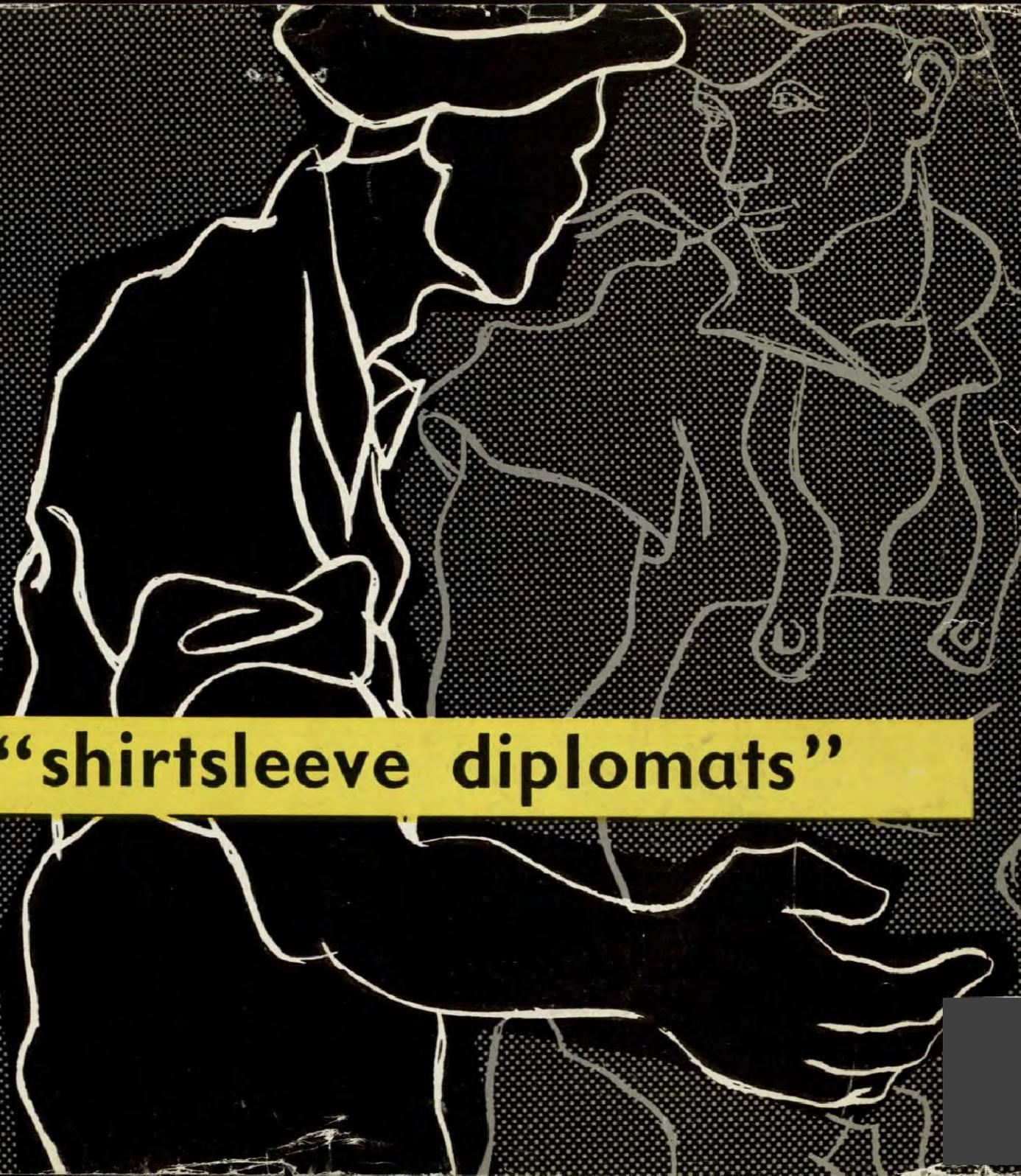


OF 'LABOR IN A

THE STORY

**“shirtsleeve diplomats”**





## “shirtsleeve diplomats”

The story of labor in MSA

“For our people the visit of the American trade unionists has been the best thing for French-American friendship since the days of the war.”

That was said in the summer of 1950 by a French provincial labor leader, E. Faucon, the Force Ouvrière confederation's chief for the Rhône department. He was thanking the labor adviser of the ECA French Mission (now the Mutual Security Agency's French Mission) for a kind of diplomacy rare in American history — the sending of American labor's own “ambassadors” to talk with labor leaders and workers abroad.

The men in denim smocks and shirtsleeves in European mines and mills and foundries value the word they get from the representatives of American men in overalls and shirtsleeves.

