
Hillquit Scores Raids on Socialist Headquarters.

Unsigned news report in *The Eye-Opener* [Chicago], v. 9, no. 9, whole no. 255 (Sept. 22, 1917), pg. 2.

Federal raids upon the National Office of the Socialist Party, and several Socialist newspaper plants were characterized by Morris Hillquit, Socialist candidate for the New York mayoralty, and member of the Socialist National Executive Committee, as lawless and high-handed.†

“It is perfectly clear that all the raids of Socialist and other anti-war organizations going on simultaneously all over the country, together with the suppression of the People’s Council meetings by the concerted action of the Governors of several states, and the suppression of numerous newspapers, are all part of a very definite policy on the part of the federal government to exterminate all organs of opposition and to stifle all voices of criticism of the war,” he said.

“I do not know of any country at war that is on the Allied side or in the Central Powers that has dared to go so far in the destruction of democratic institutions and civil rights of the people under pretexts of military necessity as has this country at the very outset of the war.

“The high-handed and lawless procedure of the government throws a lurid sidelight on our avowed purpose to make the world safe for democracy.

“As far as the Socialist movement for peace are concerned, they will not be affected adversely by the persecution. On the contrary, they will gain greater strength.

“The Socialist Party and the pacifist organizations are being driven to methods of secret conspiracy activities as they have been in Russia prior to the revolution, but the inability of the Russian people to meet in public and to work in the open in the case of the Tsar did not prevent the overthrow of Tsardom.”

†- Socialist Party headquarters, located at 803 W Madison Street, Chicago, was raided by federal authorities armed with a search warrant on September 5, 1917. Material seized was used as the basis of the celebrated “Case of the 5 Socialist Leaders,” the indictment of whom was returned February 2, 1918. The trial took place before Judge K.M. Landis in December 1918 and January 1919.

Edited with a footnote by Tim Davenport.

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