
Mrs. Hazlett to Sue Ringleader of Legion Mob: \$20,000 Damage Action to Be Brought Against Son of Banker Who Kidnapped Her

Unsigned article in the *New York Call*, v. 14, no. 228 (Aug. 16, 1921), pp. 1-2.

(Special to *The Call*.)

PLATTSMOUTH, Neb., August 15 [1921].— Mrs. Ida Crouch Hazlett, National Organizer for the Socialist Party and veteran Socialist speaker, who has been facing American Legion mobs that had adopted the tactics of gangsters in here tour through Iowa, announced here today that she would bring suit for \$20,000 damages against Thomas Murphy of Shenandoah, Iowa, as a result of the wild ride given her last Thursday [Aug. 11, 1921] in that city.

Thomas Murphy is the son of a wealthy banker of Shenandoah, who, as commander of the American Legion post there, is alleged to have led the party of 8 American Legion men who kidnapped Mrs. Hazlett, dragged here from the car in which she was speaking, threw her into another car, and drove 20 miles out of town at breakneck speed.

Mrs. Hazlett further announced that state and national officers of the Socialist Party will bring suit against other American Legion gangsters who have interfered at 5 points with her meetings in Iowa. The charge against the gangsters will be violation of the constitutional rights of free speech and assemblage.

Story of Ride.

In making the announcement here, Mrs. Hazlett told for the first time the detailed story of the wild ride at Shenandoah and how, through

suggestion, she was able to control the minds of the “8 defenders of democracy” and force them to awake to the logic of events and return her to the city.

Mrs. Hazlett charged that Murphy, the commander of the Legion post and son of the banker, had raised his hand to strike her during the ride.

Mrs. Hazlett, in telling the story, said that she believed she had won a psychological victory over the ex-servicemen.

Finding herself kidnapped, Mrs. Hazlett determined to take command of the racing automobile and its 8 occupants.

“When the banker’s son raised his hand to strike me,” she said, “I warded off the blow by remarking on the bravery of 8 men in beating up a lone woman.”

Mothers Would Be Proud.

This appeal to ex-experts at the handling of bayonets served only for a moment.

The men retorted that their mothers would be proud if they “punished” Mrs. Hazlett.

Mrs. Hazlett replied to this barrack-room logic that there was a freemasonry among women that would not countenance violence.

Then, before her captors had a chance to support their picture of overjoyed mothers at the story of 8 men beating up one woman, Mrs. Hazlett followed this opening up. She suggested that

the ex-servicemen carry their hatred of her to its logical conclusion.

“Riding down the road at terrific speed,” she recounted, “I suggested that they kill me. I pictured my body hacked to pieces and scattered along the road. I implied that it would certainly add to the sweet memories of their mothers. Then I switched the picture. I suggested the possibility that the car might be wrecked and all of us killed. Their mothers would not like to see that, would then?”

“That twist changed their minds. And when I suggested that the only thing to do was to turn back, they simply had to obey.”

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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