

# UNION PLACES BAN ON FOREIGN NEWS

## Volume of Overseas Dispatches Is Cut by Embargo to Aid Press Wireless Strikers

### FEDERAL MEETING TODAY

## U. S. Conciliation Service Calls Session for 11 A. M.—Many Companies Are Affected

A nation-wide embargo by union members on the transmission of press messages to and from countries overseas went into effect at 2 o'clock yesterday afternoon. The action was taken by the American Communications Association, CIO, after a meeting of its executive board at 5 Beekman Street.

Union officials said they acted to bring pressure on Press Wireless, Inc., 1475 Broadway, against which 300 members of the ACA are on strike, and "the leading newspapers who own Press Wireless."

The major companies against which the embargo was ordered, were listed by Lawrence Kelly, international vice president of the union's Radio and Cables department, as the Western Union Cables, RCA Communications, Inc., Mackay Radio and Telegraph Company, Inc., Commercial Cable Company, Globe Wireless, Ltd., French Cable Company, Tropical Radio Telegraph Company and Commercial Pacific Cable Company, in addition to Press Wireless.

"The embargo will last until the strike is settled," said Lawrence Kemmet, public relations director of the union.

### Conciliation Meeting Today

Soon after the union ordered the embargo, the United States Conciliation Service announced that it would call officials of Press Wireless and the ACA to its offices, 341 Ninth Avenue, at 11 o'clock this morning for a conference before a panel of conciliators.

It was first announced and later denied at the union offices that the embargo order exempted the Tass Agency, 50 Rockefeller Plaza, the Russian news-gathering organization. Tass reports were moved up to 4 P. M. and then stopped. The union exempted Government agencies from the embargo. Personal messages and ordinary commercial traffic also were not affected.

That Federal officials were disturbed over the possibility of interruption of the free flow of news was indicated by comments in Washington yesterday. Labor Department officials expressed the hope that the United States Conciliation Service would be able to straighten out the dispute quickly.

The Government officials were deeply concerned over any possible curtailment of news of the Paris Peace Conference, of developments in Palestine and of other international events. It was pointed out also that the Government's own dispatches were supplemented by foreign dispatches received in newspaper offices.

### Many Messages Go Through

Spokesmen for most of the companies affected reported that a large percentage of press messages to and from foreign countries was being handled without difficulty. A representative of Western Union said it was too early to predict the ultimate effect.

"The company regrets," he said, "that through no fault of its own it appears that its normal foreign press service will be interrupted."

The Associated Press reported its flow of incoming news over regular channels had been curtailed. Outgoing Associated Press dispatches to South America were uninterrupted but dispatches from New York to London, routed via Western Union, were stopped.

"The normal flow of foreign news is seriously disrupted," an AP official commented late in the afternoon. "There can be no improvement in the situation unless and until the communications companies notify The Associated Press of the restoration of service." The United Press reported that the embargo had "curtailed drastically" incoming news.

An official of RCA Communications, 66 Broad Street, said that union operators stopped sending or receiving foreign news when the embargo went into effect. Radio broadcasting officials reported that most of the foreign dispatches were coming through as usual. The overseas traffic was being handled by telephone, cable and in other ways.

A spokesman for the Commercial Cable Company, 67 Broad Street, said there was no confusion, but that the operators refused to handle any press copy. The press wordage transmitted by Commercial was estimated at from 15,000 on a slow day to 70,000 on a heavy day. Mackay Radio and Telegraph Company, with main offices at 67 Broad Street, reported a stoppage on the transmission of press copy.

A Radio Corporation of America official said it was difficult to handle the normal flow of 1,000,000 words daily of press copy. He said that all copy for the State Department from the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration conference in Geneva and from the Peace Conference in Paris was being processed, but that there was difficulty in handling news copy.

### Press Wireless Statement

The full public services of Press Wireless, Inc., were pledged by A. Warren Norton, president. After the union ordered the embargo, he issued the following statement:

"Press Wireless has maintained its full complement of services since the hour of the strike up to the present time and will continue to do so. As a common carrier in the public service, transmitting and receiving international news for press entities throughout the

world, Press Wireless will not permit this strike to tie up its business.

"In resorting to an embargo the American Communications Association is striking at the entire reading public. At a time when the Paris Peace Conference and other events of international importance make it especially urgent that there be no interference with the flow of news, the union attempts to draw a curtain separating the United States from the rest of the world. Press Wireless will continue to keep all its circuits in operation in this emergency.

"The public service nature of Press Wireless was expressly recognized by the union when the contract was drawn up and signed by the union and the company, and this was one of the reasons for the union's no-strike pledge, a promise which was broken. The no-strike clause in the contract reads in part, 'The union agrees that there shall be no strike, sit-down, slow-down, walk-out, job action, application of union rules of work, withdrawal of cooperation, concerted refusal to work overtime, or stoppage or curtailment of work for any reason during the life of this agreement.'"

### Strike Called on Wednesday

The strike against Press Wireless was called last Wednesday in protest against the discharge of forty-six operators. Management and union officials agreed on the principle of arbitration, but differed on the methods of carrying it out. The union insisted that the discharged employees be reinstated before arbitration started. The company rejected this plan and suggested the dispute be arbitrated as it stood, agreeing that if the arbitrator decided against it the operators would be reinstated and paid for all time lost.

When Press Wireless, Inc., laid off the forty-six employees it said that because of the sharp drop in post-war traffic their services were not needed any longer.

### Montreal Cable Traffic Halts

MONTREAL, Aug. 12 (Canadian Press)—A spokesman for Anglo-American Telegraph Company, Ltd., said tonight that all cable traffic had been stopped owing to the embargo on all international press services by the American Communications Association, CIO. All other telegraph and cable companies here said they had not been affected by the strike. Telephone companies reported there had been no undue rush to make calls between Canada and the United States.

### London Newspaper Affected

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.  
LONDON, Tuesday, Aug. 31—The London offices of the transatlantic communications companies warned American newspaper correspondents last evening that they could not guarantee delivery in New York of any press messages. The London papers appeared early this morning without any late news reports from their American correspondents. Telephone calls were the only means of getting press messages across and lines were crowded.