In this period when the workers in Europe outside the Iron Curtain have the job of strengthening western defense, the way they receive the word is extra-important. The union leaders and the organized workers like to make sure that any special message to labor bears the real imprint of labor. To European labor, it's encouraging to see that America sends labor's own kind of “diplomat”. The credentials are easy to recognize : the union card.

Monsieur Faucon's expression of that idea referred to the tour of the first American labor

Joseph Heath, seated center, then a member of the Labor Division staff, ECA Mission to Greece, works out a problem with Greek labor leaders.

team sponsored officially under the U.S. foreign economic aid program — which was then administered by the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA) and which is now operated by the Mutual Security Agency (MSA). This team consisted of two men and a woman from American unions who talked with miners at St. Etienne and textile workers at Lyons and sat down in the evenings with hundreds of unionists to answer hundreds of questions about the States and its unions and about the visitors' own union federation. They were : Miss Carmen Lucia, AFL Hatters Union; Bill Belanger, CIO Textile Union; and Harold Gibbons, AFL Teamsters Union.

In Italy, America's labor diplomacy has won friends and cooperation; in England and Eire, in Germany, Austria and Greece; in all of the sixteen Marshall Plan countries. It has helped mightily to spread the American message of production for strength and mutual security. It has put the message into the places where the hard work is being done, encouraging workers to do their share. And there has been a special message : the workers should expect THEIR share of benefits.

Before ECA and MSA, American organized labor maintained its own unofficial labor union-card diplomacy in Europe; and today that work goes on, with noted American labor experts assigned, at American unions' expense, to consult with the leaders of the free European trade unions.

The government's foreign aid program drew more shirtsleeve envoys from American unions

into similar work, in Europe and in Washington, as labor advisers and labor information officers.

It IS work. Some of the jobs are like running a union and at the same time hustling the union paper on the street corner. Like politicking to elect a good but bashful chairman of a beer-and-sandwich committee for the next meeting — or to send the right man to Washington to see the wage stabilization board. An MSA labor diplomat is likely to be called on to be orator, oracle, adviser to officials of foreign states, host to visiting dignitaries, consultant on strike procedure, editor and reporter, mimeograph operator and copy boy.

In the field of labor, the value of labor diplomacy is evident. In Algiers one evening an American representing labor in the foreign aid program sat down with five French militants of a local union to ask general information. The secretary immediately asked : " Vous êtes syndicaliste ? " (" You are a union member ? ") The visitor showed his union card. The secretary passed it around. All five examined the dues stamps to verify that the card was up-to-date. Then, then only, were they willing to talk.

After an hour's talk they asked to receive American literature that carried the American message of production for strength and well-being, and for unionism free of Communism—the American message given in labor's own language.

In all the countries the labor diplomats have had similar experience. Among the workers of Europe, the union card is more than a substitute for striped pants and Homburg hat.

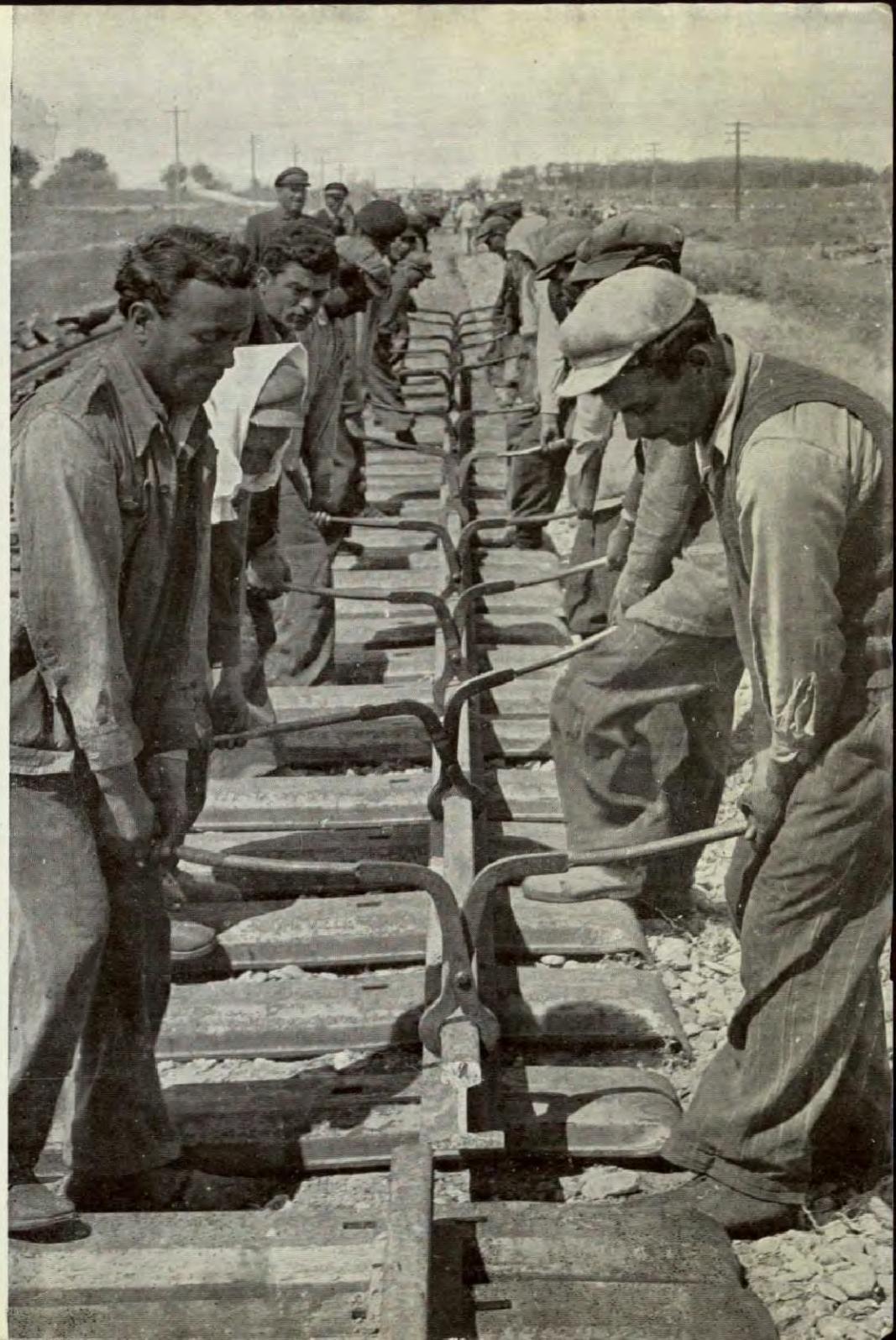
Greece's railroad system is now back in shape, thanks to American aid and the heroic efforts of the Greek worker who often had to lay track while under Communist guerrilla fire.

