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# The Michigan Raid.

## An Unsigned Article in *The Worker*.

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The raid on the Wolfskeel Summer Resort, near Bridgman, Michigan — two hours ride from Chicago — in which seventeen men were arrested and charged with membership in the Communist Party of America in violation of the criminal syndicalism law of that state was not staged by local authorities.

The sheriff's force merely acted as tools for the Department of Justice operatives who planned the entire proceedings.

So far as federal statutes are concerned the Communist Party of America is not an illegal organization for citizens. There is no federal law under which they can be arrested and held. It was necessary, therefore, for the busy Mr. Burns to operate under a state statute which has never been tested in the Michigan courts and under which no arrests have ever been made in that state.

Early Tuesday morning a small army of deputies descended upon the Wolfskeel Resort and with much flourishing of weapons and authority placed under arrest Caleb Harrison, Bud Reynolds, William F. Dunne, Norman Tallentire, Thomas O'Flaherty, Tom Sullivan, Al McMillin, John Michelic, C.E. Ruthenberg, Cyril Lambkin, Charles Krumbein, Gene Bechtold, Max Lerner, A. Nordling, Charles Erickson, [Alex Ball,] and Charles Ashworth. Erickson was beaten up before the arrested men were taken from the grounds. All were held two days incommunicado during which time they were questioned and third-degree methods used on those who appeared physically weak.

Ashworth was so badly beaten that he was later ordered released by the federal man in charge. Lambkin, Ball, and Erickson were also severely beaten and manhandled.

The Berrien County jail was overcrowded; there were not enough bunks or blankets to go around and at this writing some of the prisoners are still sleeping on the concrete floor.

The second or third day the 17 were taken down in front of the jail, photographed from various angles, while the brave deputies stood on guard with shotguns held in readiness and revolvers bulging in every available pocket.

Later when the defendants were taken over to the city hall to hear the charges read those who got downstairs first were handcuffed until the supply of manacles ran out. The result of this lavish use of the small supply of cuffs was that the smallest and most inoffensive looking of the prisoners were chained to deputies who looked big enough to eat them, while the more husky prisoners simply trailed along with the guards.

Contrary to what might have been expected the spectacle of 17 reds in captivity aroused but little interest in St. Joseph. Only a handful of boys turned out to see the results of the brain-racking work of the local officialdom in saving the nation with the help of William J. Burns, Spolansky, and Goebel — the latter two being Polish Jews and therefore greatly interested in repelling the alien invasion.

Judging from the first attitude of the local sheriff and his deputies they had expected that the

arrested men would be friendless aliens on whom their sadistic desires could be satisfied without arousing any great protest from outside. Some little change took place, however, when telegrams of inquiry and sympathy began to arrive, particularly one from the Minneapolis Central Labor Council to William F. Dunne and his fellow-prisoners, stating that the Minneapolis labor movement was with them "to the last ditch."

Bail was fixed at \$10,000 each, an exorbitant sum in view of the charge, and although the prosecutor had intimated to the defendants' attorneys that it would be reduced in most cases, the objection of the federal authorities has so far prevented any reduction. We have a clear case of a federal espionage system, run by the head of a notorious private detective agency, going outside of its jurisdiction to help wreak the vengeance of an insane ruling class upon men whose sole crime is activity in the labor movement. A federal prosecutor is at present in St. Joseph assisting the county attorney to prepare the case; if additional evidence is wanted of the gratuitous nation of these prosecutions this appears to furnish it.

The situation appears to be this: That men cannot meet to discuss the problems of the labor movement in America without being hounded by police spies who are nominally government agents but actually the servants of the capitalists of America and as such anxious to convince their masters that they are on the job.

Let us see who these "reds" are who were arrested at a well-known summer resort just previous to the convention of the Workers Party and the conference of the Trade Union Educational League in Chicago a few miles away.

All of them are members of organized labor and active in the labor movement. They are associates of William Z. Foster, whose idea of the importance of the existing trade union movement and the necessity of the radicals staying with it has worked a revolution in the tactics of the militant elements all over the United States. His idea of

the amalgamation of the railway unions has gained such a foothold that everywhere the rank and file is calling for and working for industrial unionism despite the opposition of officialdom.

