

International

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Transport Workers' Journal



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Berne Congress Issue 1960

Monthly Publication of the International Transport Workers' Federation

**International
Transport Workers'
Journal**

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Forthcoming meetings:

Berne	18 and 19 July Executive Committee meeting
Berne	20-29 July 26th Biennial Congress

Comment

A change for the better

IT IS AN UNFORTUNATE FACT that in this day and age workers in a number of countries - although allowed to organize in national trade unions - still prevented from becoming part of the international trade union movement. In other words, they are not given freedom to affiliate with either the national or their respective International Trade Secretariats.

We are not necessarily referring here to those countries which are under totalitarian control, either in the accepted or in any extended sense of that phrase. In some instances even countries with democratic forms of government - where trade unions are not merely tolerated but actively encouraged - nevertheless still maintain this senseless restriction. The reason which are advanced for curtailing this an essential trade union freedom is, although in the majority of cases it appears to be based on the belief that national trade unions would in some way be contaminated or even subverted by linking up with their colleagues in other parts of the world. The argument is a silly one because it insists on lumping together all international trade union bodies, whether they be under totalitarian or democratic control. The fact remains however, that otherwise sensible politicians apparently find it difficult - or perhaps just too much trouble - to differentiate between the Communist Party and its Trade Departments on the one hand and the ICFTU and the free trade unions on the other. As a result, trade unions which would be happy to do so are often prevented from playing an active role in the trade union movement.

Because this attitude seems to be not merely shortsighted but directly opposed to the interests of governments concerned we welcome as a sign of a change for the better. This is why we were glad to learn of a development which has ended this situation in a very important country - Turkey - where the new government has issued a decree which for the first time allows the national centre, Türk-İs, to affiliate with international trade union organizations. It is a good example which could well be followed by others.

1960 | Our third Swiss Congress

ROMER BECU, General Secretary

IT IS, I SUPPOSE, MORE OR LESS INEVITABLE that at some time in its life every international organization of any standing either settles or holds an important congress in tiny Switzerland. And there is, of course a very good reason for that – or perhaps I should say there are very good reasons. Situated as it is in the heart of Europe, with its multilingual population and its excellent facilities for the holding of meetings and conferences, Switzerland has long been a centre of international activity, and particularly international diplomatic activity.

The fact that, through its age-old tradition of neutrality, it has managed to avoid involvement in the successive wars which have shaken the Continent has further added to its attractiveness and has enabled Switzerland to play a vital role in European and world political affairs, despite its smallness and its relative lack of importance as a world power. The old League of Nations was established there between the two world wars and many international dramas have played out in its conference chambers. Although its headquarters in Geneva is now silent and deserted – almost a museum piece, one might say – at least one of its subsidiary agencies, the International Labour Organization, is still very much alive

and performing a far more useful job than its parent organization was ever able to do.

In addition, Switzerland has always played an important role in the international trade union movement itself. In Berne, for example, just forty-three years ago, a conference was held which was virtually to decide the shape and structure of our movement for several decades and certainly for the period which came to an end with the outbreak of the Second World War. It was this conference which breathed new life into the International Federation of Trade Unions and also drew up the charter of social demands which was later to be presented by the movement to the victorious Allied Governments at the Versailles Peace

The Three Countries Corner in Basle where France, Germany and Switzerland meet. Switzerland is a country of the crossroads where peoples speaking different languages and with varying customs and traditions have nevertheless united in one of the world's oldest and most respected democracies (Photograph Dierks, Basel)

Treaty Conference. The results of this latter approach were, it is true, not too encouraging, but nevertheless a number of the trade union movement's demands were afterwards embodied either in the Constitution of the ILO or were written into the first International Labour Conventions which were adopted by the new organization.

Switzerland also has its place in the history of the International Trade Secretariats. Many of them first saw the light of day there and a number have made their homes in Switzerland ever since. The first international railwaymen's organization, for instance, was set up at Zürich in 1893, merging with the ITF five years later and afterwards becoming its numerically strongest industrial section. Zürich also saw the first joint conference of the ITSS in 1913 – at a time, incidentally, when the question of co-operation between the various Trade Internationals was certainly by no means as topical as it is today.

The ITF Congress itself has met in Switzerland on two previous occasions – at Geneva in 1921 and at Zürich in 1946. I think that it is worth taking a quick look at what happened at those two Congresses – not simply out of idle curiosity but rather to establish how far we have since advanced along the road of trade union progress.

Our 1921 Congress was, of course, the first full-fledged ITF meeting to be held since the end of the 1914–18 war and it was therefore only natural that we, and indeed the whole international movement of that time, should have been thinking primarily in terms of reconstruction. Perhaps 'reconstruction' is the wrong word to use in this connection, since it implies something almost static: the regaining of lost ground. The ITF was, however, thinking more in terms of expansion and closer collaboration with the



Not only the English who prefer to take their drink standing. These young bears in the Berne zoo think there is something in the idea as well. Incidentally, our excuse for using this photo is, according to legend, the city was named after the bear (Verkehrsverein der Stadt Bern)

An aerial view of Berne, the capital city of Switzerland and venue of the 26th Biennial Congress of the ITF. The ITF is no stranger to Switzerland, our 1921 and 1946 Congresses having been held in Geneva and Zürich respectively (Photograph by courtesy of Verkehrsverein der Stadt Bern)



One of the best-known landmarks in Berne is the 'Zytglogge' or clock tower, detail of which is shown in another of our photos. It somehow symbolizes the entire Swiss community – ancient and traditional in its origins yet right on time as regards its democratic institutions and way of life (Photograph by Swiss National Tourist Office)

sections of our Movement. Symptoms of that outlook was the presence at the Congress of a representative of the newly-formed International of Post, Telegraph and Telegraph Workers, which led to a very serious discussion on the possibility of a merger of the two organizations. The discussion ended rather inconclusively, however, with a statement by the ITF official to the effect that 'a young girl should not marry an old and experienced man'. By a strange coincidence, we in the ITF were to find ourselves in a very similar position when we next held our Congress in Switzerland nearly thirty years later. We were then being wooed by an organization – namely the Communist-dominated WFTU – which was certainly not very old at the time but was already very experienced in the art of arranging shotgun weddings.

Some of the other decisions taken at Geneva also give a clear indication of how far the ITF has advanced since that time. They refer, for example, to things which we now take for granted, like the publication of an ITF periodical. Then too there was the discussion on whether it was possible to create industrial sections within the ITF and the decision that in principle this should be done. A fellow-countryman who did, however, wonder whether the resources would be sufficient to bear the expense involved. If not, he said, then subscription fees to the International would have to be increased.

Today, I am very glad to report that all sections of the ITF's Industrial Sections are now so much alive and kicking, but at the same time I would be failing in my duty as General Secretary if I did not point out that we are in a critical stage in the history of the international trade union movement their further expansion is becoming ever more imperative and that the only way in which this demand can be satisfied is by having more money in the kitty.

The Zürich Congress of 1946 also took place immediately following the end of a devastating war, at a time when the ITF was busily engaged in picking up the pieces which had been broken during six years of conflict and, what was even more

important, in making plans for our future. And I may add that we had very big plans too, for the ITF was at the time preparing to move into new fields of activity which for too many years had been the subject of discussion only.

I personally have very strong memories of the Zürich Congress with its atmosphere of reunion and of making personal contact once again with old friends from whom one had been separated all too long. However, apart from this aspect, the Zürich Congress was a memorable one for another reason: the fact that an extremely real drama was being played out at it. I have already touched upon the attempt by the WFTU to take over the ITF and the other ITSS and it was this prospect which coloured the entire proceedings at Zürich. I well remember the poignant closing speech on this subject made by our retiring President, the late Charles Lindley, and indeed it did really look as if this might be the last Congress to be held by the ITF as an independent organization. Nevertheless, thanks to far-sightedness and wisdom shown by the leaders of our International, the ITF was saved from becoming just another Communist satellite – a decision which was to have a tremendous effect on the whole future of the democratic trade union movement.

Today, there is no more talk of the absorption of one section of the movement by another or of relinquishing any part of our autonomy or freedom of action. Instead, the emphasis is on sensible co-ordination, aimed at the perfect interlocking and greatest possible efficiency of every part of international trade unionism.

And I would like to take this opportunity of stressing once again that in no area of our activity is such co-operation so essential as in the task of promoting healthy and viable trade unionism in the socially less developed countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. The job which faces us in those countries is a truly gigantic one and one at which the mind very easily boggles. It is clear that it cannot be successfully tackled by any one international trade union organization, for it requires not only

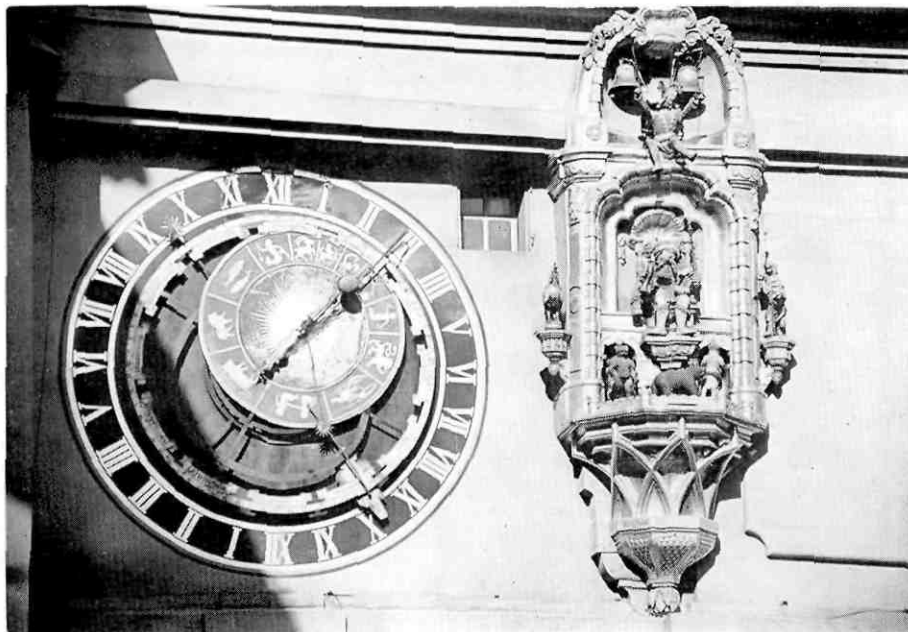




The Fountain of Moses standing in the Cathedral Square is one of the many reminders of the medieval origins of the Swiss Federal capital and a tribute to the piety of the old Bernese burghers



The seat of the Swiss federal government in Berne. The Swiss Confederation was founded in 1848. It consists of independent Cantons, each of which has its own constitution and parliament



Among the sights which delegates to the ITF Berne Congress will certainly find time to have a look at is the famous clock tower with its astronomical clock and 'puppet show' dating back to 1530. The tower itself was built in the 12th century (Photo: Verkehrsverein der Stadt Bern)

detailed planning on a joint basis, but the practical pooling of men, material resources.

We in the ITF are very much aware of that need. We are now devoting an ever increasing proportion of our time, effort and money to regional activities, but at the same time we are extremely conscious of the fact that what we are able to do alone is only a drop in the ocean when compared with the immensity of the task which we have set ourselves.

That is why we are spearheading a move towards more and more collaboration in this field, not simply between individual ITFs themselves but also between the ITFs and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

The role of the ITF in the socially developed countries will be a major theme at the forthcoming Berne Congress and the decisions which we take to implement our own programme of regional activities within the wider context of the whole international movement will give us an opportunity of setting an example to our friends throughout the world and of giving encouragement to those trade unions in Asia, Africa and Latin America who are now fighting against such fearful odds the things which we ourselves once had to win.

The further stepping-up of our regional activities cannot, of course be achieved on a shoestring budget. That, unfortunately is one of the facts of life: if you want more you also have to spend more. The ITF will need every extra penny which it can get if it is to do its job properly in the regions and I know that we will not be appealing to our affiliated unions in vain: they know that the money will be spent for the best of all possible causes: in helping their weaker brothers to develop their strength and gain the experience which they already possess.

The Berne Congress, then, will provide us with a new opportunity of facing up to the ever-growing responsibility which the ITF and the whole international labour movement must assume if it is to make progress in the modern world.

Welcome to the ITF Congress!

ROBERT BRATSCHI

FOR THE THIRD TIME, we are privileged to welcome the ITF Congress to Switzerland. After the first exploratory meeting after the 1914-18 War in 1920 in Oslo, the 1921 Congress took place in Geneva from 18 to 23 April. The previous year the Swiss Railwaymen's Federation had been founded, uniting the earlier railway unions. At its foundation Congress, the new union voted unanimously and enthusiastically to affiliate to the ITF. In the name of the Swiss railwaymen and the Swiss Federation of Labour we were pleased to welcome the ITF Congress to Geneva, then the federal capital, where for the first time we met men like Edo Fimmen, Charlie Lindley and Ernest Bevin.

In 1946, after the catastrophe of the Second World War, we again welcomed the Congress, this time in Zürich on 6 May. In addition to the railwaymen, the transport workers organized in the Swiss Federation of Commercial, Transport and Food and Drink Workers now belonged to the ITF. The Zürich Congress was a Jubilee Congress: the ITF celebrated its 50th anniversary. And the Congress was presided over for the last time by one of the founders of the organization, Charlie Lindley, by then more than 80 years old. The Congresses of 1921 and 1946 were held in times of great political and social unrest. The Geneva Congress had to overcome the results of the First World War in the ranks of the ITF, and start afresh. But already the black shadows of the split wantonly opened up in the labour movement by the Communists lay over the Congress. In Italy the Fascists stood at the gates, ready to destroy freedom in 20 years of blood and strife.

In Germany a political underworld was preparing the way for Nazism by sabotage and murder and making possible the emergence of a free state based on democratic principles. The economic crisis, aggravated by the mistaken policy of deflation pursued by most national governments at that time, also helped adventurers to power in Germany. Nothing more stood in the way of the tragedy of a ruthlessly planned Second World War.

The Zürich Congress of May 1946 took place amid the wreckage of this war. There was a slight hope that the organized workers of the world might learn the lesson of the events of three

decades and find a way of working together. The World Federation of Trade Unions, with Arthur Deakin as President, was founded shortly afterwards. It was a false hope. Co-operation with the Communists under Russian dictatorship proved impossible. It was time for the creation of a world-wide organization of free trade unions. In June 1949 the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions was founded, as the spearhead of democratic labour, and has grown vigorously ever since.

The Allies of the Second World War quickly became apparently irreconcilable opponents. The world is now divided into two mighty camps. Attempts to bring them together by means of 'Summit Conferences' have so far come to nothing. The recent wrecking of the Paris Conference is the symbol of the political world situation.

Now more than ever it is necessary for the peoples of the free world to stand together and, through their unity and strength, to attain peace and freedom for the world. The trade unions have a special part to play in this. International co-operation and solidarity have always been inscribed on their banners. The ICFTU is today a world-wide organization; the ITF has been so for decades. Soon after the First World War, under the leadership of Edo Fimmen, it had outgrown the confines of Europe and had affiliations in many parts of the world, thus smoothing the path for its sister organizations.

The affiliation of the United States organizations after the Second World War was of decisive importance. The ITF will continue to carry aloft the banner

of Peace, Freedom, the Dignity of Man, and the Brotherhood of Nations. It is in this spirit that its Berne Congress will take place. It is in this spirit that we welcome the Congress in the name of our affiliated Swiss members, to whom are now added the urban transport workers and flight personnel, and in the name of the entire Swiss working class and the Swiss people. We wish it every success and sincerely hope that the delegates and their families will have a pleasant stay in our free and beautiful country.

A way to the sea



IN THE 20TH CENTURY Swiss navigation attained great importance by the reopening of Rhine shipping between Basle and the sea which had been interrupted by the advent of the railway. In 1903 the first attempt was made to re-navigate the completely derelict waterway between Strasbourg and Basle by means of tugs. The first Rhine steamer actually reached Basle as long ago as 1832, but the service, which included connections to London, was unable to hold its own against the railway constructed twelve years later, and vanished again in the 1840s. The building of the docks began in 1904, and by the outbreak of the second World War there was over a mile of serviceable docks. The installations for flood-control on the Basle-Strasbourg section cost sixty million Swiss francs, and sixty per cent of this sum was met by Switzerland. Traffic in 1957 was heavier than in any previous year, with about five million tons of goods arriving and 368,000 tons leaving down river. The service brought Switzerland into direct communication with the sea. In 1957 the Swiss merchant fleet on the Rhine consisted of 384 boats with a total tonnage of nearly 302,893. In addition twenty-two Swiss cargo vessels are navigating the high seas under the flag of the Confederation. In 1948 a direct passenger-boat service was inaugurated between Basle, Strasbourg and Rotterdam.

Switzerland - land of beauty

by WALTER INGOLD, former Chief of Publicity

for the Swiss TUC, railwaymen's trade union organizations, Post and Telegraph services, etc.



IT IS SOME HUNDRED YEARS NOW SINCE SWITZERLAND was 'discovered' by the tourist. Its mountains reaching to the sky and covered with eternal snow, its precipitous slopes rising sharply from the valleys, its glaciers, its countless waterfalls whose waters dissolve into powdered spray before they reach the rocks below, its Alpine meadows carpeted with bright flowers laid out among the towering mountain masses, its tumbling mountain streams, lonely morainic lakes and pools high up in the quiet of the skies - all these beauties have been captured in drawings and engravings and found their way far afield - to Paris, London and New York - where they have awakened the desire to see this beautiful Alpine country for oneself.

Some five million people, speaking four different languages and of two religious denominations, living in twenty-five major and minor 'states', known as cantons, have federated to form one nation - a nation which is as open to the rest of the world by means of a network of international airlines, electric railways and roads as are its homes, hotels and guest houses to the country's many visitors, the latter offering the hospitality for which the Swiss are justly famous and which it is their constant concern to maintain.

In Tessin, on the shores of the lake of Geneva and at the many resorts on the lakes north of the Alps the tourist season starts in spring and continues until well into autumn. In the mountainous regions of Graubünden, of Eastern and Central

Switzerland, of the Bernese Oberland, of Wallis and the Waadt, as well as of the Jura, the holiday season and the sporting activities which go with it reach their peak periods in both summer and winter. There is no real sharp line of demarcation: deep in the mountains may be found 'pockets' with a southern climate, summer on all the lakes is a most pleasant time, whilst there is always much to be seen and done in the towns throughout the year.

One of the favourite methods of enjoying a holiday in Switzerland is to select a quiet holiday spot but to combine this with touring in and about the neighbouring district and towns. In this way the rich variety of the Swiss landscape and the country's cultural heritage come as a constant source of pleasant surprise to the

visitor. A single day's tour can thus take him, as it were, from the icy mountains of Spitzbergen to the warmth of a Mediterranean landscape. An equally rich variety of entertainment is also offered by the towns and health resorts with their programmes of concerts, plays and exhibitions reflecting the activities and life of many lands on other continents. Nor is the richness of Switzerland's own cultural heritage forgotten, as the many local and national costumes, customs and festivals to which Switzerland thus presents a sort of 'miniature', and on that count may be regarded as pre-eminently a country suited to youth and the education of young people with its numerous national and private schools to which so many parents from other lands have entrusted their children.

The holiday resorts themselves present a varied picture, too, as regards position, style and the needs for which they cater.



