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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ITF

NAMIBIA

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ILO report calls for fairer deal at work for black Namibians

The ILO has recently published a report entitled "Labour and Discrimination in Namibia". The report provides conclusive evidence of systematic discrimination in employment against the non-white inhabitants of the territory, arising from the fact of South African control, from the manner in which that control has been exercised and, more particularly, from the application to Namibia of the policy of apartheid.

A major factor in the discrimination introduced by South Africa are the "homelands" that have been created for each of the native ethnic groups. These have been carefully preserved as small separate entities incapable of generating sufficient employment for those who live in them, thus making black Namibians internal migrants to the developed sectors of the economy situated in the vastly more prosperous white-controlled areas of the territory.

A separate system of labour recruitment has been evolved for non-whites seeking employment in these areas. They are hired as migrant labour, a status which is emphasized by the laws (more especially the notorious "pass Laws") which restrict their freedom to leave the areas set aside for them and limit their right to enter urban areas or reside in them.

Trade unions formed by Africans are not recognized in law for the purpose of wage negotiation or conciliation. As a result, there are no African unions in the territory and no official government policy exists to encourage their formation. This reduced bargaining power helps buttress an existing discriminatory wage structure, which frequently fails to assure Africans of a subsistence wage.

The report draws the inevitable conclusion that profound administrative, social and economic reorganization will be required if a fairer and more equitable distribution of the resources of the territory is to be accomplished. Apartheid would have to be eliminated and more forward-looking labour and social policies adopted. In this connection, it recommends the evolving of a system of modern labour legislation embodying ILO conventions and recommendations concerned with freedom of association and the right to organize, this being backed up by a comprehensive employment policy taking into account ILO conventions on employment policy and employment services. Emphasis should be placed on the free mobility of labour and on the creation of a proper recruitment system.

Being a small country with a limited and developing economy, Namibia might well find it impossible to achieve implementation of the full range of international labour standards, but attention could be given to those conventions designed to improve conditions in the country's key industries, in whose prosperity the non-white Namibians should have a fairer share.

NORTHERN IRELAND  
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ITF conveys sympathy to family of dead Belfast busman

Following the brutal and senseless murder of Belfast bus driver Harry Bradshaw during the recent unsuccessful Northern Ireland Loyalist strike, the ITF sent a cable of condolence to the Belfast Regional Secretary of the ITF-affiliated British Transport and General Workers' Union requesting that he convey our deepest sympathy to the members of the dead man's family. The cable praised the courage and sense of public duty of Belfast busmen, qualities which had won the admiration of their colleagues all over the world.

As a mark of respect for their dead colleague, busmen in the city suspended all services until after the funeral had taken place.

TRANSPORT

GERMANY  
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Union warns against rundown of railways

The ITF-affiliated German Railwaymen's Union (GdED) has issued a mass circulation pamphlet to draw the attention of the public to the dangers inherent in plans to run down the railways. The pamphlet stresses that the Bonn government policy of cutback on the railways and reduction of the number of railway staff (figures just released for the end of April give a total of 369,000, the lowest ever) is misguided in that it makes no significant contribution towards reducing the railway deficit. Instead, emphasis should be placed on taking more traffic, particularly goods traffic, off the overcrowded roads on to the rails. It is further argued that financial assistance should be made available to enable the railways to modernize and that distortions in competition, which favour other modes of transport, should be eliminated. The union warns that 1977 will be a crisis year: if the correct measures are not taken now, Germany may well soon find itself without a viable railway system.

NORWAY

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Parliamentary committee recommends shorter working week for seafarers

The Maritime and Fisheries Committee of the Norwegian parliament last month drew up a draft bill on the working hours of seafarers, which set out to bring them into line with workers ashore. The most important change concerns catering and watchkeeping personnel, whose working week it is recommended should be reduced from 40 to 38 hours. The Committee has recognized that a good deal of overtime is worked at sea and provision will accordingly be made in the bill for seafarers to work up to a maximum of 20 hours' overtime a week. The seafarer may be asked to work up to 14 hours' overtime, but may freely choose whether he wishes to work the remaining six hours. It is intended that the new law shall also lay down a minimum level of overtime compensation, preferably a premium rate of 40 per cent (i.e. the same as for shore-based workers). Vessels under 300 grt (previous limit 500 grt) will be allowed special dispensation from its provisions on working hours to operate a two-watch system. The regulations will be rather more flexible than hitherto, taking full account of the seafarer's own wishes and the individual vessel's competitive position.

