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August 1993

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Urban transport workers fight for rational policies

Transport policies based on deregulation and privatisation that ignore the social needs of the travelling public have devastated the equality of public transport throughout the world.

35 delegates from 25 trade unions in 16 different countries attended the meeting of the ITF Urban Transport Committee in Birmingham, England from 30th of June to 1st of July.

The Urban Transport Committee is a joint committee of the urban transport unions within the ITF Road Transport Workers' Section and the ITF Railwaymen's Section. It unites bus workers, tram workers and other urban passenger workers.

The meeting received detailed reports from delegates about the drastic consequences of deregulation and privatisation policies in their countries.

DEREGULATION'S IMPACT

In Great Britain, one of the first countries to fully embrace the ideology of deregulation and privatisation in transport, delegates heard that the consequences of these policies had been dramatic.

The number of users of public and urban transport has declined. The conditions of the vehicles which companies are using has also deteriorated because the level of profitability has also declined. Passengers are unhappy because services are no longer as good as they used to be, and workers have suffered because their working conditions have deteriorated. Urban transport workers, under deregulation, work longer hours for less money.

The only people happy with the result of deregulation in British urban transport are the government. Public subsidies to urban transport have been cut by a third.

Unfortunately, the British experiences are being copied by many governments. Delegates heard that the Dutch, the French, the Argentinian, and even the Germans, have followed the British example to a greater or lesser extent.

DETERIORATION OF SAFETY STANDARDS

Privatisation in Uganda — often a response to the incompetent management of publicly owned corporations — has also happened. The meeting heard from the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers' Union of Uganda that privatisation policies were also being advocated and forced upon their government by the international financial community, namely the IMF and World Bank. Structural adjustment programmes in Uganda have resulted in a proliferation of mini-buses operated by families and owner-operators clogging the streets of the major towns.

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...ITF urban transport committee meeting

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Deregulation policies also lead to an increase in fatal accidents. In Uganda as in most of Africa and other parts of the developing world, the number of fatal traffic accidents has increased dramatically in recent years. A motion adopted unanimously by the Urban Transport Committee was presented by the Ugandan union about the deplorable increase in fatal accidents and the marked deterioration in working conditions in transport in their country.

FATIGUE AND STRESS

Free for all transport policies increase fatigue on drivers and encourage poor safety. The motion condemned the carefree attitude of some employers with regard to safety and called upon municipalities and other authorities to ensure that the siting of bus stops and other management measures are carried out with a proper regard for the need to promote the highest level of safety. The motion also urged the ITF Executive Board to study ways which research into accidents could be carried out and documents produced to encourage workers and unions in developing countries to fight for better working conditions and more effective legislation governing health and safety protection for transport workers.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Even without the additional effects of privatisation and deregulation upon urban transport workers, it has long been recognised that the urban transport industry is a very dangerous one to work in. Trade unionists have long known and recognised that urban transport workers suffer from a large number of occupational diseases and medical problems that are obviously related to the erratic nature of their working conditions.

Dr. June Fisher from the Centre for Municipal Occupational Safety and Health (CMOSH) in the USA attended the meeting and spoke about occupational health problems of urban transport workers. As a direct result of the Transport Workers' Union in the USA insisting upon drivers undergoing regular medical examinations, much useful data has been acquired on comparative health questions. This has shown that there is an unusually high incidence of high blood pressure amongst urban transport drivers.

Research has shown that a bus driver's health is not a question of exercise, smoking or eating, but of work organisation. High blood pressure increases with the length of service. Dr. Fisher also referred to studies on cardio-vascular disease in Denmark and Sweden. The Swedish study showed that the incidence of cardio-vas-

cular disease was six times higher amongst male bus drivers than other male workers.

Dr. Fisher highlighted the need for an exchange of information on an international basis and better co-ordination in examining of research data.

Delegates described the number of similar studies that were taking place in different countries. It is clear that there is quite a lot of research and information available, this work needs collation and dissemination.

ITF TO PUBLISH NEWSLETTER

ITF Assistant General Secretary Graham Brothers told the meeting that an occupational health and safety newsletter was now going to be produced in conjunction with Dr. Fisher and her colleagues at CMOSH, who have agreed to write the first edition. The newsletter will summarise existing research work and highlight possible projects for future work. The ITF will undertake to print the newsletter and establish a mailing list for its distribution. Unions were invited to inform the ITF of their interest in the newsletter and of possible addresses for future mailings.

BUS CONSTRUCTION

The Urban Transport Committee discussed the work in progress by the working group on bus construction whose aim is to influence manufacturers and buyers of vehicles. The working group has been working out specifications for the design of a driver's compartment, bearing in mind the climate, space, visibility, security and safety.

ITF Assistant General Secretary Brothers pointed out that the main aspects of design had been agreed in general terms but specific and final parameters still need to be set. Once these have been agreed they will be circulated to affiliates for comment.