This view taken from an open-air restaurant at Monte Brè near Lugano underlines the rich variety of the Swiss landscape where a single day's tour can take the visitor from the rugged splendour of icy mountains to the warm and sunny atmosphere of the Mediterranean



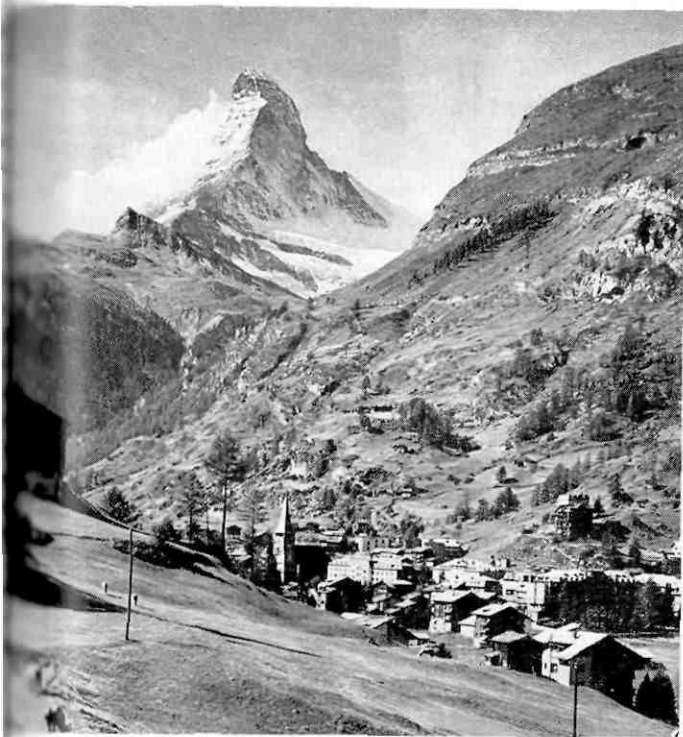
World-famous winter sports centre St. Moritz is shown here in its typical Alpine setting of mountain lake, valley meadows, wooded slopes and towering snow-capped mountains. It is some hundred years now since the tourist first discovered the great attractions of Switzerland

1) The Matterhorn - mountain of incomparable beauty, symbol of Alpine Switzerland and challenge to climbers from all over the world. However, for those who just prefer to look at mountains, Zermatt at its foot has excellent hotels and guest houses from which to

2) Another view of St. Moritz in the Engadine Switzerland's scenic beauties can easily be enjoyed by all - thanks to an extensive system of road and rail communications and excellent tourist facilities created by the industrious Swiss. (Photo by the Swiss National Tourist Office)

3) The Aletsch glacier - nature's rather awesome example of what happens when an irresistible force meets an immovable object. Actual description is not a strictly accurate one: the river is moving - however imperceptibly - the mountains are being worn away - however slowly (Photo by the Swiss Nat. Tourist Office)

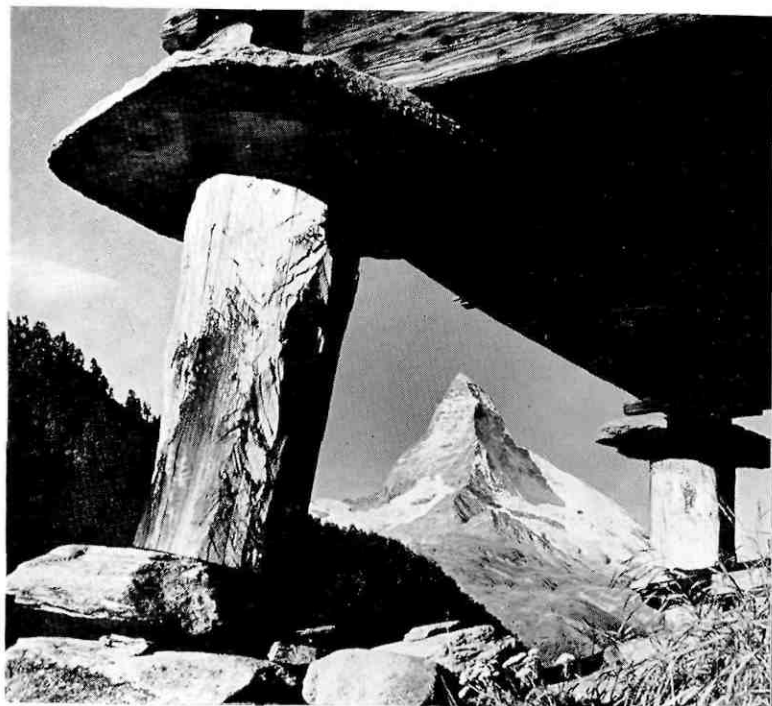
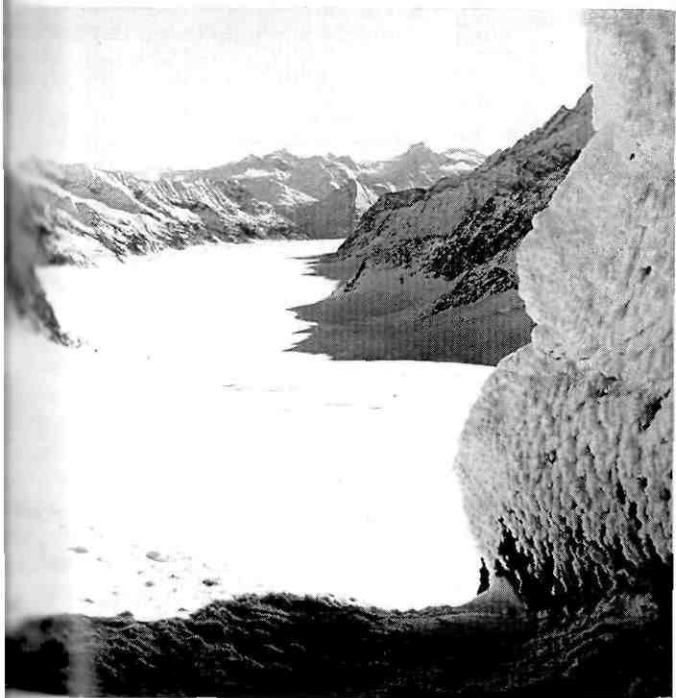
4) Another view of the Matterhorn, taken from Findelen near Zermatt. This highly photogenic peak has become the symbol of all the beauty which awaits the visitor to Switzerland.

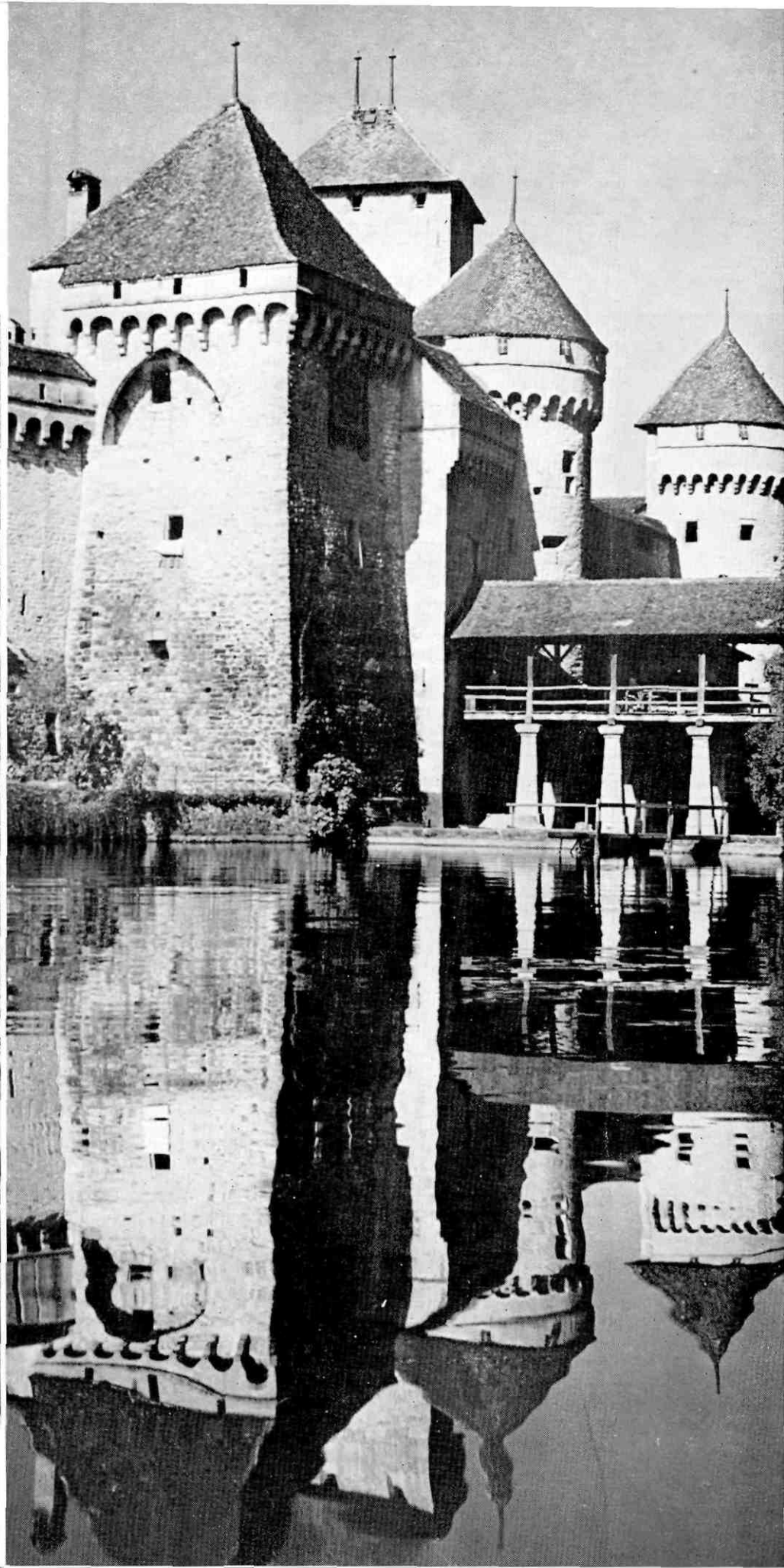


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The Castle of Chillon on the shores of Geneva – where the beauty of the present is the grimness of the past. This is where the 'prisoner of Chillon' was held for so long that the poet wrote, 'he regained his freedom with a sigh' (Swiss National Tourist Office photo)

There are the many famous Alpine resorts frequently to be found at the terminal of some mountain railroad, or elsewhere one sees where the sunny mountain slopes are dotted with a bright pattern of chalets, houses, chalets and hotels. Everywhere there are signs of how the different localities have developed into health resorts, a village in a broad highland valley, a settlement high up on a pass or in a valley hollow, here again a lake-side village or township. Not infrequently the presence of medicinal waters and the beneficial effects of the sun's rays at various altitudes have been the attraction to the visitor with the result that curative spas and sanatoria have sprung up with the assistance and encouragement of excellent medical science and services. In an age when health has assumed such significance, tennis courts and golf links have been laid out whilst swimming pools and excellent bathing beaches have been built or developed. Thanks to the many tracks and paths provided with rest facilities, and the mountain and cable railways, even those formerly denied the pleasures of the country's beauties can now enjoy them in full. In all, a cult and practice of hospitality has grown up which pays full regard to the needs of the visitor, enabling him to have the fullest enjoyment from his stay.

In this country, no valley is quite another, no view is a repetition of another. The rich variety of Nature appears inexhaustible. Perhaps the most significant advantage is the fact that all these riches can be enjoyed in the space of a few hours thanks to the excellent services provided by road and rail. Other countries have beauties equal to or excelling those found in Switzerland, but in no other are they so near and easily accessible that reason the country will always retain its attraction to the tourist.

Robert Bratschi,
former President of the ITF



Profile of the month

WHEN THE ITF HOLDS ITS TWENTY-SIXTH CONGRESS IN BERNE this year it will be welcomed by one of the canton's most distinguished citizens, a trade unionist and member of parliament who has been in his time general secretary and president of his own union, the Swiss Railwaymen's Federation, president of the Swiss Federation of Labour, president of the Swiss National Council – the Second Chamber of the Swiss Federal Parliament – and who is now Managing Director of Switzerland's most important private railway company, the Bern-Lötschberg-Simplon line. To anyone outside Switzerland who finds this last a little startling after the others, let us say at once that it is something of a tradition in Switzerland for this post to be held by a socialist or trade unionist.

The man, of course, is the former President of the ITF, Robert Bratschi, who when he gave up that office at the end of 1953 had given more than thirty years of loyal, conscientious service to the international trade union movement. He had been ITF president since 1950, a member of the Executive Committee and General Council since 1930 and before that a deputy member of the General Council – from 1926. Looking back even further we see a young man welcoming on behalf of the Swiss railwaymen the delegates to the first effective ITF Congress after the first World War, held in Geneva in 1921.

Distinction – and its responsibilities – came to Robert Bratschi very early. He was elected General Secretary of the Swiss Railwaymen's Federation in 1920 when he was only twenty-nine years old. Within two years he was in Parliament, on the Administrative Council of the Railways and managing the affairs of the Federated Association of State Employees. In the thirties, he added to his duties yet further by taking an active part in local government, as a socialist member of the Grand Council of the Canton of Berne. From the mid-thirties also dates his presidency of the Swiss Federation of Labour. Parallel with his exacting trade union and parliamentary career Robert Bratschi has also done a great amount of specialist work as a member of the Banking Council – and, from 1952, of the Board of Directors – of the Swiss National Bank, and as a member of the Administrative Council of the National Sickness and Pensions Fund. On innumerable occasions he has

been called in to serve on arbitration bodies, expert committees, co-operative boards and on the management of travel organizations and agencies which are of great importance in a country like Switzerland. But, if we had set out here to give a complete list of everything that Robert Bratschi has been and done since 1919 we should have had to mend our pen. If we are to run the risk of embarrassing this successful but extremely modest man, it is far better we do it by saying simply that he has worked, worked, worked – for the people, for democracy and for the social justice which gives democracy its meaning.

He is now seventy-one and he has been in the thick of things for over forty years. Only a man of robust constitution and tireless energy could have stood up to the demands his many commitments have made on him over the years. The key to this inner strength lies perhaps in something quiet in his nature, a capacity for reflection, patience, sincerity and modesty. His career reads as if he had taken life by storm and yet it is just in his nature not to storm. He has always shown himself to have the most urgent sense of justice, justice for the small man, together with a passionate devotion to democracy, but these have always been translated into quiet, practical efficiency. He has always believed that free men are able to work out their problems together and it has been his virtue to convince others by his practical example that this is so. It was not the least of his achievements that when he gave up his many offices in the

(Continued on the next page)

The 1874 Constitution

ABOUT 1870 the evil results of economic 'laissez-faire' were attracting attention. Working hours in factories were excessively long and conditions were unhealthy; female and child labour were abused. To avoid factory acts, whole cantons were transferred from one canton to another. Some cantons were reluctant to abandon the policy of complete internal freedom and in them the abuses were unchecked. Conditions could be improved only if factory laws were applied throughout Switzerland. This was clearly a matter for the central authority – but the central authority had not the power to compel a canton to adopt factory legislation.

Finally, as commerce grew in volume and complexity, the inconveniences consequent on having a separate system of law in each canton became more and more serious and a unified system of law more and more desirable.

To meet these three new needs, the constitution was revised. Under the new Constitution, the central government was given the power to enact labour legislation and to make much use of it.

Reason in collective security?


FOR OVER FIVE CENTURIES, Switzerland was but a very loose confederation of minute sovereign entities, held together by treaties of mutual protection. Each of these entities, called cantons, was, and was determined to remain, its own master. Their purpose in uniting their forces was not to create a new State, but merely to secure their common defence and especially the defence each of its own territorial integrity and political independence. This purpose, however, and its collective pursuit for generations and for centuries, through good fortune and ill, and the same enemies, created so many links between them and gave rise to so many common experiences, soon blended their memories and traditions, that little by little and under the stress of external necessities a Confederation was born and finally, after two and a half centuries, a federal State.

Swiss democracy



The origin of the present Swiss Confederation goes back to the pact of mutual aid (seen in the photo) signed between the Cantons of Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden in 1291. Time has impaired the sense of unity which inspired the early founders of the modern Swiss State.

The Swiss National Council, here seen in session is one of two legislative chambers, the other being the Council of States, in which supreme legislative authority is vested. The latter is elected by the Cantons whilst the former is chosen by direct election, with one deputy for every 24,000 citizens.

 THE FORM OF THE SWISS CONFEDERATION has changed, its fundamental principle has persisted. The system of multiple alliances based on treaties has been replaced by the Confederation as the federal union of twenty-two states. Where formerly the Diet merely existed as the organ 'ad referendum et ad ratificandum' of the member states, the present Federal Assembly is the legislative power and the Federal Council the common executive power. Instead of the turnpikes on which at one time some 400 tolls and similar duties were levied, the Confederation has now a common frontier which, embracing the whole of Switzerland, makes it one economic area. In short, the unity and joint strength of the Confederation has been reinforced in the interests of defence even in a completely changed world, and thus the conditions have been created in which fullest use can be made of all the possibilities offered by modern technology.

Switzerland is, however, still founded on its member states, the cantons. They are, by

(Continued from page 133)

trade union movement at the end of 1953 he left behind him men who had learned from his example and about whose determination to carry on in the same spirit he could not have the slightest doubt.

the wording of the constitution, sovereign in so far as their sovereign rights suffer no limitation by the Federal constitution. The Swiss cantons are therefore not mere districts, and cannot be compared with the departments of the centralized French state or of Napoleon's Helvetic Republic. They resemble the states of the USA, but their historical foundation goes much deeper, and they are genuine states, each with its

own constitution, and its own legislative and executive bodies. The fact that the democratic constitution is prescribed by the Federal constitution is rather a confirmation of history than an act of the Federal Council. Their democratic character, however, rests on the solid foundation of communes. Free citizens of 3,101 free communes constitute in their totality the sovereignty of the Swiss state.

Swiss citizenship is primarily communal. Every Swiss has a home commune. It is not that to obtain Swiss citizenship the consent of the Confederation must first be obtained. What really matters, however, is the decision of the commune to admit the citizen. The commune is the cell in the organism of Swiss democracy. All public activity has its origin here, and it is in the sense of the word a school of citizenship. For here, in the local self-government of the communes, every citizen can take part in discussion and share in work. In the preamble to the Communes Bill of March 27, 1943, the government of the Grand Council said quite rightly: 'The commune is the prototype of the democratic organization. The small space of the commune is a given field of pure democracy; here every citizen co-operates in every decision by his people's vote. Here the individual can see the sources and the significance of his decision, here he can see for himself the consequences of what he has done.' The free commune is from the outset a vital element of the Confederation: it is from

The Hundwil Landsgemeinde is shown here exercising its right of direct participation in matters affecting local self-government. Direct democracy of this kind has never disappeared from the Swiss political scene (National Tourist Office)

commune that the Confederation draws its strength, and it is here that we can see the difference between Switzerland and countries which govern by means of a centralised bureaucracy. In Switzerland the national will grows from below upwards and the state institutions are modelled on those which have stood the test on a small scale.

The commune, however, presupposes the liberty of the individual citizen. In its main features, that liberty has been guaranteed to the whole of Switzerland by the Federal Constitution, in particular by the Proclamation of Liberties. All Swiss citizens are equal before the law and the constitution has expressly abolished all privileges of race, birth, family or person.

What is meant by the liberty of the individual is that the citizen has a right to a personal sphere free of state control, to freedom of creed and conscience, freedom of the press and freedom of assembly. Freedom of trade and industry also enters into this category, but in this case the limits are in a state of constant flux and are continually revised by the Confederation. The freedom of trade and traffic guaranteed by the Federal constitution of 1848 was first amended by the revision of 1874 to a freedom of trade and industry, which meant in those days that the economy of the country was henceforth liberated from guild and other privileges, and that freedom of movement all over Switzerland was guaranteed, the country having become a unified economic area by the establishment of the federal state. The constitutional freedom of establishment also serves the same end, namely that every fully-qualified Swiss citizen may settle in any part of the country and may not be taxed higher than the citizen native to the place.

At the completion of his twentieth year, every male Swiss becomes an active member of his commune, i.e. he obtains the vote in all communal, cantonal and federal affairs, and is himself eligible for election. At the same time he becomes liable for military service in the Swiss militia, which carries on in modern form the tradition of an armed citizen.

One of the peculiarities of the Swiss state is the combination of pure and representative democracy. It goes without saying that the citizen has to decide upon questions arising in the communes, especially in the practically self-governing Swiss communes, and that he can be and in many cantons must be present at the most important assemblies. There are a number of cantons in which this convocation of the citizens still takes place annually in the form of a *Landsgemeinde* or folk-moot, as, for instance, in Unterwalden, Appenzell, Glarus and certain communes in Schwyz. At the appointed time the citizens assemble on the public square of the capital of the canton. They can take part in the discussion, decide by show of hands what laws and financial measures are to be enacted, and elect the members of the government. Most cantons, however, have outgrown this form of direct democracy: all the same, the citizen has the last word everywhere, and his right to direct participation in the life of the state goes far beyond the right to elect the officers of the legislative and executive bodies and, in many cantons, the judiciary also. Here the cantonal constitution is the final authority. For instance, in the canton of Basle Country, every law enacted by the Cantonal Council, which is the cantonal legislature, must be submitted to the people for approval. In other cantons, the referendum may be brought into action. This means that, if a sufficient number of signatures is collected by the citizens amongst themselves, they have the right to demand that a law approved by the legislative assembly be submitted to the vote of the people.

And now we come to the referendum and the initiative, that feature of Swiss democracy which is typical of its absolutely democratic nature and has been retained even in the Federal constitution. A bill approved by the Federal Assembly must, under the constitution, be submitted to the referendum. It becomes operative only if no petition is made against it within ninety days. But if a referendum is desired and a petition is submitted bearing the signatures of not less than 30,000 citizens, the final decision



The folk-moot (*Landsgemeinde*) which meets at Glarus. This gathering of citizens of a commune is typical of the extent to which the Swiss citizen actively participates in the affairs of the State.



as to whether it shall become law rests with the people. The citizen has yet another means by which he can exercise the right of taking part directly in the affairs of his country, namely the initiative. By this instrument the people, given the support of 50,000 signatures, can demand that the Federal constitution be amended, or totally or partially revised. In the cantons, the public can, with a proportionately smaller number of signatures, propose amendments to the constitution as well as the adoption of new laws. Should the Federal constitution be amended, not only is the consent of the majority of the people required in every case, but a majority of the 'states', i.e. the cantons, must be obtained also. This 'double majority' is ascertained by first determining the majority of all votes, and then the proportion of votes for and against the motion in each separate canton. If there is a majority of votes as well as a majority of cantons in favour of the amendment, it then becomes law.

The people as a whole as well as the cantons are responsible for the election of the legislature, i.e. the *Federal Assembly*. One of the two chambers, the National Council, is representative of the people and is, by the constitution, so elected that there is one National Councillor for every 24,000 citi-

zens, each canton, even the smallest, having a representative. Every canton forms an electoral area. At the elections to the National Council held in autumn 1959, 196 members were elected. Out of a population of 4.7 million it was calculated that 1.43 million were eligible to vote. The seats were then, as the law prescribes, allocated among the parties according to the strength of their polls. The present National Council, in office since the end of 1959, comprises forty-seven Catholic Conservatives, fifty-one Radicals, five Liberal Conservatives, twenty-three members of the party of the Citizens, Farmers and Artisans, fifty-one Social Democrats, ten members of the National Ring, five of the Democratic faction, three Communists and one member of the Evangelical People's Party.

The second chamber, called by the old cantonal name of Council of States, is elected according to cantonal legislation, either by elections in the cantons or by the cantonal authorities. It consists of forty-four members, which means that each canton has two seats. Three cantons have been divided by Federal law into two half-cantons each: Unterwalden by a very old tradition into Obwalden and Nidwalden, Appenzell into Catholic Inner Rhodes and Protestant Outer Rhodes, and Basle, after

the violent conflict between town and country in the 1830s into Basle City and Basle Country. Each one of these half-cantons is as independent a state as any canton, but in Federal matters they have only half a vote, and hence only one seat in the Council of States. This gives rise to a curious situation by which the canton of Basle City with 220,000 inhabitants has only one vote, while the canton of Uri with only 30,000 inhabitants has two. According to party, the Council of States is at present composed, since December 1959, of sixteen Catholic Conservatives, thirteen Radicals, two Social Democrats, three representatives of the Citizens', Farmers', and Artisans' Party, three Liberal Democrats, three Democrats and two non-party members.

