
The Government Stopping Sources of Disloyalty: Makes Many Arrests and Seizes Great Quantities of Printed and Other Documents

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WASHINGTON, Sept. 6.— The government as the result of countrywide raids on headquarters of IWW, Socialist, and other organizations was today in possession of documents to be used in evidence to suppress activities of an alleged seditious nature. The seizures, the Department of Justice announced, were in connection with federal grand jury investigations in Chicago. In some cities IWW officials were taken into custody for examination in court. Federal agents took charge of the national headquarters of the Socialist Party in Chicago and served on its counsel a warrant calling for surrender of its documents. The wholesale raids were carried out in accordance with orders of William C. Fitts, assistant to Attorney General [Thomas Watt] Gregory.

Chief Justice [J. Harry] Covington, of the District of Columbia Supreme Court, is preparing to make a report to President Wilson on his investigation of the IWW situation in the West. He made a close personal study of the recent outbreaks which have been characterized by federal agents as an effort to embarrass the government in its conduct of the war.

Nationwide Raid.

A nationwide raid, embracing nearly two dozen cities in almost every section of the country, was made on the various headquarters of the IWW by agents of the Department of Justice.

On orders from Attorney General Gregory, United States marshals in the various cities descended, promptly at 2 pm, Central Time, upon the local headquarters, seized books, checks, correspondence,

and other documents, and in some instances arrested officials found upon the premises.

In Chicago the federal agents took possession of the national headquarters of the Socialist Party, and a warrant authorizing the seizure of its documents was served upon its counsel [Seymour Stedman].

Simultaneous raids were made in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Denver, Seattle, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, San Francisco, Detroit, Salt Lake City, Los Angeles, Duluth, Portland, Ore; Superior, Wis.; Miami, Ariz., and in other places where the IWW had been active, and in each case all the official documents of the organization were seized and carted away.

Affects "Peace" Societies.

The raids were part of a comprehensive plan worked out by the Department of Justice for a roundup of all forces which are preaching sedition, agitating peace in questionable ways, a promoting labor troubles and violence to hinder the production of war materials.

The plan includes searching inquiries into the utterances of the German language press, Socialist magazines and newspapers, and literature of so-called peace societies and associations.

A decision has been reached by the administration to put down sedition wherever it shows its head. The Department of Justice, therefore, is working in complete harmony with the other executive departments and cooperating closely with the Post Office Department in heading off seditious matter which finds its way into the United States mails. That some prosecutions will follow is accepted as certain.

Federal Agents Watch.

The recent activities and utterances of Mayor [William Hale] Thompson, of Chicago, in connection with the meeting there of the People's Council of America for Democracy and [Terms of] Peace are also under investigation. Department of Justice officials feel their position has been strengthened by the recent decisions of Federal Judges Hough, of New York, and Speer, of Georgia, sustaining the action of Postmaster General [Albert S.] Burleson in refusing the privileges of the mails to *The Masses* and *The Jeffersonian*.

On numerous occasions since the war began the Department of Justice has held that it is not its function to prohibit or break up pacifist meetings or conventions. Nevertheless, a close scrutiny of the utterances of speakers and others at such gatherings is maintained.

With the raids it became known that the government is in possession of information that the archives of the IWW contain much evidence of a damaging character. Many officials are confident German money has backed up a number of the IWW agitators who have been active in the West.

Eyes On Some Newspapers.

Included in the investigation of publications alleged to be seditious and others regarded as open to question are German language newspapers and magazines published in this country, as well as the advertising and other literature of the American Union Against Militarism, the People's Council, the League of Conscientious Objectors, and other organizations affiliated with them or of the same general character.

Copies of the publications under investigation have been turned over to federal district attorneys by the hundreds and in numerous instances have been forwarded to the Department of Justice here for examination by officials. The district attorneys are directing the investigation, which is being conducted largely by field agents.

Hundreds of newspaper and magazine articles, the propriety of which is admittedly open to question, have been placed before officials here. In many instances the articles have been cleverly worded so as to bring them virtually within the law and still create the effect desired by the writers. Many other articles do not attack the government, but instead center their criticism upon the Allies. What if any action can be taken with regard to this class of publications depends wholly upon the wording of the individual articles.

Took Desired Documents.

A resolution introduced by Representative [Burton L.] French in the House makes it a felony for any person to advocate violence, sabotage, or any method of terrorism in industries where articles are manufactured for government use, or where foodstuffs are grown. A penalty of 10 years imprisonment is provided. The resolution is

aimed at propaganda detrimental to the government's successful prosecution of the war, which is being spread in some of the Western states.

"This action was taken under the direction of the Attorney General," says a statement issued at the Department of Justice, "and in connection with a grand jury investigation which is in progress in the United States Court in the Northern District of Illinois, in Chicago.

US Has the Evidence.

"The government at 2 pm today, Chicago time, took possession, under appropriate legal process, of such documentary evidence, checkbooks, correspondence, etc., of the IWW in all parts of the United States as is desired or needed by the United States in connection with the indictment and prosecution of certain individual offenders who have utilized the name of that organization in connection with violations of federal laws."

The exact nature of the alleged offenses was not disclosed. It was said that point would be determined by the federal grand jury at Chicago. The investigation was begun secretly a short time ago, and until today's drastic action was known only to the officials concerned.

President Wilson's personal representative, Chief Justice Covington, of the District Supreme Court, has been for several weeks making a special study of labor conditions there and devoting particular attention to the IWW.

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