COLOMBIAN MOTIONS

The meeting adopted two motions proposed by the Asociación de Choferes de Colombia on the urban transport situation in Colombia. The first motion condemned the fact that Colombian bus drivers are paid according to a system of commission payments based on the number of passengers carried or according to a system based on a percentage of fare revenue received. This means that Colombian bus drivers must work a fifteen hour day and carry 800 passengers to earn a living wage. The motion demanded an end to such forms of payments and called for an adequate basic wage and an eight hour working day. The second motion noted that the Colombian government is proposing to raise the retirement age for urban transport bus workers from 60 to 65 years, despite the fact that they are required to work shifts of up to 15 hours. The meeting called upon the government to abandon its plans and instead lower the pensionable age to 55 years.

Australians give frosty reception to Burmese officials

A five man delegation from the Burmese 'Government', the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), which arrived in Australia on 29 July for a seven day 'private' visit to improve the junta's image, was pelted with eggs upon arrival at Perth Airport by a demonstration of Australian-based Burmese nationals protesting at SLORC's denial of basic human and trade union rights.

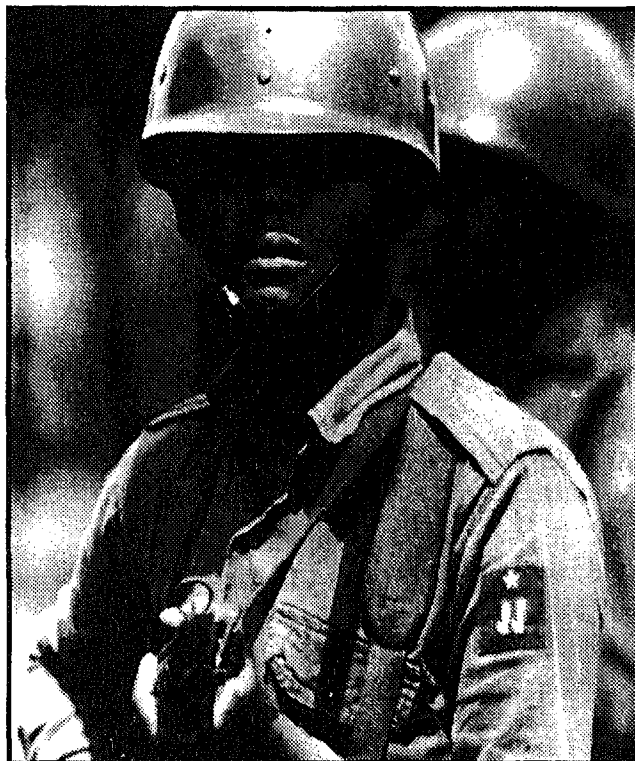
The organisers of the demonstration, the Australian Burmese Council, were furious at the Federal Government's decision to approve the visit and the fact that Senator Gareth Edwards will be meeting with the delegation. Roger Chapman, ITF Australian Co-ordinator, said "there are still people in Canberra who do not realise that this junta is a regime even worse than Pol Pot's thugs".

Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating, in response to the public outcry against the SLORC, publicly rebuked the Burmese junta and told the SLORC that they should restore democracy and freedom in Burma. [The ITF has organised a global campaign against Burma calling on all its affiliates to send messages of protest to the Government of Burma ('SLORC') and take whatever action they can against the economic interests of the Burmese Government, including, where possible, the boycotting of ships and aircraft registered in Burma. In addition the ITF has called upon its seafarer and docker affiliates and ITF inspectors to provide assistance to the exiled Seafarers' Union of Burma (SUB) in their efforts to organise, and provide assistance to, Burmese seafarers by making them aware of the existence of the SUB. The ITF is also translating the new Foc brochure into Burmese.]

A number of recent successes involving Burmese seafarers working on foreign flag vessels have been achieved. Two recent boycott actions in Australia on board Greek flag vessels, the *Sun P* and *Angelic Faith*, resulted in successful back pay claims.

Unfortunately in the case of the crew of the *Angelic Faith*, owned by a London based Greek shipping company Diamantis Limos Ltd. there was no happy ending. Whilst on route to exile in Thailand, via Singapore, the returning crew were reportedly kidnapped by Burmese government agents and their whereabouts and safety are unknown although it is feared they are in custody in Burma. The ITF through its affiliates in Australia is investigating the current status and whereabouts of the missing crew. The ITF's lawyers in Bangkok are also assisting in the search.

The ITF is looking at other areas of possible action to bring pressure to bear on SLORC such as the offshore oil and gas industry. A number



of well known oil companies are currently operating on the Burmese continental shelf despite the fact that foreign investment under conditions of severe repression of human rights is contrary to the principles enunciated by the ILO. Giant multinationals Shell and Texaco are amongst those reported to have recently invested in Burma. Foreign investment of this sort is seen as one sure way of ensuring that the Junta has the hard currency to continue its repression of dissidents.

ITF Acting General Secretary David Cockroft said "the Burmese 'Government' was condemned for its brutal suppression of human and trade union rights by over 2,000 delegates from 164 countries attending the International Labour Conference at the ILO in June. The ITF will be keeping up this pressure by making an official complaint to the ILO and, in co-operation with the ICFTU, co-ordinating effective international action against this brutal regime".