## Labor diplomat takes stand

Each mile of track relaid in the war-shattered Greek railway system was dearly paid for. When the job was finished the total cost in human life of the 500 miles of reconstructed railroad was one worker per mile — the price exacted by Communist guerrillas fighting to prevent the nation's economic recovery. At night the Communists planted mines under the new tracks; during the day they sniped at their hardworking compatriots.

Spurred on by the need to bridge vast gaps in the country's railway line, and the added incentive of a production bonus, the Greek workers withstood the hazards and completed the railway three months ahead of the 12-month goal.

But when they went to collect the promised bonus, Greek railroad officials said, "We haven't enough money to pay a bonus."

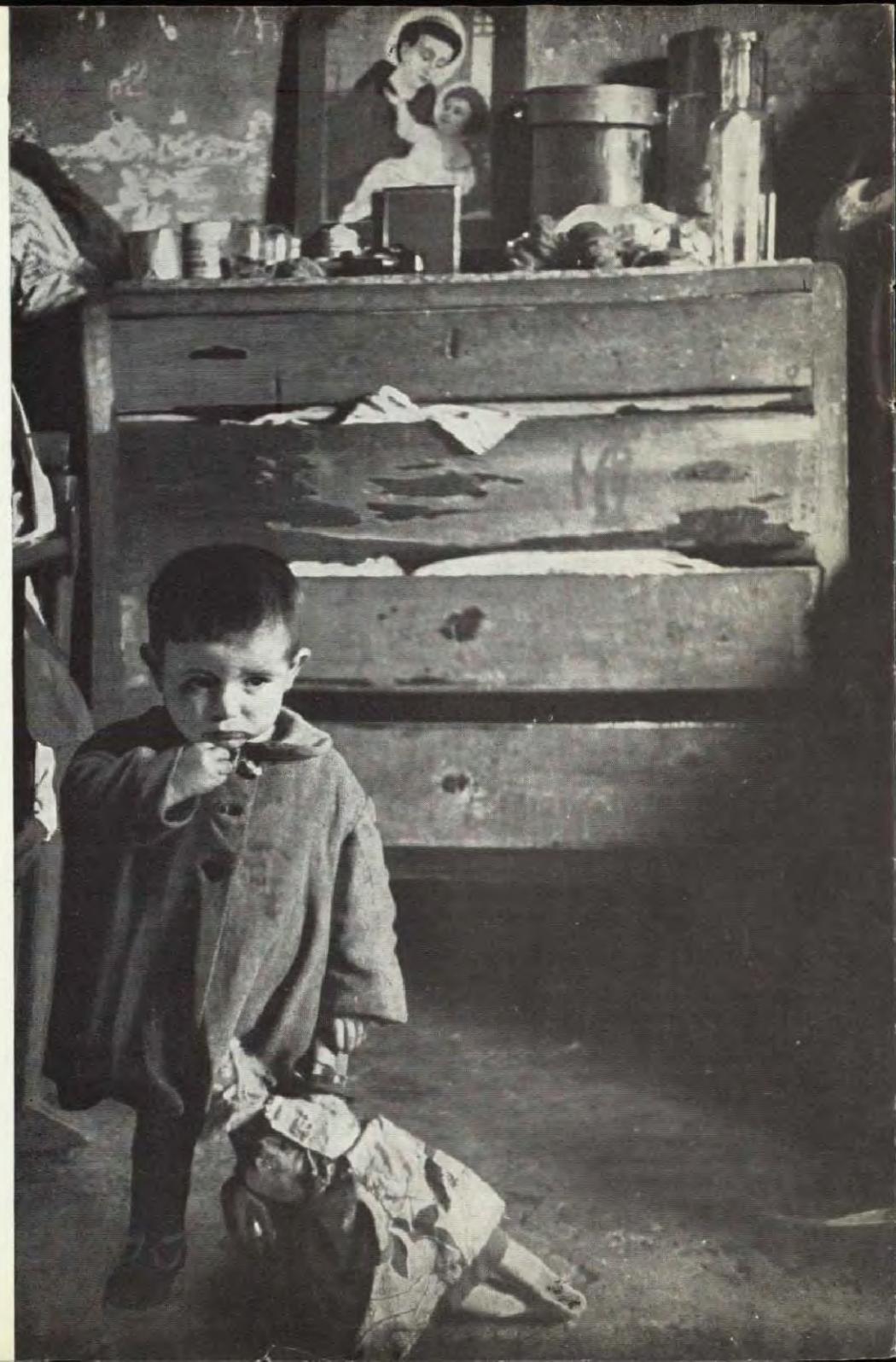


It looked as if the Communists had won a victory after all. The continuous ranting that the country was being rebuilt for the "rich capitalists", seemed to have a strong foundation in the experience of the railway workers, who had labored long and hard, a bare step ahead of hunger. Failure to pay would have been an irreparable blow to the workers' faith in the sincerity of the Marshall Plan. For that is where the money was coming from.

An American trade unionist, a veteran of U.S. labor-management bargaining tables who was employed by ECA as deputy labor adviser, jumped into the situation with both feet. He wanted to know why there wasn't enough money. He was told that after the offer of an incentive bonus had been announced, engineers decided that the quality of construction might suffer if the line were rebuilt too quickly. The original amount of aid appropriated by ECA was therefore reduced to exclude the production bonus. The change had not been relayed to the workers, and under the terms of their agreement with the Greek government, ECA officials found themselves in a snarl.

But this American trade unionist had unravelled knotty problems in his own country, especially when it came to collecting labor gains.

"These workers were told they'd get a bonus for speeding the work. They have done the work; they must be paid", he insisted.