The proposals made by the parliamentary committee have the full support of the seafarers' unions in Norway, who were represented along with the shipowners (and two neutral persons) on a committee which did much of the preliminary work in connection with the draft bill's contents.

TRADE UNIONS

INTERNATIONAL

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May Day rallies banned

Rallies and other ceremonies marking organized labour's annual day of celebration on 1 May were held as usual in countries around the world. However, in Spain the government imposed a ban on marches on that day and when workers gathered in defiance of this prohibition the police used indiscriminate violence to break up a peaceful May Day procession in one of Madrid's larger parks. In Chile, the authorities refused to allow the national trade union centre, CUT, to organize a workers' rally. The decision was condemned by the ITF, along with many other workers' organizations: "This refusal", the cable said, "clearly indicates the junta's realization that it does not have Chilean workers' support."

SPAIN

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Government ratifies ILO Conventions on basic union rights

The Spanish government last month deposited with the ILO documents formally signifying its ratification of ILO Conventions no. 87 and 98, which confer on workers the right to join the union of their choice and to engage in free collective bargaining. This brings the total number of ratifications of the two Conventions to 86 and 103 respectively. To date, Spain has ratified 97 ILO Conventions.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEWS

BARBADOS

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Busmen's strike for higher pay

Over a thousand busmen organized in the ITF-affiliated Barbados Workers' Union are currently on strike in support of demands for a twenty per cent increase in their weekly rates of pay, which range from BD\$ 75 for general workers, through \$97 for conductors and \$115 for drivers to \$120 for mechanics. The Wages Board, with the support of the government, has been attempting to impose a wage freeze.

DENMARK

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New general wage agreement for Danish workers

A countrywide strike by nearly 300,000 workers, including many in the transport sector, scheduled for midnight on 15 April was averted when the Danish parliament adopted legislation implementing the proposals of the state mediator appointed in connection with the current round of negotiations between the employers' federation (DA) and the national trade union centre (LO). The proposals had been rejected by the employers, while the unions had already accepted the offer. The agreement allows for a general wage increase of six per cent in each of the next two years. This figure represents a threshold payment of approximately 4 per cent plus a 2 per cent real wage increase.

GERMANY

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New pay agreement for railwaymen

Agreement has been reached between the ITF-affiliated German Railwaymen's Union and the Federal Railways on a new pay agreement, effective 1 February for 13 months. The agreement provides for a

5.3 per cent pay increase plus a lump sum payment of 100 DM to all railwaymen. The heavy duties allowance will be improved on 1 September 1977. The GdED has been successful in achieving the introduction of a holiday allowance of 150 DM; and two extra days' leave have been won for employees in the lower salary ranges.

GREAT BRITAIN

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Locomen and white-collar staff accept pay offer

We are now able to report that the rail pay offer reported in the last issue of the ITF Newsletter (page 24) has been accepted by the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen and the Transport Salaried Staffs' Association (both ITF affiliates), who are represented together with the ITF-affiliated National Union of Railwaymen on the Railway Staff National Council. The two unions are also represented on the joint working party which is to look at the redundancy and resettlement arrangements and the sick pay schemes.

Striking helicopter pilots win international support

Helicopter pilots working for the privately-owned company of Bristow Helicopters in Aberdeen, which provides helicopter services to the oil rigs and platforms in the British sector of the North Sea, have been on strike since 15 April over the company's decision to dismiss one of its pilots for refusing to accept an overseas posting, although he was clearly not required to do so by the terms of his contract. However, it is widely believed that the real reason for the pilot's dismissal lies in his attempts to persuade Bristows to recognize the British Airline Pilots' Association (BALPA) as a negotiating partner. Bristows, which is strongly anti-union, has resisted all attempts to reach a settlement of the dispute through the offices of the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service, maintaining that it is prepared to talk individually but not collectively to the striking pilots.

The Bristows pilots have attracted a good deal of national and international support for their case. British affiliates of the ITF are 'blacking' vessels supplying the rigs and platforms and North European affiliates in Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden have been informed of the installations affected by the action and have given expressions of their solidarity and support.