Thus the bicameral system of the legislature keeps faithfully to the federal structure of the country as a whole. For a decision to be passed by the Federal Assembly it must be approved by a majority in both chambers, the National Council and the Council of States, the representatives of the people and the representatives of the cantons. Only a few matters are dealt with by the united Federal Assembly meeting under the chairmanship of the President of the National Council: these are the election of members of the government, that is of the Federal Council, of its President and Vice-President, of the Federal judges, of the General as supreme commander of the army in time of war or on 'active service' and of the Federal Court of Insurance and also questions of pardon.

The *Federal Council* is appointed for four years at the first December session of the Federal Assembly after the election of the National Council in autumn. It consists of seven members and they are jointly responsible for the government as a legal body, while exercising at the same time the functions of head of the state, the same as for the National Council, every Swiss is eligible with the exception of the clergy, the only restriction being that several citizens of the same canton cannot at the same time belong to the Federal Council. On the other hand, the various regions of the country, languages, confessions

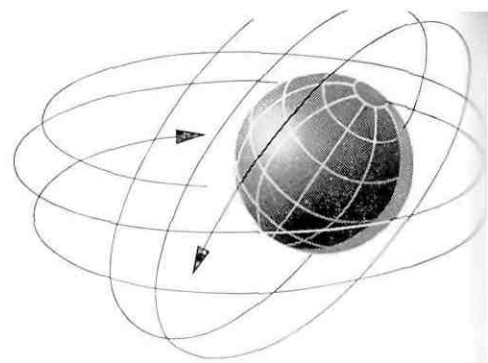
...ies are taken into consideration in the
...ion of the Council. Of the seven Fede-
... Councillors presently in office, two are
...ical Democrats, two Catholic Conser-
...ives, two Social Democrats and one is
...in the Party of the Citizens, Farmers and
...ans. Four are German-speaking and
...one French-speaking.

The President of the Confederation is
...ly the President of the Federal Council
...d 'primus inter pares' in a collective
...thority of seven Federal Councillors,
...ch in charge of an executive Department.
... addition to his duties as departmental
...nd, he has various representative func-
...ns. So there is no head of the state as in
... USA or Great Britain; the President
...not dismiss colleagues, there can be no
...inet crises and no votes of censure.
...ther a parliamentary vote nor a referen-
...um can cause the Council to resign. The
...ederal Council is responsible to the Fede-
...al Assembly, the representative of the
...ople. The Swiss system of the formation
...the political will of the state, with its
...ervations in favour of direct intervention
...the people, may be complicated and
...bersome, but these drawbacks are am-
...compensated for by the solidity and
...stability which saves the country the costly
...ventures through which other countries
...other systems have to live.


The third power of the state is the Fede-
...al Court, the *Supreme Federal Tribunal*,
...ch has its seat at Lausanne. The Federal
...ges are elected by the Federal Assembly
...a period of six years. This court, with
...four divisions, is the supreme court of
...nterland; its constitutional division is
...rged with the highly political duty of
...cting the rights of the citizen, yet it
...no power to examine Federal laws for
...constitutionality. Another juridical
...stitution, of a specialized nature, is the
...ederal Court of Insurance, Lucerne.

...her folk-moot scene - this time at Sarnan.
... medieval trappings are a reminder of the
... origins of the right to exercise a direct
... in the conduct of local affairs which
... people of Switzerland treasure so highly






Pipeline instead of road transport

 UP TO COMPARATIVELY RECENT TIMES, road tankers had fed London airport with aviation fuel from storage centres at the mouth of the Thames. The construction of a nine-mile pipeline, running from a depot at Walton and across the Thames, has, however, virtually eliminated the need to bring fuel to the airport by road transport. Formerly, something like forty tankers made daily round trips of 80 to 100 miles to ensure the flow of fuel to the airport. During peak periods, as many as sixty made the trip.

With a capacity of 30,000 gallons an hour, the new pipeline delivery is expected to ensure adequate supplies in all weather and traffic conditions.

Help thy neighbour!

 THE GERMAN TRADE UNION FEDERATION (DGB) and its affiliated unions have recently launched a campaign of aid to economically undeveloped countries. Under the slogan 'We are helping', the federation and the unions are making collections in workshops, factories and offices throughout the Federal Republic.

Initiating the movement at the end of April, Willi Richter, President of the German Federation of Labour, stressed the humanitarian basis of the concern felt for those suffering distress and penury in so many lands.


A world-wide study circle

 THE ITF-AFFILIATED SWEDISH SEAMEN'S UNION IS ORGANIZING AN UNUSUAL COMPETITION: a study circle embracing all Swedish seamen at home or on the high seas. There will be prizes for those showing the best results over the period beginning 1 June and ending on 31 December. The material for this unusual 'competition', said to be unique of its kind, has already been sent out to Swedish merchant vessels all over the world.

As explained by the organizers, the object of the competition is to combat

boredom aboard ship and help in employing leisure time in an interesting – and eventually profitable – manner. One of the reasons for initiating the scheme was the fact that ships are now spending less time in port, which means more time at sea for those working them. It is hoped that increased leisure time on board will be given additional drive and direction as a result of the competition. In point of fact, the number of study circles on board ship, and the number of participants, have trebled over the last five years. This should augur well for the success of the 'study competition', the results of which, in due course, will be judged by a special panel representative of the various maritime interests. There will be awards for ten vessels showing the best results as well as prizes of gift vouchers and books for the study leaders and instructors.

Homes for retired unionists

 MEMBERS OF THE ITF-AFFILIATED US NATIONAL MARITIME UNION have voted in favour of participation by their organization in a co-operative programme to build and operate residential hotels for retired union members.

The project is called Four Freedoms Hotels, Inc., a trade union co-operative. It plans to build or buy hotels in favoured resort areas, providing deluxe rooms with meals and recreational facilities specially designed to meet the needs and wishes of older people.

Retired union members – couples or single persons – would be accommodated at minimum rates, estimated at \$100 to \$125 monthly per person for room and board.


The NMU membership endorsed the project at regular membership meetings in March in the union's thirty port headquarters. The seamen voted on a proposal to make an initial investment of \$110,000 of union treasury funds in the project. The total vote was 3,725 in favour and 642 opposed.

Four Freedoms Hotels, Inc., plans to build first in California and Florida, the


exact locations not yet decided. The number and locations of subsequent hotels will be determined by participating unions.

NMU President Joseph Curran said his organization is participating in the Four Freedoms project because 'we regard it as a sound and praiseworthy effort to meet what is one of the most serious problems facing older people'.

Economic co-operation in Europe

 REPRESENTATIVES OF EUROPEAN FREE TRADE UNIONS are urging governments and authorities to bridge the gap between the European Economic Community (Common Market) and the European Free Trade Association. An appeal to this effect was recently made by the European Regional Organization of ICFTU representing some twenty-five million trade unionists. It reaffirmed ICFTU support for the establishment of a general economic association embracing all the countries of Western Europe; noted the intention to establish the EEC and EFTA as quickly as possible (in connection with which it expressed the hope that avoidable difficulties would not thereby be caused to the countries); stressed the need for consultation between the EEC and EFTA countries and emphasized the desirability of paying particular attention to the needs and well-being of work people arising out of the development of EEC and EFTA.

Noise is more than a nuisance

 MAYBE A LITTLE NOISE IS A GOOD THING. We have known people on holiday in the country, have been able to sleep owing to the absence of it. Silence, too, can shout. But there is a limit to most things, and the limit of 'endurability' seems to be reached at about 160 decibels.

At that intensity of sound the temperature rises, and if the noise is worse the hearing mechanism is impaired and permanent damage may be caused to the nervous system.

Apart from sounding like a nice


call your favourite daughter (a sort of mellowed-down and respectable-sized Jezebel), that, in point of fact, is a 'decibel'? It is a unit of noise intensity, where ten decibels represents a quiet whisper, eighty-five and speech (neighbours quarrelling), 110 the noise of a trip hammer, and 140 the ear-shattering howl of a jet engine and a gas burner. There we have the scale, and it is nice to know that we do not start to get back down until 160 decibels is, or are, reached.

Or is it? Because there is another factor at work and that is the more important one: how long can we put up with continuous noise? How loud is too loud? This has been put at eighty-five decibels, which is the intensity of loud speech - according to the scale. Heavy traffic, however, has a decibel rating of eighty. This is below the endurance ceiling. Presumably, therefore, we can stand up to the sound of modern traffic on the overcrowded roads for an indefinite period. Most industrial noises, however, are above the eighty-five decibel ceiling. A lawnmower, for example, registers 115 on the scale, whilst aeroplane propellers clock up at 140.

In view of the 'above the line' nature of these noises, it is comforting to reflect that the industry, by and large, is turning its attention more and more to the benefits of muffled sound. Medical opinion is generally agreed on the need to study means of eliminating noise as far as possible whenever it reaches an intensity 'where it is difficult for two persons to converse at close range'. Cost-conscious employers of the future, having been made aware of the fact that the morale, energy and productivity of their staff can be increased by muffling the din of their machinery, and that too much noise can contribute to industrial accidents, are increasingly studying ways and means of reducing noise in their plants.

Industrial leaders may be on the point of deciding, if they have not already done so, that it is cheaper in the long run to pay the extra cost of noise-reducing installations than to meet the cost of reduced efficiency and compensation claims for the impairment of hearing.

New US dock safety code

 A NEW LAW, DESIGNED TO PROTECT LONGSHOREMEN, but also improving safety conditions for seamen, came into effect in the USA on 21 March 1960. The US Congress passed legislation last year setting up a Labor Department safety code for ship repairing and longshoring. The law marked the culmination of a fight by the US labour movement dating back almost to the 1920s.

The US International Longshoremen's Association (affiliated to the ITF), whilst recognizing the need for worker education and training programmes, feels that the major emphasis in the field of dock workers' safety should be put, not on the human factor, but on taking all possible steps to make a safe place of employment. The accident frequency rate among longshoremen is 88.5, compared with 65 in the logging industry and 47.9 in coal mining - both recognized as extremely hazardous activities.

In general, the new law supports the ILA's position by holding the stevedore responsible for providing a safe place for the longshoremen to work. This means too that the shipowner must order his ship officers to bring the vessel into port in a safe working condition.

The mates are responsible for correcting items such as broken steps on hatch ladders, greasy wire rope, unused padeyes left welded to the deck, and obstructed escape hatches.

Under the law, ship's cargo-handling gear must be tested and certified to meet the standards of the US Coast Guard or the International Labour Organization.

If properly enforced, the equipment standards set up in the new safety code could result in barring from US ports many of the unsafe 'runaway flag rust-buckets' plying the high seas.

The longshore safety code also benefits seamen in more direct ways. Some of them are:

- Requires properly rigged and lighted gangways with handrails;
- Requires at least four inch space be-

tween ladder rungs and cargo stowed in hold;

- Requires guard lines for open holds not protected by coaming at least twenty-four inches high;

- Requires a three-foot space between cargo stowed on the intermediate deck and the side of the coaming;


- Holds the ship responsible for proper functioning of winches; makes it illegal to tamper with electrical winch controls;

- Requires the stevedore to keep decks clear of debris, dunnage and unused rigging and gear;

- Prohibits longshore operations while noisy chipping or scaling is being done.

Conceding that the new law is a big step forward, ILA spokesmen, however, point out the need for more inspectors. They also stress that the law is in places loosely written, there being doubt for example as to whether the Labor Department or the US Coast Guard has jurisdiction on certain matters.

Wheels on wheels

 THE POTENTIALITIES OF THE 'PIGGYBACK' METHOD of transportation continue to be exploited in various ways in the United States. Thus the nation's first transcontinental piggyback shipment of passenger automobiles left Chicago for Spokane (Washington) early this year, the first large consignment of cars to be shipped by piggyback on daily schedules from Chicago. On arrival, the cars are delivered by highway carriers to dealers in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Wyoming. Originally, the cars - fifty-six in all - were built in Detroit and transported to the rail centre on fourteen highway trailers. Car manufacturer, road transport and railway company thus combined in a joint road-rail effort to get the cars from the workshop to the user. Each road trailer carried four passenger cars and, on arrival at the railhead, the trailers were loaded on to seven 90 ft. railroad flatcars, each of which took two trailers - a total of eight cars.

The Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad Company, the railway



Four cars to a road trailer and two trailers to a railroad flatcar. This quick method of transportation (the 'piggyback') where goods are carried in wheeled vehicles – themselves used to bring them to the railhead and carry them forward from the rail terminal – is being increasingly exploited today, particularly in the United States

responsible for the rail section of this combined road-rail transport venture, points out that, had the normal railroad boxcar form of transport been used, each boxcar would have been able to take only four vehicles and more time would have been consumed in loading and unloading operations. The railroad management has also gone on record with a statement that this form of transport (truck-rail-truck handling) is in line with recommendations made by the US Interstate Commerce Commissioners to the effect that the various forms of transportation should unite to perform a service to the shipping public which would encompass the best forms of each.

A thousand Italians are working on the German Railways

THE GERMAN FEDERAL RAILWAYS at present employs some 1,000 Italians, and is recruiting more. It has also had a railway labour recruiting centre in Madrid since April of this year and has long been engaged in official discussions concerning the possibilities of obtaining labour from Greece.

All this activity is a sign that the labour situation on the Federal Railways has basically changed. For a number of years there were more men than jobs; now the opposite is true. In particular there is a shortage of permanent way men, shunters and freight shed and workshop labour.

Apparently young people are no longer attracted by the prospect of job security and the opportunity of entering a service offering established posts. The Bundesbahn has fallen back on recruiting foreign labour.

Such labour is paid according to current hourly rates under the terms of an agreement recently negotiated by the German Railwaymen's Union. The agreement also provides extra holidays in view of the distance that these workmen have to travel to their homeland, whilst married men and breadwinners get a separation allowance of DM 1 a day.

Efforts are made by the railway administration to ensure that language difficulties are reduced to a minimum. Pocket dictionaries containing the words and expressions most likely to be used in the course of their work are issued to the Italian workmen, for whom language classes are also arranged.

Fewer ratings needed

IN HIS REPORT to the annual general meeting of the ITF-affiliated British National Union of Seamen, Sir Tom Yates, union general secretary, referred to the great impact that revolutionary changes taking place in UK trade and shipping could have on the future organization of the union. It seemed evident, he said, that in future membership will consist of a smaller number of more highly skilled seafarers and a growing preponderance in the catering department.

Sir Tom went on to quote figures showing how, at the height of the Korean war in 1952, British tonnage in active commission was over 18,000,000. There were over 20,000 engine-room ratings and nearly 42,000 catering department ratings on the central register of seamen. Less than eight years later, there was an additional one and a half million tons in active commission, yet the number of ratings had declined by some 10,000. The more serious decline was in the engine room though the deck department was also affected. Since 1952, the number of engine-room ratings had decreased from 20,888 to 15,666.

The NUS general secretary attributed the



Apprentices learning their trade. In spite of a growing fleet, there is a steady decline in number of ratings due, says the NUS General Secretary, Sir Tom Yates, to the replacement of old vessels by modern, larger and faster

steady decline in the number of ratings in spite of a growing fleet – to the replacement of old and uneconomic ships by modern, larger and faster vessels, whilst the change over from coal to oil has brought about changes in the types of ships. 'All this,' added Sir Tom, 'adds up to a continuing decline in the number of ratings needed, despite growth in the actual size of the fleet help to obscure the rapidity with which changes are taking place.'

Safety in the Air

A NEW BILL DEALING with the growing problem of safety in the air is expected to be introduced during the current session of the British Parliament. Making this announcement, the British Minister of Aviation pointed out that the question of licensing airline operators would also have to be considered in the interests of maintaining the highest possible standards of air safety.

A sincere thank you

to all those persons and organizations who have helped in the preparation of the Congress Issue by providing material and special photographs for it. In particular we would like to mention our indebtedness to Brothers Hans Düby and Ernst F. of the Swiss Railwaymen's Federation; to our two other Swiss affiliates, the VHTL and the VPOD; to the Swiss National Tourist Office in London; and to the Official Tourist Office of the City of Berne.

A look at the Swiss Federation of Labour

W. KELLER

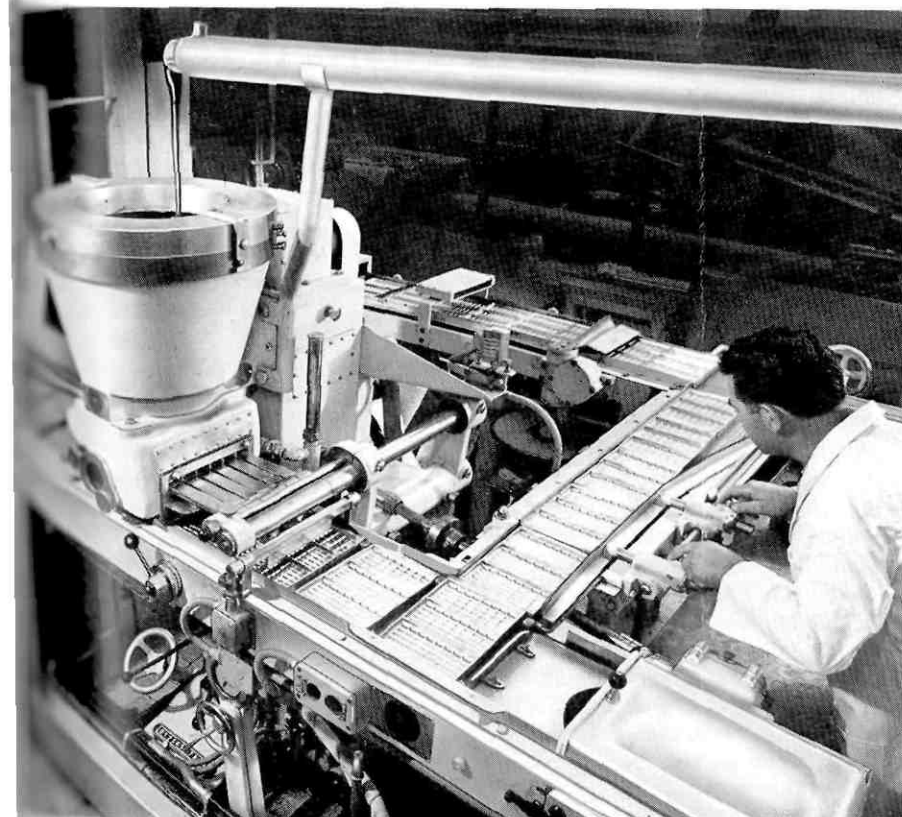
THE CENTRE OF TRADE UNION LIFE IN SWITZERLAND is the Swiss Federation of Labour (SGB), which this year can look back on eighty years of uninterrupted activity in the trade union field. At the end of 1958 the total membership of its fifteen affiliated unions stood at 430,000 of whom rather more than 10 per cent were women, and in the last five years membership of the Federation has increased by approximately one and a half per cent. The break-down of the membership between the various industries shows that by far the largest group, almost 130,000, work in the metal and watchmaking industry. After these come the building trades and woodworkers with 61,000 and the railwaymen with 61,000. Other important groups are the commercial, transport and food and drink group (42,000), public service workers (37,000), textile and factory workers (22,000) and Post, Telephone and Telegraph employees (18,000). Expressed in percentages, the metal and watchmaking group accounts for 30.1 per cent of the membership of the Federation, with the public service workers, including the railwaymen and the Post, Telephone and Telegraph employees, following closely behind with 29.8 per cent.

The yearly wastage in the public service workers' section amounts to approximately five per cent, but in the industrial sections it is much higher - between ten and

twenty-five per cent - and it is worth noting that unions with a large membership of women workers show the largest fluctuations in total membership. The question is an important one because large fluctuations in membership represent a serious obstacle to achieving and maintaining a high level of organization. There are, unfortunately no exact figures indicating the present level of organization of workers within the jurisdiction of the fifteen unions affiliated to the SGB, but a rough estimate, based on the number of employed persons in an industrial census carried out in 1955, shows that about forty per cent of the employees who could belong to unions in the SGB do in fact so belong. In certain individual unions, of course, the level of organization is much higher, notably among the railwaymen, Post and Telegraph workers and printing trades workers, where as many as ninety per cent and over of the workers are organized. In the building and woodwork group, the other hand, only fifty per cent of the workers are in trade unions and in the textile and tailoring industries the figure is as low as twenty-five to thirty per cent.

The structure of the SGB has remained unchanged for half a century. The body is essentially a federation of autonomous unions. The autonomy of each individual union is evident not only in the policy it decides to adopt towards the improvement of its members' wages and working conditions. The SGB on the other hand is concerned directly with the broad lines of social and economic policy, the significance of which is not limited to any one industry, such as, for example, general legislation on working conditions. One might note here that the SGB steers an independent course, being obliged by its constitution to maintain political as well as confessional neutrality.

