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COMMUNIST THUGS, seeking to block arms shipments, are losing the . . .

# Hot War on Europe's Docks

Free workers, organized with U. S. union help, slug back and break the Red grip on waterfronts. Shipments are moving now, but all-out conflict might bring a sterner test.

Communist strength is on the wane among the dockworkers of Western Europe's ports. Where once the Reds were so strong that they could practically dictate what goods could move and what could not, they now face an organized, militant opposition. And that opposition owes a heavy debt—in money, advice, and personnel—to U. S. labor, particularly the AFL.

It takes more than just slogans and pep meetings to break the Communist grip on the docks. From Cherbourg to Marseilles, to Genoa and Naples, to Piraeus in Greece and Haifa in Israel, and back around to the North African ports, shadowy action committees—the vigilantes—are mobilizing. Their goal: to throttle Communist influence on the docks and protect inbound ships and cargoes for Europe's defense. Their weapons: "fists and cargo hooks, if we need them to do the job."

• **International Ties**—AFL comes into the picture through the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the International Transportworkers Federation (an ICFIU affiliate). AFL's European representative, Irving Brown, is masterminding the attack. Already, he's earned himself the nickname "Scar-

face Brown, henchman of the State Dept." in the Communist press.

Americans who wonder what an AFL representative is doing in Europe forget that trade unionism is an international movement. For years AFL has fought the Communist-controlled World Federation of Trade Unions, which for a long time was the only international federation. Right after the war, AFL set up a Free Trade Union Committee specifically to help anti-Communist European union leaders fight off WFTU organizers.

In 1949 WFTU split wide open. Then AFL joined with the British Trade Union Congress and the CIO (until then a WFTU member) to set up the rival International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

For the past year, ICFIU has been pushing a program to break up WFTU all over the globe under the slogan: "Bread—Freedom—Peace." It's managed to weaken the Communist hold on Latin America's unions, and gathered recruits in Australia, Africa, India, Tunisia, and Japan. Today, the federation has over 53-million members, in more than 60 nations.

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U. S. federations are working in Europe. Irving Brown, the generalissimo of the fight on the docks, is an official of both AFL and ICFTU. The lion's share of his financial support comes from AFL's Free Trade Union Committee.

## I. Battle of the Ports

In some areas, the "battle of the ports" has already been fought and won. The Marseilles waterfront—once a Communist fortress—is a good example. A year ago, the party held 54 seats on the port's stevedore committee; now it holds 10.

The battle came to a head over the delivery of U. S. arms aid to Europe. Months before the first shipment arrived last April, Communists outdid themselves with a barrage of razzle-dazzle propaganda—threatening, wheedling, waving the banners of "Peace." Communist bosses in Italy and France confidently predicted that the "American guns would be dumped into the Mediterranean"; one bigwig promised civil war should the police try to suppress Communist demonstrations.

• **Posses Organized**—But as far back as 1948, AFL's Brown and the International Transportworkers had begun undermining the Communists on the docks. They borrowed a leaf from communism's book of terror tactics, recruited a "hard core" of their own: highly mobile posses of rugged dockers, backstopped by semiprofessional street-fighters. Anti-Communist or lukewarm workers—the little guys who had always been kept in line by Communist toughs—screwed up their courage.

At one point, Pierre Ferri-Pisani, secretary of France's anti-Communist seamen's and dockers' union and Brown's sidekick on the waterfront, marched up to the top Communist maritime leader in France and laid it on the line: "If you go on breaking my boys' jaws, we won't bother beating up your boys—we'll come right to you." After that, every now and then one of the party faithful would wind up in the hospital—or would get an unexpected dunk in the tarry backwash around the piers.

• **Strike Fizzled**—When the time came for the first arms aid shipment, the dockers were thoroughly aroused, more resentful than ever against Kremlin dictation. The first shipload arrived in Naples on Apr. 11, 1950—and a highly advertised Communist general strike fizzled badly. Sixty-four dockers—members of the free trade union group—went right ahead and unloaded the ship—without incident.

The same thing happened the next day in Cherbourg, where France's first boatload of arms arrived. Despite party threats, the dockers had already voted

to unload—and proceeded with no trouble.