He carried the ball for the Greek railway workers. The argument speedily reached the top of the Economic Cooperation Administration. The ECA chiefs agreed with him and the workers were paid.

Those workers were not only pleased with the bonus they received, they were elated to see that labor's part in the U.S. aid program was not just a front ; that American labor is on the job to protect the interests of the working classes of European countries participating in the plan.

As Paul G. Hoffman, ECA's first director and now president of the Ford Foundation, told an American union convention in June in 1950 : " If these people — the free people — are to be completely immunized against Communism — or any other kind of "ism" — they must have tangible proof that democracy is the better way of life. It is fruitless to talk of "freedom" to a man whose children are hungry and cold. "

## The labor side

European workers are keenly interested in American living standards and in the U.S. labor movement. The Communists, of course, claim that our unions are "tools of Wall Street", that the "masses are in chains of poverty". But this line of lies has suffered a serious set-back in Western Europe. The shirtsleeve diplomats have provided living evidence of Labor militancy in

Another shirtsleeve diplomat Lee R. Smith, Netherlands ECA Labor Division Chief (right), gets his point across to two Dutch miners deep in the Maurits Mine in the Limburg area, Holland.



America. In the process, they have won a large measure of confidence among workers and have taken the sting out of phony propaganda.

There are enough examples of myth-debunking to fill volumes. Here's a simple one. On the platform of a labor union meeting in Belgium, an ECA labor man was answering questions about the U.S. trade union systems. Some of the questions posed by sceptics obviously were based on the Communist-hatched fairy tale that American labor unions don't have to fight like European unions to obtain economic gains.

Then, one of the unionists asked, "What do you do in the United States if a plant is on strike

and the men who do not belong to the union try to cross the picket lines?"

"Well", said the labor man, a veteran of U.S. picket lines, "they just don't get in."