The highest authority of the SGB is the Congress of Trade Unions which meets every three years to lay down the main lines of policy until the next meeting and to approve the reports on activities of its various organs. Between Congresses the Council (Gewerkschaftsausschuss) nor-

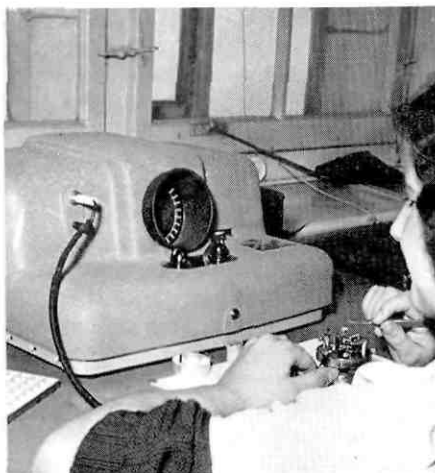


Switzerland is a highly industrialized country employing large numbers of skilled workers exporting quality products throughout the world. This worker is operating machinery at the Chocolate factory at Serrières. This is one of thirty-six similar factories in the country

Street scene in Lausanne, in the French-speaking part of Switzerland. The fact that the country has four official languages (French, German, Italian and Romansch) inevitably complicates the work of the Swiss Federation of Labour, which has its affiliates in all the linguistic areas



One Swiss industry which is justly world-famous is watch-making. Here a girl adjusts and checks the accuracy of a watch movement on a precision cathode-ray oscilloscope. Nearly forty million watches and watch movements are produced every year, the majority of them for export



A typical scene in a smaller Swiss town, combining the old and the new, and the traditional setting, with age-old democratic traditions go hand in hand with up-to-date trade methods and go-ahead ideas (Photographs reproduced courtesy of the Swiss National Tourist Office)



mally meets at least twice a year to settle important questions of the day. The executive body is the Federal Committee (Bundeskomitee) which deals with day-to-day business and prepares more important business for the Council and the Congress. The trade unions send to the Congress 234 affiliated delegates and a further 136 delegates are sent in an advisory capacity by the Executive Committee, the Council and from the various local associations. Only the former are entitled to vote. Corresponding to the administrative and historical division of Switzerland into twenty-four cantons, there are a number of local associations of trade unions affiliated to the SGB and each of these local associations (Gewerkschaftskartelle) sends one, the larger ones two or even three, delegates to the Congress.

The Secretariat of the SGB has at present a staff of twelve, secretaries and employees, who have at their disposal a comprehensive library and a well-arranged supply of information on unions both in Switzerland and in other countries. The fact that no less than three main languages are spoken by the inhabitants of Switzerland naturally complicates proceedings and is particularly felt in the publications department.

For twenty years, between 1934 and 1953, the SGB was headed by a personality notable also within the ITF - Bro. Robert Bratschi, to whom the SGB has good cause

to be grateful for the courage and care he showed in steering the Federation through those difficult and dangerous years. In appreciation of his services Brother Bratschi was elected Honorary President in 1953. Since 1958 another well-known figure in ITF circles, Brother Hermann Leuenberger, has been President of the SGB, having taken over after the sudden tragic loss of Brother Arthur Steiner, the late President of the Metal and Watch Workers' Union, who was SGB President from 1954 to 1958.

Although the Swiss Trade Union movement has never been exposed to the calamities and totalitarian attacks which our brothers in neighbouring countries suffered during the Nazi reign of terror, the events of those dark years did not pass without affecting us in some way. In the 1930s the Swiss trade unions had not only to fight against the effects of the world-wide economic crisis but were obliged to defend with all their might the democratic principles upon which their very existence depended. Without this active work on the part of the Swiss trade unions it could well be argued that Switzerland would not have emerged so unscathed from the Second World War as it did.

Unfortunately it has not been possible to preserve trade union unity in Switzerland. The Catholics founded their own unions as early as the beginning of the

century, their example being followed in the 1920s by Protestant groups and, later on, by Liberals. There are today no less than four confessional or minority groups with a combined membership of 140,000 and, if it were, in competition with the unions affiliated to the SGB. Besides these there are the Swiss Federation of Salaried Staff Associations with a total membership of 88,000. Relations between this latter body and the SGB are friendly and in recent years they have co-operated closely in the 'Community of Employees and Consumers' in dealing with matters of common interest affecting wages and prices.

This is not the place for a detailed account of all the activities of the SGB in the social and economic sphere. One can only give a brief indication of some of the problems that are at present occupying the careful attention of its leaders. There is, for example, the present tug of war between wages and prices which must lead to improvement in the worker's purchasing power if he is not to be left at a grievous disadvantage by the abandonment of price and wage controls. Other problems posed by Switzerland's membership of the free trade area, a new Law on Cartels in the field of social legislation, it is worth mentioning that employees in Swiss industry and commerce are still waiting for comprehensive industrial protection since the present one covers only fact



Locomotive driver employed on the St. Gottard line goes shopping in his off-duty period. The Railwaymen's Union with 61,000 members is the third largest organization in the Swiss Federation of Labour. Other important groups are the commercial, transport and food and drink workers, and the public service workers.

workers. This last example shows very clearly that even in democratic Switzerland the legislative machinery works much more slowly for the workers than, say, for the employers. The SGB has also been active in campaigning for a legal reduction in working hours and their efforts in this direction must be viewed alongside what has already been achieved by direct negotiations between employers and employees. Although Switzerland rightly enjoys a considerable reputation throughout the world as an advanced industrial democracy, the Swiss unions have still a great rôle to play in defending and improving the conditions of the country's workers.

Modernizing Swiss suburban trams

THE LAUSANNE TRAMWAY COMPANY, which some time before the outbreak of the Second World War had moved over to bus and trolley-bus operating, has a number of services to distant suburbs and localities having no rail connections of their own to the centre of the town.

In many cases these localities are at quite some distance and present considerable variations in altitude.

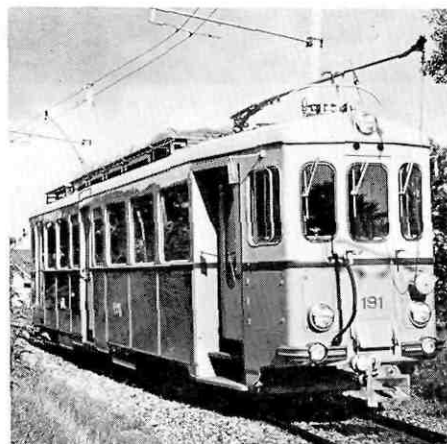
These so-called 'Jura services' to such places as Monthéron, Moudon, and Savigny consequently are called upon to convey a comparatively large amount of luggage and goods traffic which clearly makes it worth while to maintain existing services and modernize the vehicles.

The first stage in the modernization programme was to put three new four-axled combined passenger and goods cars into service on the Lausanne-Moudon route. This route is twenty-four km. long. It starts from the centre of Lausanne and reaches an altitude of 900 m. above sea level at Le Châlet-à-Gobet, before descending to an altitude of 500 m. above sea level at Moudon. On the way, gradients of sixty, sixty-three and even seventy-five in a thousand (one in 13.3) are encountered. Naturally on such routes and in such conditions, specially constructed cars with powerful motors have to be used.

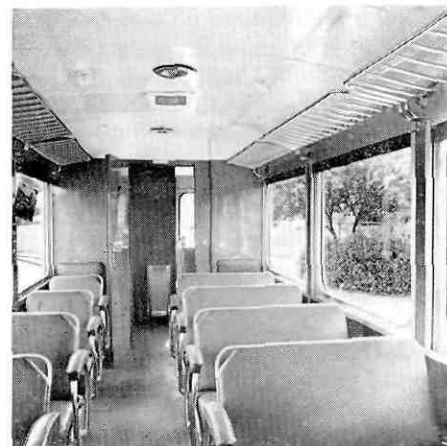
The Swiss-built cars running these services weigh 27.5 tons. They consist of two passenger compartments with seating capacity for thirty-four together with an extensive centre platform and further separate compartments for mail and luggage. Total overall weight, including that of the bogie and electrical installations, is 18.3 tons. In addition to the thirty-four seated passengers, these cars can take another fifty-six standing so that total capacity is 100 passengers. They have two driver's stands with two speed indicators (one registering and the other idling). A special reflector enables the driver to see the hand signal to start given by the conductor of his own car as well as of the trailer car.

Trials with the first three cars have proved so successful that similar modernization on the remaining two stretches of the 'Jura lines' can be expected in the very near future.

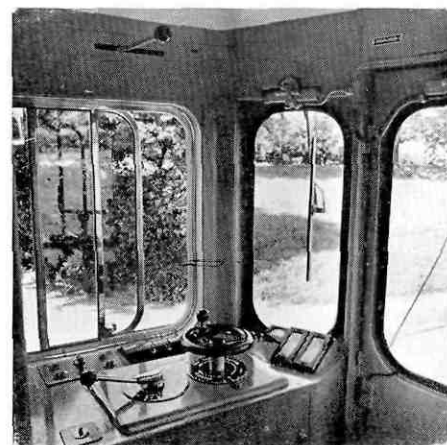
Our next issue will cover the months of August and September and will contain an extensive review of the Berne Congress



New-type tram in use on the Lausanne-Moudon route. Three of these new tramcars have been put into service on this fifteen-mile run which has some very steep gradients (Photo G. Stetza)



Interior of the new-style tramcars in service on the Swiss 'Jura line'. They take thirty-four passengers seated and another fifty-six standing, giving a total capacity of one hundred. There is ample room on the centre platform and compartments for mail and luggage (Photo G. Stetza)



The driver's stand with speed indicator (right - close to window). Trials having proved successful on the Moudon route, these cars are expected to appear shortly on the other services connecting Lausanne with outlying areas (Photo G. Stetza)



An old story



THE ASIAN SEAMEN'S CLUB IN SINGAPORE is reported to be running at a loss. It's an old story – but one that we had hoped would not be repeated: the shipping companies 'have ties with the lodging house keepers'. This means in practice that, although the lodging houses charge \$7 to \$8 a day for food and lodging compared with the Club's \$6.25, the seamen have no choice in the matter, their accommodation being arranged by the shipping agents. Many who have subsequently visited the club have insisted on a transfer. Nevertheless, the estimated loss at which the club is running is put at \$10,000 a year.

The Asian Seamen's Club, opened in 1958, is a pleasant eight-storeyed building with a modern theatre, assembly hall, cafeteria and bar. The dining room with its garden frontage seats some 150 and food is served from three modern kitchens, one for each of the racial and religious groups, Hindu, Muslim and Chinese. Compared with the accommodation in lodging houses the Club is a 'luxury hotel'. It is therefore all the more regrettable that, as a result of the 'tie-up' between lodging house keepers and shipping agents, the club's facilities are not being used to the full.

In the past the ITF has made contributions to the financing of the club through the medium of the Seafarers' Welfare Fund. It is therefore far from disinterested in seeing that the club is patronized on its merits. Any arrangement between agents and lodging house keepers under which seamen are virtually prevented from exercising free choice in the matter of their accommodation ashore savours of practices which have long been discredited in the maritime industry.

Singapore's new trade union structure



SINGAPORE'S TRADE UNION ORDINANCE, 1960 was given a first reading in the Legislative Assembly at the beginning of April. Full debate on the new measure was expected to take place during May. The Trade Union Ordinance is in-

tended to bring orderliness into what has been described as a 'free for all' situation in which any seven persons could set themselves up as a registered trade union.

The Ordinance seeks to ensure registration of unions under ninety craft or 'functional' groups. Under this arrangement, transport workers would be organized in six unions catering for: Harbour Board employees, seamen, land transport workers, air transport workers, water transport employees and fishermen (with agricultural workers).

A union seeking registration would have to have a membership of at least 250 and at least two-thirds of its executive would have to be persons actually engaged or employed in the trade for which the union is catering.

One of the 'functional groups' laid down in the draft ordinance is government and public employees and all public servants – other than police officials – would be permitted membership. The Head of State, however, could decide that certain categories, in addition to the police, would be excluded from union membership. The ordinance further allows unions to set up political funds but empowers the Registrar of Trade Unions to freeze any union funds used 'for unauthorized purposes'. Fines are provided for acts of interference by employers with employees unions.

The new ordinance, which is expected to replace the earlier instrument enacted in 1940, is regarded as a major piece of labour legislation designed 'to create through the operation of the law one of the most advanced and formidable union structures in this part of the world'.

A single port authority for Singapore



A SINGLE PORT AUTHORITY FOR SINGAPORE may emerge as the result of recommendations made by a Contract Labour Inquiry Commission set up by the Singapore government which made public its findings on 6 April.

The Commission, which sat for two months, examined twenty-four witnesses and studied sixty-seven memoranda from

organizations and individuals, recommended as regards port workers that labour hitherto employed by contractors on casual basis should be the direct employees of such contractors and enjoy the benefit of both the labour and central provident fund laws.

The Commission further recommended that all contractors of labour should be registered and, in some cases, become direct employees of departments of the Port Authority. It also proposed that the departments of the Port Authority – Dock Labour and the Stevedoring Labour Departments – should be merged into a single Dock Labour Corporation within eighteen months. Commenting on its recommendations, the Commission made it clear that by 'direct labour' in connection with contractor labour it did not imply 'continuous'.

The recommendations of the Commission in so far as they concern port workers will be summarized as follows:

The Port of Singapore shall have three labour departments: the dock labour department and the stevedoring labour department (Roads). These two departments are to be independent of the Port Authority as regards their day-to-day operations and also be financially self-supporting. The PA, however, shall be the ultimate authority in matters of general policy and use of finances, and shall be the employer of all labour directly employed by it. Industrial disputes are to be dealt with at the level of each department in conjunction with a joint council.

The Commission further recommended that the whole of the stevedoring labour force at present working for contractors should be absorbed by the Stevedoring Labour Department, being placed on the register with priority given to those with the longest, and that registers should be kept of both regular and casual stevedoring. With the stevedoring labour force being directly employed by the Department, former contractors would become stevedoring agents and would be registered with the Department. Shipowners would be free to choose from any of the registered

stevedoring agents but would not be obliged to engage any such agents.

It was further proposed that the labour force absorbed by the Department should be left in gangs as at present, provided they were efficient and satisfactory, and should retain their own 'mandores' who, together with the foremen, should be direct employees of the Department. Stevedoring contractors should be engaged as foremen by the Departments with the same conditions of employment applicable to such grades of labour. In that event they would not be registered as stevedoring agents.

Anything in it?

IT IS EARLY YET TO HOPE TO SPECULATE WITH ANY PROFIT on the ultimate outcome of the racial tension in South Africa due to the present government's racial policy. Possibly the country and its government are still suffering from 'delayed shock' as a result of world reaction to the shooting of Africans demonstrating against the pass laws and the attempt on the life of Dr. Verwoerd, the South African Prime Minister – carried out, it is important to note, not by an African but by a White man.

Liberal and informed opinion, in so far as it can be said to influence the march of events, tends to operate slowly. For the present, the negative approach to the problem of racial co-existence – which consists in doing everything that is practically possible to exacerbate the problem – seems to hold the field. In such circumstances, those who plead for a more enlightened approach to the subject tend to clutch at any straw – to look round for signs of the slightest breezes which might promise of a wind to bring the ship to harbour. Of such a nature was the step taken by the Cape Town Chamber of Commerce around the middle of April when it instructed its president to urge the government to appoint a commission of enquiry into grievances among non-white workers in urban areas. The commission, the Chamber of Commerce urged, should include non-white members.

Referring to the disturbances which began on 21 March, the statement containing the recommendation on this subject handed to the Leader of the Assembly, added that 'until such grievances are substantially removed, it will be impossible to achieve the co-operation of non-white South Africans in promoting peacefully a rapidly expanding economy'. The Minister promised to give the Chamber of Commerce memorandum his consideration. And there, it would appear, the matter rests. Whether the Chamber of Commerce has been given a polite brush-off or whether in fact South African politicians are about to re-appraise their racial policies in the light of what has happened since the Sharpeville shootings, in anybody's guess. There are, however, signs that some thinking is going on. Maybe there is nothing in it and the return to what is described as orderly behaviour among the African populace will also mark the return to the same repressive apartheid measures as sparked off the original trouble. Perhaps repression will even be stepped up. At the moment the situation appears to be one of uneasy equilibrium. Possibly a few grains of common sense plus a dash of business men's self interest might prove the turning point in this unhappy period of South African history – the catalytic agent enabling something reasonable and progressive to emerge from the present explosive mixture. And the South African government has got an explosive mixture on its hands. At the moment, it is true, it has managed to clamp the lid down on it. It is doubtful, however, whether it really believes it has rendered it harmless. The funny thing about some explosive mixtures is that you can 'treat 'em rough', kick them around, as it were, until one fine day something as apparently gentle and harmless as an apologetic cough will send the whole lot sky-high. The lid goes with the mixture.

Forced labour in South Africa

THE ICFTU HAS SENT to the Director General of the International Labour Office a damning indictment of the prison

farm-labour system under which African labour is being exploited in South Africa. It has asked the ILO to give full consideration to the charges of forced labour being levelled against the Union of South Africa, with particular reference to International Labour Convention No. 105 concerning the abolition of forced labour, and has asked the matter to be brought before the ILO Committee on Forced Labour.

In its report to the ILO, the ICFTU makes mention of two systems whereby African labour is made available to European farmers in South Africa. One is prison labour, when the African has been sentenced before a court. The other is the so-called volunteer scheme under which petty offenders are induced to accept farm work instead of being prosecuted. The latter scheme seems no longer to apply to South African-born Africans, but is applied to others.

Referring to the large number of cases of ill-treatment inflicted on Africans – not all of which are brought to court – the ICFTU request goes on to maintain that there are enough of these cases to warrant a full investigation into the situation.

Nigerian unions join ICFTU



DELEGATES REPRESENTING NINETY FIVE UNIONS of the Nigerian Trades Union Congress have endorsed a working party decision to affiliate to the ICFTU. The affiliation brings a further 200,000 trade unionists into the international free trade union movement in Africa.

The African family budget



AN AFRICAN FAMILY OF FIVE NEEDS at least £24 3s. 2d. a month to exist in Johannesburg, but if the proper standards of consumption set in the theoretical minimum budget are to be met the family income should be about £36 a month. These are the findings of an economist, Mrs. Joy de Gruchy, who undertook a survey on behalf of the SA Institute of Race Relations.

The findings of her investigations have

just been released. They show that the great majority of Africans in Johannesburg cannot afford to keep healthy because of their low incomes.

The incomes of between fifty per cent and seventy-five per cent of Johannesburg's African families are insufficient to meet even the minimum needs for health and decency.

Mrs. de Gruchy based her study on the diet which was considered a minimum for health by the Department of Nutrition. This diet, at today's prices for food, costs an African family £13 12s. 8d. a month. Other items in the family budget are clothing £4 13s. 0d., rent £2 5s. 0d., fuel £1 9s. 8d., cleaning materials 16s. 6d., transport £1 3s. 5d., tax 2s. 11d.

This budget allows nothing for school fees or levies (compulsory under Bantu education), medical expenses, furniture, crockery, newspapers, entertainments, drink, sweets, toys and the many other items which are an essential part of any family budget.

The survey shows that where African families spend money on these extra items, they do so by cutting down on food and clothing.

A change of name



TO STRESS THE WIDENING OF ITS FIELD OF ACTIVITIES the ITF-affiliated Nyasaland African Motor Transport Workers' Union has changed its name to Transport and Allied Workers' Union. This change of title marks a drive to organize a wider range of workers including petrol handlers and airways workers. The union now has 850 members compared with 284 at the end of 1958. It hopes to reach the 1,000 mark by the middle of this year. The union now issues a duplicated news-sheet *Magalimoto Bulletin* written in the vernacular and English.

The human element in driving



A SOUTH AFRICAN TRANSPORT COMPANY, the Public Utility Transport Corporation (PUTCO), recently concluded a six-year research project resulting

in significant findings on the part played by the human element in road accidents. The investigation was conducted under two main aspects, the psychological and the statistical. An article on the research results, published in the fortnightly *Digest of South African News*, is reproduced below.

The detailed study of the accident records of 700 Bantu and Coloured bus drivers who had been driving eight hours a day for periods of up to ten years, has revealed the following facts:

Accident proneness was definitely proved to exist and certain drivers were very much more liable to accidents than others. Only the drivers who were good potential accident risks really benefited by experience. They started with a 'learning' period in which they had their scratches and bumps; as soon as they gained proficiency and competence they showed a marked improvement; and, with experience, they showed a further gradual improvement through the years.

So consistent were the records of the good accident risks that any sudden deterioration indicated that something had gone very wrong and that an immediate physical or psychological investigation should be made.

The records of the bad accident risks, showed a completely different pattern. The acquisition of driving proficiency and experience had remarkably little effect, for such people usually started badly and continued that way. Even personal attention in the form of renewed training or strict supervision had only a temporary effect. Left to their own devices they reverted to an accident pattern which showed them to be a liability to the company and a danger to other users of the road.

In order to establish the causes of this accident behaviour, the psychological research team applied physical and psychological tests to hundreds of drivers in an attempt to find out where their particular weaknesses lay. They established that the basic requirements for a full-time driving job were:

Adequate physique, stamina and health,

the absence of any incapacitating disease and the absence of any signs of addiction to drink or drugs;

Adequate day vision, night vision, stereoscopic vision, field of vision, colour vision and adequate hearing;

An adequate degree of intelligence, concentration, anticipation and judgement; widths, distances and speed;

An adequate degree of cerebro-muscular co-ordination, resulting in quick reaction time and well controlled and co-ordinated movements;

A capacity for clear thinking in an emergency; and lastly, an adequate, well balanced and adjusted personality.

The possession of the 'physical' qualities ensured that a man could be taught to drive a vehicle with a satisfactory degree of proficiency. They were necessary, also, before he could be regarded as having a chance of being a good accident risk, they were not enough to ensure that *would* be so. For among the people who could be regarded as reasonably proficient drivers, the ones who had repeated accidents were not the less proficient ones but the ones with the wrong personality and temperament.


Specially designed psychological tests revealed that the men with the unsatisfactory accident records were not the men with mediocre skills but the men who had personality defects. Either they displayed certain personality faults such as immaturity, irresponsibility, selfishness, intolerance, impatience and a lack of control over their emotions and tempers, or they showed personality weaknesses such as instability, indecisiveness, lack of determination and too little self-reliance resulting in a capacity for being easily swayed and influenced.

Using the findings of this research, the team developed procedures for detecting and eliminating the company's unsatisfactory drivers and replacing them with selected and trained by scientific methods. The results are shown by the company's official statistics. Training wastage is one-tenth of what is used to be before aptitude tests were installed. Turnover amongst drivers has been reduced by forty per cent.


and the accident position has shown a phenomenal improvement. Whereas the accident rate amongst the general motoring public is going steadily up, the company's accident rate, instead of increasing also, is going steadily down. The accident rate of the Johannesburg public has increased by more than twenty-five per cent over the last six years. The Public Utility Transport Corporation (PUTCO), operating in the same area and under the same conditions, has shown a contrasting decrease in its accident rate which now amounts to thirty-seven per cent.

