

# Idle Ships in Philadelphia Port

## Christian Front Tangles Up Shipping

By John Mellon

(The Worker Staff Correspondent)

PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 5.—The Philadelphia metropolitan area has become a gigantic war center and is performing miracles of production—but a scandalous bottleneck exists on the docks, causing serious delays in delivering arms to our troops and Allies.

In shipbuilding alone, this area has replaced England's famous Clyde bank.

Eleven per cent of all war contracts thus far awarded out of the billions appropriated by Congress are being produced in this region.

And yet—the big, well equipped port of Philadelphia is in a scandalous mess. Shipping is virtually

at a standstill. Thousands of freight cars pass directly by the docks here where ships are lying idle and continue north to Boston, New York and Halifax.

Meanwhile, to add to the seriousness of the situation, this waterfront is contaminated with Christian Frontists and Bund sympathizers who continually stir up dissension and opposition to the nation's war effort. Only this past week, 400 dock workers, members of the International Association, allowed themselves to be provoked by shippers on a wage issue—and left the door wide open for Christian Fronters to foment an outlaw strike. The tie-up, which seriously threatened what little war shipping there is at the port, was only called off after heavy pressure from

Michael J. Crosetto, Federal conciliator and Joseph P. Casey, regional labor representative of the War Production Board.

Casey made the open charge that "This strike is plainly a case of sabotage." He charged that definite signs of sabotage entered into the situation when someone stampeded the men off the docks at a time when the union officials were involved in negotiations with the shipping company.

That a subversive element is active on the Philadelphia waterfront was graphically demonstrated here three months ago when a crew of longshoremen halted loading a Soviet ship with urgent war materials. An investigation into the matter by other trade unionists revealed that there was absolutely

no grievance for calling the strike on the Soviet vessel.

It just "happened."

Seamen, meanwhile, cite numerous instances of vessels leaving the port only to have to return due to criminally irresponsible loading of cargo at the docks.

Equally, if not more serious than the conditions of shipping on the docks is an accusation leveled against the Pennsylvania Railroad by two members of the traffic department. While this correspondent is duty bound to withhold their identity, the substance of their charge against the Pennsylvania Railroad is this: that war goods freight is being deliberately diverted from the port of Philadelphia and sent to other East coast ports for the added freight revenue accrued.