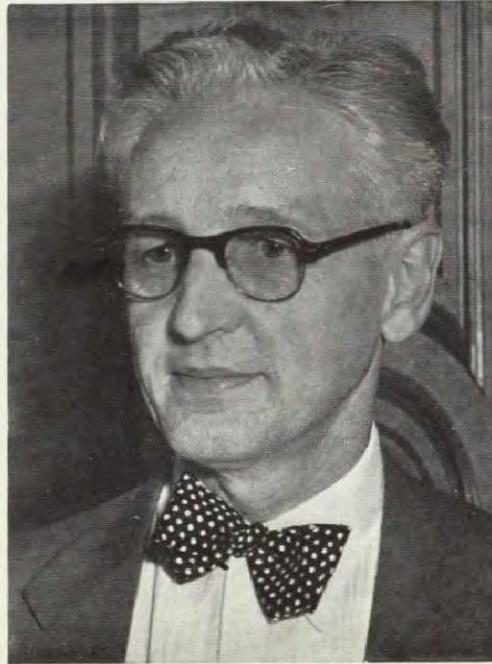
The point of his answer wasn't missed by the Belgian unionists. Within a few minutes a small part of the bloody, inch by inch battle for U.S. labor gains was told. And the veil of suspicion which surrounds any "American bearing gifts" was pierced.

Suspicion hasn't vanished but it grows less with every visit of U.S. labor groups to European countries and with every visit of European worker's teams to the States.

#### AT THE WASHINGTON H. Q. OF "SHIRTSLEEVE DIPLOMACY"...



Marion Hedges



Nelson Cruikshank



Ward Melody



Robert Oliver



## Walkout

Rarely does the ECA-MSA unionist deal with the Communists face to face, but an instance of this occurred in the South Wales area of Great Britain. The Commies had infiltrated into the unions there during the war. One union secretary who was an active anti-Communist invited an ECA labor information officer to debate with the secretary of the South Wales Communist Party on the topic: "Has the Marshall Plan Led to American Domination of Great Britain?" The audience contained many C. P. members. As the heat of the discussion increased it became obvious even to these that Communist arguments were falling flat. The Communist speaker and his followers chose the now familiar route set by Russia's Gromyko and walked out of the meeting hall. That was the first and last public debate between an American trade unionist and a Communist in Britain.

## International strength

Labor has set up its own defense line around the world against the Communist movement among workers incited by Soviet agents. It is a task in which MSA's labor diplomats are asked to cooperate and in which they give freely of time and effort.

The Stalinist march in labor has been checked throughout the world by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, which, from its

U.S. commodities are unloaded at French docks in spite of Communist interference.

## The fraternity of labor

European labor wanted to be sure from the beginning in 1948 that, in the agency which handled the U.S. foreign aid program, there was genuine interest in the general cause of improving the conditions of life of Europe's workers.

The labor offices inside ECA and MSA have been a big factor in convincing the European labor people that, in foreign aid, there is a fraternal interest in European worker problems. It was reassuring to see that labor was given a part in foreign aid direction, under the law, that it insisted on exercising its functions, and that it was welcomed to do so.

When the program was launched, the posts of labor advisers to ECA in Washington were filled by eminent unionists — Bert Jewell of the AFL and Clinton Golden of the CIO.

Under MSA, as 1952 began, Nelson Cruikshank of the AFL and Robert Oliver of the CIO were carrying on that work in the capital at home.

In MSA's European offices at Paris, the labor division director is Joseph F. Heath, long a leader in the AFL electrical workers and AFL government employees, who came to ECA in Greece in 1949 and helped reorganize Greek unions at a time when Communist guerrillas were waging war there.



Harry Martin, right, European labor information director and President of the American Newspaper Guild, in conference with Trieste labor leaders.

The Paris post had been filled, first, by Boris Shishkin, distinguished economist of the AFL; and next, by Mr. Cruikshank, AFL social security expert.

The job of spreading the ECA and MSA message among European workers — giving them American labor's message, and also sending Euro-

pean news to American unions — has been carried forward at full steam by a union-card corps of experts — the Labor Information staff.

From the beginning this work was directed in Europe by Harry Martin, president of the American Newspaper Guild of the CIO, who led a march out of the old International Organization of Journalists when the Communists took it over, and who led in the formation of a new free world journalist federation.

In Washington, Labor Information is directed by Marion Hedges of the AFL electrical workers and by Ward Melody, on loan from the CIO's American Newspaper Guild.

It is many-sided work. It is journalism and public relations, writing and reporting. This office maintains a flow of news and information inside Europe and between Europe and the States, with concentration on the labor press. It counters Communist manoeuvres, exposes Red fakes. It has had its own labor press, such as the "Bulletin Syndical" ("Union Bulletin") in France and "El Mondo del Lavoro" ("The World of Labor") in Italy.

Labor Information uses films, radio, expositions, posters, charts — all kinds of written, spoken and graphic material — in cooperation with American unions. It has done its part to make "With These Hands", the International Ladies Garment Workers Union film, popular with the workers of a half dozen countries. Labor's language is understood.