A practical research project such as this has important bearings on the significant part played by human weaknesses in road accidents. It is of particular significance in view of the toll of injury and death resulting from the alarming increase in road accidents throughout the Union and various suggestions have been put forward as to how such as these could be utilized in a nation-wide accident prevention campaign.

More help from Norway for underdeveloped areas

 THE NORWEGIAN PARLIAMENT has called upon the government of the country to increase by a considerable amount the appropriations in next year's budget for aid to underdeveloped areas. The resolution was unanimous and the Foreign Minister stated that it was completely in line with the government's intentions. On its present record Norway is already third – reckoned per head of population – in the amount of assistance it gives to underdeveloped areas through agencies of the United Nations.


Is the wind shifting?

 LAST MONTH A DEPUTATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN INDUSTRIALISTS led a team of five Ministers that a new approach based on consultation was the way to a peaceful solution of 'the lawless and riotous outbursts' in South Africa. The consultation, said the business men, should be between the government and

leaders acceptable to urban Africans. The business men's representatives even went so far as to offer to introduce the Cabinet to certain responsible native leaders with whom initial discussions could take place to determine the form of consultative machinery.

Is the wind shifting slightly, we may wonder. We should like to think so. Especially when we are presented with the picture of industrialists actually putting in a plea for native workers to be treated as bargaining agents in matters affecting their living conditions. A recommendation by the South African Chamber of Industries to review the wages of lower-paid workers on a voluntary basis, and to the government that it should modify and improve the machinery for wage-fixing or review it at more regular intervals, as well as allow native workers a more active part in wage negotiations – all this sounds as if, at last, a breath of sanity is to be introduced into the South African labour scene. It would be a welcome change. On the other hand, we have to bear in mind that the present South African government are stern realists bent on pursuing realistic policies designed to preserve the privileges of a white minority. They really believe in their 'mission'. Since clearly no humanitarian considerations can be allowed to cause them to deviate from their chosen path of racial repression, no proposal to treat the African population as human beings, as opposed to a political problem, is likely to find much favour. When humaneness comes into conflict with political or racial theories, Reason hides her head. Perhaps it is no accident that South Africa is the home of the ostrich, famous for its escapist technique.

Port supervisors should join union, says Jamaican tribunal

 DR. RAWLE FARLEY, the independent chairman of the three-man Jamaican essential services tribunal (joined by Roy Woodham, appointed from the workers' panel, but with Sidney G. Fletcher, for the employers, dissenting) has ruled that supervisors in the Kingston port

industry have the right to join a trade union of their own choice.


The Farley judgement states that 'the law is not against it, nor is equity nor is public opinion'. It goes on to say that 'after the most anxious consideration, we hesitate even to suggest whether the supervisors should be in separate sections or not... Some unions refuse to organize supervisors, some keep them separate; some have even abandoned them. This is their problem. Unions are autonomous bodies within the democratic state'.

A detailed survey of precedents overseas had led the majority of the tribunal to the conclusion that in many countries there was a very large number of supervisors involved because 'of the scale of industrial development and the exacting degree of technical skill required over large areas of their complex industrial pattern.' However, the judgement continues as follows:

'Even if a supervisory union came into being in Jamaica, it is doubtful whether it can command by itself the large numbers and the technical strength to affect, in any significant degree, the unilateral determination of the rights and interests of its members by the management of the company'.

Arguments by management against the propriety of supervisors belonging to unions represented a narrow view of trade unionism and refused to accept 'a basic principle of the institutionalization of industrial relations (for) there is no basic conflict between workers' loyalty to their company and their allegiance to their union'. Life, commented the judgement, is full of multiple loyalties, which could be adjusted to commonsense.

Trans-Asian highway is planned


 THE CONSTRUCTION, within five years, of a highway across Asia which would link Singapore with Turkey has been recommended at a conference sponsored by the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE). The highway would connect up Singapore with Bangkok, Rangoon, Dacca, Delhi, Rawalpindi, Kabul and Teheran.

Something about the Swiss Railwaymen's Federation

by HANS DÜBY, *President, Swiss Railwaymen's Federation*



Hans Düby (extreme right), President of the Swiss Railwaymen's Federation and author of this article, in conversation with Bro. Becu at the previous ITF Congress. Brother Düby played an active part in the work of the ITF Railwaymen's Section and also serves on our Executive

 SWITZERLAND ONLY MADE A START WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF HER RAIL NETWORK round about the middle of the last century. At the beginning, the Swiss Confederation did not bother itself very much with the country's railway system. In fact, everything was left more or less to chance. The result of this attitude was considerable fragmentation of the industry. A large number of private railway undertakings – both big and small – came into being and dealt with the construction and operation of their networks on purely private enterprise lines. With the passing of the Railway Act of 1872, however, concessionary rights were vested in the Confederation, and the Federal Constitution of 1874 stipulated, in its Article 26, that legislation concerning the construction and operation of railways was the responsibility of the Federal authorities. A further twenty-five years were to go by nevertheless before nationalization became a reality, the process being achieved by the legally blameless method of concessionary re-purchase. The networks scheduled for re-purchase in this way were the five large private railway companies: Jura-Simplon; the Swiss Central Railway; the North Eastern Railway; the United Swiss Railway; and the Gotthard Line. For their operation, a special Federal undertaking – known as the Swiss Federal Railways – was created.

Railway staff suffered the most from the unfortunate situation existing in the industry prior to nationalization. The wages and living conditions of railwaymen were anything but satisfactory; promotion and discipline were carried out in completely arbitrary fashion. Insurance against the results of industrial accident was still in its infancy. Pension funds were completely unheard of. The staff of the individual companies were left entirely to their own devices for a central railwaymen's organiza-

tion, which would have looked after the interests of the workers, salaried employees and permanent officials employed by the various rail undertakings, did not yet exist. The idea of joining together in a trade union first took root among the locomotive staff, and gradually they were joined by a number of other groupings which had to fight step by step for their place in the sun.

The fact that the existing railway unions were split on a category basis led to unproductive quarrels and differences. The

war of 1914–18, however, succeeded where the far-sightedness of a few men of vision had failed. Prompted by common misfortune, the leaders of the individual organizations came together with the idea of organizing all railway workers in a single union. Following agreement on the structure of the proposed new national union, its constitutive conference was held at Berne on 30 November 1919. The craft and trade groups merged into a single organization and the ITF-affiliated Swiss Railwaymen's Federation (known by its initials since then) came into being.

The Swiss Railwaymen's Federation thus became the only authentic professional organization of rail workers. Today, something like ninety per cent of all those employed by both the Federal and private railways belong to it. At the end of last year



A gang at work on the permanent way. The Swiss railway network began to take shape about the middle of the 19th century when a large number of small private undertakings came into being (Photo by Swiss Federal Railways)

membership totalled 60,984, of whom 18,185 were active railwaymen and the remaining 17,799 railway pensioners. As an all-grades union, the SEV caters for every type of worker employed on the railways, their individual interests being taken care of through special sections and sub-groupings.

At the national level, the Railwaymen's Federation is affiliated with both the Swiss National Trade Union Centre and the Federation of Public Service Staff. Internationally, it works closely with the International Transport Workers' Federation.

The Swiss Railwaymen's Federation is completely neutral from a religious point of view and is politically independent. Its members are thus free to act according to their beliefs and conscience in all religious questions. The Federation takes no part in party politics and takes an independent line on economic questions which affect its membership—whether directly or indirectly. In order to combine flexibility with effectiveness, the SEV finds it necessary to organize its membership along fairly rigid lines. New members are therefore immediately allotted, according to their grade, to one of the craft sub-sections, which under the SEV Constitution are considered as organs of the Federation. The following craft sub-sections are at present in existence: Labourers; Signals Staff; Shunting Personnel; Train Staff; Locomotive Staff; Inspection and Security Staff; Administrative Personnel; Railway Workshop Staff; Employees of Private Railways and Steamship undertakings; and Pensioners.

The SEV is a democratically-organized union. Its members have the right of decision in all important matters. They decide on the Constitution of the Congress and back on decisions through the medium of referendums.

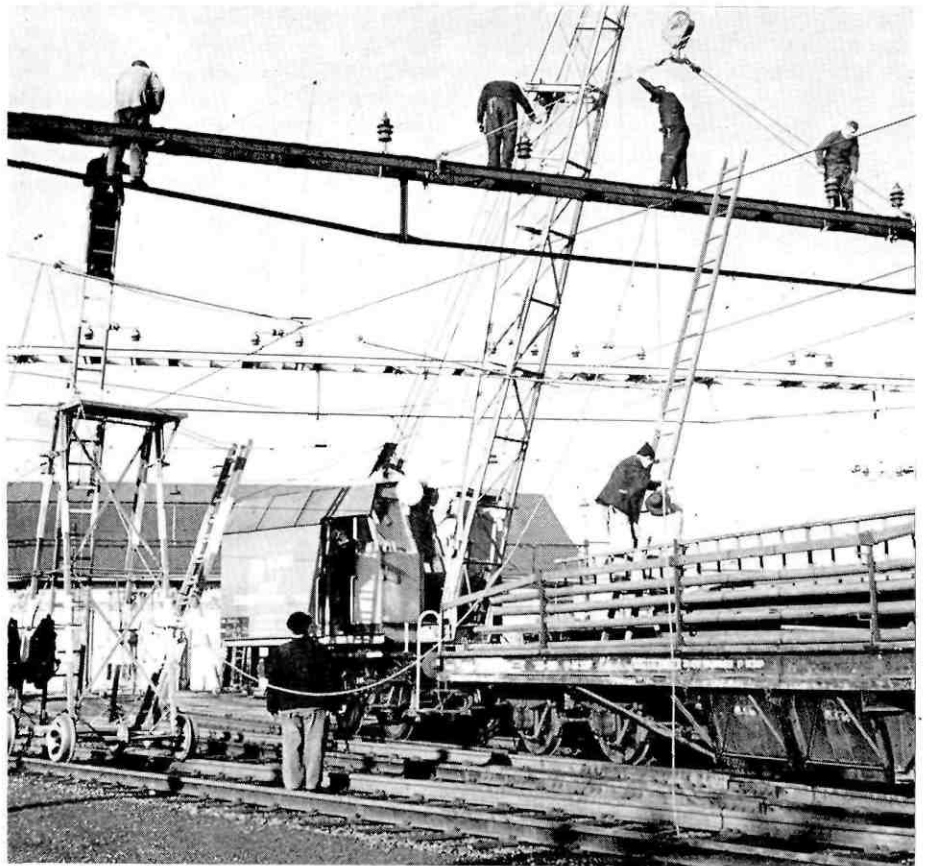
The highest authority of the union is the membership ballot, to which Congress decisions are subject, as also to the referendum procedure.

The next highest authority is the Congress, which is composed of representatives of the Sections and Sub-groupings.

The Federation's administrative machi-



Some 600,000 passengers travel daily on the national railway network whilst another 200,000 are carried by the private railways. Swiss railways are highly modernized. This up-to-date ticket issuing machine on the Federal Railways typifies the efficiency and modernity of the system



Working on the overhead installations of a section of track on the Swiss Federal Railways. The Federal Railways were acquired by concessionary re-purchase at the turn of the century. A number of privately-owned railways are still in operation however (Photos by Swiss Federal Railways)

In spite of increasing mechanization on the Swiss railways, they still need strong men to do much of the work. Special sections and sub-groupings of the Swiss Railwaymen's Federation take care of all the interests of the crafts exercised by a membership of some 60,000 together with those of a further 43,000 railwaymen pensioners



nery consists of the Executive and the Management Committee. The Executive is responsible for general directives on the implementation of union business, whilst the Management Committee deals with the current administrative business of the Federation, and supervises the work of the Secretariat, of the Sections and the Sub-groups.

The Secretariat is entrusted with the task of carrying out trade union, financial and organizational decisions adopted by the Congress, the Executive and the Management Committee. In addition, it deals with the numerous individual problems affecting railway workers which are brought to its attention day by day. At the head of the Secretariat is Brother H. Düby, President of the Federation.

The SEV issues a weekly newspaper for each of the three main language groups which exist in Switzerland: the *Eisenbahner* for the German-speakers; *Le Cheminot* for the French; and *Il Ferroviere* for the Italian-speaking railwaymen. These three publications deal, on a continuing basis, with all questions which affect the Federations membership, either directly or indirectly.

In the private railway field, the Federation looks after the interests of more than 10,000 members – who, incidentally, are employed by considerably more than one hundred separate undertakings. Our Federation has been extremely active in a campaign to put these lines on a viable basis. The Private Railways' Subsidies

Laws of 1939 to 1949 alone resulted in the granting of Federal financial assistance amounting to 155 million Francs (£1 equals 12.24 Frs.; 100 Frs. equal \$23.30); whilst the Swiss Cantonal authorities contributed a similar amount. The Federation has also played an active rôle in the new campaign for the nationalization of further private railways and has also played an important part in discussions on a new Railway Act.

A problem which has occupied the Federation ever since its foundation is the right to consultation (Mitspracherecht). This right exists to a far greater extent on the Federal Railways than is the case in other Federal undertakings, and has also progressed much further than in private industry.

The basic aim of the Swiss Railwaymen's Federation is, of course, to maintain the living standards of its membership and, wherever possible, to improve them. At the same time, however, it considers it a duty to protect its members against misfortune of all kinds – against the results of illness, accidents, unemployment and death – to the very best of its ability. The Federation also assists them, both morally and materially, in cases of involuntary distress or

want. During the course of the years, a number of special social institutions have been created to carry out all these subsidiary tasks – institutions of which both our Federation and its membership can justly be proud.

The most important and also the oldest is that which provides free legal aid. The SEV gives such aid to those who become involved in either civil or criminal proceedings.

Also among the oldest social institutions created by the Federation is the Assistance Fund set up to provide against the financial consequences of sickness and accidents of all kinds.

The activities of these two last-mentioned are complemented, in cases of need, by the Federation's Loan Fund. This aims at assisting members who, through no fault of their own, find themselves in temporary financial difficulties.

Some time ago, the Federation also created an Unemployment Insurance Fund to provide aid for those who, because of the nature of their employment on the railways, must reckon with periodical spells of unemployment. Additionally, union members have the opportunity of taking



Inside the cab of a modern Swiss electric locomotive. The Federal Railways are the biggest consumer of electric power in the country. It has been estimated that a return to steam would cost the railways an extra 100 million francs a year (Photographs by the Swiss Federal Railways)



The Swiss Railwaymen's Federation assumes the present structure in 1919 and is now representative of all trade and craft groups on the railways. Before that date, there was a multiplicity of unions mostly organized on a category basis, all too frequently working at cross purposes



Robert Bratschi, former President of the ITF, the chief executive officer of the Swiss Railwaymen's Federation until the end of 1953. He was elected to the ITF Executive Committee at the Zürich Congress of 1946 and later served as President for four years from 1950 to 1954.

...ident insurance policies on their own account at very favourable rates.

The Swiss Railwaymen's Federation owns and operates three Railwaymen's Holiday Homes, which provide a total of 100 beds. The largest of these is the Brenno Holiday Centre at Brissago in the Ticino. The second, known as Grubisbalm, is situated on the southern side of the Rigi mountain, just above Vitznau, whilst the third and also the newest is Sonloup at Montreux in Western Switzerland.


In order to make visits to these holiday homes somewhat easier for those of its members in the lower and medium salary groups, the SEV has established a Holiday Grant Fund. This provides a reduction of twenty-five per cent in the cost of full board and lodging for seven days per year. The reduction applies to the member himself, his wife and his children. In addition, there is also a special fund applying to needy members requiring convalescent treatment, as well as to members of their family.

Finally, I should mention the fact that the Swiss Railwaymen's Federation also has its own life insurance scheme. This has grown over the years from very modest beginnings to its present highly advanced state organization. Through it, every member of the SEV can take out a life insurance policy at minimum premiums.

The Swiss Railwaymen's Federation stands there proudly, - able and willing to defend effectively the interests of its membership. The Federation has achieved an honoured position in the public life of our


country and is the only genuine representative of the Swiss railwaymen. It represents them in relations with the Federal Railways and the numerous private transport undertakings; with the Federal and Cantonal authorities and - last but not least - with the public itself. It also stands ready to assist, outside the narrower confines of its own activities, in the further development of our democratic State.

CIRM progress report

 'PROCEEDINGS OF THE CIRM STUDIES CENTRE', ROME, 1960, is an account of the research work carried out by the special research centre run by the International Radio Medical Centre (CIRM) at its Rome headquarters during the year 1959. Matters on which research was carried out and herein reported upon include: behaviour of the cardio-circulatory system of seamen in tropical climates; observations on the functioning of the respiratory system of seamen under rapid climatic changes in temperature; the social and medical problem of ex-tubercular seamen and their readmission to work; and dental services for seamen.


The articles are in Italian with summaries in English and French.

Fire Aboard!

 THE PROBLEM OF FIRE CONTROL and prevention on board ship and in port installations is increasingly engaging the attention of legislators at national and international level. Advance notice has been received of the publication of a book (*Fire Aboard*, by Frank Rushbrook, Technical Press, London, s.w.3, price about 63s) in which the subject will be fully treated from all aspects. Thus the author, who is assistant fire master in the Edinburgh and South-East Scotland Fire Brigade, after going into the history and nature of the problem, proposes to discuss present-day legislation on the subject - both applied and in prospect - concluding with a summary of recommendations and a look into the future of fire prevention. In partic-

ular, the provisional table of contents advises that the author will devote chapters to arising British and US legislation in connection with the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea and to the need for international standardization of fire-fighting equipment.


The roots of Swiss liberty

 WHEN, AS A RESULT OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION, nationalism began to play a growing role, the Swiss no longer sought its basis in common descent or language but in common political traditions and institutions. They turned for inspiration to their past struggles for constitutional liberty; like the English who in the seventeenth century, at the time of the birth of their modern nationhood of liberty, traced its origin back to the Magna Carta and the ensuing parliamentary developments, reinterpreting them in the spirit of the new time, thus the Swiss looked back to the thirteenth-century origin of their nation, when in a Europe growing more and more subject to feudalism and absolutism free communities of peasants and burghers established and preserved their liberties. England and Switzerland became in the nineteenth-century stable democratic nations to a degree rarely found elsewhere. They owe it partly to the indirect influences of the French Revolution - but even more to the fact that the foundations of their democracy have their roots in the thirteenth century. The revived memory and the glorifying interpretation of those foundations kept the spirit of national cohesion and of human liberty strong amidst all the deep social changes and international tensions of recent times. Even in seventeenth-century Switzerland, at a time of the bitterest religious animosity and of the lowest ebb of the spirit of unity, the cantons pledged their co-operation, in the Defensional of March 8, 1668, for the 'preservation of the glorious liberties which our beloved ancestors so dearly acquired' (erhaltung der von unsen lieben altfordern so their erworben herrlichen freyheiten).

Kohn - *Nationalism and Liberty, the Swiss Example*

Meet the public service workers



 THE SWISS PUBLIC SERVICE WORKERS' UNION (VPOD), among Switzerland's larger trade unions, presents a fine example of how trade unions have become an essential structural element of a democratic state. Besides making ceaseless efforts to secure for its members a full share in the country's prosperity, it takes an active part in all aspects of the social and economic life of the community, extending its activities far beyond purely material considerations.

During the last years of the nineteenth century municipal employees in the larger Swiss towns – up till that time perhaps among the most neglected and despised members of the working-class community – began to realize the advantages to be gained from organization and to form unions based on individual towns. However, they fairly soon saw that such small units could not gain the prestige to attract sufficient members to win concessions from the municipal authorities who were the main employers. It was not long before unions in Zürich, Basle, Winterthur and Berne, on the initiative of the Zürich union, united to form the first Swiss national union, the Municipal and State Workers' Union (*Gemeinde- und Staatsarbeiterverein*) in

1905. The new body elected as leader Herman Greulich, who had been, and continued to be until his death in 1925, the most powerful influence in the union's decisions.

The union suffered in the early days from extreme poverty, but strikes were rare, and after a while Greulich, after securing an increase in contributions, pressed for a central secretariat to be set up, pointing to the experiences of other unions whose membership had increased considerably on the establishment of union centres. This was done, not without some opposition, and a union journal, *Aufwärts*, was started which set about revealing the appalling conditions under which many municipal and state employees were compelled to work, many of them below the bread line.

A Douglas DC-8, seating 120 tourist and first class passengers, which is just being put into service on the North Atlantic route operated by Swissair – Switzerland's national airline. Civil Aviation Section of the Swiss Public Service Workers' Union, which organizes a number of Swissair employees, is affiliated with the

Concurrently with the creation and establishment of this union, tramway workers, some employed by private undertakings, some by publicly-owned companies, were also struggling to form unions based on individual towns. After an abortive attempt to form a central union in 1898 the tramway workers joined the Railwaymen's Union, but this proved an unsatisfactory arrangement, and in 1905 the Swiss Tramwaymen's Union was formed.

The tramwaymen and the public service workers went through similar technical troubles – shortage of cash, difficulty in recruiting members, unsuccessful strikes – but despite this their strength increased and among their early successes were agreements on wages, holidays, hours of work

ness and accident benefits etc., along with a rough kind of negotiating procedure grew up.

During the war years the fight to maintain and improve conditions intensified and many strikes were fought out with varying success. The demand for an eight-hour day had been on the programme of the trade union movement for years and between 1917 and 1921 the working week had been appreciably shortened for both public service and tram workers.

