

Ships Delayed by Firing Of Radio Men, CIO Says

U. S. 'Beaches' Oper- ators Without Charges

By AMOS LANDSMAN

CIO officials charged today that, while the Government is searching the country for radio operators for merchant ships, at least 47 experienced operators had been ordered "beached" by the Navy Secretary, without charges.

This situation was revealed by Joseph Curran, a CIO vice president who heads the National Maritime Union. Curran charged that the sailing of ships was being delayed because of the inability of the Government and private companies to find operators.

The discharged operators were ordered off their ships under a law authorizing the Navy Secretary to blacklist "undesirable" radio operators. The law does not apply to other maritime personnel.

As time passes, the situation will become worse because new ships are being launched every day. Schools training new operators, according to Curran, are not turning them out fast enough.

The 47 "beached" operators are members of the American Communications Assn. (ACA), CIO. Curran surmised that there were other operators who have been subjected to the same treatment.

Curran cited the case of Murray Winocur, vice president of the ACA and a radio operator of 15 years' experience. Early this year, when the radio operator famine was first felt, he left his union post and shipped out aboard a tanker. Two and three tankers were going down daily at that time, Curran recalled.

After two trips, Winocur was ordered ashore at Houston, Tex., on Mar. 10. No explanation was offered. No charges were made.

Winocur managed to obtain a hearing before the Naval District Qualifications Board, 90 Church St. He found it difficult to defend himself, however, since he still did not know what he had been accused of. The Board has rendered no verdict since this hearing.

"It's like Germany," observed Curran. "Only there you at least get a verdict."

Curran said he favored regulations which would keep dangerous characters off our ships, once these persons have been legally proved dangerous.

"But if they are dangerous," he asked, "why let them roam the streets?"

Curran observed that all the beached ACA radio operators had been accused of being Communists before the Dies Committee by a disgruntled unionist who had been expelled for collusion with an AFL union. The expulsion was upheld by the courts.

Aside from Winocur, 10 high-ranking union officials have been ordered ashore.