*film*



Still shot from "With These Hands" distributed throughout Europe



pamphlets

# PRESS



Hands" ILGWU movie  
MSA.



French workers read "Bulletin Syndical"—labor newspaper published by MSA.



exhibitions



American Labor Exhibition in England.

Brussels headquarters, organizes and propagandizes constantly, carrying the call of free trade unionism, with the fullest cooperation from American unions.

The International Transport-Workers Federation defeated the Communists on the wharves of Western Europe more than a year ago and made possible the uninterrupted unloading of cargoes for western defense. This was done primarily by the ITF's Mediterranean Committee of seamen and docker leaders, who talked in such plain language to the red agitators of Mediterranean ports that the reds beat a retreat.

Svend Godfredsen, left, who directs labor information and Labor activities for MSA in Denmark, in discussion with Joseph Heath, European Director, MSA Labor Division.



David Dubinsky, President of ILGWU, in shirtsleeves at the Milan conference of the ICFTU, July 1951.

With participation of the AFL and the CIO, a labor committee was set up in the first days of the Marshall Plan to act as labor advisor to the Organization for European Economic Cooperation — Europe's counterpart to the Marshall Plan agency. This committee was the European Recovery Program's Trade Union Advisory Committee. It helped to plan Mutual Security operations as they affected the workers of Europe.

The creation and promotion of international bodies of free trade unionism for the free labor crusade for workers' welfare and against Communism is interpreted by MSA labor diplomats as a cause in which they are duty-bound to help.

## Productivity

The overall effect of the "shirtsleeve-diplomats'" activities has been a tremendous rise in international prestige for American labor. The result is that its voice finds more ready ears when it calls for increased productivity in Europe as a lever for raising living standards. Europeans listen attentively to American labor's experience. Boosting industrial output sounds like a speedup to European workers until there is firm assurance that the additional profits will be fully reflected in workers' pay envelopes. These workers respect assurances backed by the shirtsleeve diplomats.

Productivity has risen most sharply in countries where the labor movements are powerful enough to guarantee the workers a share in the results; i.e., Great Britain and the Scandinavian countries.

The American foreign aid program has helped to stimulate thinking on production problems in all West European countries by sponsoring 965 technical assistance tours in the States by plant managers, supervisors and workers. These teams have included 28 all-trade-union teams and most of the others have included some workers. The visitors have seen how American unions benefit from new methods and machinery, and how American unions use their own expert consultants on production.

Visits of American unionists to Europe under official sponsorship resulted initially from a suggestion made by MSA's Labor Information headquarters in Europe.

The exchange of visitors finally inspired the current program for training-in-work of thousands of European workers on long-term stays in the States. The free trade unions are cooperating in this program.

The most convincing arguments for productivity come from production-conscious workers themselves. In December of 1950, representatives of the Norwegian trade union movement and the labor government sought special ECA funds for a concentrated production drive in one community. With ECA footing 40 per cent of the bill, the drive got underway.

The "Pilot Town" selected was Moss, Norway, a community of 18,000 people and highly diverse industry. A State Rationalization Council was set up with an experienced labor-management director at its head. This director, whose salary is paid by the trade unions and by the labor party, organized the "Pilot Town" operation and marshalled the support of all interested groups for a follow-up national drive, which has achieved notable success.

In the drive to stimulate increased productivity, European labor groups — such as the ICFTU and the ERP-Trade Union Advisory Committee — have cooperated wholeheartedly. Trade unionists participate in productivity centers in all countries.