All this time the public service workers' union had been operating more as a federal body than as a really central union. The central secretariat was regarded more as a kind of clearing house for information than as the headquarters of a united body of workers, and the individual branches were working almost entirely on an independent basis. Greulich was determined that his union should gain real unity and strength through centralization, but difficulties arose over attempts to bring this about, as the local branches were often unwilling to surrender their autonomy. Another aspect of the organizational field was a proposal for amalgamation with the tram workers' union. This had been strongly resisted by the latter, but during the war years, when



Meticulous maintenance of aircraft engines is the daily work of these mechanic members of the Swiss Public Service Workers' Union (VPOD), which is responsible for organizing staff employed by municipal and nationalized enterprises.

unions had to fight to remain in existence at all, discussions were resumed and 1920 saw the amalgamation approved by both organizations. This step marked the end of a period of internal difficulties which had prevented the unions from playing a really effective part in the struggle for the improvement of their members' social and economic position. In 1924 the name of the union was changed to the Swiss Union of Public Service Workers (VPOD).

The postwar period was one of struggle to defend standards which, never high enough and made worse by a rising cost of living, were now being attacked in the name of 'economic necessity'. The union managed more or less successfully to combat attempts to impose wage cuts, longer hours and dismissals and to relieve hardship among its members.

Except during wartime the membership of the VPOD has steadily increased and the union has developed into a progressive, forward-looking force in Switzerland's labour movement. Its activities and programme cover not only the interests of its own members, but also those of the community as a whole. It is not afraid to state its aims clearly and openly – indeed it regards honesty in public life as a necessity if democracy is to have any real meaning.

As far as its own members are concerned, the VPOD has at times had to carry on a purely defensive struggle against attacks on their hard-won standards. But at the same time it has never become paralyzed in a defensive position and has always been able to jump to the attack when an opportunity presented itself. The union has fought for, and to a large extent won, increased wages, shorter hours and longer holidays, and



At work in the cockpit of a Swissair Convair Metropolitan. Switzerland's airline, which carries its country's distinctive red and white colours all over the world's air routes, came into being in its present form in 1931. (Swissair photograph)

many 'fringe' benefits, besides providing on its own account, legal aid and advice, loans and unemployment and death benefit payments, and is also willing to give assistance to any of its members in difficulties of any kind.

In the broader field of the labour movement generally, the VPOD has been among the most forthright in declaring that workers must be given an equitable share in the national prosperity. It maintains that technical progress must benefit all sections of the community in terms of shorter hours and longer holidays, while standards of craftsmanship must not be allowed to deteriorate with the advent of more advanced machinery. The union has done all in its power to see that while some skilled workers are benefiting from general prosperity their lower-paid, unskilled colleagues are not forgotten. It has constantly advocated increased industrial democracy and made proposals for introducing more worker-participation in managerial decisions. The VPOD has a strong sense of the importance of the international labour movement. It is affiliated to the Public Services International, in which it plays a very active part, and its civil aviation section is affiliated to the ITF.

The union sees in political action one of its main weapons, for if other bodies have a voice in state and local government, the trade union case must not be allowed to go unheard. Without being formally tied to any one party it helps to ensure the preservation of democracy by playing its rightful part in the processes of government. Believing that private interests must be subordinated to the interests of the commu-

(Continued on the next page)



In the galley of another type of jet aircraft used by Swissair – this time the Caravelle. The galley contains a fitted electric oven and other modern equipment to facilitate speedy and high-quality service of meals and drinks by Swissair's present cabin staff (Photograph by Swissair)

The VHTL - trade union movement in miniature



THE DISTRIBUTION OF INDUSTRY IN SWITZERLAND at the turn of the century presented tremendous difficulties to would-be trade union organizers. Outside the larger towns workers were spread out thinly over country districts which were not always easily accessible, and businesses were often conducted on paternalistic lines which discouraged the workers from joining any kind of association. This situation applied particularly to food workers – millers, coopers, butchers, bakers, tobacco workers, gardeners, brewers, etc. Their small factories, often employing not more than two or three assistants or apprentices, offered daunting problems to those whose mission it was to present the advantages of trade union membership to men who, it seemed then, had little or nothing to gain but plenty to lose by joining.

The union of food workers had been founded in 1904 by Herman Greulich – Papa Greulich to so many Swiss trade unionists, and not only in this sector of the movement – but the actual setting up of the union was only the first step in what was to be the long period of struggle for recognition, of heartbreaking setbacks and internal difficulties which all young trade unions of that period had to survive before becoming fully established. The organizers travelled around the country, held meetings in lunch breaks at factories and, slowly at first but with increasing enthusiasm, the workers began to join. The movement stood on a firm basis at last, a basis which was strengthened in 1915 by amalgamation with the transport workers' union to form the present-day Federation of Commercial, Transport and Food Workers (VHTL). Membership rose to 20,000 by 1919, one of the strongest and most union-minded groups being the brewery workers, many of whom were of German origin.

The period after the first World War saw trade unions everywhere struggling to main-

tain standards of living against rising prices, unemployment and repressive measures by employers, destined as much to smash workers' organizations generally as to squeeze more work out of their own employees. But the food and transport workers' union not only had to fight the employer; it had also to resolve its own internal difficulties and it was not until 1928 that the irresponsible and disruptive activities of the Communists were finally brought to a stop.

Not surprisingly, during this time, union membership had been dropping, but after 1930, when Switzerland was suffering from the effects of world depression and unemployment became widespread, the union increased in size and influence and right up to and during the war its position was strengthened. The early years of the war saw the start of a new period in the union's history. New men came to the top to replace the old pioneers like Jean Schifferstein and Robert Fischer who had been with the organization since its earliest days. The new President, Hermann Leuenberger, was also a member of the Swiss National Assembly and President of the Foodworkers' International. The union took part in the FWI's boycotts of Peter, Kohler & Cailier, the chocolate firm, and Remy & Cie. (Belgium). Leuenberger was also until 1946 a deputy member of the General Council of the ITF, to which the union has been affiliated since its very earliest days, and has taken an active part in the work of its Road Transport Section.

After the Second World War the union, having consolidated its position in Swiss economic and social life, was obliged to mobilize its full strength and influence in

order to maintain the purchasing power of its members' wage packets in the face of ever-rising prices and to a large extent this aim has been achieved. The union has been concentrating lately more on the issue of reduced hours of work. Among its particular successes can be numbered the enactment of a law prohibiting night driving of road transport workers in Switzerland, and the introduction of the tachograph system, which, by means of a device which automatically records details of a driver's work day, is designed to check and control a professional driver's working hours.

In the fifty-six years since the foundation of the VHTL, things have changed out of recognition for trade unions and their members. At the turn of the century there was no such thing as the officially-recognized right of free association for workers. Membership of a trade union was a risky business, which, while not guaranteeing anything in the way of better conditions, would often result in the loss of a job. Total freedom of association is an unquestioned right and there are even employers who positively welcome trade-union organization among their employees.

When the union was founded, working hours in factories were eleven hours a day while in some workshops they were completely arbitrary. Bakers, butchers, millers, etc. were working more than eighty hours a week. Fifty years later the forty-eight-hour week was in force in factories. In the early days, paid holidays were totally unknown, now they are enforced all over the country. Payment for overtime and rest-day work was entirely at the discretion of the employer, and there was not the least sign of any right of consultation. Anyone who took those days of bitter struggle suggesting measures for the protection of children and women workers was regarded as a rebel. Anyone who mentioned clean and hygienic surroundings, protection against accidents, or even that employees might be treated as human beings, was put on the black list. Terms of employment and conditions of apprenticeship were the exclusive domain of the employer.

Today, all this has been changed.

(Continued from page 153)

...nity, the union advocates a planned economy and far-reaching social welfare legislation for the old, the sick, the unemployed and all who are in need of help. The VPOB is an example of a progressive union which sees its responsibilities not only in the comparatively narrow field of the interests of its own members, but which affirms its right openly to express its opinion on matters covering a wide field and to put forward positive proposals for any changes which it feels to be necessary.

all in the day's work for the Swiss coach driver. These hairpin bends in the Valais district place a premium on skilled and careful driving. To ensure their work is properly rewarded and their conditions safeguarded, these drivers look to the VHTL (Photo Swiss National Tourist Office)





Hermann Leuenberger, President of the VHTL since 1941, was elected as President of the Swiss Federation of Labour in 1958. He is also a member of the Swiss National Assembly.

State lays down minimum standards of safety and cleanliness and has comprehensive schemes of social welfare, which are amply supplemented by the union's own funds for relief in cases of unemployment, sickness and distress of all kinds. 500 children of Dutch transport workers will not quickly forget the three months' holiday they spent in Switzerland as guests of the VHTL immediately after the end of the second World War. This example of the spirit of international brotherhood in its most concrete form resulted from a visit made by the President, Bro. Leuenberger, to Holland in May 1945.

The VHTL covers approximately forty categories of workers, and is affiliated to five International Trade Secretariats. This means that it has tremendous organizational difficulties to overcome in fulfilling its obligations to such widely differing professions as dockers and waitresses, seafarers and butchers, taxi drivers and gardeners. In addition to this, the fact that membership is not far over the 40,000 mark means that the union's financial resources

are to some extent limited. Despite these problems and those of maintaining contact with members scattered in small pockets throughout Switzerland, there is no doubt that the VHTL has contributed more than adequately to the progress of its own members and the labour movement generally, both on a national and international level.

1) *As its title implies, the Swiss Union of Commercial, Transport and Food Workers (VHTL) caters for a very wide range of employees. Despite appearances, this chat between a union lorry driver and a policeman is entirely friendly*



2) *A reminder that Europe's busiest waterway – the Rhine – starts in Switzerland. Inland waterway workers are among the forty categories of workers for which the VHTL caters. Total membership of the union is, however, comparatively small – approximately 40,000 (Strom u. See)*



3) *Motor transport cannot, of course, run without fuel – nor could the Swiss economy without vast imports for which it pays by the skill and labour of its workers in many industries. The country's production of food, for example, is not sufficient to feed its population (VHTL photo)*

4) *Passenger steamers – like this one on Lake Constance – are a familiar sight on most Swiss waterways. More significantly, the Swiss maritime flag has recently made its appearance on the high seas. Despite its absence of maritime traditions, Switzerland is very much aware of the need to maintain high standards, both at sea and on its lakes and rivers (Photo ATP Bilderdienst)*



5) *There's no time to look at the scenery – at least not for this driver on the Grimsel Pass. The VHTL, which caters for many types of road transport workers, has been active for 56 years and has an outstanding record of achievements*

6) *Today one can move lorries by crane and cranes by lorry. Here the lorry is doing the work while the crane is having a rest. It's all part of the modern Swiss transport scene and a reminder that the country is not all 'mountains and milk'*

'Norway and her sailors'



THAT NORWAY, WITH A POPULATION OF LESS THAN THREE AND A HALF MILLION, can justly claim to be the world's third largest legitimate maritime nation is partly the consequence of the country's physical structure, of the extremely long, sharply indented coastline and the bleak mountainous interior – three out of every four Norwegians are born within 20 miles of the sea and from the earliest times it has been natural for them to turn to the sea for the living the land would not give them. Norway's leading position as a seafaring nation can also, however, be seen as a reflection of the courage and tenacity of her people. As a neutral she lost half her ships in the First World War and yet managed by a combination of determination and foresight to emerge from the slump of the thirties with a fleet of large modern vessels which, going over to the allied cause when the Nazis occupied Norway, managed to supply Britain with no less than a third of her food supplies and half her oil during the first two critical years of the war. Once again Norway lost half her fleet and once again she has built up from the battered remnants that returned from the battle of the Atlantic a fleet larger than ever before and consisting almost entirely of large, specialized vessels of advanced design on which working conditions are as good as any to be met with in the world today.

As the lives of seafarers go, the Norwegian seaman is well off. The credit for this must in very large measure go to the Norwegian Social Democrat government which apart from the occupation years, has been in continuous power since 1935. The present body of industrial and social legislation generally in Norway is a reflection of a firm, uncompromising sense of social justice. It is part of this sense of justice that the seafarer should not lag behind, that no effort should be spared to alleviate the natural hardships and hazards inseparable from the seafaring life.

'Norway and her Sailors', an interesting and attractively presented booklet recently

issued by the Norwegian Joint Committee on International Social Policy, presents a concise and informative account of the extent of this social legislation and what it means in practical terms to the Norwegian seaman ashore and afloat, in sickness and in health, in youth and in old age. Among other things it gives details of the Seamen's Employment Offices and the safeguards ensuring that those who take up this arduous profession are temperamentally suited to it, of the agreement on employment, calculation and payment of wages, of special provisions in the case of sickness or injury, wages during illness, the seamen's right to a free passage home in the case of illness or after a certain period of service (many Norwegian ships ply entirely between foreign ports, sometimes on the other side of the world, and never return to Norway). There are also sections dealing with working hours and holidays, representative bodies of employers and seafarers, collective agreements, special income tax arrangements for seamen – these are particularly interesting because they put the seaman, as it were, in a privileged position, which, however, is perfectly legitimate when one considers that his prolonged absences from home tend to deny to him full enjoyment of many of the amenities which the tax goes to pay for. Obviously one can give here no more than a brief review of section headings. The book itself, however, is full of lively details, and is, moreover, generously illustrated with interesting photographs, among which may be mentioned one of Norway's first qualified woman ship's engineer who obtained her certificate in 1948. She is in fact just one of 3,000 women serving on Norwegian foreign-going ships.


Public motor transport



PUBLIC MOTOR TRANSPORT has been developed by the Swiss Federal Post Office and 144 private undertakings to cover a network of 5,827 miles, of which 4,001 miles are served by the Post Office. In 1956 41.1 million passengers were conveyed on this network.



The Swiss Railways: some facts and figures

 THE COST OF A SWISS EXPRESS TRAIN consisting of a locomotive, eight passenger coaches, a dining car and a guard's van amounts to some four million Swiss francs. The speed of Swiss trains can be seen by looking at the current timetables according to which it takes one hour and seven minutes to do the eighty-nine kilometers between Basle and Zurich, three hours seventeen minutes for the 194 kilometers between Zurich and Geneva and only forty-seven minutes for the fifty-seven kilometers between Zurich and Lucerne. The longest non-stop journey in Switzerland is between Basle and Bellinzona, three hours twenty-two minutes being required for the 260 kilometers and also for a climb of 900 meters between Airolo and Bellinzona. Highest speeds are maintained in twisting tunnels. Although it costs several times as much to lay and maintain a kilometer of track in mountainous districts as it does on the flat, railway fares are no dearer in the mountainous districts.

The Swiss Federal Railways possess 4,181 kilometers of main line track which has, of course, to be maintained in good order and replaced when necessary. The average age of the rails is twenty-five years. The age of sleepers varies according to whether they are of iron or wood: the former twenty-six years, the latter seventeen years.

The Federal Railways are the greatest consumers of power in Switzerland and it has been estimated that if they were to go back to using coal the cost would be more than 100 million francs a year extra.

In 1959 the Swiss private railways carried approximately eighty-one million passengers on their 2,100 kilometers of route track. In other words, in spite of the enormous increase in private motoring more than 200,000 people every day chose of

their own free will to travel on the Swiss private railways. Not to mention the 600,000 who daily travel on the Federal Railways.

Although competition from road traffic has been particularly severe on suburban lines, most private railways have managed to maintain and in some cases have even stepped up their rush-hour peak services.

Infrastructure costs vary enormously from district to district. They are highest on the Lötschberg line which runs entirely through difficult mountainous terrain. The price per kilometer here works out at 1,118,000 Swiss francs. On the Jungfrau line, which is mainly tunnel, the cost is 803,000 Swiss francs per kilometer, on the Schöllenen line, 614,000, and on the Constance-Toggenburg line 429,000. All these are well above the average for the Federal



The Gornergrat Railway in the Valais district typifies the genius displayed by Swiss railway builders in overcoming many difficult obstacles.

Railways which is 313,000 Swiss francs per kilometer.

The track itself and its safety installations are superb. On the line between Geneva and Zurich the driver has to obey signals. If he passes a signal set at stop the brakes go on automatically.

One of the most expensive items in building Switzerland's railways has been the tunnels. The Simplon, 19,824 metres long, cost 114 million francs or 5,750 francs per metre; the Gotthard, 15,003 metres long, 62 million francs or 4,130 francs per metre; the Lötschberg, 14,612 metres long, 52 million francs or 3,560 francs per metre. The increase in the cost of building tunnels has been enormous. Today it would cost as much as 9,000 or 10,000 Swiss francs every metre of a double track. Altogether there are 5,133 railway bridges, which, if laid end to end, would make a bridge seventy-six kilometres long.

In 1957 305,000 breakfasts and 521,000 lunches and dinners were served in dining cars on Switzerland's railways.



It costs several times as much to lay a track in mountainous districts as on the flat, but fares on the Swiss railways are no higher on the mountain routes than elsewhere. One of the most expensive items has been the construction of tunnels.

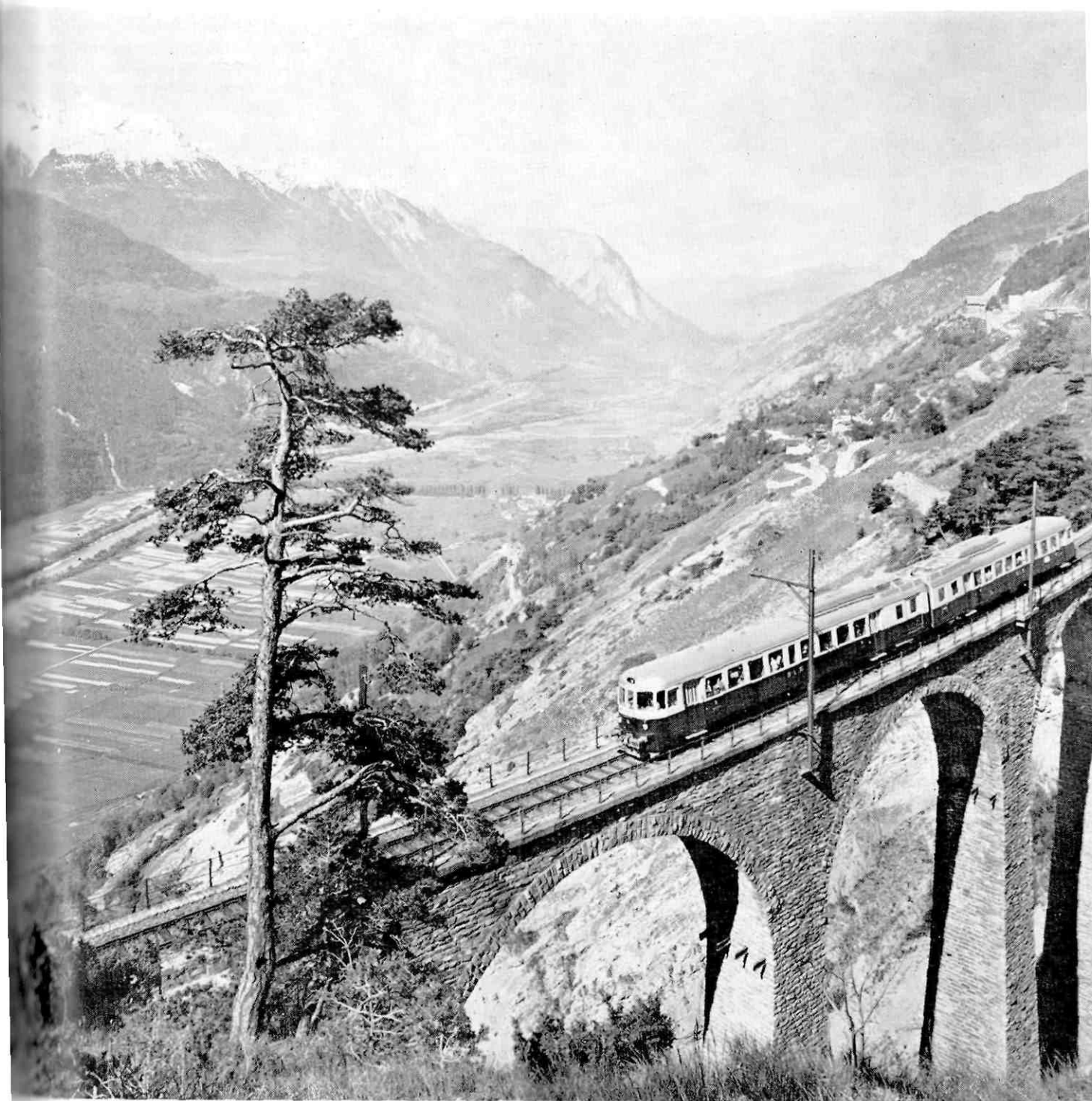


Up-to-date equipment and facilities characterize the Swiss railway network. Track and safety installations are of the highest order, resulting in an efficiency and a safety record which can compare with the best anywhere else in the world.

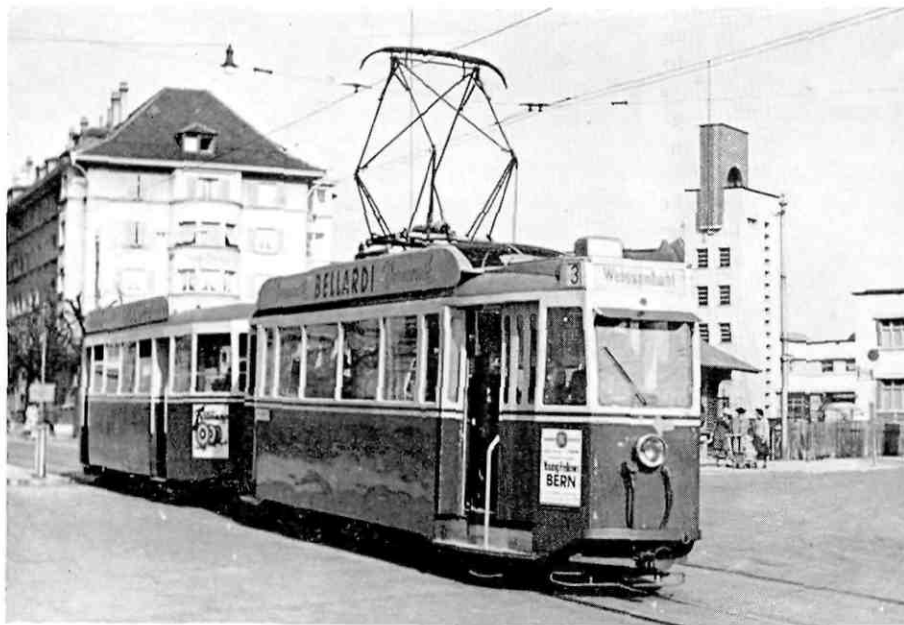



Station scene on the Federal Railways near Zurich. The Federal Railways operate some 4,000 kilometers of route track. Longest non-stop run is from Zurich to Bellinzona, a distance of 260 kilometers which is covered in three hours twenty-two minutes.

