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Communists Outwitted By New Zealand Unions

833 South Flower Street, Los Angeles 17, California, August 16, 1951.

H. A. Stalls Editor, Charlotte Labor Journal:

Behind the recent news of the settlement of the twenty weeks' strike on the New Zealand waterfronts, lies the exciting story of Cominform tactics meeting a superior strategy through the combined teamwork and action of Scottish, English and New Zealand dock workers.

The two principals in the story are the chairman of the Scottish longshoremen, Tom Christie, and the national secretary of the New Zealand Harbor Board Workers, Bob Freeland. They were unknown to one another, until meeting at the World Assembly for Moral Re-armament at Caux in Switzerland last year. These two men put their ideological training into action this year and by so doing strengthened the hand of the democracies in the Atlantic and the Pacific by frustrating Cominform plans to cripple their countries' economies.

Ideological Strike
 Last February when the officials of the New Zealand Waterside Workers' Union (then affiliated to the maritime section of the Moscow-directed World Federation of Trade Unions) pulled a strike, it was not generally known by their rank and

file that their action would mean additional severe hardship for the British people. It was just then that Britain was also facing difficulties in her meat negotiations with the Argentine. The end result would mean cutting down their already meager ration of 8 cents worth per week.

Although the strike was described by the waterside workers' officials as a "wage dispute," they refused to negotiate according to existing legislation already laid down by the former Labor Government and as recommended by the official national trade union body, the New Zealand Federation of Labor. It was one more case of an ideological attack hung on an economic peg. The Cominform inspirers of the strike had no illusions as to their own objectives of bringing down the New Zealand government and crippling Britain's economy.

In the light of these facts the government of New Zealand had no alternative but to authorize the army and navy to load the ships with the meat so badly needed in Britain.

Freeland's Harbor Board Union which operates all the cranes and mechanical equipment on the New Zealand docks, decided to stay on the job and help get the ships unloaded.

"The Ships Will Be Unloaded"
 Christie of Scotland sent an inquiry to his friend Freeland in New Zealand for the true facts on the strike, as he had been urged by Communist elements to refuse to unload the New Zealand meat ships because of the New Zealand strike.

On having the true facts furnished by a man whom he could trust, Christie at once sent this message to the New Zealand waterside workers: "The ships will be unloaded. Leave them to us and send us more of your great meat. We need it desperately." The London longshoremen, many of whom had participated in Britain's last disastrous dock strike which cost the country \$17 million pounds, agreed with Christie of Scotland, and five ships bringing 87,000 tons of meat to the British people were unloaded.

Speaking of his union's part in keeping supplies flowing, Robert Freeland stated, "I believe it is due to the rank and file of my union that we are in the favorable position we are in today on the waterfront. It would have been a popular decision if our union had gone on strike too. It called upon many people to determine where they stood and also to make decisions which were extremely hard. It was a difficult thing for the members of my union to stand on one side and say, 'We do not believe there is any right in this cause.'"

Longshoremen Unite On MRA

Collective Bargaining What War All Is About

Paul L. Styles, newest member of the National Labor Relations Board, spoke last week at the Hosiery Workers convention in Philadelphia. What he had to say was so important that we are passing along this summary for the information of every union member.

In these days, when we are engaged in a world contest that sometimes seems to dwarf the great holocaust of World War II, we hear quite a bit of talk that collective bargaining should be temporarily side-tracked, that it is a luxury we cannot afford in such times of crisis. This talk, even when it comes from the uninformed or the misinformed, is cause for alarm. Essentially, there are only four ways in which terms and conditions of employment can be determined: (1) They can be fixed by the employer; (2) They can be imposed by the union. (3) They can be ordered by government decree; and (4) They can be determined by collective bargaining.

Our history has made it clear that the first two methods—involving absolute unilateral action by the employer or the union—are incompatible with our system of free enterprise.

The third course—in which the government dictates every single detail of the conditions under which enterprises shall operate and free men shall work — is

The president of Freeland's union, Walter McNeil told how they had asked union members to make a decision on the basis of their own consciences and to be guided by what was right. "If Communists had their way this country would be under their control and under martial law," said McNeil. "The reason this is not so is that some people saw what was right and fought for it."

Freeland said it was meeting British dockers' leaders at the MRA World Assembly at Caux, which had shown him the right course to take. There he had heard former Communists on the London docks, who had been changed over the last year by MRA, state that they would never again take part in another strike without first deciding what was morally right. These men had been the leaders in all the British dock strikes since 1945.

A supporting cable to the New Zealand dock workers came from executive officials of the British National Amalgamated Stevedores & Dockers' Union: "The dockers' traditional international brotherhood finds its fullest expression through Moral Re-Armament. We wholeheartedly support your courageous fight for what is right."

T. G., Los Angeles, Calif. Aug. 16, 1951.

what the fighting is all about. Shall we, at home, adopt the very measures which we abhor, and thereby give impetus to those forces of centralized government control that we are pitted against all over the world?

The fourth course — collective bargaining between the chosen representatives of management and labor—may not be the perfect system, but it is the best ever devised by men jealous of their liberties.

It is just 25 years ago this month that Congress first adopted as a national policy the require-

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