
Ruthenberg Acquitted by Court Order at Cleveland: Cincinnati Socialists Raided.

[events of Nov. 18, 1919]

by Joseph W. Sharts

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By a striking coincidence of dates, C.E. Ruthenberg was acquitted by instruction of the court at Cleveland, of guilt with reference to the famous May Day riots, at almost the same time a band of 300 alleged members of the American Legion were raiding Socialist headquarters at Cincinnati and burning bundles of Socialist literature in Vine Street.

The order of the court to the Cleveland jury in the Ruthenberg case means that after a week's hearing of the state evidence, when it had produced every scrap of evidence it could offer, not one scintilla of evidence, not one bit of evidence, had been introduced to prove Ruthenberg guilty of causing the May Day riots.

As Ruthenberg was the marshal of the Cleveland parade, this can mean but one thing: the whole outbreak of lawlessness must be laid at the door of those pretended "patriots" and sham defenders of "law and order" who rode into the parade with armored tanks and army trucks and broke up the parade.

In all ages there have existed bands of bravados and swashbuckling bullies who have been in the pay of nobles and privileged classes and have sought to strike terror among the commons whose slowly accumulating strength has made the dominant families apprehensive.

In the declining days of the Roman Republic, when wealth had accumulated in a few powerful fami-

lies, the armed bands of "clients" of various wealthy demagogues ranged the Forum.

When the Renaissance occurred in Italy, the great Italian princes then dominated the decaying state, sent their swaggering assassins up and down committing depredations upon the public.

When the English Commons began to shake the yoke of the Stuart kings, the London shopkeepers and their apprentices and families were the victims of innumerable outrages at the hands of the "cavaliers" and their servants.

When the French Revolution was brewing the nobles hired professional assassins and swordsmen to terrify the public.

When the Russian Revolution was beginning in 1905 it was temporarily crushed out by the bloody massacres and pogroms instituted by the "Black Hundreds" — who were simply the hirelings of the wealthy and conservative class.

It would be strange indeed if in times like these in America the panic-stricken bourgeoisie, the class into whose hands the great bulk of the property has passed, did not revert to type and, in their turn, by such open or indirect methods as were deemed advisable, organize bands of bravados and "Black Hundreds" in the old vain effort to stay the tide of discontent by terrorism.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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