Blue Arrow service on the privately-operated Bern-Lötschberg-Simplon Railway provides the passenger with a wonderful view of the Rhone Valley. In 1939, the Swiss private railways carried some 81 million passengers on their 2,100 km of track (Photo by courtesy of Bern-Lötschberg-Simplon Railway)



Sixty years of municipal tramways in Berne



 THE BERNE MUNICIPAL TRAMWAYS celebrated their sixtieth birthday at the beginning of this year: it was on 1 January 1900 that the city bought out the tramway company hitherto operating the network. The deal took a little time to put through because, although the city council was willing, and the shareholders too, a foreign bank had bought up enough shares to prevent the deal going through. The council retorted by refusing the tramway company permission to build a new line. Sometimes even bankers can be outwitted. (Incidentally the shareholders got a good return on their investment – money back plus 4% interest.)

Naturally, the tramway system thus municipalized had had its forerunners. Horse-drawn trams had started up in 1885, an hourly service being run from 7.30 a.m. to 7 p.m. On certain routes, these had been preceded by regular coach services. But it looked as if the days of the horse were numbered – at least as the motive power for public service vehicles. As early as 1884 there was talk of a company to run steam trains almost into the centre of the town. Somebody also came up with the idea of vehicles run on compressed air. Nantes was doing it in France and Berne had enough water power to ensure an ample supply of compressed air. A company was formed in 1888 – the Berne Tramway Company. The first compressed air tram started on its inaugural run at the end of 1890. Top speed was about

10 mph. The Berne Corporation was taking no chances however and had passed a bye-law making it compulsory for the trams to be equipped with speed indicators. Happy days!

The compressed-air idea turned out quite successful. So much so in fact that plans were made for an extension of the service. Unfortunately, the water supply available was insufficient to permit of any extension of the compressor plant. In the circumstances, thoughts turned to the new 'wonder child' – electricity. In 1891, a couple of experts were sent to an exhibition in Frankfurt where an electric tram installation was on show. Their report however was unfavourable. The decision was therefore taken to build and run the new north-south route with steam locomotives. Seven locomotives were or-

A typical tram operated by the Berne municipal authority. Just over sixty years ago the city bought out the company which had formerly been running the tramway system. Those sixty years have seen many changes in operating methods.

dered in the year 1893 and in May 1901 the second service, the north-south route, went into operation.

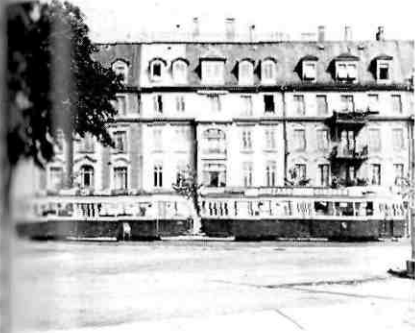
In spite of a certain amount of opposition, however, electric trams were far off. After all, Berlin had had them since 1890. Most of the objections came from house-owners who did not like having their houses 'uglified' by the overhead wall fixtures holding the cross-arms. Nevertheless, the first electric service was inaugurated in 1901. The other two services soon switched over to electric power and new routes were quickly developed. Meanwhile the petrol engine was coming into its own and the day of the omnibus was dawning.

For the first time since it was acquired by the municipal authority the Berne tramway system was operated at a loss in the years 1919-20. The trade depression was making itself felt. Nevertheless the possibilities of opening up new routes were actively considered, and double-tracking on existing lines extended. In 1924, however, the bus had 'arrived' and, although it had not been there so long, so, proved the answer to the question: do we or don't we, at much cost, extend the tramway services? Having shown the first few weeks that it was popular and profitable, the bus had come to stay. Less than a year later a second bus service was put into operation and by 1927 the bus services were carrying nearly two million passengers a year. When a local bridge building project in 1930 opened up the possibility of a tram or bus service to a certain district, the body mentioned a tram service. It looked as if the tram had had its day.

The years of the Second World War, however, were to prove otherwise. Unavoidable difficulties in procuring sufficient petrol and oil made severe cuts in bus services imperative. For the first



trolleybus has failed to oust the tram as the principal passenger carrier in the streets of Berne. Last year the trams were still carrying ten times as many passengers than the newer trolleybuses



Modern-type tram in service with the Berne Municipal Transport System. The tram seems to provide the answer to the town's passenger transport needs. There are no present plans for any large-scale replacement by other forms of transport




The bus made its appearance on the Berne municipal transport in 1924. It proved both popular and profitable and by 1927 the bus services were carrying nearly two million passengers a year. But the number of the tram were by no means numbered

When they started up, the buses were being run at a loss. After many ups and downs, the trams on the other hand were doing good business. Nevertheless economic conditions were the order of the day. It was during this trying period that the trolleybus made its appearance – in 1941. It was the faithful tram, however, which has to carry the burden of an increasing demand for passenger transport which

bus and trolley – through no fault of their own – were unable to meet. They did their best, of course, even to the extent of the buses running around on wood gas – with the kitchen stove, as it were, trailing behind.

Fortunately, the end of the war brought happier days for the city's passenger transport system. There were certainly none of the difficulties which characterized the period after the First World War. By the end of 1946 the first step in extending the town's passenger transport services was taken with an extension to an existing tramline. 'Old faithful' was back in business, and the Berne passenger transport system began to assume its present familiar aspect with tram, bus and trolleybus, all doing their best to cope with the town's growing passenger transport needs. Last year the system carried 60.5 million passengers of whom over half went by tram and nearly three million by trolleybus. Indications are that the system – and especially the trams – will continue to carry an increasing number of passengers as the years go by and as the town grows. The days of the tram, at least as far as Berne is concerned, are far from numbered in spite of the growth in the number of private cars. Trams still carry by far the major proportion of the 165,000 passengers daily transported on the town's passenger transport system.

Switzerland and its cultural influence


 THE FUSION OF LOCALISM WITH WORLD-WIDE CONNECTIONS is one of the main features of Switzerland and characterizes at the same time her economic and political position among the nations of the world. It is worth while noting that Switzerland has inspired a number of innovations in other countries; for instance the typically Swiss institutions of the referendum and initiative have served various states of the USA as models for similar institutions. Switzerland, on the other hand, had in 1848 taken from America the idea of

the bicameral system for the representation of the people and the cantons. Tribute has been paid to Swiss legislation, too, as when Turkey, in building up her republic, took over and adapted to her needs the entire Swiss Civil Code.

This, however, is only a part of the *cultural influence* which Switzerland has had on the world. There has always been an active exchange of ideas between her and the rest of the world in more than one sphere, and she has never failed to consider or assimilate new trends of thought, especially if they were in keeping with the Swiss character.

Switzerland's proudest achievement lies in her body politic and the way she harmonized the various great European cultures. She has not only bridged over the points of difference and contrast, but succeeded in welding them into a powerful and fruitful whole. Switzerland, embodying as she does the idea of humanity and mutual tolerance, is by her mere existence the living contradiction of the theory of a hereditary enmity among mankind. She is the living proof that discord between the nations is not fate, but can be mastered by the free creative will of Man.

The Port of Basle

 WITH NO SEABOARD OF HER OWN and depending on other countries for her supplies of essential raw materials, Switzerland attaches great importance to communications and transport. In the early years of the present century, she did everything in her power to develop the Rhine, one of her two big rivers, as a line of communication with the seaports of Antwerp, Rotterdam and Amsterdam and the big industrial centres of western Europe. River traffic progressed satisfactorily and the Port of Basle rapidly became the main gateway to the country. Almost forty per cent of the total volume of the country's foreign trade, which amounted in 1957 to some five million tons of goods, passes through the Port of Basle; of this total, roughly ninety-two per cent is made up of imports.

Conditions facing railwaymen in East Africa

by PIETER DE VRIES, Director of Regional Affairs



General Secretary of the Kenya Railway Association, Bro. J. B. A. Ohanga, addressing members during the November 1959 strike which spearheaded the general movement among railwaymen in East Africa. This strike improved wages and conditions (Photo E.A.R.A.)

FOR THE SECOND TIME running it has been necessary for the ITF to lend a helping hand to the transport workers of East Africa, this time following consultation and in co-operation with the ICFTU. AS on the first occasion, the reason was that a railway strike in one of the East African territories threatened to develop into a general strike affecting all three, i.e. Tanganyika, Kenya and Uganda. In order to understand how this situation came about, it will be useful to take a closer look at the background to the recent events.

There is probably no need to underline the fact that the evergrowing movement for colonial freedom – aimed at the abolition of existing administrative forms and expressed in the demand for self-government, to be followed by complete independence – is accompanied by increasing demands for the Africanization of industrial life, in other words for more and more utilization of African workers, including their employment in the more responsible posts. For the young, and in many respects still inexperienced workers' organizations this involves a task which is certainly not one of the easiest. It is only too well known how a development such as that sketched above can often result in extreme tensions and at

very best takes place in an atmosphere of passion. Where trade unions are faced with a situation of this kind it is generally not easy for them to guide the emotions released by legitimate aspirations along the right paths and to keep them there.

It should also be obvious that the results of such a situation are felt primarily and most acutely in the more highly-organized sectors of industry: in this case, in the railway and port industry, which is operated by its management as a single economic entity covering the three territories under the name 'The East African Railways and Harbours Administration'. This undertaking is – and here we are quoting from a booklet issued by the Administration itself

– 'a self-contained and self-accounting organization under the East African Harbours Commission which controls and operates the public transport services of Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda, comprising railways, harbours, road services, lake services and hotel and catering services.' In other words, we get the picture of a comprehensive whole which can provide employment for many workers. On this aspect, the above-mentioned booklet has the following to say: 'It is the largest employer of labour in East Africa and offers excellent opportunities for a career in a wide variety of occupations with security of employment. The salary structure of the Administration is non-racial and equal opportunities for advancement are open to all. It is the policy of the Administration to recruit the bulk of its staff from within East Africa, though in the current shortage of manpower in skilled and professional occupations, recruitment of some trained staff from overseas continues to be necessary for the present.'

If one takes this description as its value, it would seem that there is no cloud in the sky, particularly if one considers the passage which we have italicized. The only question which one could perhaps ask is what is being done to overcome the shortage of skilled manpower and this in fact is one of the points on which the opinion of management and the trade unions tend to diverge. In our considered view, this difference of opinion was one of the contributing factors in the two strikes which have taken place.

We would also mention that the question of Africanization and the consequent need for a revision of existing gradings and wages laid down for them, as well as the relationship between the various gradings was already raised by the trade unions under the general heading of 'regrading' in 1954 and was discussed by them with the ITF's General Secretary during his tour

ica in 1957.

Finally, to complete the picture it should be pointed out that although, as has already been mentioned, the East African Railways Harbours Administration operates as a single unit in all three countries, the existence of the three separate territories – each with its own legislation – means that the railway workers are only allowed to organize trade unions on a purely territorial basis. As was pointed out during the recent conflict, this state of affairs is not conducive to the proper conduct of negotiations when dealing with one of the same employer.

That is the background to the events which took place in East Africa during the latter part of 1959 and the first few months of this year. Let us now turn to the events themselves.

In November last, difficulties arose in Kenya over the behaviour of a European railway employee which, in the view of our African railwaymen's affiliate, was of such a nature that they felt it necessary to press for an inquiry. When no proper satisfaction was given to the union's request, it decided to take strike action, accompanying this with a demand that the European staff member in question should be dismissed. At a later date – when the strike had already been in



(Left to right) Jay Krane, ICFTU Assistant Director of Organization, Jack Purvis, ICFTU Representative for Africa, Kasanga Tumbo, General Secretary of the Tanganyika Railway African Union and Pieter de Vries, ITF Director of Regional Affairs, in informal conversation with Charles A. Millard, ICFTU Director of Organization shortly before the joint ITF-ICFTU mission left for East Africa to assist and advise the striking railwaymen (Photo TCP)

progress for some little time – this was complemented by demands concerning the familiar question of regrading as well as for a revision of wages on this basis.

A detailed account of this strike – in which the Uganda railwaymen's union also joined at a certain point – has already been given in ITF publications, and we therefore do not feel it necessary to make more than a passing reference to it. It is, however, important to underline that what happened – or rather what did *not* happen – during the discussions between management and trade unions following this strike, was the cause of the later events in Tanganyika. However, let us not anticipate at this stage.

The agreement between the railway administration and the Kenya Railway African Union, on which the latter based its decision to end the strike, in addition to conceding the claim for a further investigation into the conduct of the European employee – in which the union was to participate – also explicitly provided for the

immediate opening of negotiations on the railwaymen's claims for a revision of their working conditions.

The outcome of the negotiations which followed, however, was simply a repetition of what had happened in the earlier talks between the Administration and the trade unions. The demands of the latter were rejected as unacceptable, the only reply by management being that it would make no counter-proposals unless the unions were prepared to underwrite its opinion that an increase in the minimum wage to 106.50 shillings per month was the maximum which the undertaking could bear under existing circumstances and that even this amount would only be reached at some unspecified time in the future. In other words, a kind of 'rain-check' offer.

Even though we may accept that the claims made by the unions were too ambitious to be achieved at one go (they had, for example, proposed that the minimum wage, then 80 shillings per month, should be raised to 7.75 shillings per day, i.e. to 232.50 shillings a month) we nevertheless cannot avoid the conclusion that during the negotiations little or nothing was done by management to achieve a compromise which would have been acceptable to both sides.

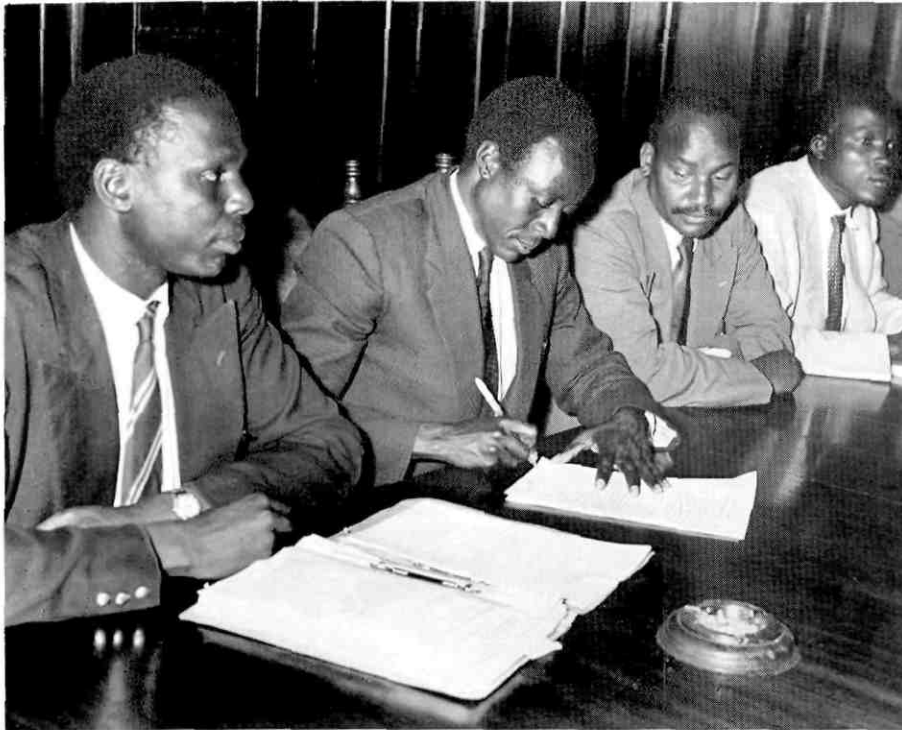
The whole situation had, for the umpteenth time, reached complete deadlock and it was really not surprising that the thought of taking strike action to give force to their demands once again occurred to the unions. At the same time, however, it was equally understandable that the unions of Kenya and Uganda in particular should have had some doubts about the outcome of such an action, coming as it would have done so soon after the not completely successful strike in November. Be that as it may, the fact remains that at a certain point the Tanganyika African Railway Union (TARU) went on strike while the two



Pieter de Vries, ITF Director of Regional Affairs and author of this article, studies photographs of the ICFTU in that organization's quarters in Brussels. Talks were held here with ICFTU representatives on the situation of the railway workers in Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda (Photograph by courtesy of TCP)



Bro. Kasanga Tumbo, General Secretary of the ITF-affiliated Tanganyika Railway African Union, who had come to Brussels to discuss with ICFTU and ITF representatives the growing tension among railwaymen both in Tanganyika and throughout East Africa, seen in conversation with ICFTU's Jack Purvis (TCP)



A return-to-work agreement signed in Kenya following the 1950 strike provided for the immediate opening of negotiations on the workers' claims for a revision of their working conditions. Left to right: H. P. Oduol, President of the Kenya Railway African Union, J. B. A. Othman, General Secretary of the Union, W. Waithe, Vice-President and Nelson Oduol, Secretary of the Union's Nairobi branch (Photo: EAR & ...)

other organizations abstained, despite an earlier decision to take joint action.

We consider that this development is to be seriously deplored. On our side, we had advised against a new strike action, mainly because the organizations were not capable of bearing the financial burden involved and moreover because they could not, and should not, expect the international trade union movement to be able to finance strikes all over the world. At the same time, however, we feel that we should draw attention to what, in our opinion, was the irresponsible attitude adopted by the management during the course of the negotiations. We are certainly not unaware of the fact that they attempt to lay the blame for everything which has happened on the inexperience of the trade unions, and in particular on that of their leaders. We too, would be the last to claim that there is no question of inexperience here. However, we believe that a management which must itself be considered as possessing this so necessary experience should have done everything possible to reach an agreement during the negotiations and that it should have known that this could not be achieved by a flat rejection of the union proposals coupled with a refusal to make any concrete counter-proposal. In our view, they should have realized that by so doing they were putting the unions in an impossible situation, thereby provoking them to extreme measures. In that sense, we consider that they must also accept

their share of the responsibility for the difficulties which arose.

It would be superfluous to recount the later events in detail. Suffice it to mention that the African railway employees in Tanganyika gave complete support to the call to stop work as from 8 February and that by the end of that month there had been not the slightest change in the situation, despite the fact that the strikers had received no support of any kind. This fact, coupled with reports of growing tension – not only in Tanganyika but throughout East Africa – led the ICFTU and the ITF, following joint consultations, to decide to request Brother Jack Purvis, ICFTU representative for Africa, to go to Dar-es-Salaam in order to advise and assist the TARU and, if possible, to suggest to them ways and means of achieving a reasonable solution of the dispute.

The reports which he sent to us – based on an investigation which was not simply confined to Tanganyika but also covered the situation in Kenya and Uganda – were of so serious a nature that it was considered necessary to have further talks with him and a number of trade union leaders from East Africa. Among other things, for example, the reports revealed that the railway administration had tried to reach an agreement with the Uganda union on a wage increase which was far below the proposals originally put forward on a joint basis by the three railwaymen's organizations. This move by the administration, which seemed

to involve an attempt to break the Tanganyika strike in Uganda, had caused a lot of bad blood in Kenya and Tanganyika and led the unions there to consider whether it was not necessary to convert the Tanganyika stoppage into a general strike throughout East Africa.

The proposed talks were held in Brussels on 31 March and 1 April, and were followed by discussions in London with the BRITISH RAILWAY UNION (BRU) on 2 April and with representatives of the British Colonial Office on 4 April. As a result, and following a request from the Tanganyika Federation of Labour, it was decided that Brother Millard of the ICFTU and the writer should travel to Dar-es-Salaam with the aim of trying, together with Bro. Purvis, to bring about a solution of the difficulties in consultation with the national centres and the railwaymen's organizations of Tanganyika, Kenya and Uganda.

Immediately following the arrival of ICFTU and ITF representatives, a joint conference was held in Dar-es-Salaam with the three railway unions and the three national centres. This conference, which lasted from 10 to 13 April, resolved to accept the services of the international trade union representatives in an effort to resolve the dispute. It was agreed that if the management refused to accept the mediation offer by the two Internationals then the conference would be recalled. The conference also called for the continued moral and material aid of the public and adopted the following policy:

- I. (a) to reaffirm the decisions taken at the meeting*) held in Nairobi on 17th March 1960;
- (b) that the findings of a full scale independent public inquiry in the Kenya African Railways & Harbours Administration should be made public within six months;
- (c) that a settlement of the present dispute shall hold a provision

*) At this meeting, the management's offer to the Uganda union – an increase of 10s. per month for the lowest-paid grade in Group C – was discussed in considerable length. In order to demonstrate again their willingness to compromise, the union decided to scale down their claim (already substantially reduced in the course of negotiation) to 5s. per month, with the proviso however that this should apply to all employees in Group C.

no victimization shall take place.

To regard the present dispute as being common to the three unions and to decide that any settlement thereof must be on the basis of what is laid down under point (1) of this agreement and must apply to the three unions.

To confirm the urgency of the establishment of permanent coordinating machinery between the three unions concerned and furthermore to establish permanent machinery between the management and those unions to deal with grievances and disputes and to that end as a first step to avail itself of the services of the East, Central and Southern Africa Area Committee of the ICFTU.

