

Seamen Picket Arab Ship Here; Protest Boycott on Israeli Trade

By WERNER BAMBERGER

American seamen and longshoremen picketed the Egyptian ship Cleopatra yesterday on her arrival here from Mediterranean ports.

Spokesman for two unions said the action protested the boycott by the United Arab Republic of ships that had traded with Israel or called at Israeli ports. They said the blacklisting of such ships had threatened job opportunities for American seamen.

A picket line was set up at Pier 16, East River, shortly after the 8,193-gross-ton steamship docked. Longshoremen honored the picket line and refused to work the passenger-cargo vessel.

The two unions involved are the Seafarers International Union and the International Longshoremen's Association.

Leaflets handed out by six pickets of both unions demanded that the United States Government order the Navy to stop buying oil in any port where American ships were blacklisted, and that the United States halt the shipment of farm surplus cargoes to any nation that blacklisted American shipping.

The United Arab Republic has barred from its ports and from transit through the Suez Canal any ships that have traded with Israel. In addition, vessels that have called at Israeli ports are barred from carrying aid cargoes from the United States to ports of the United Arab Republic.

The picketing of the Cleopatra was the first action of its kind in this country. Maritime labor in Finland and Sweden has refused to handle U. A. R. ships.

Union sources here indicated yesterday that the picketing would be continued indefinitely and that it might be extended to other Atlantic Coast ports at which the Cleopatra might call to discharge cargo.

Paul Hall, president of the

S. I. U., said, "We will keep up the steam until this situation is corrected." Thomas W. Gleason, general organizer for the longshore union, said his organization was supporting the protest to help restore full freedom of the seas for the benefit of maritime workers over the world.

Both union leaders urged the United States to notify the United Arab Republic that it would use all the resources at its command to restore international law and the freedom of the seas.

Mr. Hall and Mr. Gleason recalled that the Maritime Trades Department of the merged labor federation had passed a resolution in February condemning the boycott by the Nasser Government.

A spokesman for Lawes, Loring Corporation, general agent here for the Khedivial Mail Line of Alexandria, U. A. R., owners of the Cleopatra, said he did not know what would become of the vessel if the boycott continued indefinitely. He said the vessel had 3,000 tons of general cargo aboard for discharge at ports as far south as Jacksonville, Fla. There are 400 tons of cargo for discharge here, he said.

The vessel's nine passengers debarked with the help of her 103-man crew, who are all Egyptians.

Efforts are being made through the New York Shipping Association to obtain an injunction against the picketing, the agents' spokesman said.

The New York Shipping Association represents 170 steamship lines and employing stevedores in the Port of New York. An association spokesman said that attempts were being made to get the longshoremen back to work and that the work stoppage was a violation of the "no-strike" clause in the I. L. A. contract. He termed the work stoppage "not a legitimate labor dispute," but a "political demonstration."