Bristows pilots stepped up the dispute on 16 May when they began picketing British Petroleum's giant oil refinery at Grangemouth in the hope that BP, which is Bristows' largest single customer, will bring pressure to bear on the company to reach a settlement with its pilots. Rail and tanker drivers have promised that they will not cross the picket lines. This action, which has the full backing of the Trades Union Congress, was followed by a combined picket of the striking pilots and sympathetic unions of Dyce Airport, Aberdeen on 18 May.

GREECE

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Shorter hours for Olympic Airways flight engineers

Flight time limitations negotiations between the Greek Flight Engineers' Association (EIM) and Olympic Airways have ended in agreement. A new maximum daily limit of 10 hours (previous limit 11 hours) will come into effect on 31 December 1977 on long hauls to Australia and North America. It has also been agreed that two flight engineers should be carried on all flights exceeding ten hours.

The union, which has recently applied for affiliation to the ITF, has expressed its gratitude to the Federation for its assistance in promoting a successful outcome to the talks.

Pilots suspend flights to Greece

Following the replacement of striking Greek civilian air traffic controllers by military personnel whom it regards as "unqualified", the International Federation of Airline Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) advised the world's pilots for safety reasons to suspend flights to Greece and in Greek air space. The atas, together with other airport staff, began a 10-day strike on 13 May in support of claims for higher overtime pay and more fringe benefits. Olympic Airways cabin crews also walked out in sympathy. In addition to calling in military personnel, the authorities served thirty civilian ground staff with compulsory mobilization orders.

The action was called off on 23 May after the atas received government reassurances that their demands would be re-examined.

ISRAEL

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Ships' officers return to work

Ships' officers organized in the ITF-affiliated Israeli Sea Officers' Union have resumed normal working after striking for most of the month of April. This action was forced by the owners' persistent refusal either to sign a new collective contract -- the previous agreement having expired some two and a half years ago -- or to honour an interim agreement to restore differentials between officers and ratings. A return to work was effected on 29 April when the owners agreed to commence talks with the officers' representatives.

JAPAN

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Railwaymen's spring offensive yields major gains

On 15 April, members of two of the ITF's Japanese railway affiliates DORO and KOKORO, along with other workers in the public sector, staged a 24-hour strike on a number of local lines

operated by the National Railways marking the beginning of a week of strikes in support of pay demands. They were joined the following day by private railway company workers, who within hours returned to work on receiving a satisfactory reply to their claims. The National Railways workers called off action in their support on learning of this offer, but renewed their own action on 20 April after overnight attempts at mediation had failed to bring about a settlement. The action, originally scheduled for three days, was cancelled after 21 hours when an arbitration tribunal offered a 9.12% pay increase, legally binding on both parties.

#### NORWAY

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#### New conduct records for seafarers

Norway's four maritime unions (three of them ITF affiliates) have reached agreement with the employers' association on a standard procedure for recording a seafarer's conduct in his employment, thus doing away with the "black lists" secretly circulating among shipowners. Under the new system, each seafarer when he signs off will be given a copy of a certificate giving details of his work performance. If he disagrees with the assessment it contains he will have the right to seek redress with union assistance. The record will be useful to the seafarer as it will provide him with the information a subsequent employer will need before making a decision to hire him.

#### PAKISTAN

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#### PIA flight deck crews win improved conditions

Flight deck personnel with Pakistan International Airlines, including F/Es organized in the ITF-affiliated Flight Engineers' and Navigators' Association, called off their action against the airline on 23 April when the PIA management agreed to concede a demand for improvements in their conditions of service.

#### SCANDINAVIA

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#### SAS cabin attendants call off strike

SAS cabin attendants in Sweden belonging to the ITF-affiliated Commercial Workers' Union (HTF) called off their 11-day-old strike against the airline on 20 May after accepting the official mediator's proposals for a settlement of their contract claims. These included a 7.5 per cent pay rise backdated to 1 March, with an additional 2 per cent from 1 September. Norwegian cabin staff members of the HTF also struck, but obeyed a government instruction to return to work on 19 May after being told that their strike was damaging the national interest.