Any affiliate who wants more information on Burma should contact the Burma Action Group in the UK at the following address (they can put you in touch with local action groups):

Burma Action Group
Colin's Studios
Colin's Yard
Islington Green
London N1
UK
Fax: + 44 71 403 3997

Kenyan government sets up union breakaway group

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) is calling on its affiliates around the world to boycott a breakaway group that has, with Government support, ousted the elected leadership of the Central Organisation of Trade Unions of Kenya (COTU).

This move follows the Government's active policy of dividing Kenyan workers by publicly supporting a breakaway group, headed by Mr Johnson Ogendo, and interfering in the internal affairs of COTU by preventing its leadership from carrying out their legitimate duties including holding meetings.

On the second of July the Government prevented the legitimate leadership from holding a council meeting and ordered the police to occupy the headquarters of COTU. Meanwhile the Labour Minister was attending the breakaway group's conference who were claiming it to be a COTU governing council meeting. Subsequent attempts by the legitimate General Secretary of COTU, Joseph Mugalla, to get the High Court to remove the pro-government group were rejected on August third. Brother Mugalla, who had been jailed earlier in the year following criticisms he made of the government's economic policies in

a speech to a May Day Rally, intends to appeal. However, the ruling was based on the fact that the "new" leadership has been registered with the official Registrar who is a member of the Government.

The ICFTU believes this is the end of free trade unionism in Kenya and Enzo Friso the ICFTU General Secretary said it seemed that "the Kenyan government has the power to change the leadership of any trade union at any time".

The ITF, in a letter to the President of Kenya, Daniel Arap Moi, expressed its outrage at the action taken by the government in deliberately interfering in the internal affairs of COTU.

ITF Acting General Secretary David Cockroft said "This action represents a clear violation of ILO Convention 87 on Freedom of Association and all recognised labour standards and practices including the ILO's Constitution".

"Unless President Moi disassociates himself from the actions of his ministers and civil servants and guarantees COTU's legitimate leadership the right to carry out their trade union duties unhindered the ITF will add its voice to calls for the international community to take action against the Kenyan government".

European transport workers right to strike challenged

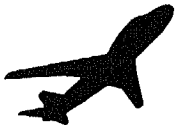
In the wake of road blockades that seriously impeded European road transport operations last summer, two Socialist Members of the European Parliament — one from Spain and one from Portugal — put forward a draft resolution that could seriously restrict the right to strike of European transport workers.

In their proposal they ask the European Commission and the Council of the EC to designate a network of major transport routes by rail, road and inland waterways on which blockades would not be permitted. They call on the social partners to guarantee the provision of minimum services in case of a dispute so that supplies are guaranteed for every town in the Community. Finally, they demand measures at Community level to compensate for any economic loss or damage Community citizens might suffer as a

consequence of an interruption of essential transport services.

The matter was brought to the attention of the European Transport Liaison Committee (a joint body made up of representative of the ITF and the Brussels Committee) at its meeting in Brussels at the end of June. Eike Eulen, European Vice-President of the ITF, and a member of the European Community's Economic and Social Committee, warned of the inherent threat to the right to strike for road transport workers in the EC entailed by this initiative. He urged ITF affiliates to lobby their countries' MEPs to oppose these moves as they represented a limitation on trade union activity.

Details of the Spanish MEP concerned have also been passed on to the ITF affiliates in Spain who promised to investigate the issue further.



CIVIL AVIATION

Pakistani unions prepare to fight "open skies" policy plans

Unions organising staff at the Pakistani national carrier PIA met on the 16th of June to discuss the situation of the country's civil aviation industry.

The Pakistani government has adopted a unilateral "open skies policy" which allows foreign airlines sponsored by the mega carriers to operate from the Gulf countries to Pakistan without any bilateral agreements being reached between PIA and the mainly African airlines concerned (Egypt Airways, Ethiopian Airways etc.).

This policy threatens the livelihood of almost 22,000 PIA employees. It also indirectly helps the mega carriers in their bid to take over national flag carriers in the Asia/Pacific region.

The foreign airlines have not offered job opportunities in the Pakistani aviation industry since they mostly employ foreign nationals.

Even the newly-formed private domestic carriers like Hajveri Airlines, Aero Asia, Raji Airlines etc. have acquired surplus aircraft and flight deck/ground crew from Eastern Europe.

They are being used to provide feeder services for the foreign airlines and are not required to serve the less lucrative domestic routes.

The foreign airlines are gaining an additional competitive advantage over PIA because of the lower standard of service provided, poor safety conditions as well as lower pay and conditions for their staff which enable them to operate at much lower cost.

At the same time PIA's own customer service standards have deteriorated.

The unions blame the previous PIA management for letting the situation get out of control and not explaining to the government the full impact of its open skies policies for the national carrier.

At their meeting the unions unanimously adopted a resolution which condemns the government's unilateral open skies policy and demands an urgent review of this policy as well as incentives to the local aviation industry and guaranteed rights for the national carrier with regard to bilateral agreements. The resolution supports efforts to improve the new domestic carriers' service and safety standards which must be coupled with the requirement for them to serve their share of non-profitable routes. The resolution criticises the PIA management for not briefing the government on the negative impact of its policy which in the eyes of the unions could be interpreted as the first step towards

privatising the national airline, thus reducing even further employment opportunities in the Pakistani airline industry.