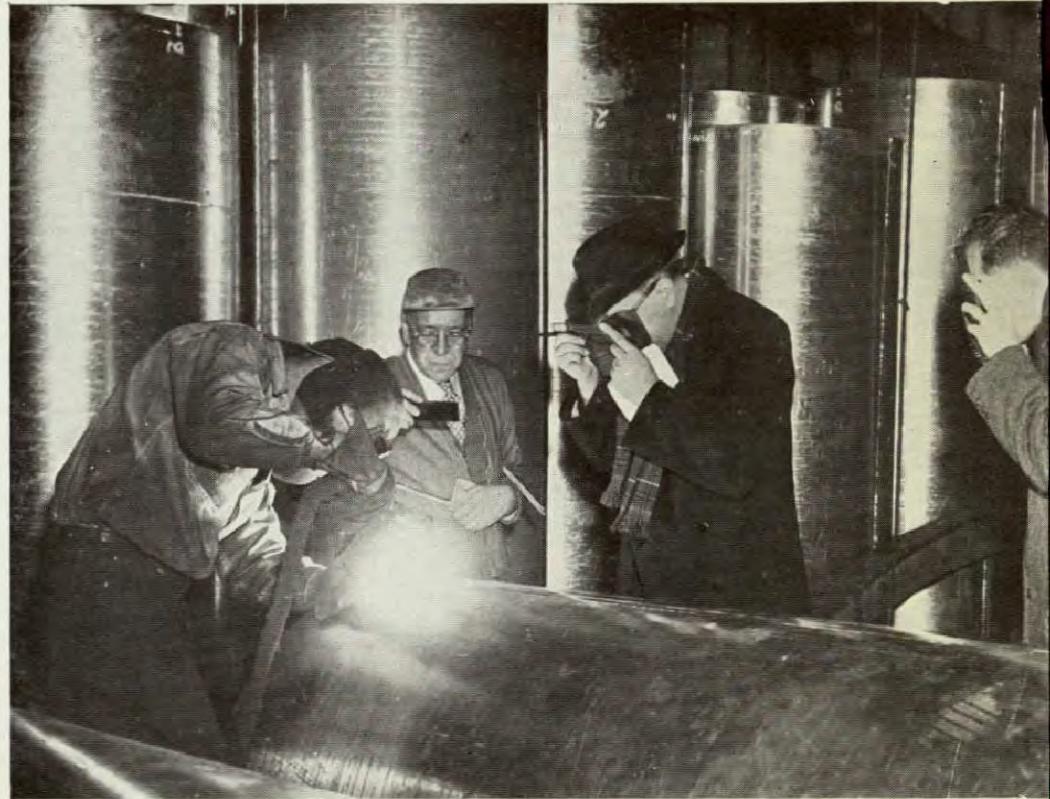
## Union experts

Partners with the "shirtsleeve diplomats" in the campaign to try to elevate the living standard of European workers are U.S. trade union experts who are willing to leave their comfortable firesides at home and come to Europe to work on the ground with their continental and British comrades. These partners have played an essential role in achieving gains in the program.

MSA's technical assistance program involves travel of workers both ways across the Atlantic. A majority of this travel has been by European workers going to America. A smaller, but nonetheless important, part of this travel has brought experts from the U.S. unions to Europe. These men know, from their own experience in the hard fight to win labor gains at home, that reluctant employers — such as those found in many European industries — must be pressured into efficient operation of their plants; that workers must be insured a fair share of the benefits of rising productivity; that out-moded distribution techniques must be abandoned; that archaic restrictions on the development of a dynamic industrial economy must be thrown off; that lower prices at the consumer level are necessary to fullest consumption of increased production; and that a system of high production, low prices, and high wages must be substituted for the all too popular concept of high profits, low output.

And American trade union experts know — as

do the labor diplomats — that strong, free trade unions are essential instruments for the accomplishment of these ends. Working with the labor diplomats and with the workers of Europe, they have done an exceptionally able job.



Members of a French Technical Assistance team study production methods in a U.S. factory.

## The record speaks...

Labor-diplomacy wins friends, and influences millions of people. ECA-MSA labor advisers and labor information officers have had a guiding hand or a helping hand in innumerable demonstrations of growing friendship.

In Germany, 50,000 people assembled on a Sunday morning in 1950 to take part in a free trade union rally in Berlin..... In Italy, the free trade unions and the Ambassador of the United States took part in a May Day ceremony in honor of an Italian labor martyr..... In Greece, the free trade unionists marched in Athens to celebrate America's Labor Day, in 1949 during the Communist guerrilla war..... In Austria, free unionists quickly staged a mass demonstration in Vienna to thwart an attempted Red coup

d'état..... In Sweden, an ECA labor "diplomat" went up and down the land to speak to the people, and he met all comers — he talked to Communist groups, too, — giving them the American labor message..... In Italy, after a Stateside tour by Italian labor chiefs guided by an ECA-Rome labor "diplomat", the main non-Communist federations merged. This gave Italy a free labor front against red-led unions.

The record is like that, in all the countries in which labor-diplomacy has been the job assigned.

The strengthening of the free trade unions of Europe is specifically prescribed in the Benton Amendment to the Foreign Aid Act of 1951 as one of the things to be done for mutual security. That's what the shirtsleeve diplomats are up to.

French workers examining the most modern industrial equipment brought to them through travelling exhibits sponsored by MSA.



