
IWW Traitors Arrested Throughout Nation: Government Suppresses “Reds” in Many Cities: Headquarters of Socialists and Other Organizations Preaching Sedition Raided Simultaneously

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WASHINGTON, Sept. 5 [1917].— The government today took stern measures to end the anti-war propaganda conducted in the name of the Industrial Workers of the World, the Socialist Party, and other organizations throughout the United States.

On orders from Attorney General [Thomas Watt] Gregory, United States marshals in many towns and cities descended at 2 pm, Central Time, upon local headquarters of the Industrial Workers of the World, seized books, checks, correspondence, and other documents, and in some instances arrested officials of the organizations.

In Chicago, 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.

Seizure of Documents.

The seizure of documents was carried out in accordance with a plan perfected here by William C. Fitts, Assistant Attorney General, working under the direction of the Attorney General. A statement issued by the Department of Justice announced that the seizure of the papers was made in connection with a Federal grand jury investiga-

tion of the Industrial Workers of the World now proceeding at Chicago.

The department's action was taken on the eve of a report to President Wilson by Chief Justice [J. Harry] Covington of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia, who was designated recently by the President to investigate the labor situation in the West. Judge Covington has completed his investigation, which lasted several weeks and took him to the Pacific Coast, and probably will report to President Wilson tomorrow.

Marshals Act Together.

Whether the concerted action of marshals throughout the United States was in any way related to Judge Covington's investigation was not disclosed. It is known, however, that Judge Covington made a special study of the activities of the Industrial Workers of the World. It was shortly after he reached the Northwest that 27 leaders of the organization were arrested by Idaho National Guardsmen, the day before the time set for a general strike in Washington, Oregon, Montana, and Idaho.

The charges against the leaders of the organization under arrest, or whose arrest is contemplated, were not made public here.

It was said at the Department of Justice that these would have to be determined by the grand jury investigating the organization.

Question of Indictments.

Officials also declined to state if indictments had been found by grand juries in Chicago or elsewhere against Industrial Workers of the World leaders. It was intimated, however, that the investigation has only begun. Indications are that Federal grand juries in other cities will be called upon also to investigate the activities of the organization.

For many weeks past the activities of Industrial Workers of the World leaders have been under close scrutiny of the [Justice] Department's Bureau of Investigation. Scores of field workers, chiefly in the West and Middle West, have devoted their undivided attention to alleged attempts on the part of leaders to embarrass the government in the conduct of the war by strikes and other disturbances called in the name of labor.

Not a Labor Movement.

These activities have never been regarded here as a labor movement. They have been held to be political and, in some instances, conducted with a view solely to hinder and hamper the government in exercising its full strength in carrying on the war.

Charges of many complexions have been received by the Department in connection with the organization's activities. Recently it was charged that included in the ranks of the Industrial Workers of the World were many Austrians who have been active in stirring up strife intended to hamper American industries, doing work handled by Germans before the United States declared a state of war existing with Germany.

Continued investigation has failed, it is understood, to connect these activities with German money. The Department has determined the principal reservoirs of German funds in this country, and, it is reported, has not connected them with recent disorders in the West and Southwest.

Local United States Attorneys have reported many instances of a suspicious nature in connection with alleged labor troubles, however, and these have been the subject of departmental investigation.

As a result of the countrywide seizure of the organization's papers, the Department of Justice tonight finds itself in possession of documents by the thousand, many of which will be submitted to grand juries as the basis of an investigation to determine whether leaders can be prosecuted.

Prosecutions may be begun under several laws, chiefly the Espionage Act, covering the utterances of treasonable and seditious statements, and the food control law. Prosecution under the latter law could be conducted in instances where it was shown that attempts were being made, by conspiracy or otherwise, to impede the interstate movements of foodstuffs and other commodities controlled by the government and needed for the successful prosecution of the war.

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The Dragnet in Denver.

[By AP Night Wire.]

DENVER (Colo.), Sept. 5 [1917].— The Federal dragnet spread across the country to seize records of the Industrial Workers of the World was effective in two places in the Rocky Mountain region — in Denver and in Miami, Arizona.

At Miami, where several thousand copper miners have been on strike for two months under direction of the IWW and the International Union of Mines, Mill and Smelter Workers, agents of the Department of Justice, accompanied by Lieut.-Col. George White, who is in command of the United States Cavalry on strike duty there, and one of his subordinate officers, raided the Industrial Workers of the World headquarters and seized all the records of the organization. No arrests were made, but two officials of the organization were taken to Globe and questioned by the government officials. Federal troops were used in making the raid at Miami.

In Denver the government officers seized all the records, correspondence, and literature in the Industrial Workers of the World headquarters. No one was arrested.

Edited by Tim Davenport

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