This resolution was forwarded to the ITF with a request for support.

In a message to the Pakistani prime minister, Acting General Secretary David Cockcroft pointed out the ITF's experience with government policies of liberalisation and deregulation in the civil aviation industry and the negative impact "open skies" policies have had in other countries — destroying jobs, threatening wages and conditions for the workers and undermining the competitiveness of the national carrier. This was not only jeopardising aviation safety but also putting into question the ability of the government of the country to influence the direction of civil aviation policy.

He appealed to the Prime Minister to ensure that the Pakistani government "will stick to the original system of bilateral agreements and will extend market access to foreign carriers only under conditions which guarantee fair competition and continuation of nationally owned and controlled airlines, which as at present, employ workers under decent working conditions and with fully respected human and trade union rights."

PIA unions, among them the ITF-affiliated Pakistan Airline Pilots' Association, thanked the ITF in its support in a matter which is of great concern to the aviation workers of their country.

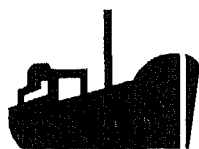
Air France and Sabena unions plan concerted actions

A seminar for trade unions representing staff at Air France and Sabena, held on the 1st and 2nd of July in Paris, studied the economic and social situation of those airlines.

Both companies were suffering heavy financial losses and were pursuing strong anti-social policies which manifest themselves in huge productivity increases, a large number of redundancies and massive salary reductions.

In the conclusions adopted by the seminar the participants therefore called for concerted actions — extending also to other European airlines — to fight these policies and for the speedy establishment of a European Works Council for the Air France/Sabena group.

They also demand a meeting with the heads of Air France and Sabena, Bernhard Attali and Pierre Godfrois. Both have so far refused to meet with the unions.



SEAFARERS

ITF appeals to UN over blockade actions against Israeli shipping

The potential threat to the jobs of Israeli dockers, tugboat crews, pilots, truck drivers and port employees posed by the UN blockade of Iraq has apparently been averted following an intervention by the ITF.

Following a letter from Efraim Marcovitz of the ITF-affiliated Israeli Sea Officers' Union (ISOU) highlighting the consequences of the UN blockade on the port of Eilat ITF Acting General Secretary David Cockroft, wrote to the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr Boutros Boutros Ghali, asking him to amend the operational instructions of the UN Multinational Maritime Force (UNMMF) to alleviate the disruption inadvertently caused to the port of Eilat without decreasing the effectiveness of the blockade.

The UN blockade of Iraq involves all vessels entering the Tiran Straits (the narrow entrance to the Gulf of Aqaba) being searched by warships attached to the UNMMF. This has resulted in delays, most notably to the Israeli shipping

company Zim Lines, the main user of the Port of Eilat, which has caused them to suffer financial loss. Other requirements of the UNMMF is that container vessels should not stack containers more than three high on deck. The result has been that vessels are being diverted to the Israeli Mediterranean ports of Haifa and Ashdod since to do otherwise would mean operating the vessels at less than their maximum potential return. Cockroft said in his letter "it is rather absurd to suspect that an Israeli beneficially owned vessel, subject to Israeli Ministry of Transport rules and regulations, crewed by Israelis and carrying ships documents which clearly indicate that it is carrying a cargo destined for Israel, would be smuggling contraband to Iraq".

Efraim Marcovitz reported that as a result of the ITF's intervention the *Zim Alexandria* was allowed to proceed to Eilat despite the fact she carried containers 5 high on deck which points to fact that the UN vessels engaged in searching ships have now received new instructions.

Danish shipowners defend crew's tax concessions

Danish shipowners have reacted strongly to government plans to abolish seafarers' tax concessions on income earned abroad because they argue it would put them at a disadvantage against foreign competition. The Danish Shipowners' Association (DSA) argues that the current set-up secures employment for Danish crews and contributes significantly to national foreign currency income.

Dutch shipowners issued a 'pay up or will quit' threat to the government in July. They are demanding a \$257 million package and the ending of restrictions on crewing. The shipowners estimate that if the government took this action millions of dollars would be invested in new tonnage over the next few years and around 200 new and existing ships would return to the Dutch register. The Dutch Shipowners' Association (KVNR) wants the government to allow the hiring of non-Dutch officers and engineers; an increased financial package to stimulate shipping investment; increased tax relief for seafarers, and make shipping profits exempt from

taxation. In a separate move the Dutch Directorate of Shipping and Maritime Affairs (DGSM) announced plans to promote and develop shortsea shipping between the Netherlands and the rest of Europe. The DGSM is currently considering supporting one of five routes with start up capital. The development of the other routes will be actively promoted in an attempt to encourage the entire concept of moving freight by sea and to publicise the economic and environmental benefits.