# “ SHIRTSLEEVE DIPLOMATS ”

on duty with

the MUTUAL SECURITY AGENCY (Partial List)

## EUROPEAN OFFICE, PARIS, FRANCE

### EUROPEAN LABOR DIVISION

Joseph F. Heath. DIRECTOR  
(International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, A F L)

David J. Sapos. SPECIAL ADVISER  
(Office of Labor Production — W P B)

Richard N. Kelly. FIELD REPRESENTATIVE  
(United Automobile Workers, C I O)

Foster J. Pratt. SUPERVISOR FIELD REPRESENTATIVES  
(Int'l Federation of Technical Engineers, Architects and Draftsmen Unions, A F L)

Roy F. Renoud. FIELD REPRESENTATIVE  
(International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, A F L)

David E. Christian. CHIEF, LABOR SUPPLY & EMPLOYMENT  
(National Security Resources Board)

Evelyn Scheyer. ASST. CHIEF, LABOR SUPPLY & EMPLOYMENT  
(American Federation of Teachers, A F L)

Van Seagraves. RESEARCH ANALYST  
(American Federation of Government Employees, A F L)

Ralph Holben. LABOR ECONOMIST  
(American Federation of Government Employees, A F L)

### EUROPEAN LABOR INFORMATION

Harry Martin. DIRECTOR  
(President of American Newspaper Guild, C I O)

John N. Hutchison. DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
(American Newspaper Guild, C I O)

Allan L. Swim. SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR  
(American Newspaper Guild, C I O; formerly editor, C I O News)

William C. Gausmann. SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR  
(American Newspaper Guild, C I O; formerly editor, Labor Press Associates.)

T. E. (Pat) Frayne. MISSION LIAISON OFFICER  
(American Newspaper Guild, C I O; and American Federation of Government Employees A F L)

Cornelius Miller. CHIEF, NEWS AND WRITING  
(Office Employees International Union, A F L; formerly editor, A F L Weekly News Service)

Hugh B. Sutherland. DEPUTY CHIEF, OPERATIONS  
(American Newspaper Guild, C I O)

Lemuel E. Graves, Jr. DEPUTY CHIEF, NEWS AND WRITING  
(American Newspaper Guild, C I O)

Al Hemsing. DEPUTY CHIEF, FILMS  
(Amalgamated and Textile, C I O)

## M S A WASHINGTON

### WASHINGTON D. C.

Nelson Cruikshank. LABOR ADVISER  
(Seafarers International Union, A F L)

Robert Oliver. LABOR ADVISER  
(Textile Workers Union of America, C I O)

Clinton S. Golden. CONSULTANT TO LABOR ADVISERS  
(United Steelworkers of America, C I O)

Bert M. Jewell. CONSULTANT TO LABOR ADVISERS  
(Railway Employees Department, A F L)

Marion H. Hedges. DIRECTOR, LABOR INFORMATION  
(International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, A F L)

Ward B. Melody. LABOR INFORMATION  
(American Newspaper Guild, C I O)

Sol. D. Ozer. CHIEF ECONOMIST  
(Wage and Labor Standards, O M G U S)

Eleanor Finger. LABOR INFORMATION SPECIALIST  
(Social Security Administration)

## M S A SPECIAL MISSIONS

| <i>Country.</i>      | <i>Labor Division Chief.</i>  | <i>Labor Information Officer.</i>   |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Austria.             | Einar Edwards.<br>(Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers of America)  | Martin O'Farrell.<br>(American Newspaper Guild, C I O)                    |
| Belgium & Luxemburg. | Joseph L. Bryan.<br>(International Brotherhood of Bookbinders, A F L)   | James Toughill.<br>(American Newspaper Guild, C I O)                      |
| Denmark.             | Svend A. Godfredsen.<br>(United Packinghouse Workers, C I O)  | Svend A. Godfredsen.  |
| France.              | Kenneth Douty.<br>(Textile Workers Union, C I O)<br><br>Elmer Henry Williams, Deputy Chief.<br>(International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, A F L) | L. Allen Thomason.<br>(American Newspaper Guild, C I O)                   |
| Greece.              | D. Alan Strachan.<br>(United Automobile Workers Union, C I O)   | Arthur Diggle.<br>(American Newspaper Guild, C I O)                       |
| Italy.               | Thomas A. Lane.<br>(Bricklayers, Masons & Plasterers International Union, A F L)  | Leonard B. Tennyson.<br>(American Newspaper Guild, C I O)                 |
| Netherlands.         | Lee R. Smith.<br>(Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen, A F L)   | William H. Hornby.<br>(American Newspaper Guild, C I O)                   |
| Norway.              | Victor J. Sjaholm.<br>(Order of Railway Conductors, IND)  |   |
| Germany.             | Rudolf Bertram.<br>(Acting Chief)   | Philip A. Heller.<br>(International Ladies Garment Workers' Union, A F L) |
| United Kingdom.      | Glenn R. Atkinson.<br>(Brotherhood of Railway & Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers and Station Employees, A F L)                                  | Harry L. Turtledove.<br>(American Newspaper Guild, C I O)                 |

## M S A MISSION CHIEFS FROM LABOR

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Michael S. Harris. | Chief, M S A Special Mission to Germany.<br>(United Steelworkers, C I O)  |
| John E. Gross.     | Chief, M S A Special Mission to Norway.<br>(International Association of Machinists, A F L, and Colorado State Federation of Labor) |

