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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

INDIA

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ITF protests at alleged ill-treatment of George Fernandes following his arrest

George Fernandes, president of the All India Railwaymen's Federation, was arrested on 10 June in Calcutta. Fernandes went into hiding when the Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi issued a state of emergency in June 1975 and has since issued a series of statements denouncing the steps she has taken to restrict freedom of speech and political activity.

The ITF has cabled the Prime Minister expressing grave concern at reports of the alleged ill-treatment of Fernandes following his arrest and calling on her personally to ensure that he is well-treated and that any charges against him are the subject of prompt, fair and open trial.

The Federation has circularized its affiliates requesting them to contact the Indian embassy in their respective countries and make known their deep concern. They have also been asked to try to obtain information as to his present circumstances.

\* an ITF affiliate

TRANSPORT

EUROPE

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Council of Europe acts to outlaw terrorism

The Ministers of Justice of the Council of Europe have unanimously endorsed a draft convention on terrorism which would render certain types of offence ineligible for political asylum and require signatory countries to extradite or bring to trial persons committing or assisting in the commission of such offences. The hijacking of aircraft is one of the crimes for which a political motive would no longer be recognized, as are attacks on the life or person of a diplomat, the taking of hostages and the use in terrorist attacks of firearms or explosives. It is expected that the draft convention will receive final approval later this month and that it will be open for signature by national governments in the autumn.

GREAT BRITAIN

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Officers' leader comments on pay parity issue

In a letter to the British labour weekly Tribune, Eric Nevin, general secretary of the ITF-affiliated Merchant Navy and Airline Officers' Association, points out that the problem of phasing out the sub-standard rates paid to Asian seafarers on British vessels (see April and May issues of ITF Newsletter) is greatly complicated by the freedom British shipowners enjoy to move capital across national frontiers, which enables them to establish companies abroad and manage foreign-flag vessels, thus evading British legislation designed specifically to protect seafarers. The attitude of the Indian government, which has made it known that it would resist any attempt to introduce pay parity for its nationals, many of whom receive less than the ILO recommended minimum of £48 per month, is a further aggravating factor, although Nevin says that he can see no reason why the Indian government could not use its own tax arrangements to promote the socio-economic policy it feels would be threatened by raising Indian seafarers' rates of pay to the British level.

ICELAND

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Settlement ends cod war

The recent cod war has come to an end with the signing in Oslo by the British and Icelandic foreign ministers of a 6-month interim agreement on 1 June. The agreement establishes an approved list of 48 British trawlers, of which only 24 will be allowed to fish at any one time within Iceland's claimed 200-mile limit. It is feared that the settlement will inevitably mean a loss of jobs among British distant-water fishermen and shore-based personnel.

SPAIN

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Spanish government demobilizes railway workers

The Spanish government last month demobilized the 70,000 railwaymen who work for the state-run national railways RENFE. The men were mobilized on 19 January in order to forcibly prevent a threatened strike (see ITF Newsletter No. 2, 1976, page 13).

TRADE UNIONS
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## GERMANY

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Railwaymen's union wins increased representation on staff councils

The ITF-affiliated German Railwaymen's Union (GdED) has expressed its satisfaction with the results of recent elections to the various staff councils of the German Federal Railways. GdED candidates have won 25 of the 31 seats on the national staff council and 246 of the 310 seats on the 10 district staff councils.

## GREECE

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Labour relations legislation is introduced in Greece

Greek trade unionists, who went on strike for four days late last month in protest against the government's proposed labour relations legislation, called off their action when the bill became law and are now assessing the effects that it is likely to have on trade union activity (see ITF Newsletter No. 5, 1976, page 45).

## JAPAN

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ITF pledges support for Japanese railwaymen's affiliates

The first court hearing in the massive suit for damages brought by the Japanese National Railways against the two ITF-affiliated railwaymen's unions, the National Railway Workers' Union (KOKORO) and the National Railway Motive Power Union (DOPO) takes place this month. The ITF has cabled the Japanese Prime Minister Takeo Miki protesting against what it considers a blatant attack on Kokoro's and Doro's very existence and declaring that it will do all in its power to back its affiliates in their defence.

The JNR is seeking redress in the courts for losses and damages amounting to over US\$ 67 millions which it allegedly suffered during an 8-day rail strike in November 1975. The stoppage, which also involved bus and postal workers, forms part of a long-standing campaign by unions in the public service to regain the legal right to strike. The ITF has consistently declared its support for the Japanese unions on the issue of this fundamental trade union freedom.