The EUROS flag is back in the news with the European Commission trying to modify the terms of the initiative in an eleventh hour attempt to save the concept of a European Community register of shipping. New measures are currently being worked on with a view to getting the Belgian Presidency to put forward a document with some new ideas. These will include manning requirements which only stipulate that the Master and Chief Engineer must be

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...Isle of Man register moves towards Foc status

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nationals of the EC state whose flag the vessel flies although state aid will be dependent on the employment of EC nationals above and beyond this minimum requirement.

The German register has declined by 47 vessels of 248,000 grt since July 1992 according to figures released this month by the German Shipowners' Association (VDR). As of 1 July 1993 the German fleet stood at 282 merchant vessels of 3,917 million grt with 187 of these vessels being registered on the German International Ship (GIS) register representing 2,150,000 grt or 55 per cent of all German registered vessels. The total German beneficially owned fleet, according to the VDR, is now 670 vessels of 8.11 million grt.

The Isle of Man register is back in the headlines following the publication of statistics which show that the numbers of British officers and ratings employed in its fleet have declined substantially. This has led the ITF's two main British maritime affiliates, RMT and NUMAST, to review their position on the register's flag status. Currently ships registered under the Manx flag are treated on a case by case basis but this is dependent on the unions refraining from asking the ITF's Fair Practices Committee (FPC) to add the register to the Foc blacklist. The Manx flag is viewed by many in the industry as the UK's own offshore register but the government has never formally recognised this status. This has encouraged the UK Baltic Exchange into floating proposals for a British Offshore Register designed to halt the decline of the UK fleet. Prime recruitment targets include Hong Kong Chinese and former Soviet Union shipowners. According to the Baltic Exchange's Chairman, Peter Tudball, the proposals aim for a flag of excellence rather than a flag of convenience. We won't hold our breath.

The list of countries offering flag of convenience registries took a bizarre turn for the worse with the opening of the first ever registry allegedly sponsored by The Almighty. The Oceanus flag established by retired US naval admiral Edward Welles, who claims he is on a God-given mission to preserve the seas from abuse, has failed to get recognition from the IMO (the IMO, as a UN agency, only recognises nation states). Admiral Welles has threatened to wreak havoc on any country that fails to co-operate with his register.

Panama revealed another measure designed to improve its appalling safety record by making it compulsory for international vessels joining the register to be in class. Not the most staggering step forward given the ability of shipowners to get ships classified by any Tom, Dick or Harry, and ships leaping from class to class seeking the cheapest surveys and less stringent scrutiny. In fact 'class hopping' is so prevalent these days that the IMO is taking a closer look. Perhaps the ITF should consider declaring certain classification societies as "classes of convenience".

The Philippines government has agreed measures to promote the development of its domestic passenger and cargo shipping fleet. A new bill approved by the Parliament's Transportation and Communication Committee will allow ship owners access to financial assistance from a central monetary fund which will make available foreign currency to purchase second-hand tonnage from overseas.



Following President Bill Clinton's decision not to pursue his pre-election promise of maritime reform several major US shipowners have decided to desert the United States of America registry. Both American President Lines (APL) and Sealand have now announced plans to flag out a total of 20 ships. Sealand claim they will be able to save about \$3 million per ship by hiring foreign crews and laying off 280 American seafarers despite having to make payments of about \$1 million per ship to the various unions representing the crew members. These savings will come from lower labour costs and cheaper ship repairs. David Arian (President of the International Longshoremen's & Warehousemen's Union) called the moves "treasonous". Rebel maritime leaders in the US House of Representatives, dismayed by Clinton's backtracking, have successfully steered through a bill of their own which, if it passes the final vote, will force the US administration to introduce a subsidy scheme to replace the Operating Differential Subsidy programme. In a separate rearguard action Congressmen Gerry Studds, Chairman of the House merchant marine and fisheries committee, is attempting to amend the MarAd 1994 authorisation bill which will prevent vessels over 3,000 grt from flagging out until at least 1995 and at least in the short term will put paid to Sealand and APL's plans.

True Nationality of Flag of convenience fleet*

— 31 December 1992 (brackets = 1 July 1990)

Rank by dwt	Flag Country	Total foreign flag fleet	
		dwt '000	No. of vessels
1 (1)	GREECE	52,916 (46,305)	1631 (1385)
2 (2)	JAPAN	52,353 (45,024)	1976 (1661)
3 (3)	USA	40,001 (35,610)	685 (605)
4 (4)	HONG KONG	26,615 (26,471)	566 (603)
5 (5)	NORWAY	19,141 (18,287)	521 (482)
6 (6)	UK	18,094 (18,094)	458 (379)
7 (7)	GERMANY	10,079 (7,990)	589 (423)
8 (18)	SWEDEN	9,318 (2,841)	149 (97)
9 (8)	KOREA	7,349 (4,248)	196 (111)
10 (10)	CHINA	7,295 (4,983)	198 (138)
11 (16)	DENMARK	5,681 (4,692)	239 (238)
12 (17)	BELGIUM	4,900 (3,257)	125 (89)
13 (13)	SWITZERLAND	4,480 (3,502)	146 (120)
14 (9)	TAIWAN	3,934 (3,800)	190 (162)
15 (12)	FRANCE	3,785 (3,560)	111 (113)
16 (11)	FINLAND	2,813 (2,506)	69 (73)
17 (-)	SAUDI ARABIA	2,555 (-)	35 (-)
18 (15)	SINGAPORE	2,420 (2,863)	160 (163)
	"OTHERS"	37,403	1,886
	TOTAL	311,102	9,730
	WORLD TOTAL	694,560	79,845
	% OF WORLD	45%	12%

* The figures represent the total amount of shipping owned in each of the countries indicated which are registered in Liberia, Panama, Cyprus, Bahamas, Bermuda and other 'non-national' registers. Source: UNCTAD Review of Maritime Transport 1992.

