

Bridges Out-Wits FBI Wiretappers In N. Y. Hotel

NEW YORK, Aug. 27—Outwitting two agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Pres. Harry Bridges of the CIO Intl. Longshoremen's & Warehousemen's Union this week exposed a month-old wire-tapping plot in his room at the Hotel Edison here.

Labor people in New York are having a good laugh at the expense of J. Edgar Hoover's FBI, now revealed to be participating in one more of its fantastic efforts to "get the goods" on the California CIO director and deport him to his native Australia.

Working with a reporter and a photographer from the newspaper PM, Bridges enjoyed talking for the FBI record and making life difficult for the listeners, who occupied an adjoining room in the hotel. The listen-

to the hotel soon proved that the management was lying.

Further suspicions were aroused by an "FBI monkey" whom Bridges recognized in the hotel lobby.

When, shortly afterwards, Bridges heard queer sounds next door, and found that his telephone had temporarily gone dead, he was on to the super-sleuths' plot. For some two weeks Bridges toyed with the agents, to the amusement of friends who were in on the game.

The farce ended at 2:30 a.m. on Aug. 22. A few hours earlier Bridges and the PM staff reporters had yanked a tiny, super-sensitive dictograph out of the telephone box in Bridges' room. A cable led to the adjoining room.

PHOTOGRAPHS READY

Outside the FBI men's room, a PM photographer waited, flash-gun ready. Bridges called the hotel manager, who seemed to be pretty embarrassed by it all. He said he would telephone the people in the next room, but he refused to use Bridges' phone for his message.

At 2:30 a.m. a man believed to be FBI Agent Younger made a sudden dash from his room, and the photographer caught his picture just as



HARRY BRIDGES
Outwits FBI Hawkshaws

ing apparatus was a highly sensitive microphone placed in the telephone box in Bridges' room.

Special Agent Evelle J. Younger and a colleague carried out their instructions of listening to all conversations in Bridges' room and of cutting in on all the union leader's phone calls. What they heard won't do the FBI or anti-union employers much good, for Bridges was aware of the plot from the beginning, and cautioned all his friends against discussing important union affairs.

PAPER GOT 'NEWS'

Once Bridges laid a trap to determine whether the Hoover agents were passing along their data to employers. He "discussed" an important local strike in his room and announced his "intention" of marching on the picket line. Two days later the Scripps-Howard New York World Telegram carried a story predicting Bridges' appearance on the picket line!

To check up on the sieuths' activities, Bridges tore a piece of paper into strange sizes, tossed them into his wastebasket, and left his room. He dashed to the room of Legn Goodelman, reporter for PM, in a hotel across the street, and through telescopes watched the detectives in their room trying to put the scraps of paper back together again!

Another sport was to call Bridges' room from Goodelman's quarters. Each time the CIO official's phone rang, the two agents could be seen dashing to the floor in a corner of their room, just opposite Bridges, telephone box, where their listening apparatus was located.

GREW SUSPICIOUS

Two events first raised suspicion in Bridges' mind. One was the insistence of the Hotel Edison management that he occupy Room 1027 even though it cost a dollar more than he wanted to pay, the hotel claimed no others were available and cut the rate on 1027. An anonymous phone call by Bridges

FBI: 'No Comment'

Washington, Aug. 27—The FBI Information Service doesn't know a thing about the tapping of Harry Bridges' telephone wire in New York's Hotel Edison.

Asked for a comment by the CIO NEWS, a Mr. Tracy claimed he hadn't seen the two-page story in the New York paper PM. He added:

"We never make any comment either confirming or denying any alleged investigating activities."

he rounded a corner in the corridor. In the room were carbon copies of two of his reports.

"He was running like a scared rabbit," Bridges commented later.

"We chased after him, but he went down the fire escape."

WARNS AGAINST HOTEL

"I saw and heard enough in the Edison Hotel to convince me that every union conference in that place is tapped," Bridges told Federated Press, labor news service. "And I would like to say this: I am ready to cooperate with the FBI in making a national broadcast of all the conversations they recorded while I was at the Edison, or I'll o. k. a complete release to the newspapers."

"What the labor movement should know is that the FBI definitely proved in this instance that it is helping to break strikes by passing along information to employers."