Following the conference, a series of talks were held with a number of government officials, including the Minister of Labour, the Minister of Finance, the Commissioner of Labour and the Conciliator. It was clear from these that there was a genuine desire on the part of the Tanganyika Government for a speedy solution of the dispute which would satisfy both parties as well as for an improvement in railway labour-management relations. Discussions also took place with representatives of the railway territorial administration and of African political life. All these talks were accompanied by constant consultation with the railway union and the Tanganyika Federation of Labour.

Eventually, after preliminary talks with railway industrial relations officers, the mediators met Sir James Farquharson, the General Manager, and three other management representatives in Nairobi. At this conference, held on 19 and 20 April, it became clear that agreement on the union demand for a 10s. increase for all grades in Group 'c' (i.e. the Group to which African workers belong) was unlikely. However, there did appear to be general agreement on the principle of 'no victimization', the suggestion of 'an independent inquiry into the state of industrial relations in the East African Railways and Harbours

Administration with particular reference to the nature and suitability of the machinery needed for sound industrial relations', and the application of any wage increase to all three territories - although the management said that this could not necessarily be done simultaneously.

In the end, the General Manager made it clear that the union demand for a 10s all-round increase would not be met in full. It would cost approximately £200,000 a year, he said, and the administration was not prepared to go beyond £100,000. In reply, the mediators told him that they considered the offer inadequate and that they could not recommend it to the unions. They then returned to Dar-es-Salaam where efforts continued to persuade the administration to adopt a more reasonable attitude. In consultation with the union, they also indicated that an agreement could be reached on the basis of a total sum of £130,000.

During the period which followed, it was evident that the Conciliator, the Governor and government officials were doing what was possible to bring the parties around the negotiating table again. We gained the impression that it might be a question of finding a 'face-saving formula' for management, but at the same time there seemed to be a feeling in some management circles that if a settlement could be delayed long enough, the union might capitulate on their terms. However, the union stood firm on its compromise proposal of 10s. increase for the lowest grade (c6) reducing to 4s. for the highest (c1).

On April 27, the railway administration offered terms as a basis for a return to work. Clause 1 of these, which offered an increase of 10s. for the lowest grade 'with adjustments in other Group C scales up to C3', was not considered specific enough. Clauses 2 and 3, which were acceptable, read as follows:

2. Both parties agree to an independent inquiry into the state of industrial relations in the East African Railways and Harbours Administration, with particular reference to the nature and suitability of the machinery needed for sound in-

dustrial relations. The inquiry will be carried out by a Commissioner, appointed by the Secretary of State. The Commissioner will submit his report and recommendations within six months of the return to work.

3. There will be no victimization by the Management of any member of the staff who came out on strike or by the Union of any member of the staff who continued to work during the strike, nor shall the period of the strike be considered as being a break in service for the purpose of the Administration's pension and gratuity regulations or other matters dependent upon service.

The union's counter-proposal called for the increases already mentioned above, recognizing that the total sum involved would be £130,000 and stipulating that its actual distribution should be worked out by both parties with the assistance of ITF representatives. This was rejected by management.

Later, the union discovered that manage-



Pieter de Vries, ITF Director of Regional Affairs, flanked by Tom Mboya, General Secretary of the Kenya Federation of Labour, addresses railway strikers outside the headquarters of the East African Railways & Harbours in Nairobi. The Kenya strike, in which the Uganda railwaymen also joined, was later to be followed by a rail strike in Tanganyika (An EAR & H photo)



A moment of light relief, as speaker and 'barracker' stage a 'squaring up' performance during the Kenya railwaymen's strike. The discontent of African railwaymen in the three territories of Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda, however, calls for seriousness and applied goodwill on the part of the employers

ment had widely distributed a letter (dated April 26) urging a return to work and guaranteeing that no charge 'for being on strike' would be made – an act which the union did not regard as conducive to an amicable settlement.

On the following day, the Conciliator informed the General Secretary of the Railway African Union that management was preparing a new offer. After several postponements, a further conference was finally held on 30 April. In the meantime, the international representatives had a meeting with the Minister of Labour in order to explain fully the trade union standpoint, to protest at the procrastination of the railway administration, and to request his support, as well as that of the Governor, in obtaining a fair settlement.

At the meeting on 30 April, the management finally agreed to a settlement, operative from 1 May on a return to work, along the lines of the union compromise proposals: (i) increases ranging from 10s. for Grade C6 to 4s. for Grade C1; (ii) an inquiry into the state of industrial relations; and (iii) no victimization by either side.

Following the settlement, the international trade union representatives issued a joint Press Statement, reading as follows:

'On behalf of all those we are privileged to represent we are indeed grateful that the Railway Workers strike in this country is now ending and that a better basis for important improvements in East African Railways and Harbours Administration industrial relations has been laid in the settlement terms agreed upon.

With few exceptions since arriving three weeks ago, we have received first rate co-operation from Government, Administration and Trade Union representatives and we are particularly pleased with the patience and very commendable fortitude shown by the striking Railway workers and their families and friends.

While the wage issue, especially for those in the lower wage groups, is a matter of major importance, we believe the agreement to establish an independent Enquiry Commission is even more significant and promising in the circumstances.'

Bro. Millard then left Dar-es-Salaam on 1 May, as did also the writer later the same day. Just before the latter's departure, he received a copy of letter from the regional representative of the railways to Bro. Millard in which it was stated that the General Manager had declared that he reserved the right to apply, or not apply, the wage increases to the other territories. Despite this, however, the settlement has meanwhile been applied to Uganda with effect from 9 May and on 27 May the ITF was informed by Bro. Purvis that the EARHA administration had agreed to apply the terms of the Tanganyika settlement to Kenya, also with effect from 9 May.

Our account of recent events in East Africa and the difficulties arising out of them for our railwaymen could be ended at this point. Nevertheless, we would not like to conclude without expressing once again our earnest hope that the

projected investigation into industrial relations and the measures taken as a result will be beneficial not only to the situation of our trade unions but to the whole of East African Railways & Harbours Administration.

As underlined in the press statement quoted above, we consider that the agreement to carry out this investigation is of the greatest possible significance. In this connection, particular attention should be drawn to the peculiar situation whereby a single undertaking operating in three separate territories must deal with its organized workers through a number of territorial unions which, as the result of local legislation, are prevented from combining on an inter-territorial basis.

That such a set-up is not exactly conducive to the solution of industrial problems – which, by the very nature of the undertaking, are in many cases common to all three territories – has been proved by the recent dispute. It is equally obvious that the territorial character of the official bodies responsible for dealing with industrial conflicts also has strongly adverse effects. Not to mention the somewhat shadowy High Commission, which, as our experience showed, is – even in such a highly dangerous situation – extremely difficult to approach and perhaps even more difficult to set in motion.

We realize, of course, that the rather divergent political structures of the three territories mean that it is perhaps not too easy to replace the Commission by something better. Nevertheless, we consider it of vital urgency for the many thousands of workers employed in undertakings under the direct control of the High Commission that steps should be taken to enable them both to organize and to defend their interests at inter-territorial level.

Finally, we would agree with the sentiment expressed by Bro. Millard in our recent article published in *Free Labour World* that 'May 1 will have a special meaning for the trade unions in Tanganyika, Uganda and Kenya in 1960 and the years ahead'.

Jets can be dangerous!



Servicing a Trans World Airlines' Intercontinental Boeing 707. Jetliners of this and similar type are due to appear with increasing frequency on the world's airline services. Their maintenance and general servicing present a number of problems to ground personnel (Photo courtesy TWA)

A THE DANGERS ASSOCIATED with the servicing and maintenance of the world's huge fleet of civil aircraft are perhaps not so immediately apparent as those entailed in actually flying the planes. Nevertheless, just as it is true to say that the ability of a skilled and conscientious flight crew to bring a planeload of passengers safely to their destination depends in the last resort on the vast amount of work which has been put in by a whole army of workers on the ground, so it is equally true to point out that guaranteeing safety in the air can involve considerable risks for the ground crews.

This problem is one that is constantly increasing, not only due to the rapid expansion of the civil aviation industry itself but also because of the introduction of more complex and, in many ways, more dangerous types of aircraft. This applies particularly to the jet turbine equipment which is now being placed in service by aviation companies throughout the world. A large number of ITF members are already engaged in work on such aircraft and many more will be switching over to jets in the months to come. One of our United States affiliates, the Air Transport Division of the Transport Workers' Union, has recently carried out a thorough investigation into the problems and dangers of servicing jet planes and has published a small booklet (ATD-TWU and Jet Safety) which contains a comprehensive collection of hints and rules for jet maintenance personnel. In view of the universal interest for ground staffs, we think it well worth while to summarize the booklet's main conclusions.

As one might have expected, the booklet concentrates primarily on the hazards associated with jet engines, the effect of noise, the danger of being sucked into the engines or being burned by the hot gases issuing from the exhaust. At the same time, however, detailed attention is also given to the dangers of other equipment such as radio and radar, modern electrical systems with much higher voltage than on piston aircraft, pneumatic and hydraulic systems, and the harmful effects of fuels and solvents on the unprotected skin.

At first sight it might seem strange that noise should be one of the principal dangers of the jet age. The surprise, however, can be put down to the comparative rarity of noise to now of really noisy equipment. Noise, measured in decibels (units which indicate the pressure sound makes on the

eardrums), begins to cause physical injury at ninety-five decibels. At a distance of seventy-five feet, the noise from a jet engine may be as much as 137 decibels. It is therefore obvious that anyone working near such engines must be equipped with ear plugs and similar protective devices. Even then there are limits to the amount of time which can safely be spent near a jet. At full power in the maximum noise areas, the limit is one minute with an ear muff, two minutes with plugs, fifteen minutes with both plugs and muffs, and forty-five minutes with plugs and a helmet. Danger to hearing can result from any extension of these limits.

To be safe, the union recommends wearing ear plugs at any time when one is within 400 feet of the engines, ear muffs within one hundred feet and helmet and plugs when closer than twenty-five feet. It points out, too, that even the turbine starter is capable of generating 120 decibels.

Turning to jet suction, the booklet emphasizes that ground crews will be working in vicinity of four giant vacuum cleaners which do not differentiate between the objects they suck into their intakes. To underline the silent danger awaiting them, it points to US Air Force experience that on average a man has been sucked into jet intakes every sixty days and that in every case death or crippling injury has resulted. Maintenance staff should therefore always keep twenty-five feet between them and the intake, whether it is directly in front or to either side.

The jet exhaust can constitute an even greater hazard. On the Boeing 707, for example, the exhaust has a velocity of 590 miles an hour and a temperature of 370 degrees Fahrenheit at twenty-five feet distance. At one hundred feet, the speed is still ninety-four mph and the temperature

140 degrees. Even when the engines are idling it is best to keep at a distance of at least 200 feet. It takes only a second for the engine to go from idle to a power setting.

Some types of jet hydraulic fuel, particularly that known as Skydrol 500, can cause skin irritation and even internal injury. Skydrol 500 is now being replaced because of this danger, but all hydraulic fuels should be treated with healthy respect and gloves should be worn when handling them as well as when working round hot exhaust or tail pipes. The hydraulic system on jets, incidentally, contains an explosive pressure of 3,000 pounds per square inch. The system must therefore be completely switched off before disconnecting lines, otherwise fluid can shoot out at dangerous velocity.

The jet pneumatic system, too, has its dangers. It develops a temperature of 400 degrees Fahrenheit and the systems ducting will become hot enough to burn the skin. The electrical system, unlike those of older aircraft which employed 28-volt DC current, uses 220-volt AC power which is sufficient to prove fatal. The utmost caution – and dry skin – is essential when working on it. Radio power, too, though not lethal, can cause severe burns because of its high frequency. Aerials should not be touched when main power is on in the aircraft. Ground power units and tow tractors generate the same voltage as the aircraft's electrical system.

Over-inflation and the two-piece rims used on high-pressure tyres can also cause fatal accidents. Tyre cage guards are a must when tyres are being inflated and regulators should be used to limit the air flow.

Finally, ATD-TWU's booklet makes a few recommendations about how to dress safely when working on jets. Any type of loose clothing should be avoided, as should also wrist watches, rings and other types of jewellery – both can catch on moving parts and the latter can make electrical contact. Gloves should be worn and sleeves rolled down when working near hot exhaust or tail pipes.



Not for want of skill

⊗ THAT PERSONALITY DEFICIENCY, rather than lack of skill, is the dominant element, is a conclusion of the utmost practical importance in the prevention of road accidents generally. It indicates that an attack on road accidents by way of driver training and more stringent driving tests, both of which concern themselves mainly with skill and competence, is not likely to prove effective.

Under practical circumstances, it is generally not possible to be selective... What is, however, feasible, is to test all persons involved in two or more accidents, even minor ones. Action in their case could well be justified if proneness was indicated by the test result.

Dr. S. Biesheuvel, Director of the SA National Institute for Personnel Research

South Africa - a police state

⊗ SOUTH AFRICA'S POLICY OF APARTHEID is sheer fantasy and an elaborate piece of self-deception. Such an ideology, if persisted in, will damage the white people most in the end, even though it is intended to secure their protection. This must be so, because any policy which assumes that civilization can only be preserved by constantly restricting and repressing particular racial groups in society must sooner or later undermine the courage and sap the vitality of the very group which implements that policy. That is already beginning to happen. Many white people are held ever more captive by their fears. Obedience to this racial sectarianism has brought South Africa under emergency regulations and a fully-fledged police state. One by one, the lights of freedom have been extinguished.

Rt. Rev. R. A. Reeves, Bishop of Johannesburg (speaking in London)

Denied a living wage

⊗ IT GRIEVES ONE TO SEE THAT THE AFRICANS' INCOME DOES NOT APPEAR TO CONCERN THE AUTHORITIES.

One cannot overlook the pathetic situation faced by the workers of South Africa

as a whole - yet the majority and back-bone of the country's labour force is deprived of the right to earn a living wage.

When one travels around the busy shops in Johannesburg - furniture, grocery and drapery stores - it can be seen that the Africans constitute the major portion of the customers. The growth of the townships to the far west of Johannesburg is another source of wealth to the business men and factory owners. Unfortunately, these employers fail to understand that the producers of their products are also consumers of the goods manufactured, and it would assist them if wages were based above the bread-line scale.

The African is not given the chance to qualify as skilled workers. Even so, the labour they perform is equally important to an industry. In any working premises, for instance, what would happen if the place is not swept or cleaned for just one week?

How many training schools and centres are provided for Africans? How many avenues of advancement are open to them?

We have a situation where South Africa is crippled in development because its source of expansion is barred by racial industrial legislation which affects the less privileged workers and gives the masses no security for the future.

Sarah Chitjah in The Garment Worker (South Africa)

Colonialism at work

⊗ A UNIQUE EVENT OCCURRED IN AFRICA NOT SO LONG AGO: the coloured population there came out energetically as the advocate of a European colonial civil servant. The civil servant is an Englishman, by name Jim Brandie, and his job as an inspector in the Uganda Labour Department was to ensure the application of labour laws and regulations in force. As time went by, however, the colonial government began to realize that Brandie was doing his job with a little too much enthusiasm and, moreover, tended to be helpful to the workers' side. The man was dismissed and at the same time expelled from Uganda. This behaviour of the colonial government roused a storm of

indignation among the coloured population. When representations were turned down, protest demonstrations were organized followed by a twenty-four-hour strike and a decision on the part of the Uganda trade unions to break off relations with the Uganda labour department. These events roused no little interest around the world at the time and are generally regarded as highly detrimental to the prestige of Uganda's colonial government - with its English associations.

Another event occurred about this time in the same region and in a closely associated field. As is well known, the ICFTU has established a school in Kampala, Uganda, for the purpose of training trade unionists. The school is available to students from all parts of Africa. When the four-month course was due to start (in February last), a number of things occurred which, to say the least, were peculiar. A couple of students from Nyasaland were refused travelling permits by the British colonial government. A student from Togo was refused an entry permit into Uganda. Another student from Mauritania was refused permission by the Ugandan authorities to enter Uganda. In not one of these cases was the ICFTU able to obtain the reasons for these measures. We have had a clear case of an arbitrary exercise of dictatorial powers on the part of a colonial regime which evidently does not understand that the training given at the Kampala school is designed to promote among the African population an appreciation of the value of balanced and reasoned argument in all their dealings.

from Fackföreningsrörelsen (organ of the Swedish Federation)

Willing to learn

⊗ IF THESE TERRITORIES ARE STILL POLITICALLY INEXPERIENCED and economically underdeveloped, that is something about which their former rulers should feel ashamed... The Africans now demand democracy because students have told them we have it, not because we have taught it to them.

from The Observer

International Transport Workers' Federation

President: FRANK COUSINS

General Secretary: O. BECU

7 industrial sections catering for

RAILWAYMEN
ROAD TRANSPORT WORKERS
INLAND WATERWAY WORKERS
PORT WORKERS
SEAFARERS
FISHERMEN
CIVIL AVIATION STAFF

● Founded in London in 1896

● Reconstituted at Amsterdam in 1919

● Headquarters in London since the outbreak of the Second World War

● 225 affiliated organizations in 71 countries

● Total membership: 6,500,000

The aims of the ITF are

● support national and international action in the struggle against economic exploitation and political oppression and to make international working class solidarity effective;

● cooperate in the establishment of a world order based on the association of peoples in freedom and equality for the promotion of their welfare by the common use of the world's resources;

● seek universal recognition and enforcement of the right of trade union organization;

● defend and promote, on the international plane, the economic, social and occupational interests of all transport workers;

● represent the transport workers in international agencies performing functions which affect their social, economic and occupational conditions;

● furnish its affiliated organizations with information about the wages and working conditions of transport workers in different parts of the world, legislation affecting them, the development and activities of their trade unions, and other kindred matters.

Affiliated unions in

Aden • Argentina • Australia • Austria • Barbados • Belgium
Brazil • British Guiana • British Honduras • Canada • Ceylon
Chile • Colombia • Costa Rica • Cuba • Denmark • Ecuador
Egypt • Estonia (Exile) • Faroe Islands • Finland • France
Germany • Ghana • Great Britain • Greece • Grenada
Honduras • Hong Kong • Iceland • India • Indonesia • Israel
Italy • Jamaica • Japan • Kenya • Luxembourg • Malaya
Malta • Mauritius • Mexico • The Netherlands • New Zealand
Nicaragua • Nigeria • Norway • Nyasaland • Pakistan
Panama • Paraguay • Peru • Philippines • Poland (Exile)
Republic of Ireland • Rhodesia • St. Lucia • South Africa
South Korea • Spain (Illegal Underground Movement)
Sudan • Sweden • Switzerland • Tanganyika • Trinidad
Tunisia • Uganda • Uruguay • United States of America
Venezuela • Zanzibar

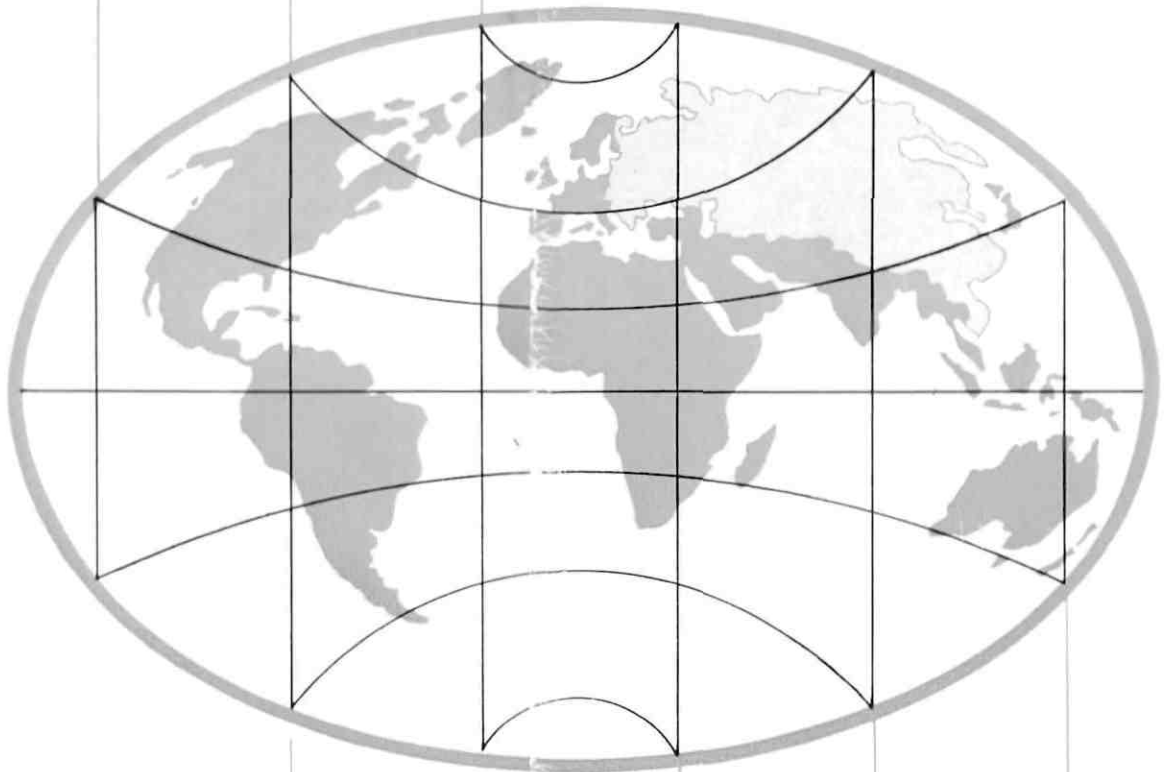
Publications for the world's transport workers

International Transport Workers' Journal

Internationale Transportarbeiter-Zeitung

ITF Journal (Tokyo)

Editions of Journal



Editions of Press Report

Pressebericht

Pressmeddelanden

Communications de Presse

Transporte (Mexico City)

Press Report Two separate editions in English issued in London and Singapore