

STRIKE THREATENS EMBARGO ON NEWS

Union Seeks to Stop Radio and Cable Service to Back Press Wireless Fight

The shutting off of all radio and cable transmission of news to this country from overseas was threatened yesterday by the American Communications Association, CIO, as a means of increasing the effectiveness of the union's strike against Press Wireless, Inc., worldwide radio communications agency.

The executive boards of the union locals representing employes of RCA Communications, Mackay Radio, Commercial Cable and the Western Union cable department will hold a joint meeting tonight to consider the imposition of a general embargo on all press messages, according to Lawrence Kammet, publicity director of the ACA. He said the meeting probably would be held at the offices of the New York Newspaper Guild, where strike headquarters have been established by the Press Wireless workers.

The strike, which began on Wednesday, involves 300 workers in New York, Washington and San Francisco. It was called in protest against the dismissal of forty-six workers and proposed wage cuts for some of those remaining. The company reported that it was able to maintain normal service on Government and press messages by manning operating positions with executives and supervisors.

Maximum Pressure Urged

The possibility that transmission of press messages by companies not involved in the controversy might be halted by the union was discussed at a closed meeting of union leaders late Wednesday night. At that time, according to Mr. Kammet, the view was expressed that maximum pressure should be directed against newspapers and wire services to force a speedy settlement of the strike at Press Wireless, which is jointly owned by a number of the nation's largest newspapers and press associations.

It was felt, the union spokesman said, that it would not be sufficient to prevent newspapers from diverting their normal Press Wireless file to other radio or cable companies and thus limit the amount of foreign news.

Mr. Kammet said that the union "fully appreciated the seriousness" of cutting off all international news transmission, particularly at the time of the Paris peace conference, and promised that "the most careful consideration" would be given to questions of public policy involved. He declared an embargo would be ordered only as "a last resort" and that a final decision might not be made at tonight's meeting.

If the union succeeded in stopping all movement of news by the radio and cable companies, the only alternative commercial facilities would be those of the American Telephone & Telegraph Company linking this country with Europe and other overseas points by telephone. However, the limited number of trans-oceanic circuits would interfere with the speed of transmission if all press copy had to be filed by telephone.

Relay Copy Refused

Members of the ACA employed by Western Union in this city continued to refuse to handle copy received through Press Wireless for relay to newspapers in this country and Canada. A Western Union spokesman said no trouble was being encountered in Washington and San Francisco, where the Western Union operators belong to the Commercial Telegraphers Union, AFL.

A spokesman for Press Wireless said it had handled a larger volume of copy than normal despite the strike. A report from Washington disclosed that some of the regular operators there had remained on the job, according to the company official.

Thomas A. Knowlton, a Federal conciliator, said he had no immediate plans for calling a new meeting to seek termination of the strike. John F. Ryan, executive vice president of the New York Newspaper Guild, which has instructed its members not to handle Press Wireless copy during the strike, said a committee appointed by the Guild to assist in the efforts to settle the dispute had begun its work, but he disclosed no details of its activities.