LUXEMBOURG

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Young railwaymen's leaders meet in Luxembourg

Youth leaders from ITF-affiliated railwaymen's unions in Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands and Switzerland met in Remich, Luxembourg from 17 to 22 May 1976 for their 16th annual conference, which was also attended by Mrs. H. Walsh from the ITF Secretariat. The meeting was opened by Jeannot Schneider, chairman of the railwaymen's section of the host union, the Luxembourg Federation of Railway and Transport Workers (FNCTTFEL). The major part of the proceedings was devoted to an exchange of information on the legislative and other measures taken in the countries of the participants to protect the rights of young people at work and the part the youth sections of the trade unions had played in achieving these results. During the week visits were paid to the training centre of the Luxembourg Railways (CFL) and the locomotive repair shop, both in the city of Luxembourg. It was decided to accept an invitation from the Belgian railwaymen's union to hold the next meeting in Belgium during May 1977. Subjects to be discussed at next year's conference would include youth unemployment and professional training of young people.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

EUROPE

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EEC Court of Justice rules on equal pay

Following a case brought by a retired Sabena stewardess Gabrielle Defrenne who, invoking Article 119 of the Treaty of Rome, challenged the legality of the airline's differential pay scales prior to 1966, the EEC Court of Justice in Luxembourg has ruled that member countries of the Community must observe the principle of equal pay, effective from the date of the court decision, i.e. 8 April 1976, only persons with claims actually pending under the article on 8 April being able to sue for back pay.

Meanwhile, Monique Genonceaux, also a former Sabena stewardess, has given notice to the airline that she intends to sue for unlawful dismissal. Madame Genonceaux was compulsorily retired last year at the age of 45 (the retirement age for male staff being 60). Last November's ITF Conference on Women Workers' Problems, being informed of her situation, dispatched a protest cable to Sabena calling for her immediate reinstatement.

CANADA

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Railwaymen to vote on mediation settlement

Over 100,000 Canadian railwaymen will reply via the ballot box to the proposals contained in a two-year pay settlement drawn up by a federal mediator. Union negotiators are recommending rejection. A no vote would constitute a mandate for a national strike.

GREAT BRITAIN

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Port rail workers receive £6 per week

Effective 26 April 1976, a weekly wage rise of £6, in line with the government's pay restraint policy agreed with the unions, came into operation for the 7,500 railway workers employed at 19 British ports. (The £6 will not be incorporated into basic rates for the purpose of calculating overtime rates.) The British Transport Docks Board has given an undertaking that union demands for enhanced overtime rates and two additional days' annual leave -- which last month led to an overtime ban -- will be taken up as soon as government policy allows. The Board has also agreed that membership of a trade union will be required as a condition of employment of all new entrants from 1 September 1976. Existing employees will be encouraged to join a union, but there will be no compulsion.

The port rail workers operate cranes, lock gates and the link spans used in roll-on/roll-off services and are organized by the ITF-affiliated National Union of Railwaymen.

London's busmen receive £2 per week pay rise

London's 23,000 busmen have been awarded pay increases of under £2 per week backdated to the beginning of April. The increases are: £1.94 for conductors; £1.82 for drivers; and £1.17 for drivers of one-man operated buses. The men, most of whom are represented by the ITF-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union, had asked for a substantial rise, but were told that the threshold payments they had received over the past year would have to be offset against the £6 per week maximum allowed under the British government's incomes restraint policy.

SCANDINAVIA

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SAS cabin attendants give notice of strike action

SAS cabin attendants stationed in Denmark, Norway, Sweden and outside Scandinavia organized by the ITF-affiliated Swedish Commercial Employees' Union (HTF) have given notice of strike action against the airline, effective 18 June, following the breakdown of protracted contract negotiations. The HTF is seeking a reduction in duty time, notably on short hauls within Europe, as well as an increase in the number of pursers employed by SAS. The

union is against the proposed interchange of personnel between KSSU member airlines, and wants a clause inserted in the new collective agreement to the effect that all cabin attendants on SAS aircraft shall be SAS employees and that SAS personnel shall not be required to work on aircraft of other airlines. These demands and a union claim for a 10% salary increase in 1976 have all been rejected.

ITF civil aviation affiliates have been informed of the situation and asked for their support and solidarity should the strike go ahead as planned.

UNITED STATES  
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TWA cabin attendants call off threatened strike

The ITF-affiliated Transport Workers' Union of America reached tentative agreement on the terms of a new contract for TWA cabin attendants shortly before a threatened strike was due to begin on 5 June. Details of the settlement, which has yet to be ratified by the union rank and file, will be given in the ITF Newsletter as soon as they become available.

