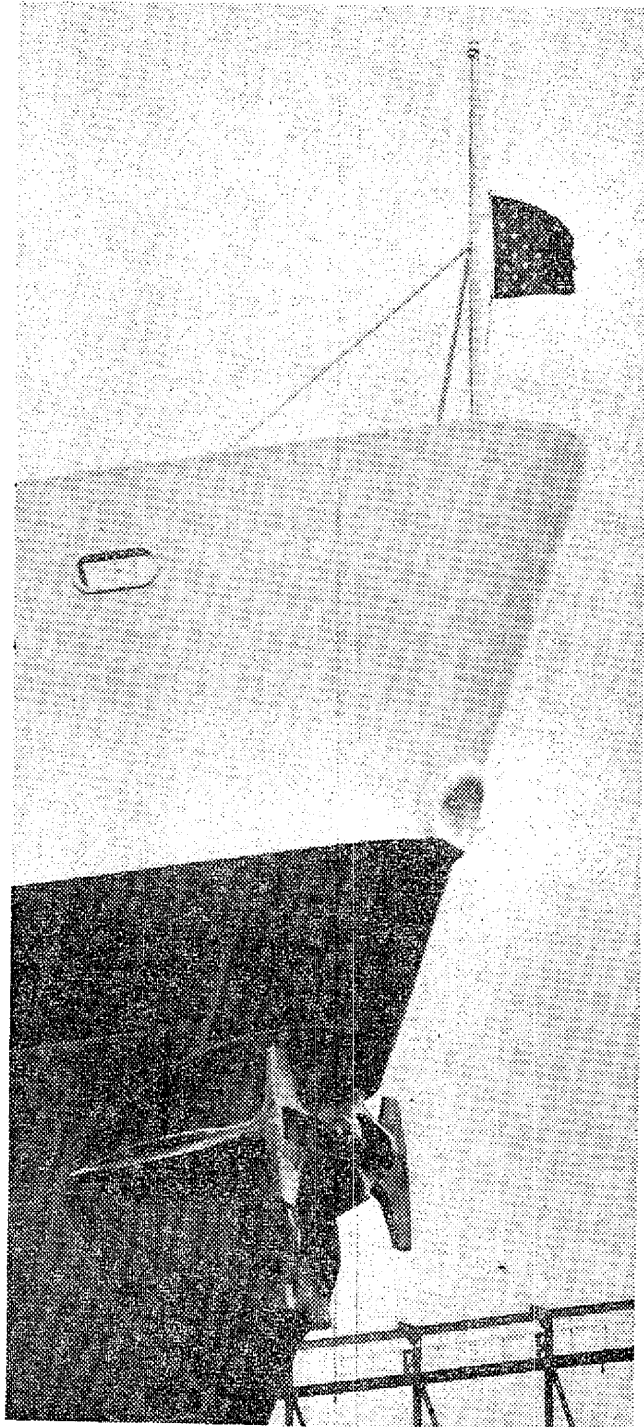


Port Work Suspended as Tribute



The New York Times

ON THE WATERFRONT: Ship at U.S. Lines pier with flag at half-mast for the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Unusual Memorial Is Marked by Seamen and Longshoremen

By MARTIN ARNOLD

In a rare tribute, longshoremen and seamen from Maine to Texas stopped work yesterday, shutting down all the seaports until today in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The only other time the ports were shut down as a memorial was after the assassination of President Kennedy.

Cargo ships, passenger liners and ships scheduled to carry the supplies of war to Vietnam all were affected.

On the West Coast, longshoremen shut down the ports for four hours as a memorial to Dr. King.

Thomas W. Gleason, president of the International Longshoremen's Association, in announcing the closing of all Atlantic and Gulf Coast and Great Lakes ports, said that "all longshoremen join all freedom loving Americans in grieving the loss of Rev. King, who symbolized everything just and sincere in the civil rights movement."

"He was a man of peace and dignity, completely dedicated to God and the brotherhood of man, Mr. Gleason said in a statement. "It is fitting and proper, then, that we devote this time to pray that the principles which guided this great, great man continue to guide others in the movement for brotherhood to which he devoted his energies."

To Return at 8 A.M. Today

The longshoremen are scheduled to return to work at 8 A.M. today.

Both the I.L.A. and the N.M.U. have been integrated for many years. The I.L.A. membership is about 40 per cent Negro, and the N.M.U. has close to 50 per cent Negro and other minority group membership.

From Washington, Joseph Curran, president of the Na-

tional Maritime Union, ordered all work on ships under contract to the union—except necessary security duties—to be halted until 5 o'clock this afternoon "as a gesture of respect for the memory of Dr. King and an expression of our determination to carry forward his great work."

In his telegram to all the port offices of the 55,000-member union, Mr. Curran said that the N.M.U. began fighting the battle of civil rights more than 30 years ago and "we have worked with Dr. King in this cause and we know how great is the loss to all Americans in his passing."

He ordered that all American and union flags be flown at half-staff, at union port offices.

About 100 United States-flag ships manned by union members were affected by Mr. Curran's order. The sailing of the liner *United States*, on a West Indies cruise, was rescheduled from 11 A.M. today until 5 P.M.

Lines Take It in Stride

The steamship companies, while not happy that the ports were closed, took it in stride.

Alexander Purdon, president of the U.S. Lines, said, for example, that it's "a very emotional experience for the whole nation—a sad experience and you can't get a logical answer. We were just getting back after a 10½ day strike and its holding us up. On the other hand you can't very well complain."

The I.L.A. order shut down the ports from Portland, Me., to Brownsville, Tex., and involved approximately 115,000 longshoremen, including about 19,000 dock workers in the Port of New York alone.

William P. Lynch, secretary of the I.L.A. Local 791, explained the longshoremen's willingness to close down the ports as a tribute to Dr. King this way:

"He preached nonviolence. This is the reason the men went out. Nonviolence while some other groups and people were preaching violence."

The Port of New Orleans, the nation's second largest port, has about 6,000 longshoremen, and a good percentage are Negroes.

There was no way to estimate nationally the cost to the shipping industry of the unusual memorial. The Maritime Association, which represents all the steamship companies, said, however, that it costs \$1.5-million a day to shut down the Port of New York alone.

First Stoppage in Jersey

The first stoppage in the nation occurred in Newark and Elizabeth, where 3,000 longshoremen, who had reported to work at 8 A.M., shut down the piers at 10 A.M. in honor of Dr. King.

By shortly after noon, 90

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piers of the Port of New York were sepulchral after the long-shoremen had stopped work, and, except for security guards, not a person was seen on any of the piers and the cranes and heavy moving equipment hung empty.

When the work moratorium got under way, the stevedore gangs and dock workers were busily engaged in moving the backlog of cargo that had piled up during the dock strike that ended last Thursday.

The all-Negro Local 1233 of the I.L.A. will not work on Monday, the day of Dr. King's funeral, it was announced.