Already a split in the United Mine Workers of America has been prevented because the militants have got the notion of dualism out of their systems, and today the outlook for the American labor movement is more hopeful than ever before. The employers are worried at the strong new tendency for unity.

Again, William F. Dunne, formerly editor of the *Butte Bulletin*, lately labor editor of *The Worker*, of New York, was on his way to Butte when arrested with a plan for the organization of the metal miners of the United States which had been worked out by him and Foster.

He was to take charge of the *Butte Bulletin* once more and again challenge the copper trust in its stronghold.

There are copper mines in Michigan and there is little doubt that the news of Dunne's arrest brought no sorrow to the copper barons in Arizona, Montana, or Michigan.

Caleb Harrison, active in the machinists' union; Michelic, another militant machinist from Kansas City; McMillin, organizer for the World War Veterans in St. Louis; Reynolds of the Carpenters' Union of Detroit; Norman Tallentire, carpenter, known for his work on the Mooney defense and in behalf of all worker victims of the employers' hatred and greed; Thomas O'Flaherty, longshoreman, railwayman, active in the Irish organizations, fighting for the economic as well as political freedom for the Irish workers; Charley Krumbein, active member of the Steamfitters' Union of Chicago; Nordling, seaman, longshoreman, and carpenter; and C.E. Ruthenberg, the smiling rebel and unequalled organizer whose spirit has not been killed by two prison terms for his class.

This is the type of men who are now menaced with a sentence of 10 years' imprisonment

and a \$5000 fine for daring to counsel with each other on the burning questions of the labor and revolutionary struggles of the workers.

Without a semblance of reason, Michigan warrants were issued for William Z. Foster, Browder, and Aronberg. Browder is managing editor of *The Labor Herald* and of course the powers that prey want Foster for many things. He has never been forgiven for the organization of the steel strike and there is no worker in America today who is more hated and feared than William Z. Foster, the quiet young man who has brought new hope to the militants in the organized labor movement.

The complaint on which these men were arrested charges them with nothing except membership in the Communist Party of America. No acts in violation of any statute are cited; the Department of Justice seems to merely have taken advantage of the fact that 17 men were in Michigan at the same time to institute prosecutions under a state wartime measure whose federal counterpart has been repealed.

There is little doubt that these arrests are part of a general campaign of intimidation engineered by the government agents in connection with the railway strike. As a matter of fact this was admitted by Spolansky in conversation with some of the prisoners in the Berrien County jail. He said: "The Communist Party and the Workers Party are not strong enough to bother about and if it hadn't been for the big strikes this wouldn't have happened."

Mr. Spolansky admits that he is the best expert in the department on radical activities and as such enjoys the trust and confidence of those who sit in high places, so in this particular matter he

can probably be believed. It follows therefore that the Michigan arrests are not an attack on revolutionary suspects but are a deliberate onslaught on the fighting elements in the organized labor movement. More significant than anything else in connection with this matter is the sweeping injunction applied for by Attorney-General Daugherty, restraining the striking shopmen from doing everything except breathing and even prohibiting that in the vicinity of railway property.

For the first time in the industrial history of the United States ordinary trade unionists and the officials find themselves, so far as the oppressive powers of capitalist government are concerned, in the same position as the so-called "reds," whom the governmental agencies and the propagandists of the ruling class have hitherto used as bugaboos with which to scare the worker who did not know that all organization of the workers is anathema to the ruling class at the present stage of capitalist development.

It is out of such occurrences as these that come the phenomena most dreaded by a worried and frightened ruling class — THE UNITED FRONT OF LABOR.

Here in the United States where labor is the least conscious of its mission its scattered forces are being welded together by two forces — the activities of the militants, who are the first to feel the heavy hand of the Black Hundreds of imperialism, and the oppressive acts of those same Black Hundreds, who are unconsciously destroying the very system they try hard to save from the consequences of its follies, inconsistencies, and cruelties.

*Edited by Tim Davenport.*

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