Figures produced by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) for December 1992 reveal that the trend towards flagging out of national flag shipping continues unabated.

The amount of foreign registered tonnage has risen by over 52 million tonnes between 1 July 1990 and 31 December 1992 — an increase of 20 per cent over an 18 month period. This means that the total tonnage registered in Focs, and other non-national registers, represents 45 per cent of the world fleet in tonnage terms.

In the rankings the Table above shows no change in the top seven places from the figures produced in 1990. However, the meteoric rise of Sweden from 18th in the league in June 1990, with 2.8 million dwt, to 8th in December 1992, with 9.3 million dwt, represents

a staggering 328 per cent increase in Swedish tonnage registered overseas. According to UNCTAD over a fifth of the total foreign registered Swedish tonnage is flying the flag of Bermuda.

The only country showing a decline in overseas registered tonnage, both in terms of the number of ships and tonnage, was Singapore down from 2.8 million dwt and 163 ships to 2.4 million dwt and 160 ships. Hong Kong showed a fall of 37 ships but an increase of 144,000 dwt.

The average increase over the period was 2.2 million dwt, with Greece (up 6.6 million dwt), Japan (up 7.4 million dwt), USA (up 4.4 million dwt), Korea (up 3.3 million dwt), China (up 2.3 million dwt) and Sweden (up 6.5 million dwt) showing increases above this average level.

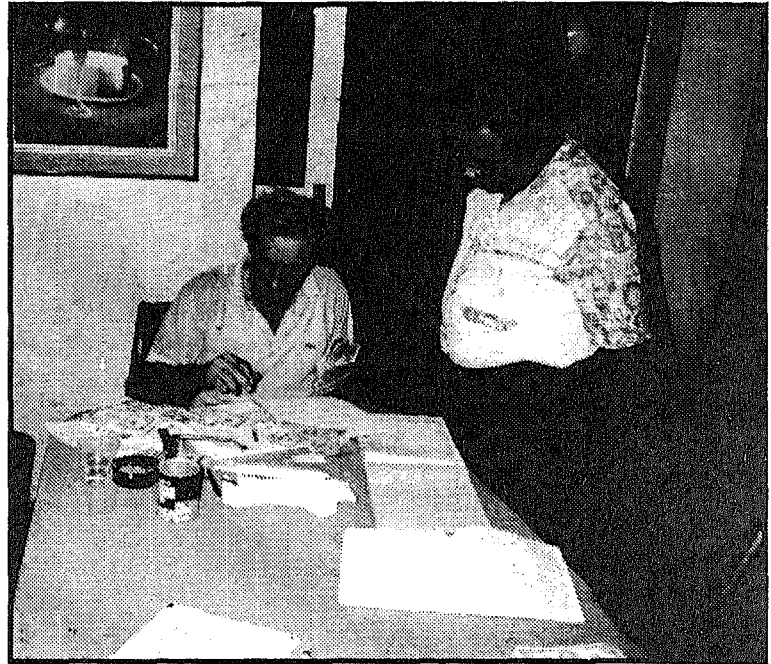
Cockroach infested vessel in New Jersey

Conditions were very bad on the Greek owned, Maltese flag *John*, which called in New Jersey, USA at the end of July. The multinational crew were Greek, Ukrainian, Sri Lankan, Filipino, Maldivian and Polish. Food supplies were poor and inadequate, safety clothing was not provided, family allotments were late or missed being paid, salaries were not paid properly, the ship was infested with cockroaches, there were insufficient first aid facilities, the engines had broken down a number of times and the general state of accommodation was poor. ITF Inspector Spiro Varras visited the vessel. Varras negotiated backpay and repatriation for two crewmembers, who received a total of US\$5,998.44. The remaining 24 crew received a total of US\$48,181.00. Engine repairs were undertaken, a new cook was hired and new food supplies were obtained.

ROSTOCK CASE SETTLED

The Maltese flag *Kaveri* (see ITF News July 1993) left Rostock, Germany on July tenth bound for St. Petersburg. Some repairs were carried out in Germany, and the vessel has been told it cannot leave Northern Europe without another inspection by the classification society.

Flag of convenience campaign news



The Master paying out on the Maltese flag *John*.



FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

23-27 August	Southern African Road Transport Meeting on Border Crossings	Maseru
6-10 September	Inspectors' Seminar	Lesotho
21 September	Road Transport Workers' Section Steering Committee	Eastbourne
28 September	Cruise Ship Working Party	London
29 Sept.-1 Oct.	Cruise Ship Committee	Miami
4-6 October	North Sea and Channel Ferries Meeting	Miami
5-7 October	African Railway Workers' Conference	Rotterdam
18 October	Management Committee	Accra
19-20 October	Executive Board	London
26-27 October	Asia/Pacific Railway Workers' Seminar	London
26-27 October	Cabin Crew Technical Committee	Tokyo
3-4 November	Maritime Safety Committee	Berlin
8-10 November	Civil Aviation Section Committee	London
11 November	Ground Staff Technical Committee	London
16-18 November	African Seafarers' and Dockers' Seminar	Nairobi
17-19 November	Tourism Services Section Conference	Granada
6-8 December	African Women's Conference	Abidjan
9-10 December	ITF/Brussels Committee/PTTI Meeting on International Integrators	Berlin
14 December	Channel Tunnel	Coquelles



INLAND TRANSPORT

Collective action secures victory for Turkish railway workers

Mass action by Turkish railway and other public sector workers has delivered a victory for the unions in the 1993 contract dispute.

More than 600,000 Turkish public sector workers have participated in mass "sick-out" actions in the last month.

The ITF-affiliated Turkish railway workers union — Demiryol-IS — was in the forefront of this campaign.

Negotiations for a new collective labour agreement between the public sector unions and the public sector employers' association had failed. The railway workers demanded a wage increase above the rate of inflation, an end to the practice of sub-contracting and new job security provisions.

Because of the failure of the government to accede to these demands, more than 600,000 public sector workers participated in a mass "sick-out" action on 22nd of July. Work stopped for half a day as workers marched to and back from hospitals, blocking traffic all the way and shouting slogans to protest about the governments' failure to negotiate.

On 29th of July, railway workers stopped working for three hours during which time they discussed the unions' claims and the government's and employers' proposals.

On 30th of July, workers throughout the country again went on a "mass sick-out". This time the actions continued until the late afternoon.

Demiryol-IS announced on August 10 its in-

attention to conduct a full strike starting on August 25.

A day later — August 11 — a new agreement was signed.

Wages will increase above inflation this year, and will be indexed to prices next year. Time limits on sub-contracting have been lowered, and the government has agreed to fully abide by the terms of ILO Convention 94 (Labour Clauses {public contracts}).

A new job security clause introduces employer obligations, minimum redundancy compensation of seven months pay and various seniority fringe benefits.

"The signing of the collective labour agreements for 1993-94 is important but does not solve all the problems. Many public sector establishments are faced with the privatisation attack. Rolling stock factories might be the first targets in the railway industry," said Demiryol-IS President Enver Tocoglu:

"The economic policies of the government are geared to the demands of the World Bank and the IMF and do not match the interests of the working class. Nevertheless, we should be able to overcome the difficulties since we lived through the unfortunate 1980-88 period which taught us many things and we have the experience of collective struggle since 1989 through which we could secure a higher standard of living and further rights."

Union delivers strike ultimatum to Indian railways

Indian railway workers have given the government until the end of August to accept their current demands or they will declare an all-out indefinite strike.

The ITF-affiliated All-India Railwaymen's Federation has given the government a deadline of the 1st of September. Federation's general secretary J.P. Choubey has said that the government has gone back on its commitment to implement a pay commission award. The union is also

protesting against the current ban on recruitment in Indian railways.

The AIRF organises one million railway workers out of a total of 1,6 million workers in Indian railways. The union has balloted its membership and they support the leadership's call.

Other central government employees are also affected by the decision of the government not to pay the awards granted by the Fourth Pay Commission.

'Flagging-out' of Rhine boats threatens working conditions

In March 1993 Köln-Düsseldorfer Deutsche Rheinschiffahrts AG which operates a fleet of 30 day trip vessels and ten boats providing passenger accommodation on the Rhine (all crewed with highly qualified staff) took over the Swiss tour operator Triton Reisen AG.

By paying the crew of its accommodation vessels *Wilhelm Tell* and *Ursula III* wages far below the accepted standard and having them work hours which do not always comply with legal provision, Triton Reisen AG are offering comparably cheap trips across the Rhine.

The conditions under which masters, crew members and hotel staff on board these vessels are working are well known and are a matter of concern to everybody working in Rhine shipping.

Employees working for the Köln-Düsseldorfer company while welcoming the take-over of Triton in March now fear that the methods of social dumping used by the former rival company will now be taken on by the new parent.

This would inevitably lead to a reduction in safety standards and service quality which would be fatal for a company which so far regarded

quality and passenger safety as its first priority.

Köln-Düsseldorfer staff are certain that the management is seriously thinking of flagging-out its own fleet to the Triton Reisen AG, thus threatening jobs in the parent company.

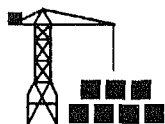
Together with their new colleagues from Triton Reisen AG, the employees of the Köln-Düsseldorfer Deutsche Rheinschiffahrts AG are determined to resist any deterioration onboard their vessels, arguing that passengers have a right to expect highest possible safety standards and high quality service.

