
Red Raid Scribe in Nonunion Clan: Connections is Shown Between Michigan Cases and the Labor Movement.

by Robert M. Buck

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If anyone fails to understand the connection between the “red” raids at Bridgman, Mich. last August [Aug. 22, 1922] and the general cause of labor, here is a story that may help him see his interest in the matter and maybe move him to send the Labor Defense council a few dollars to help keep W.Z. Foster and the others from going to prison.

One of the nasty little busybodies of the “red” raids was a man named R.M. Whitney. He messed in, got access to some of the papers that had been seized and wrote a series of newspaper articles about them for the *Boston Transcript* and other papers, spreading “anti-red” propaganda over the United States and denouncing as many persons connected with the labor movement and liberal groups as he could think of, many of them having no connection, however remote, with the Michigan cases.

Who is R.M. Whitney? He is the Washington, DC, director of the American Defense Society. And what is that society?

Anti-labor literature of the American Defense Society, confidentially circulated, reveals the big business soul of this organization.

Organize Volunteer Strikebreakers.

“What the American Defense Society is Working to Do,” is a subject head of one of the society’s broadcasted pamphlets. In listing its activities, the organization folds itself in the American flag and makes itself out a kind of an industrial Ku Klux Klan.

An outstanding plank of its platform calls for

creation of “Home Defense Committees, to act under proper officials in case of general strikes that public service facilities may continue and the life of American communities may not be at the mercy of irresponsible agitators.” Another proposes the elimination of “labor reds and outlaw strikes.”

An interesting bit of psychological terrorism is seen in the society’s plan to “educate” the workers through their pay envelopes. Says the pamphlet:

Encourage industry and increased production. The society provides printed leaflets to be placed in pay envelopes demonstrating that increased production can reduce the cost of living and that all must give their best efforts to increase output. Samples of these will be gladly furnished on request.

As a fitting conclusion a selected public is asked “to contribute in support of the work the American Defense Society is doing.” The circular requests that “your check” be made “as large as your interest permits.”

The Labor Defense Council, Frank P. Walsh, chief counsel, is concerned not only with the group of workers arrested at Bridgman last August, but also with the protection of the constitutional guarantees of the entire working class against the anti-social practices of all such organizations as the American Defense Society. All workers are asked to do their part in winning a big victory for civil liberties against the forces of reaction, by contributing money to help carry on the fight. Contributions may be sent to the Labor Defense Council at 166 W Washington St., Chicago.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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