

TRANSPORT GROUP ATTACKS BRIDGES

International Federation, at Havana Meeting, Declares War on His WFTU Unit

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HAVANA, Sept. 12.—The International Transport Workers Federation today declared war on the maritime section of the Communist-dominated World Federation of Trade Unions. This section was formed recently in Marseille and Harry Bridges, president of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, CIO, was named chairman.

J. A. Oldenbroek, general secretary of the International Transport Workers Federation, advised Latin-American transport workers here that the Bridges organization was opposed to all the ideals for which his organization stood. The Oldenbroek group claims a membership of 5,000,000 dockers, railwaymen, seamen, fishermen, civilian aviation employes, inland transport and other transport workers in fifty countries.

At today's conference of Latin-American transport workers, Mr. Oldenbroek reported on the present state of the international federation's boycotts on Panamanian flagships. The boycott was promulgated last May, but has not been fully applied because of negotiations with the Panamanian Government pending further meetings in December in Geneva.

Rival "Encourages Unrest"

Referring to the new maritime section of the World Federation of Trade Unions, Mr. Oldenbroek said it "will obviously support and encourage labor unrest in ports where possible."

"The new organization will sabotage the Marshall Plan and will set up centers for seamen and dockers in many ports," he declared. "They will use their organization as an instrument of Soviet policy and will try to create the impression that the Western powers cannot rely upon the support of seafarers and dockers in case of international conflict."

"Last but not least, they will use their organization for espionage purposes.

"We will fight this program tooth and nail in every port. When the new organization begins any action that is obviously for a non-trade union purpose we will withhold support."

Mr. Oldenbroek announced that the International Transport Workers Federation would expel any affiliate which followed the lead of the Bridges transport section. He indicated that his organization would also carry the fight to the Bridges group in various countries "behind the iron curtain."

The meeting here today, sponsored by the Oldenbroek group, brought together delegates from fifteen Latin American lands and from the United States.

The purpose of the meeting was to establish a regional office and to grant to the regional unit a larger degree of autonomy in federation affairs. The decision to establish regional offices in Latin America, Africa, the Near and Middle East and Southeast Asia was taken at a congress of the transport federation in Oslo last July.

Geneva Conference Dec. 5

Mr. Oldenbroek explained that the conference scheduled for Geneva on Dec. 5 was called as a result of federation negotiations with the Government of Panama. At the meeting, he said, a collective agreement was expected to be negotiated between seafarers' unions affiliated with the transport federation and owners of ships under the flag of Panama.

It is reported that the government of Panama will consider making the Geneva agreement, if one is concluded, apply to all shipowners, whether or not they were represented at the conference called for that purpose.

In any event, the Oldenbroek organization reserves the right to act against any shipowners that refuse to sign the agreement.

Mr. Oldenbroek said he looked forward to a diminution of influence by the World Federation of Trade Unions when the new global labor organization, limited to unions from democratic countries, was informally set up in London this November. The new labor federation, he said, would conduct a global war against Communist infiltration in unions.