• **Indo-China, Too**—The Communists also lost their fight to halt arms shipments from France to what they call the "dirty colonial war in Indo-China." Once France's Communist-run General Confederation of Labor had to offer bribes to get maritime workers to strike against loading arms.

There's still a lot of work to be done before Europe's waterfront is "secure," though. The transportworkers have just set up a "Mediterranean Committee," to organize anti-Communist cells in major ports of Italy, Greece, Israel, Egypt, Tunis, Morocco, and Algeria. There's special emphasis on the North African ports—now that the Western allies are stepping up the rehabilitation of airports and other installations there.

## II. Pulled Punches

Irving Brown and the European free trade union leaders are quick to admit this: The real test of their fight will come only if there's a full-blown crisis, or war. There's evidence that the Communist leaders have pulled their "hard core" out of the ports fracas, holding it in reserve rather than have it beaten up by vigilance committees. When orders come from Moscow, though, the local leaders will throw in everything they have in an effort to paralyze the West's shipping.

But the vigilance committee has foreseen that possibility and has spotted its own "inside" men on the docks and on ships. Where the Communists have four or five men planted aboard ship ready to take over, so do the vigilantes.

• **If War Comes**—And though they're ably blocking peacetime sabotage, the anti-Communists still have to prove to the European worker that they can take care of him on such things as wages, working conditions, and inflation control. The fact of the matter is that force—along the lines of the vigilance committees—is effective only where it has the firm support of the majority of people concerned. Right now, that support is there: The rank and file of Western Europe's workers are fed up with Communist terror and indignant at Communist attempts to use the trade union movement to further Stalin's imperialism.

But when the Communist-controlled unions are allowed to soft-pedal political agitation and to champion workers' economic grievances, they may partially counteract the influence of free labor's action committees. For example, a recent attempt by France's CCF to tie lowered living standards and a booming inflation to rearmament has won some new recruits. There's real danger if inflation bites further into the minimum subsistence level of French workers.

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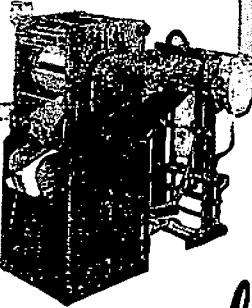
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## Britain's Little Cyclops

Ernie Bevin's hard-hitting, brainy successor has been a foe of communism since way back. A life-long Socialist politician, he still believes in mixed economy and paying for what you get.

Last week Britain got a new Foreign Secretary, 63-year-old Herbert Stanley Morrison. The Western world wondered: Would Morrison stand as firmly against Russia as his predecessor, Ernest Bevin?

Moscow knew the answer. The Kremlin's files would show that Morrison had been a bitter enemy from the start. In the early 1920's, almost every leader of the British Labor Party looked on Soviet communism as just another version of their own socialism. Not so Herbert Morrison, who had taken the trouble to study Karl Marx.

On the day Morrison was appointed, the British press used the following adjectives to describe him: nimble, shrewd, sensible, cautious, practical, amiable, ruthless, honest. The British press also praised his dexterity at political maneuvering, skill in compromise, and appeal to reason. His friends say that he can take a problem, however big, and his mind will snap on it like a machine. Before he lets go, he has a complete grasp of it.

• **Boss of London**—All this faithfully depicts "Our Herb," London's political

boss since 1934, and Labor's leading campaign strategist and parliamentary tactician. But Morrison is more. While lacking the sticky soulfulness that the British call "sincerity," Morrison has real intellectual ability, firm principles, and great courage. London observers predict that he will make at least as good a Foreign Secretary as Ernest Bevin did.

London is Morrison's world, although he knows France well and loves it and has crossed the Atlantic twice. He was born in 1888 in a London suburb, where his father was a policeman and his mother a former housemaid. Three days after birth he lost his right eye in an accident, later was teased in school. But Morrison never showed any chip on his shoulder as a result.

• **Give and Take**—Thus Morrison's start in life was as humble as Ernie Bevin's. But by temperament and experience Bevin and Morrison differ profoundly.

Bevin built a rocklike stubbornness by beating his way up through a dockworkers' union. Morrison developed his shrewdness and adaptability in the give