITF unions in 21 countries, was chaired by K. Mols Sørensen of the Danish Navigating Officers' Association. The Report on Activities for the period since the last meeting was discussed and subsequently adopted and it was also agreed that new wage scales under the ITF Agreement should come into effect on 1 September 1976, a year from the last increase.

A proposal by the Greek Seafarers' Union (PNO) concerning the recognition of the Greek collective agreement on Greek-owned flag-of-convenience vessels for the purpose of issuing ITF blue certificates was rejected by the meeting.

The meeting approved grants from the Seafarers' International Assistance, Welfare and Protection Fund made during the period April to December 1975 and agreed on further grants totalling over £75,000 for projects in Argentina, Belgium, Finland, Great Britain, New Zealand and South Africa, among others, which will benefit seafarers of all nationalities.

Under the agenda item Future Activities, the meeting agreed that a small delegation should visit a number of Asian and Far East countries yet to be named, where they would hold discussions on ITF policy with the appropriate authorities and also broach the more general question of increasing trade union activity in the countries visited. The meeting further decided to increase the number of union officers acting as ITF Inspectors in the flag-of-convenience campaign, the Secretariat agreeing that a meeting of Inspectors should be convened once the Service had been expanded.