The Danish cabin attendants working for SAS gave one week's notice of strike action as required under Danish law. Talks with the mediator continued past the strike deadline and action was cancelled following a satisfactory contract offer.

The ITF pledged its support for the union in its dispute with the airline and requested civil aviation affiliates in France, Germany and the Netherlands to respond favourably if they were asked to show solidarity.

For details of the events leading up to the strike see ITF Newsletter No. 3/4, page 29.

SINGAPORE

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Pregnant stewardesses to be allowed to keep jobs

Under the terms of an agreement reached between Singapore International Airlines and the ITF-affiliated Singapore Air Transport Workers' Union, SIA flight stewardesses who become pregnant will be temporarily posted to ground duties from the date they are certified as medically unfit to fly until three months after confinement. Previously, they had been required to leave the airline. Training check stewardesses will be offered ground employment within the same grade on basic pay; all other flight stewardesses will be granted unpaid leave of absence, although they may apply and be considered for alternative ground jobs within their grade. Senior chief (and chief) stewardesses who accept ground jobs with a lower grading will receive a special gratuity payment. These arrangements will not apply to stewardesses with less than three years' service, those with two or more surviving children, or to stewardesses with a poor service record in the preceding twelve months. Stewardesses guilty of certain disciplinable offences will also be excluded from the agreement.

The union has also announced that retirement ages for stewardesses will be as follows: training check stewardesses - 45 years, senior chief (and chief) stewardesses and all other stewardesses (other than those on fixed-term contracts) - 35 years.

SPAIN

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Ground staff win concessions from Iberia

A partial strike late last month by Iberia's entire ground staff, who are members of the ITF-affiliated Transport Workers' Federation of the UGT, has resulted in the airline granting a number of important concessions. The workers were successful in pushing through most of their demands, achieving a collective agreement of 20 months' duration (the airline had been insisting on two years)-- this means that the ground and flying staff agreements will now expire simultaneously -- and a commitment on the part of Iberia to

review wages every ten months in the light of changes in the cost-of-living index. Salary increases averaging 8,000 pesetas have also been conceded. Iberia has agreed to give its workers a seat on the board of management and to create a joint worker/management committee, which will give workers a say in decisions affecting scheduling, overtime, promotion etc.

During the strike, the ITF despatched a cable to the Iberia management deploring the violent methods used by the civil guard to break up a peaceful assembly of striking Iberia workers. The Federation also advised the UGT of its full support for their claims and assured them of international solidarity.

#### Aznar Line crew refuse to sail from Southampton

The Spanish crew of the Aznar Line car ferry Monte Toledo, which is shortly to pass into Libyan ownership, have gone on strike in the British port of Southampton and are refusing to sail in an effort to obtain improvements in the severance pay offered them by the Aznar Line. The strike is believed to be the first ever staged by Spanish seafarers in a foreign port.

#### SWEDEN

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#### Swedish workers take strike action following collapse of central pay talks

Some 3,000 members of unions affiliated to the Private Salaried Staff Cartel (PTK) have begun selective strike action following the failure of protracted central wage negotiations with the employers' federation which had been pursued jointly by the PTK and the larger LO trade union confederation for the first time in twenty years. The state mediator put forward final suggestions for a settlement on 12 May, on the eve of the expiry of a strike warning issued by the two centres when they turned down a previous mediation offer. The PTK rejected the offer made to its members and began strike action at 06.00 on 13 May, halting all domestic air services run by SAS and the internal airline Linjeflyg. The LO, which had delayed a final response to the offer, has now announced that it will take parallel strike action from 25 May, when it will call out 7,000 workers in the transport and distributive trades.

Meanwhile, the employers' federation (SAF) has given notice to the PTK that it intends to institute a lockout of 220,000 of its members from midnight on 25 May. If this goes ahead as planned, the PTK has warned that it will widen its strike action on 1 June to include all members in industries affected by the lockout, excepting only key executives and safety staff. Many LO members would undoubtedly have to be laid off as a result of such a massive lockout, in which case the LO can be expected to issue a similar strike notice on behalf of its members.

The two centres had earlier called a ban on overtime, new hirings and business trips outside normal working hours from the end of April after reaching deadlock on negotiations for a new agreement.