New York bus and underground workers forfeit cost-of-living rise

An emergency board appointed to deal with New York's fiscal crisis has unilaterally revoked a cost-of-living award to bus and underground workers on the grounds that it violates the city's current wage freeze. However, the board has announced that it is prepared to allow pay increases linked to improvements in productivity. The decision has been accepted by the ITF-affiliated Transport Workers' Union of America, which represents the bulk of the employees concerned.

The award formed part of a two-year contract details of which were given in the April issue of the ITF Newsletter.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Australian railwaymen staged a 24-hour strike late last month in support of a shunting supervisor who was dismissed for refusing to order the movement of sulphur to a uranium mine. The railway unions, who are firmly opposed to the mining of uranium, ordered a return to work when it was announced that the supervisor concerned would be reinstated.

Canada's 2,200 air traffic controllers called off a strike due to commence on 1 June after union negotiators recommended acceptance of the government's latest contract offer.

Fiji port workers are to strike from 1 July following a deadlock in pay talks with the port authority. The government has already announced that it will take over operation of the country's docks and maintain cargo services if the strike -- now 'illegal', the Minister of Labour having refused to accept the strike notice served by the men's union -- takes place as scheduled.

Italian air, rail and urban transport workers staged a series of walkouts on 24 May in support of contract claims.

Jamaica has joined the Inter-governmental Maritime Consultative Organization, becoming its ninety-sixth member.

Mexico has introduced a 200-mile fishing zone off its coast.

Portuguese shipping agency employees went on strike from 27 May to 3 June in furtherance of a wage claim.

The Spanish Information Minister has announced plans for reforms which would recognize for the first time the right of workers to form independent unions outside the system of state-run unions (Sindicatos). The proposed reform, which has yet to be approved by the Spanish parliament, will be submitted to a referendum in October.

PERSONALIA

The following have been elected to the presidium of the Committee of ITF Transport Workers' Unions in the EEC ('Brussels Committee') for the period 1976 - 1979: Ph. Seibert (Germany), president; Jack Jones (Great Britain), A. Tonneaux (Belgium), S. Barendregt (Netherlands), A. Servanton (France) and S. Stimilli (Italy), as vice-presidents.

Mathias Hinterscheid (Luxembourg) has been elected general secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation in succession to Theo Rasschaert. The new assistant general secretary is Sven Erik Sterner (an officer of the Swedish Commercial Employees' Union on temporary contract to FIET). Heinz Oskar Vetter (DGB, Germany) has been re-elected president.

Reijo Anttila has succeeded Olavi Keitele as president of the Finnish Seamen's Union. Lauri Heinonen has been appointed vice-president of the union.

Jack Ashwell takes over as national secretary of the road transport commercial group of the British Transport and General Workers' Union from Ken Jackson, who retires this month.



Knut Hadrup, outgoing president of the Swedish Engineer Officers' Union, was made an honorary member of the union at its ordinary Congress earlier this month. His successor is Folke Havik.

Egil Halvorsen, president of the Norwegian Railwaymen's Union, has been made an honorary member of the union. Brother Halvorsen celebrated 30 years as a full-time union official in November 1975.

Guurtje Gerritsen-Wink has been elected on to the executive of the dockers' section of the Dutch Transport Workers' Union. Guurtje Gerritsen-Wink attended the ITF Conference on Women Workers' Problems last November.

Børge Jensen, former chairman of the road transport group of the Danish Transport and General Workers' Union, has died at the age of 69.

Karl Peter Lauritsen, treasurer of the Danish Radio Officers' Association, celebrated his 50th birthday on 10 June.

Lars-Eric Nicklasson is to succeed Lars Sandberg as president of the Swedish State Employees' Union from 1 October.

Jeannot Schneider and Josy Konz have been elected president and general secretary respectively of the Luxembourg Federation of Railway and Transport Workers (FNCTTFEL).

Philipp Seibert, president of the German Railwaymen's Union and a member of the ITF Executive Board, has announced that he will not stand for re-election to the German parliament. Bro. Seibert has been an MP since 1961.

The following changes have taken place in the leadership of the various sections of the Dutch Transport Workers' Union:  
Bertus Hoekstra becomes chairman of the road transport workers' section; Ben Kok has been elected chairman of the civil aviation section in succession to Jelte Post (a member of the ITF Executive Board since November 1973 and chairman until 1974 of the ITF Civil Aviation Section); and Piet van Keulen becomes chairman of the dockers' section

Wu Pi-En and Lu Kuo-hua have been elected president and general secretary respectively of the Chinese Federation of Labour (Taiwan).

#### FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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Fishermen's Section Conference - Grimsby, 21-22 June 1976

Sub-Committee on Working

Conditions of Railway Staff - London, 22-23 June 1976

Seafarers' Section Conference - Aug/Sept. 1976 - venue undecided

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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