Their interests are represented by the ITF-affiliated German transport workers' union ÖTV and Swiss transport union VHTL.

Correction — Railway statistics

The International Union of Railways (UIC) International Railway Statistics 1991, which was featured in ITF News of May/June 1993, in fact costs 500 French Francs not the 1,000 French Francs we said in the May/June edition. We apologise for the error and remind readers that if they wish to obtain a copy of this comprehensive guide to international railways, they should order it from the International Union of Railways (not the ITF), at:

16 Rue Jean Rey/ Paris F75015 /France — Fax:+33-1-44-49 20 29



DOCKERS

Russian dock union conference

On June 24-25 the Second Congress took place of the Dockworkers' Union of Russia (DUR) in St. Petersburg. Thirty-two delegates attended, representing eight ports: St Petersburg, Murmansk, Novorossiisk, Vladivostok, Arkhangelsk, Magadan, Vyborg and Vostochny. Observers were also present from the port of Dudinka.

In the summary report by the executive committee it was noted that in the course of a year the number of local branches of the union had grown from four to eight. Today the DUR unites 6,200 of the 9000 dockers in Russia.

Together with unions covering seafarers and water transport workers, the union has recently signed a wage agreement. However, it was argued that this agreement represented a defeat rather than a victory, since little account was taken of the demands raised by port workers.

The congress judged the work of the Executive Committee to have been satisfactory.

A series of amendments were introduced into the union's charter. They included, in particu-

lar, a point forbidding union leaders from belonging to leading bodies of any party or movement.

The congress considered cases in which the industry wages agreement had been violated, and it was resolved to fight for the fulfilment of the agreement by all available methods. In connection with this, machinery operators on the docks were urged to stop work for an hour on July first as a sign of protest against the failure of the port authorities to fulfil the agreement.

The congress resolved to form a commission to participate in drafting a Law of the Russian Federation on trade unions. Vladimir Vasiliev was re-elected DUR president.

The union's application for ITF membership was accepted by the ITF Executive Board in March this year, but full affiliation still awaits the completion of formalities and payment of fees.

(Thanks to Labour Information Centre KAS-KOR, Moscow)

Dutch government raises doubts over future of dock labour scheme

Pronouncements by the Dutch Minister of Social Security and Employment have cast doubts on the financial future of the 1,900 workers employed by Amsterdam and Rotterdam Labour Pools, known as the SHB. There are about 10,000 dockers working in the Netherlands.

Subsidised currently to the tune of 13 million Dutch guilders (US\$6.5 million) per annum out of the General Unemployment Fund, the Minister has indicated that the current economic climate may require a re-examination of the scheme.

The subsidy currently ensures that SHB dock workers are provided with an income during periods when there is no actual work for them to do. This arrangement, which also covers stevedores, is enshrined in their collective agreements, negotiated through the ITF-affiliated Dutch Transport Union, the FNV-Vervoersbond.

The Minister has initiated discussions on the future of the scheme with both the Employers' Organisations and the FNV. The FNV has made

it clear that they are prepared to negotiate only on the operation of the scheme, not on the future of the scheme itself. The FNV is insistent that the essence of the 1987 amendments to the SHB law should be preserved, pointing out that the current adverse economic conditions make the provision of income security even more important.

The FNV's Joop Verroen, who since July has sat on the ITF's Docker's Section Committee, anticipates tough talks. Despite the increased pressures on the General Unemployment Fund, the Minister will be told that any attempt to undermine the income guarantee scheme for the Amsterdam and Rotterdam dock workers will inevitably lead to industrial unrest.

Because any change to the scheme would require an act of Parliament, Joop Verroen believes that pressure can be brought to bear on the Minister and a full blown dispute can probably be avoided.

OBITUARIES

Raymond T McKay died of heart failure on 9 August at the age of 68. McKay was a long-time member of the Committee of the ITF Seafarers' Section, a marine engineer, President of the American Maritime Officers (AMO), a part of the National Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association. McKay also served as Vice-President of National MEBA and President of the MTD's Greater Florida Maritime Trades Council.

McKay — known among friends for a quick earthy wit and a sharp strategic sense — had just been elected to another three year term as President of AMO, the union he helped launch in New York in 1949.

As President of AMO, McKay gained the respect of management and labour as a tough but responsible negotiator who struck the necessary balance between the needs of his union membership and the health of the industry that employed them.

McKay is survived by his wife, Dolly, three sons — Michael, Thomas and Robert — a daughter, Cecilia Ann, a brother and several grandchildren. Michael McKay and Robert McKay are licensed marine engineers and elected officials in AMO.

Acting General Secretary: David Cockroft

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PEOPLE

Monika Wulf-Mathies was re-elected as President of the Public Services International on August sixth at the PSI's 25th World Congress in Helsinki. Monika has been President of the German Public Service and Transport Workers' Union (ÖTV) since September 1982.

Bere Saxby was elected as the first ever woman President of the British union Manufacturing Science Finance (MSF) at the 1993 MSF annual conference. She has just retired from Lufthansa German Airlines at London's Heathrow airport and has been involved in the union for over twenty-five years.