UNITED STATES  
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New rates of pay for flight engineers with American Airlines

The ITF-affiliated US Flight Engineers' International Association (FEIA) has recently announced new rates of pay for flight engineers with American Airlines following the conclusion of a new two-year contract for AAL pilots, which came into effect on 1 April 1977. (The FEIA has an agreement with the carrier that whenever a new pilots' agreement is signed, a formula for determining f/e rates of pay is brought into operation.) The sample rates quoted below refer to a flight engineer in the 12th year of service, domestic rate:

equipment	1/4/77	1/10/77	1/6/78
747 passenger jet	\$4242	4468	4658
DC-10	3777	3966	4164.

Other improvements won on the basis of the pilots' agreement include: expenses (based on time away from base) of 85 cents per hour from 1 April 1977, rising to 90 cents on 1 February 1978; 28 days' annual leave after 12 years' service; and a starting salary of \$1,100 per month.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Aircraft refuellers and petrol tanker drivers at Sydney airport in Australia struck for 4 days in mid-April in sympathy with their colleagues who were seeking higher pay and better conditions.

Australian air traffic controllers began strike action from midnight on 6 May to press demands for a 37 per cent pay increase to bring their pay up to that of airline pilots. The atcs claim that the two jobs carry equal responsibilities. Earlier, the men had staged a 12-hour strike in support of their claim. They returned to work on 14 May after being promised an independent hearing.

The French confederation of trade unions FO and two other national centres have called a general strike of their members for 24 May. The strike is intended as a protest against the government's economic strategy, which has limited the freedom of unions to negotiate adequate levels of pay and improved conditions for their members. Transport services will be seriously affected, with railwaymen, civil aviation personnel and bus crews joining in the action.

Dockers in the Greek port of Piraeus have called off a 93-day-old go-slow following a meeting with the Minister of the Mercantile Marine. It is understood that the go-slow was originally imposed in protest against the failure to meet the men's pay demands.

Four ground staff unions with members working for El Al Israel Airlines have formed a joint committee to press demands for pay increases in line with those recently awarded to air crews.

A strike of dockers of the ITF-affiliated Organization of Karachi Port Trust Workers (Pakistan) called for 7 April was cancelled after the signing of an agreement satisfactory to the union.

ITF General Secretary Charles Blyth presented a Welfare Fund check for \$51,000 to the US United Seamen's Service at a recent meeting of the AFL-CIO Maritime Committee in Bal Harbour, Florida. The money is to be used to help the USS with its work of providing welfare services to seamen around the world, both at sea and in port.

PERSONALIA

Remi van Cant has been appointed national secretary in charge of the seamen's section of the Belgian Transport Workers' Union.

Ward Cassiers has retired from his post as president of the Belgian Transport Workers' Union on reaching 65. Brother Cassiers, who was a member of the ITF Executive Board from 1971 until 1976, was awarded the ITF Gold Badge by the General Secretary Charles Blyth during the retirement ceremony in recognition of his many years of loyal service to the Federation.

Robert Degris, former general secretary of the French Railwaymen's Union FO, has resigned from his post as railwaymen's secretary with the FO confederation of trade unions on reaching retirement age. Willy Gitler, general secretary of the French Transport Workers' Federation FO and a member of the Committee of the ITF Road Transport Workers' Section has been elected a secretary of the confederation.

Tom Jenkins has been elected general secretary of the British Transport Salaried Staffs' Association. He was formerly TSSA Senior Assistant General Secretary.

Walter Johnson has been elected president of the British Transport Salaried Staffs' Association. Brother Johnson is a Labour member of Parliament and an ITF Lay Auditor.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Executive Board - Dublin, 19-20 July 1977  
ITF 32nd Congress - Dublin, 21-29 July 1977

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

+++++ STOP PRESS +++++

Swedish central pay negotiations (see page 43)

The central pay negotiations between the two national centres and the employers' federation (SAF) were successfully concluded on 26 May. The PTK immediately called off its selective strike action and all strike notices issued by the LO have now been withdrawn. The lockout ordered by the employers was initially postponed and then cancelled when agreement was reached.

Pay increases averaging 2.9 per cent have been awarded to unions represented in the Private Salaried Staff Cartel (PTK), while unions affiliated to the LO trade union confederation receive approximately 3.9 per cent.