
**Letter to Walter H. Evans, District Attorney
of Multnomah County, Oregon, in Portland
from J. Edgar Hoover, Special Assistant
to the Attorney General, in Washington,
March 24, 1920**

Copy in DoJ/BoI Investigative Files, NARA M-1085, reel 916, file 186701-87.

March 24, 1920.

Hon. Walter H. Evans,
District Attorney for Multnomah Co.,
Portland, Oregon.

Dear Sir:

Your communication of January 29, 1920, addressed to Senator McNary, which was referred to the Attorney General by the Senator for his consideration, has been called to my attention. I note with interest the views expressed by you upon the nature and character of the IWW. The activities of this organization have been the subject of inquiry by the agents of the Bureau of Investigation of this Department for some time, and interesting bits of evidence have been collected. I note with particular interest the copy of the Resolutions and Minutes as passed by the Executive Board of the IWW in August and September, 1919, in which they ally themselves with the Third International. I am writing to inquire whether or not you could obtain for me the original of this resolution, or whether, to your knowledge, the same has been printed in any of the official publications or bulletins of the IWW.

You, no doubt, are aware of the fact that the determination as to whether or not an organiza-

tion of such a nature as to come within the provisions of the deportation statute is for the Secretary of Labor to pass upon. Congress has vested in that officer the authority to determine the organizations which, in his opinion, advocate the overthrow of the Government of the United States by force or violence, or advocate the unlawful destruction of property. The Attorney General has no authority finally to pass upon this question.

At the time that a brief was submitted to the Secretary of Labor upon the character of the Communist Party of America, a similar brief was presented to the Secretary of Labor upon the nature and character of the Communist Labor Party, and I am informed that the Secretary of Labor will shortly consider the question as to whether or not the Communist Labor Party is such an organization as falls within the provisions of the Act of October 16, 1918. To date, however, the Secretary of Labor has only ruled that the Communist Party of America is an unlawful organization. In principles and tactics, both parties are identical, and I expect, and sincerely trust, that the Secretary of Labor will shortly rule upon the character of the Communist Labor Party, at which time, prompt action may be expected from the representatives of the Department of Justice in curbing the pernicious activities of members of the Communist Labor Party.

Any information which may come to your attention, from time to time, upon the activities of the radical groups in your section of the country, should be forwarded to the nearest office of the Department of Justice, or to me personally, and I can assure you that it will receive prompt attention.

Very truly yours,

J.E. Hoover,

Special Assistant to the Attorney General.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

Published by 1000 Flowers Publishing, Corvallis, OR, 2011. • Non-commercial reproduction permitted.